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Ellen G. White

The Human-Interest Story

Ellen G. White—The Human-Interest Story

By ARTHUR L. WHITE, Secretary of
the Ellen G. White Publications

[REPRINTED FROM "THE MINISTRY"]

As Others Knew Her

ACCORDING to line 21 of the General Conference Biographical Information Blank, Ellen Gould White was 5 feet 2 inches tall, and weighed 140 pounds in 1909, with "complexion rather dark," "eyes gray," "hair gray." Had the blank been filled out some years earlier, it would have noted her hair as brown, but she was now eighty-one years of age. Twenty-six other spaces on this blank yield such information as "Date and place of birth—Gorham, Maine, November 26, 1827." "Date of conversion—probably in March, 1840." She was married to Elder James White on August 30, 1846; and he died August 6, 1881. There were four boys born to the Whites, the oldest and youngest were deceased. Mrs. White traveled extensively, and wrote many books, which were translated into many languages.

This interesting blank renders much valuable information regarding Ellen White as a Seventh-day Adventist worker, but it does not acquaint us with her as an individual. It does not speak of her disposition, nor does it tell us how she related herself to others, or how she bore her burdens. It does not speak of her joys and sorrows, her struggles with discouragement, the battle with appetite, her love of home, her interest in flowers and animals. It does not tell of the hours she stood by the sickbed of a neighbor's child, or of the cooking, the mending, and the shopping. It says nothing about Mrs. White as a speaker, of the burden of writing, and of the endless hours spent in seeing those who sought her counsel. These would not appear in a formal blank. But these are the experiences and characteristics by which we really become acquainted with Sister White. Fortunate it is that from her voluminous records, housed in the Ellen G. White Publications vault at the office of the General Conference, we can reconstruct sketches of these human-interest features of her life and experience.

If we were to visit the White home in the early days—and we will fix the year as 1859, for we have Mrs. White's diary for that year—we would find ourselves in a little frame cottage only a few blocks from the Review and Herald office in Battle Creek, Michigan. Mrs. White is

a woman of thirty-one, and her husband is thirty-seven. There are three boys—Willie, Edson, and Henry—their ages four, nine, and twelve. We observe that Mrs. White is a thoughtful mother, a careful housewife, a genial hostess, and a helpful neighbor. She is a woman of conviction, but gentle in manner and voice. She is interested in the everyday happenings and the local news. She can enjoy a good laugh. There is no place in her experience for a long-faced religion. One feels at perfect ease in her presence. She is friendly, but not snooty or prying.

It is early in January, and Mrs. White is busy writing, sewing, and preparing for a three-week journey which will take her to a number of the churches in northern Michigan. She will go in advance of her husband who plans to join her soon. We find her assisted in the home by Jenny, a sterling young woman who keeps things running smoothly while the Whites are away on their trips. Our first visit is in midwinter, and there is snow on the ground. We notice that the home is on the edge of town, with garden and barn at the rear. We shall be interested to see the out-of-door activities later in the spring.

One of the Many Journeys

The little black leather-covered diary not only reveals the plans for this journey but discloses also a detailed, day-by-day account of the trip. Occasionally it gives us a glimpse of her heart experience. Here is the entry for Friday, January 7: "Went to Otsego, to Brother Leighton's. It was a cold drive, yet we kept quite comfortable." The entries that follow tell of meetings held and people seen, and of her state of health. We turn to Wednesday, January 19: "In the afternoon we go to Wright [where nine years later our first camp meeting was held]. Brother Cramer, the elder, takes a seat in our carriage to pilot us. He is acquainted with the road. It is a good road. Have no milk for Teresa [Evidently Brother Cramer's daughter.]. She cries. Oh that we may be as earnest for the bread of life as she is for temporal food. She will not be satisfied."—*Diary, 1859.*



HARRY ANDERSON, ARTIST

James White, Encouraged by His Wife, Begins to Write Articles for Our First Periodical in the Summer of 1849

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Two days later, Friday, Mrs. White thought especially of home, as the traveling worker often does when the Sabbath draws on. She confides in her diary: "I have felt so homesick on the journey. Fear that I have not been willing to sacrifice the company of my husband and children to do others good. I desire a willingness to make a whole sacrifice and crucify every selfish feeling. I feel a lack of the Spirit of God. Have had a weeping time before the Lord."

The Battle With Appetite

Four years roll by, and it is summer, 1863. In our imagination we are again in the White home. We are told of the health-reform vision of June 6 of this year, and of the changes it brought to the family in dietetic practice. Mrs. White had been a heavy meat eater, and had cared little for the simple, wholesome foods. She had thought she needed meat for strength. Her health had not been good; in fact, she had fainted several times a week. But in the vision she had been shown the advantages of a simple and wholesome diet free from stimulating food and flesh meat. She had determined to bring these principles, so new to her, into practice in her own home.

The cook was instructed that they would have no more meat, and the order was promptly carried out. A few hours later the family came to the table, which was bountifully set with the good things of the earth, but without flesh food. Mrs. White had thought she was hungry, but now decided that she was not, and left the table. At mealtime again the family was summoned. By this time she knew that she was hungry. But after looking over the table and finding no meat there, she decided she did not care to eat, and left without touching food. She was hungry only for meat.

When mealtime again came, Mrs. White eagerly hurried to the dining table. There was no meat there and she longed for it. The simple articles of diet were unappealing to her. Then, she tells us, "I placed my arms across my stomach, and said, '... I will eat simple food, or I will not eat at all.' ... I said to my stomach, 'You may wait until you can eat bread.'"—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 371, 372. It was not long until Mrs. White enjoyed the wholesome, simple food which God provided for man.

Thus we discover that she had the same battles with appetite that we all have. Being the Lord's messenger did not relieve her from these personal struggles in her own experience. She records a similar experience in gaining the victory over the use of vinegar. (See *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 485.)

Appreciation of the Beautiful

In the summer of 1873 we find the White family in the Rocky Mountains. Elder and Mrs. White, with their younger son, are seeking a

little relaxation in Colorado. Mrs. White's appreciation of the beauties of nature is contagious. Listen as she speaks:

"I love the hills and mountains and forests of flourishing evergreens. I love the brooks, the swift-running streams of softest water which come bubbling over the rocks, through ravines, by the side of the mountains, as if singing the joyful praise of God. . . .

"We have here in the mountains a view of the most rich and glorious sunset it was ever our privilege to look upon. The beautiful picture of the sunset, painted upon the shifting, changing canvas of the heavens by the great master Artist, awakens in our hearts love and deepest reverence for God. The surpassing loveliness of the blended colors of gold, silver, purple, and crimson, painted upon the heavens, seems to speak to us of the amazing glories within. As we stand almost entranced before this picture of nature's unsurpassed loveliness, contemplating the glories of Heaven of which we have a faint reflection, we repeat softly to ourselves, 'Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.'"—*Health Reformer*, August, 1873.

At Recreational Gatherings

Of course, we are interested in Mrs. White's personal attitude toward recreation. The year is 1876, and Mrs. White and the group of workers from her office and others from the Pacific Press spend a day in recreation on San Francisco Bay, at the beach and in a sailboat out through the Golden Gate. It is a beautiful April day. A Seventh-day Adventist captain is piloting the craft. How everyone enjoys the water! As the captain heads the ship out through the Golden Gate to the open ocean, they find that the Pacific is not too peaceful, and some of the ladies are seasick, but not Mrs. White. We will let her tell of it as she does the next day in a letter to her husband:

"The waves ran high, and we were tossed up and down so very grandly. I was highly elevated in my feelings, but had no words to say to any one. It was grand. The spray dashed over us, the watchful captain giving his orders, the ready hands to obey. The wind was strong outside of the Golden Gate, and I never enjoyed anything as much in my life."

Then she contemplates: God "holds the winds in His hands. He controls the waters. We are mere specks upon the broad, deep waters of the Pacific; yet angels of heaven are sent to guard this little sail-boat as it races over the waves. Oh, the wonderful works of God! So far beyond our understanding! At one glance He beholds the highest heavens and the midst of the sea."—Letter 5, 1876.

The next day she was to write on the theme of Christ stilling the tempest. "I am glad I went upon the water," she said. "I can write better than before."—*Ibid*.

Mrs. White was often an invited guest at church school picnics. She took delight in such occasions when parents, teachers, and students united in a day of recreation. Forgetting present surroundings, let us join such a group of forty or fifty years ago. We note the time, and discover it is nearly noon. A carriage is driving onto the grounds, and the word is passed along, "Sister White has come." She alights and joins the group around the bountiful meal spread out

on the grass. Everyone enjoys the good lunch provided, and then the company of old and young press a little closer together, and Mrs. White addresses them for about twenty-five minutes.

Her talk over, the company scatters to enjoy the afternoon, but some gather about her to visit a bit. Someone suggests surprise that she should leave her writing and her many duties as the Lord's messenger to spend a few hours on the picnic grounds. She assures them that she takes pleasure in such wholesome recreation. Perhaps she is reminded of an experience earlier, in 1884. We will let her tell the story which reveals her attitude toward such occasions:

"At the close of my long journey East, I reached my home in time to spend New Year's eve in Healdsburg. The College hall had been fitted up for a Sabbath-school reunion. Cypress wreaths, autumn leaves, evergreens, and flowers were tastefully arranged; and a large bell of evergreens hung from the arched doorway at the entrance to the room. The tree was well loaded with donations, which were to be used for the benefit of the poor, and to help purchase a bell. Except in a few instances, the names of the donors were not given; but appropriate Bible texts and mottoes were read as the gifts were taken down from the tree. On this occasion nothing was said or done that need burden the conscience of any one.

"Some have said to me, 'Sister White, what do you think of this? Is it in accordance with our faith?' 'I answer them, 'It is with my faith.' . . .

"We have tried earnestly to make the holidays as interesting as possible to the youth and children. Our object has been to keep them away from scenes of amusement among unbelievers."—*Review and Herald*, Jan. 29, 1884.

Cheerfulness in Adversity

The death of Elder James White came as a great blow to Sister White and to the denomination. He was just sixty years of age, and his death followed closely a few days' illness. It seemed to the bereaved messenger of the Lord that she could not go on. How could she pick up her burdens alone. For a time it ap-

peared that she too might lose her hold on life. But she soon took command of herself, determined to press on, and determined also not to allow that experience which brought such sadness to her heart to cause her to cast a shadow upon those with whom she came in contact. She would be cheerful and pleasant, even though her heart was bleeding. A few years earlier, when in adversity, she had expressed her philosophy of life in these words:

"Do you ever see me gloomy, desponding, complain-

MAY 10 1900

Please fill out at once, and return in accompanying envelope.

Biographical Information Blank

To be preserved by the General Conference as a matter of permanent record.

1. Full name: *Ellen Gould White* Usual form: *Ellen G. White*
2. Date of filling this blank: *March 5, 1909*
3. Present address: *Sanitarium, near St. Helena, Napa Co., Cal.*
4. Date and place of birth: *Koskovo, Maine, Nov. 26, 1827*
5. Names and nationality of parents: *Robert Harmon, Sumner Harmon, both American*
6. Mother's maiden name: *Sumner Gould*
7. Place or places where earlier years were spent: *New England, New York, and Michigan, U. S. A.*
8. Educational advantages in public or private schools (give dates): *Attended public school in Portland, Me. until seven yrs. old. spent short time in private school when 12 yrs. old.*
9. Educational advantages in denominational schools (give dates): *None in schools, but the broad education that comes to one evangelist in the work of soul-winning.*
10. What degrees, if any, have you received, and from what school or schools, and when? *None*
11. Date of conversion: *Probably in March, 1849*
12. When, where, and by whom baptized? *Little part of 1849, at Portland, Me., by Methodist minister.*
13. Were your parents, or either of them, Seventh-day Adventists when you were born? *No. Ed. This did not yet exist.*
14. To what denomination or denominations did your parents belong? *Methodist*
15. To what denomination or denominations did you belong before accepting present truth? *Methodist*
16. By what means particularly were you brought into the truth? *Study of the Bible, listening to gospel preachers, and by revelation*
17. When, where, and in what capacity did you begin laboring in the cause? *In Maine, 1848, laboring for young friends; 1844-45 began public labor, relating visions, etc.*

Enlightening Biographical Blank Filled Out in 1909

ing? I have a faith which 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 to imitate Jesus, for to be a Christian is to be Christ-like."—MS. 1, 1867.

Some years later in Australia, Mrs. White passed through a period of great physical suf-

fering. With the contemporary records before us, we, in imagination, tiptoe into her bedroom, for she is quite ill. Having learned that, even though in great bodily suffering, she has been writing much on the life of Christ, we are not surprised to find her propped up in bed, pen in hand. Her arm is resting on a framework that has been constructed at her request to enable her to proceed with her work. She has suffered much during the past eight months from inflammatory rheumatism and can catch but a few hours' sleep at night. After greeting her we express regret that she must suffer so, and then she tells us how she looks upon this experience. She is speaking now:

"When I first found myself in a state of helplessness I deeply regretted having crossed the broad waters. Why was I not in America? Why at such expense was I in this country? Time and again I could have buried my face in the bed quilts and had a good cry. But I did not long indulge in the luxury of tears. "I said to myself, 'Ellen G. White, what do you mean? Have you not come to Australia because you felt that it was your duty to go where the conference judged it best for you to go? Has this not been your practice?'"

"I said, 'Yes.' "Then why do you feel almost forsaken and discouraged? Is not this the enemy's work?"

"I said, 'I believe it is.' "I dried my tears as quickly as possible and said, 'It is enough. I will not look on the dark side any more. Live or die, I commit the keeping of my soul to Him who died for me.'

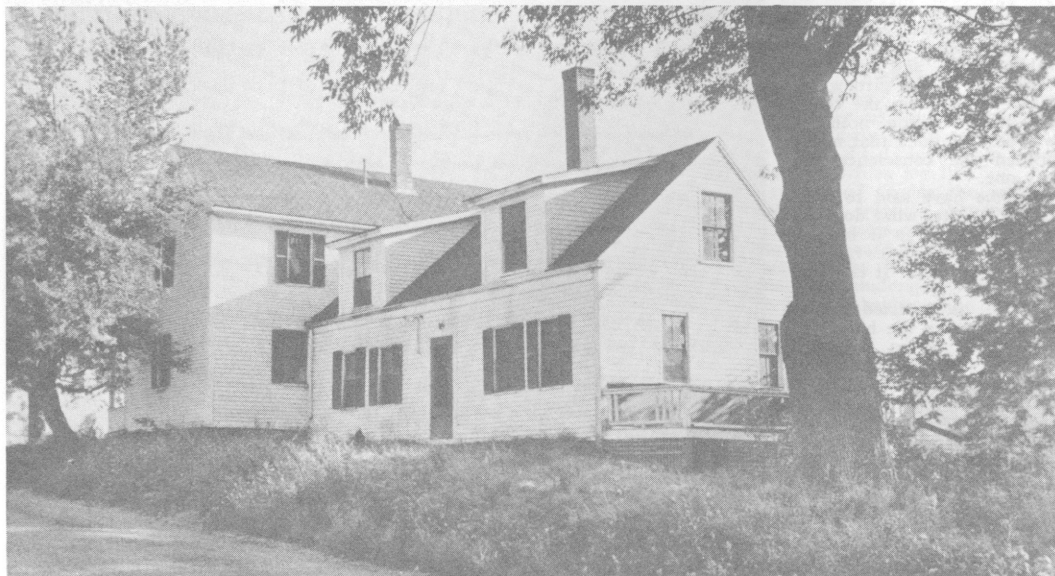
"I then believed that the Lord would do all things well, and during this eight months of helplessness, I have not had any despondency or doubt. I now look at this matter as a part of the Lord's great plan, for the

good of His people here in this country, and for those in America, and for my good. I can not explain why or how, but I believe it. And I am happy in my affliction. I can trust my heavenly Father. I will not doubt His love. I have an ever watchful guardian day and night, and I will praise the Lord; for His praise is upon my lips because it comes from a heart full of gratitude."—Letter 18a, 1892.

Thus she lifted herself above bereavement and suffering with a determination to trust firmly in God.

Mrs. White Very Human

Having met Sister White under varying circumstances, we discover that she is very human. She is not, as some have thought, an austere, smileless woman, somewhat removed by position and work from the common people with their joys and sorrows. She is one of us. But we have seen her only on a very few occasions. We still want to spend more time in her home and office and join her in her travels, becoming acquainted with her as a homemaker, a neighbor, a counselor, a writer, a speaker, a personal worker, a steward of means, and as God's messenger. To accomplish this, we turn to more of her diaries, her letters, and her articles in our denominational papers, and through these learn to know Mrs. White as she was known to those around her. The documents we shall draw on for the succeeding articles are, for the most part, not formal statements written for publication. Rather we shall construct our story largely from the informal records.



Birthplace and Childhood Home of Ellen G. White at Gorham, Maine

The Homemaker

IT IS easy to picture Mrs. E. G. White as an indefatigable writer and an earnest speaker, but not often is she thought of as a capable housewife and mother, carrying many home responsibilities and caring for and training her children.

During the first years of their married life James and Ellen White had no regular income, for there was no systematic support for the ministry. They had no fixed place of abode, but they "resolved not to be dependent" (*Life Sketches*, p. 105), even though much of their time was given to the work of God. They found life not too easy, for the Lord allowed trials to come lest they "should settle down at ease," "unwilling to leave" a pleasant home. (*Ibid.*, p. 106.) Often entrusting the care of their children to others, they traveled from place to place, tarrying at times for but a few weeks or months at any one location. Sometimes they kept house in a spare room, or attic, with borrowed furniture (*Ibid.*, p. 123), and sometimes they boarded with the families with whom they stayed.

In establishing the publishing work at Rochester, New York, in 1852, a building was rented to serve both as home and office, but they were "compelled to exercise the most rigid economy and self-denial" to keep the enterprise going. The cheapest secondhand furniture, some of it badly needing repair, was secured, and the food budget was so restricted that for a time they used "sauce in the place of butter, and turnips for potatoes." (*Life Sketches*, p. 142.) Ellen White, however, counted it a pleasure to have a settled home where the entire family could be together.

Soon after moving the publishing work to Battle Creek, Michigan, in 1855, the Whites were privileged to have a home all their own; and although away much of the time, home life was maintained to provide their children with the proper environment. From this time until the death of James White, in 1881, they maintained a home in Michigan. They also had a home in California for a period in the seventies, dividing their time between the growing work on the Pacific Coast and the Battle Creek headquarters.

At Home in Battle Creek

Incidental references which occasionally occur in the records indicate that the White home was a cheerful, happy place, although stirring with activity. The first building of their own was a six-room frame cottage located on Wood Street at the western edge of Battle Creek. At the back was the garden and barn, and they had their own cow. They drew their water

from the well which served the community. On a back corner of their land was a wooded spot providing a secluded place for prayer.

Since Mrs. White's time was much taken up with writing, preaching, and traveling, it was necessary to employ responsible domestic help; yet she did not surrender her position as manager of the household affairs, as mother and hostess. Her diaries reveal that during her time at home and while traveling, a large part of many days was devoted to writing, yet other activities were not neglected. When sewing was receiving special attention, we find her from day to day making "a pair of pants," preparing "a coat for Edson," and making "a mattress for the lounge," or working "hard all day on a dress to wear through the mud." (*Diary*, March 25, 28; April 26, 1859.)

This particular year the gardening season was inaugurated with the setting out of a "currant bush" late in March. It turned out to be "a cold, blustering day," and after fitting out departing guests with loaned "cloak, mittens and necktie to protect them," she jotted in her diary, "In the new earth there are no chilling winds, no disagreeable changes. The atmosphere is ever right and healthy." (*Ibid.*, March 24, 1859.)

In succeeding weeks, currant and raspberry bushes and strawberry plants were all set out. One entire day was devoted to "making a garden for my children," as she wished "to make home . . . the pleasantest place of any to them." (*Ibid.*, April 11, 1859.) Plants were secured from the neighbors, and exchanges of plants and roots are recorded. (*Ibid.*, April 11-13, 1859.)

Then there was the buying to be done. Shopping trips to town were made, not only to supply the family needs, but at times to assist neighbors in the selection of merchandise, for Ellen White was known to be a good buyer.

One day she went downtown to buy some goods with which to make a pair of trousers. She asked Mr. Skinner, the proprietor of one of the dry-goods stores, to show her a piece of all-wool material. He threw down a bolt of goods on the counter and told Mrs. White he had just received it, and he believed it was what she was looking for.

"Is it all wool?" she asked Mr. Skinner.

"Oh, yes, Mrs. White, one hundred per cent wool," he assured her.

Without thinking, her hand felt for the raveled edge and she found a loose thread. She pulled it out, untwisted its strands, and discovered some cotton. Holding it up, she inquired: "Is this wool, Mr. Skinner?" Much embar-

rassed, he admitted it was not, and then told Mrs. White that he had bought it for all wool.

This shows Mrs. White's knowledge of textiles, and her familiarity with the practical things of life. Her mother was a very sensible, practical woman, and had trained her girls well.

Sabbath and Home Routine

The Sabbath in the White home was a full day, spent in attending service, reading to the children in the afternoon, walking through the woods or by the stream, and visiting the sick or discouraged.

Mrs. White usually did her writing at home in a room set aside for her office, but for a period she shared her husband's office at the Review and Herald. Sometimes when she went over she found work pressing hard in the bindery, and there she would join others in folding or stitching papers, book signatures, or pamphlets. (*Ibid.*, Jan. 5, March 28, 29, 1859.)

Our ministers were not infrequently called to Battle Creek for general meetings. So it was in early March, 1859. The diary entry records a parting visit with one of these workers, the youthful John Nevins Andrews.

"It is a day when infirmities are striving for the victory. I suffer much pain in my left shoulder and lung. My spirits are depressed. Brother John Andrews leaves today, comes up to visit us in the evening. Have a pleasant interview.

"Get together a few things for him to take home. Send Angeline a new calico dress (nine shillings) and a stout pair of calf skin shoes. Father gives the making of the shoes and the making of a pair of boots for Brother John Andrews. I send the little boy a nice little flannel shirt and yarn to knit him a pair of stockings. I send Sister or Mother Andrews a nice large cape well wadded for her to wear. I make a bag to put them in of towel cloth. Write three small pages to Sister Mary Chase. In it write a recipe obtained from John."—*Ibid.*, March 8, 1859.

The White home was always open to visitors, and at times it seemed to the family that they operated a gratuitous hotel. Conference time in 1859 finds thirty-five eating at their home. The day after the conference there is but one brief entry: "We were all much worn out."—*Ibid.*, June 7, 1859.

The diary story for that and other years records many individuals and families who were welcomed to the home for a night or a day or two or longer. This brought a heavy strain on the family budget, increased the labor in the home, and deprived the family of much of that privacy to which they were entitled. What this entertaining sometimes meant personally to Mrs. White is revealed in a letter penned in 1873 to one of our workers:

"I have arisen at half past five o'clock in the morning, helped Lucinda wash dishes, have written until dark, then done necessary sewing, sitting up until near midnight; I have done the washings for the family after my day's writing was done. I have frequently been so weary as to stagger like an intoxicated person, but praise the Lord I have been sustained."—Letter 1, 1873.

The meals were simple, but there was ample

wholesome food. After receiving the light on health reform, the table conformed to the instruction given. The cooking was usually well done except when new, untrained help first came to the home. Mrs. White wrote in 1870:

"I have a well-set table on all occasions. I make no change for visitors, whether believers or unbelievers. I intend never to be surprised by an unreadiness to entertain at my table from one to half a dozen extra who may chance to come in. I have enough simple, healthful food ready to satisfy hunger and nourish the system. If any want more than this, they are at liberty to find it elsewhere. No butter or flesh-meats of any kind come on my table. Cake is seldom found there. I generally have an ample supply of fruits, good bread, and vegetables. Our table is always well patronized, and all who partake of the food do well, and improve upon it. All sit down with no epicurean appetite, and eat with relish the bounties supplied by our Creator."—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 487.

Those in the White home found a good latitude of freedom in the matter of their personal diet.

"I do not hold myself up as a criterion for them. I leave each one to follow his own ideas as to what is best for him. I bind no one else's conscience by my own. . . . There are those in my family who are very fond of beans, while to me beans are poison. Butter is never placed on my table, but if the members of my family choose to use a little butter away from the table they are at liberty to do so. Our table is set twice a day, but if there are those who desire something to eat in the evening, there is no rule that forbids them from getting it."—*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 491.

Discipline in the White Home

Although heavily burdened with many problems, the busy mother did not neglect the training of her children. Home discipline was firm, but administered with understanding kindness and love. She endeavored to avoid crises, and sought constantly to lead the minds of the boys in such a way as to strengthen character and develop will power. Suitable and simple rewards encouraged obedience and good behavior. The inducements outside the home were often offset by innocent pleasures in the home. Very seldom was corporal punishment administered, and then only after a quiet talk and earnest prayer.

Of course problems arose. The White boys were not model children. But issues were dealt with promptly and with decision. Their mother testified:

"I never allowed my children to think that they could plague me in their childhood. Never did I allow myself to say a harsh word. . . . When my spirit was stirred, or when I felt anything like being provoked, I would say, 'Children, we shall let this rest now; we shall not say anything more about it now. Before you retire, we shall talk it all over.' Having all this time to reflect, by evening they had cooled off, and I could handle them very nicely."—MS. 82, 1901.

The frequent absence of one or both of the parents tended to complicate the task of rearing the children. While on her journeys the mother kept in close touch with them by frequent letters. Her thoughts and her prayers were often concerned with the growing boys at home.

The Home in Later Years

After the death of Elder James White in 1881, Mrs. White continued to maintain her own home. By this time the children had established themselves, and her family consisted largely of her literary assistants, domestic help, and worthy young people she was assisting in school, and at times individuals—either workers or lay members—who were in need of care. More of the responsibilities of the operation of the home were now thrown upon the housekeeper, and Mrs. White filled the position of gracious hostess. After a busy day of writing the family worship service was often supplemented by Ellen White's recounting the experiences of the early days of the work.

In Australia the White home at Sunnyside, Cooranbong, was a busy place with the family numbering from ten to sixteen. (*Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 488.) The house, augmented with tents, served both as residence and office. One of the first buildings on the new school property, it was often the stopping place for visiting workers or those who were joining the school staff. Those were pioneer days, and the strictest economy was enforced of necessity, yet the table presented wholesome satisfying food. "Grains, vegetables, and fresh and canned fruit constituted our table fare," she wrote in 1896. (*Ibid.*, p. 489.) There was plenty of land, and Mrs. White planned the orchard and garden. Determined to make her "wilderness home blossom as the rose" (Letter 59, 1896), she set apart ample space for flowers. She wished her home to be made beautiful by the things of nature created by God. She purposed to make her orchard and gardens "an object lesson to those who would rather beg than work." (Letter 128, 1899.)

The White home echoed with the clicking of typewriters busily engaged in copying letters and articles and book manuscripts. But on one Tuesday morning all this was silenced as the large dining room became the setting for a wedding. It was a pleasant, yet solemn, sacred service, in which Mrs. White took part by offering the prayer. She records that there "was no light jest or foolish sayings." (MS. 23, 1894.)

At times adjustments had to be made in the rooming facilities to make a place for someone who needed treatment and good food, but could not afford care at an institution. One such person was a guest in 1898, "although we have to crowd up our family to do this," Mrs. White wrote. It is further stated that "she is treated as a member of my family without cost to herself of a penny. I thought Jesus would do just this." (Letter 68, 1898.)

At the Elmhaven Home, St. Helena

When Mrs. White took up residence at Elmhaven, near St. Helena, California, she was in advancing years. Her family consisted of her office and home helpers. Although her time and energies were given over almost entirely to writing and speaking, she found relaxation in the activities about the farm and the home. Much to the distress of her personal secretary, Sara McEnterfer, she occasionally slipped away to visit with the neighbors without telling the family where she was going. At the age of seventy-five she took a day to drive into the mountains "to get cherries—small black ones" to can. "Our carriages," she explained, "were drawn up under the trees, and I picked nineteen quarts, sometimes sitting on the carriage seat, and sometimes standing on it." (Letter 121, 1903.) At another time she drove out to the pasture with Brother James, her efficient farmer, "to see the black calf," for she was anxious to know whether it was "faring well after the long rain." (Letter 91, 1904.)

Mrs. White took joy in watching the progress of the vegetable garden and the growth of the fruit trees, but in the flowers she found special delight. Even in her advanced years she was not unmindful of the welfare of the members of her family and her guests. She was eager to have them comfortable, and she wanted to be assured that the food was appetizing and adequate.

During the last three years of her life less time was devoted to writing, and she was often found reading her Bible, her own books, and our denominational papers. The daily newspaper kept her in touch with world events which all pointed to the near Advent of her Saviour. This was Ellen G. White the homemaker.

As a Neighbor

WHEN the lawyer came to the Saviour, asking the way to eternal life, the conversation turned to man's relationship to his fellow men. In response to the question, "Who is my neighbour?" Jesus told the story of the good Samaritan, leading to the unmistakable conclusion that a true neighbor is one who does what he can to help those about him in need. Acts of neighborly kindness, of course, are not usually matters of record, and yet we do find references here and there which help us to understand that, as defined in the parable, James and Ellen White strove to be good neighbors.

The earliest day-by-day diary of Ellen White in our possession antedates institutional and conference organization and the choosing of a denominational name. This little book, dated 1859, carries records of a period soon after Elder and Mrs. White were situated in their own home in Battle Creek, Michigan. The entry of January 2 records the giving of a cloak and a dress to a sister in need, and the entry for the next day reveals that Mrs. White was furnishing work to needy sisters. Two days later, January 5, although pressed hard in preparing for an extended journey, she was urged to go to the stores and help in selecting "some things for Roxana."

The next day we find her giving "a half-worn dress" for the needy mother of a girl employed in their home, and in this connection is the exclamation, "May the Lord have mercy upon the needy!" Among the many diary entries we find frequent mention of providing for the destitute. Here is one for a certain Tuesday:

"Walked to the office. Called to see Sister Sarah (Belden) and mother. Sarah gave me a little dress and two aprons for Sister Ratel's babe. . . . I rode down to the city and purchased a few things. Bought a little dress for Sister Ratel's babe. Came to the office, assisted them a little there and then came home to dinner. Sent the little articles to Sister Ratel. Mary Loughborough sends her another dress, so she will do very well now. "Oh, that all knew the sweetness of giving to the poor, of helping do others good and making others happy. The Lord open my heart to do all in my power to relieve those around me!—give me to feel my brother's woe!"—March 1, 1859.

Turning the pages of this time-worn little book, we find many entries indicating acts of neighborly kindness. April 21, after speaking of her writing and of sympathy of certain church members for a needy family, we find the words, "We have contributed a mite for their relief, about seven dollars. Purchased them different things to eat, and carried it to them."

Caring for the Sick

After the vision of June 6, 1863, at which time there was revealed to Mrs. White that the

transgression of the laws of nature was the underlying cause of sickness, she was shown the benefits of co-operating with nature in restoring health. When sickness came to the White home, simple, rational methods of treatment were employed with remarkable success. Then when the neighbors and friends were ill, Elder and Mrs. White were frequently called upon to assist with advice and help in giving treatments. Of this experience, Mrs. White reminisced in writing to friends at Battle Creek in 1903:

"Before our sanitarium there was established, my husband and I went from house to house to give treatment. Under God's blessing, we saved the lives of many who were suffering."—Letter 45, 1903.

"We would bring to our house cases that had been given up by the physicians to die. When we knew not what to do for them, we would pray to God most earnestly, and He always sent His blessing. He is the mighty Healer, and He worked with us. We never had time or opportunity to take a medical course, but we had success as we moved out in the fear of God, and sought Him for wisdom at every step. . . . We combined prayer and labor. We used the simple water treatments, and then tried to fasten the eyes of the patients on to the great Healer. We told them what He could do for them."—MS. 49, 1908.

In those early years of the message, before there was regular support for the cause as we know it today, at times various laborers found themselves in need. There are frequent references in statements made by them to periods of weeks or months that they were at the White home as guests without charge. Not only workers shared in experiences of this kind but at times lay members were also thus assisted. As an illustration, we find in the records of 1868 that Elder and Mrs. White, while residing at Greenville, Michigan, learned of a certain sister who, in making a business trip, was detained by severe illness in a Greenville hotel. They looked her up and took her to their home, where she remained until they were satisfied that she should be sent to the health institute in Battle Creek. They took the children of this afflicted woman into their own home. It was five months before the mother could resume her work and the care of her family again.

The diary for this same year portrays the story from day to day of the accident occurring to Sennica King (resulting in a skull fracture), of how he was brought to the White home at Greenville, cared for through days and nights when his life hung in the balance, and of his final full recovery. To make room for this patient, Mrs. White was obliged to take her work of writing to an unfinished room, and many adjustments were required to meet the unusual needs of this neighbor.

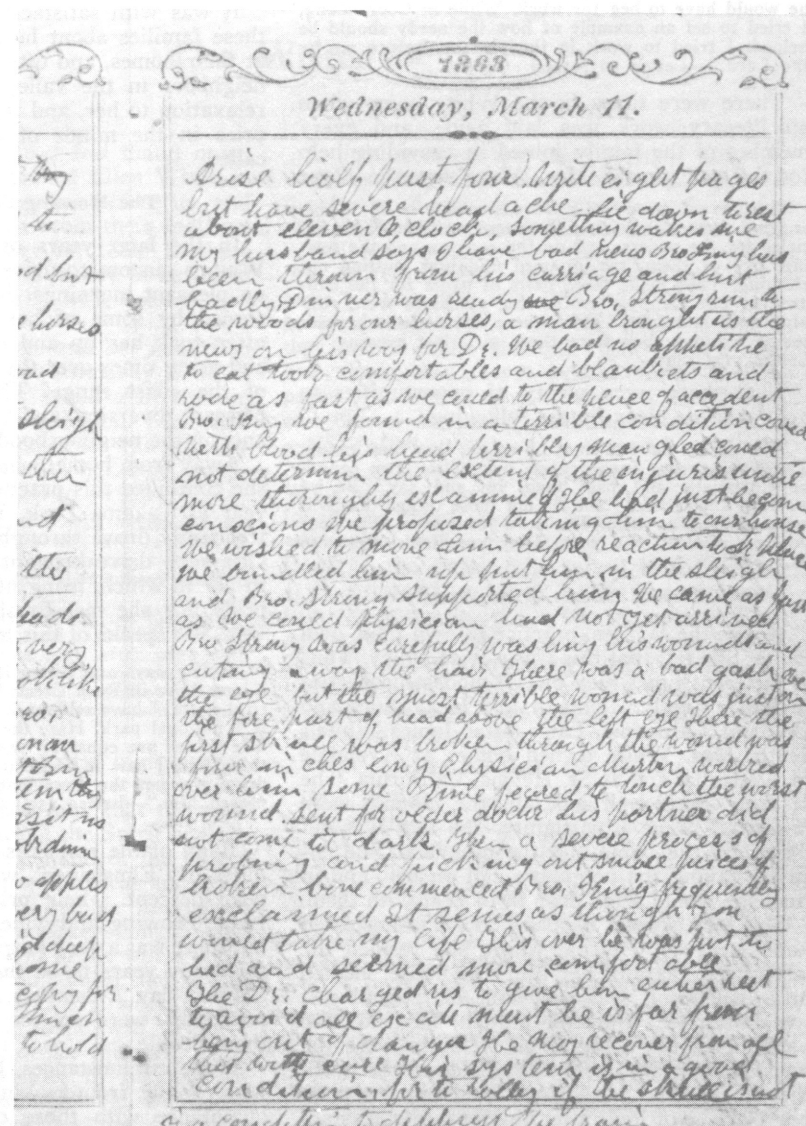
In her extensive travels acquaintance was

formed with many needy families, and although she was often unable to provide the help necessary, she did what she could to bring relief. There were times when this consisted of knitting warm garments for those who labored in cold countries. While in Europe she came in contact with some families that she knew would suffer if she did not help them, so after her return to America she devoted spare time to the knitting of stockings which were sent to them. It might be said that knitting became her hobby.

Neighborly Acts in Australia

It seems that on every hand there were opportunities to help those who were ill or in need. This was especially so in Australia, for Mrs. White was there during days of financial depression. In the neighborhood about Avondale she discovered many destitute families, and even though her own resources were limited, she could not pass them by without sharing with them. Food was provided; sometimes she herself drove long distances to deliver it; and at other times clothing was supplied. This was not often furnished, however, in the form of ready-made garments. Good quality cloth would be purchased by the bolt, and then apportioned out to the needy families. If the housewife were unable to make the needed garments, perhaps the housekeeper or one of the literary helpers from Mrs. White's staff would be sent to assist in teaching the mother how to sew.

There was much sickness in the region. Some could be cared for in the White home, but more often she sent her private secretary and traveling companion, Sara McEnterfer, to help out.



Page From E. G. White Diary, Containing Account of the Accident of Sennica King

For a time at Avondale Miss McEnterfer's time was nearly all consumed in work similar to that of a community nurse. Every possible way was devised to assist those in need. We get a glimpse of this in a few words written in 1894:

"We purchase wood of our brethren who are farmers, and we try to give their sons and daughters employment, but we need a large charitable fund upon which to draw to keep families from starvation. . . . I divided my household stores of provisions with families of this sort, sometimes going eleven miles to relieve their necessities."—Letter 89a, 1894.

We discern her tact in this work in an account of how one family was helped:

"I interested myself in his case. . . . I endeavored to anticipate his needs, and never to place him where

he would have to beg for work. While in Cooranbong, I tried to set an example of how the needy should be helped. I tried to work in the way set before me by the Lord."—Letter 105, 1902.

There were times in the White home when all literary work was laid aside, and every member of the family joined in providing help for the unfortunate. Mrs. White wrote in 1897:

"Last evening we had a Dorcas society in our home, and my workers who help in the preparation of my articles for the papers, and do the cooking and the sewing, five of them, sat up until midnight, cutting out clothing. They made three pairs of pants for the children of one family. Two sewing machines were running until midnight. I think there was never a happier set of workers than were these girls last evening."—Letter 113, 1897.

That there were plenty of opportunities to help is made clear by the following:

"We do not have to hunt up cases; they hunt us up. These things are forced upon our notice; we cannot be Christians and pass them by and say, 'Be ye warmed and clothed,' and do not those things that will warm and clothe them. The Lord Jesus says, 'The poor ye have always with you.' They are God's legacy to us."—MS. 4, 1895.

Various Homes of the Family

It was the Whites' practice to own their own home. She felt that this was a wise policy. Thus at different times they owned modest properties in Battle Creek, Michigan, and Healdsburg and Oakland, California. Later, after James White's death, Mrs. White owned homes at Avondale in Australia, and at St. Helena, California. The buildings were well kept, and the grounds were improved. True Christianity, she felt, was reflected in the home and the premises. She enjoyed having the neighbors call on her, and in turn she would often drop in to visit with them.

She took special pleasure in her Elmshaven home near St. Helena, where she resided the last fifteen years of her life. The house, located on a little knoll, was well built. Surrounding it were orchard, vineyard, garden, hayfield, and pasture. In the distance on all sides were the wooded hills, and from the hillside at the north the St. Helena Sanitarium looked down upon her place. Not long after this property was acquired, she sent to Australia for Brother Iram James to come and take charge of the farm. His family was soon comfortably located in a little cottage to the east. Across the creek to the southeast was a piece of wooded land and a garden spot which she gave to her son W. C. White, and he built a house and settled his family there, about five minutes' walk from her home. To the south were two cottages. These were occupied by the families of her office workers, and a little later another house for a secretary was built not far away to the north. Another small cottage close to her home housed still another family of helpers.

It was with satisfaction that she thought of these families about her. She frequently called at their homes, and often went beyond to other neighbors in the valley. These visits brought relaxation to her, and they left cherished memories in the minds of those upon whom she called.

The Morning Carriage Drives

In the later years of her life it was Mrs. White's custom to drive out with the carriage on pleasant mornings. She was usually accompanied by some of her helpers. These drives often took her up and down the Napa Valley and many times over the narrow, winding roads of the coast range. These trips gave her a pleasant diversion, and broadened her acquaintance in the neighborhood.

Away from home, when it could be arranged, she continued this practice. In 1904 she spent a year at Takoma Park, Washington, D.C., and frequently drove through the forests and parks. One such drive brought a pleasant experience to her in which, being human, she took a bit of pride, for she met President Theodore Roosevelt. She speaks of this in writing to her son:

"A few days ago Sister Hall, Sara, and I went for a long drive in Rock Creek Park. This is a most beautiful place. I have seldom driven over finer roads. This is a national park. Here the President takes his rides. The drives are equal to, yes, more than equal to anything that I saw in Denmark or Switzerland. On our drive we met the President. He bowed to us as we passed him."—Letter 357, 1904.

Many of the residents within a radius of ten miles of "Elmshaven" were of Southern European descent. Their principal occupation was grape growing and wine making. Just over the hill there was a very large stone winery, reputed for many years to be the largest in the world. Seventh-day Adventists, with their temperance principles, were not too popular with many of these people.

These circumstances, however, did not deter Mrs. White from making many a friendly acquaintance with those on surrounding farms. As she drove up the valley perhaps she would notice a mother on the porch or in the yard. Likely as not she would stop and visit with the woman. No, she did not know her name, but that did not matter. She knew a mother's heart and a mother's problems. Oftentimes these visits rendered an opportunity for a bit of missionary work, either by word, or, in the case of the less fortunate, by deed.

Years after her death Ellen White was tenderly remembered by not a few of the residents of the Napa Valley as "the little old woman with white hair, who always spoke so lovingly of Jesus."

The Writer

WRITE, write, write, I feel that I must, and not delay," penned Ellen White in 1884. "Great things are before us, and we want to call the people from their indifference to get ready."—Letter 11, 1884. In these words are summed up the objective of her most important work, and that by which she is best known today.

Her childhood experience and her education were not such as we would ordinarily think of as naturally fitting one to spend a lifetime in writing. Her schooling was limited. But when called of God in her girlhood, she was fitted by Him for the tasks entrusted to her. She graphically pictures to us her call to write:

"Early in my public labors I was bidden by the Lord, 'Write, write the things that are revealed to you.' At the time this message came to me, I could not hold my hand steady. My physical condition made it impossible for me to write.

"But again came the word, 'Write the things that are revealed to you.' I obeyed; and as the result it was not long before I could write page after page with comparative ease. Who told me what to write? Who steadied my right hand and made it possible for me to use a pen?—It was the Lord."—*Review and Herald*, June 14, 1906.

Had the Lord chosen as His messenger a brilliant student, or one of mature years with education, some might have said that the messages were not the product of the Spirit of God, but had their origin in the mind of the writer and were based on preconceived ideas and prejudices. The Lord chose a humble instrument for His work, that the messages might flow from Him to the church and to the world without danger of contamination, and in such a way that all could see that it was His work.

From the time that her hand was steadied, back in 1845, to the close of her lifework, Ellen G. White did all her writing by hand. Even when secretarial help was available, she chose to work undisturbed, penning the sentences thoughtfully and carefully. Sometimes the writing would be done on note paper, sometimes on large sheets, and at other times in bound, ruled copybooks.

The circumstances under which Mrs. White wrote varied greatly. When she could do her work at home she was pleased. For a time in early Battle Creek days she worked largely at home, but at times went to the Review office, where she shared a room with her husband. But much of the time the writing had to be sandwiched in as best she could while traveling, speaking, and visiting. The diary of 1859 gives us a glimpse of this:

"Awoke a little past two A.M. Take cars [train] at four. Feel very miserable. Write all day. . . . Our journey on the cars ended at six P.M."—*Diary*, Aug. 18, 1859.

A little later on this same journey, early one morning Elder and Mrs. White were taken to the home of one of our believers. So pressed was she with her work that although "the house is full of company" she recorded, she "had no time to visit. Shut myself in the chamber to write."—*Diary*, Oct. 10, 1859. In 1891 she notes in connection with a tour of three months in the Eastern States that she had "spoken fifty-five times, and have written three hundred pages. . . . The Lord it is who has strengthened and blessed me and upheld me by His Spirit."—MS. 4, 1891.

It is related that at one conference Ellen White was so pressed with her writing that she found she must write in meeting through the week. One morning, seated at the table just in front of the pulpit, she wrote steadily while J. N. Andrews preached. At the noon intermission she was asked as to her opinion on Elder Andrews' qualifications as a preacher. She replied that it had been so long since she had heard Elder Andrews preach that she could not express an opinion. This indicates intensive concentration in her work.

In the Early Morning

Mrs. White often did her work in the early hours of the morning, retiring early in the evening, and resting some during the day. We will let her tell us of this. She wrote to one of our pioneer workers in the year 1906:

"The evening after the Sabbath I retired, and rested well without ache or pain until half past ten. I was unable to sleep. I had received instruction, and I seldom lie in bed after such instruction comes. There was a company assembled in ———, and instruction was given by One in our midst that I was to repeat and repeat with pen and voice. I left my bed, and wrote for five hours as fast as my pen could trace the lines. Then I rested on the bed for an hour, and slept part of the time.

"I placed the matter in the hands of my copyist, and on Monday morning it was waiting for me, placed inside my office door on Sunday evening. There were four articles ready for me to read over and make any corrections needed. The matter is now prepared, and some of it will go in the mail today.

"This is the line of work that I am carrying on. I do most of my writing while the other members of the family are asleep. I build my fire, and then write uninterruptedly, sometimes for hours. I write while others are asleep. Who then has told Sister White? A messenger that is appointed."—Letter 28, 1906.

Other glimpses of this early morning work are seen in the following, written from Australia:

"I sit here on my bed, this cold July morning trying to write to you. I have woolen mitts on my hands, leaving my fingers free to write. I place my lamp on one side at my left hand, rather than behind me, and then the light shines on my paper in just the right way. . . . It is a little past two o'clock. I continue to be an early riser and I write every day."—Letter 105, 1900.

"I am obliged to continue my writing, and I praise the Lord for the strength that He gives me. I am carrying so heavy a burden that often I can not sleep past twelve or one o'clock. When my mind is so pressed, I can find relief only in prayer and writing. My workers tell me that since my return from the East [a period of two months], I have written about six hundred pages of type-written matter."—Letter 54, 1902.

"I have much to write. For several nights scenes have been opening before me. Yesterday morning, with one eye bandaged, I sat writing page after page hours before the other members of my family were awake."—Letter 372, 1906.

Through Periods of Suffering

Much writing was done during periods of great physical suffering. Soon after she reached Australia, in the early nineties, she was ill for nearly a year with rheumatic fever. At times she could sleep but very little, yet she pushed forward with her writing. We get a picture of this in two statements penned in 1892:

"With the writings that shall go in this mail I have, since leaving America, written twenty-hundred pages of letter paper. I could not have done all this writing if the Lord had not strengthened and blessed me in large measure. Never once has that right hand failed me. My arm and shoulder have been full of suffering, hard to bear, but the hand has been able to hold the pen and trace words that have come to me from the Spirit of the Lord."—Letter 2d, 1892.

"You will excuse the poor writing, for I am obliged to change my position about every hour to be able to be made any way comfortable to write at all. I send in this mail sixty pages of letter paper written by my own hand. First my hair-cloth chair is bolstered up with pillows, then they have a frame, a box batted with pillows which I rest my limbs upon and a rubber pillow under them. My table is drawn up close to me, and I thus write with my paper on a cardboard in my lap. Yesterday I was enabled to sit two hours thus arranged. . . . Then I must change position. She [her nurse] then gets me on the spring bed and bolsters me up with pillows. I may be able to sit some over one hour and thus it is a change, but I am thankful I can write at all."—Letter 16c, 1892. (Italics mine.)

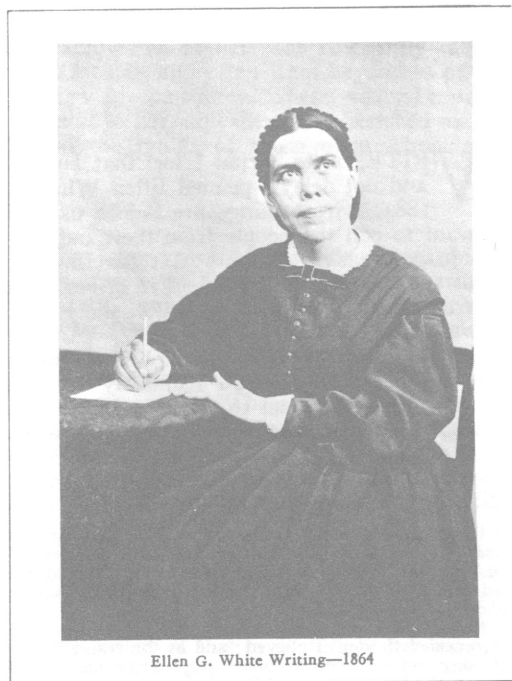
Of course, her hand grew weary and her eyes heavy, but it was not the weariness of incessant labor that burdened her heart. Her great concern was that she might present aright the great truths opened to her mind. Thus she cried out:

"I know not how to speak or trace with pen the large subjects of the atoning sacrifice. I know not how to present subjects in the living power in which they stand before me. I tremble for fear, lest I shall belittle the great plan of salvation by cheap words."—Letter 40, 1892.

"Now I must leave this subject so imperfectly presented, that I fear you will misinterpret that which I feel so anxious to make plain. O that God would quicken the understanding, for I am but a poor writer, and cannot with pen or voice express the great and deep mysteries of God. O pray for yourselves, pray for me."—Letter 67, 1894.

Watched Choice of Words

Winning words were always sought for by Ellen White—words which would draw and convince and not repel, for she said: "Essential truths must be plainly told; but so far as possible they should be told in language that will win, rather than offend."—Quoted by W. C.



Ellen G. White Writing—1864

White in letter to members of the Publication Committee, July 25, 1911.

At another time she wrote of the words used:

"In my letter to you I felt deeply. I was very cautious that not a word I should say should wound, but that the facts should be related as simply as possible."—Uncopied Letter 14, 1864.

As a writer she labored to increase the stock of words from which she might draw. She ever sought language which measured with her subject and adequately conveyed the ideas she was treating. *Early Writings*, written in the fifties, presents a very forceful, but simple, vocabulary and sentence structure. In later books, as *The Desire of Ages* and *Education*, we discover a richer and broader choice of words and more complex sentences. In reading, in traveling, and in conversing with others, she bettered her ability to express the truths which were revealed to her. She was, of course, aided by the Spirit of God in her writing, but not in a mechanical way. "The words I employ in describing what I have seen," she explained, "are my own unless they be those spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation."—*Review and Herald*, Oct. 8, 1867. In vision her mind was enlightened, then it became her task to present the truths to others.

She soon discovered that she must write very guardedly and explicitly. There were always some who would distort her meaning or misrepresent her teachings. Not long after the first copies of her first book, *A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White*, were issued in 1851, she found it necessary to

paste in a page of "Notes of Explanation," which in expanded form are now found in *Early Writings*, pages 85 to 96.

Mrs. White studied diligently to find a way of combining words in such a manner as to express the thought effectively and strikingly. One morning she came to breakfast at the newly opened Loma Linda Sanitarium, happy as a child with a new toy. "I've got it! I've got it!" she exclaimed, "Medical-Missionary-Evangelists!" She had been reaching out for a combination of words that would tersely and fully describe the qualifications of those who would there receive their medical training. This led eventually to naming the medical school The College of Medical Evangelists.

Ellen White could also write in a lighter vein, and she sometimes did when communicating with members of her family or close friends. Thus, from Oakland, California, in a letter to her husband, who was in Battle Creek, Michigan, she quipped:

"Dear Husband:

"We received your few words last night on a postal card:

"Battle Creek, April 11. No letters from you for two days. James White."

"This lengthy letter was written by yourself. Thank you for we know you are living.

"No letter from James White previous to this since April 6. . . . I have been anxiously waiting for something to answer."—Letter 5, 1876.

A Broad Field of Writing

Not all the E. G. White writing was of the same character. There are the great books of description and exposition, setting forth the story of the age-long conflict from its beginning to its close. In these not only are the outstanding events in the great controversy pictured, but the reader is taken behind the scenes, as was the writer. Thus he is permitted to view the underlying objectives and motives and purposes in these happenings. Through all this we find a great deal of exposition of Scripture. We would place the Conflict of the Ages Series in this grouping.

Some of the books fall into the category of admonition, warning, and counsel. Closely associated with these are the writings of instruction, giving explicit guidance to individuals and those responsible for the enterprises constituting the several branches of the work of God in the earth. We are speaking of the *Testimonies*, and of the "Counsel" books now.

Some of the writings present views of the future, with detail as to the relation of coming events, and counsel as to the proper attitude to take at the time. The views set forth in *Early Writings* and the last part of *The Great Controversy* form the larger part of this type of writing.

A fourth class might be said to be inspirational, leading to a deeper Christian experience and bringing messages of encouragement and guidance to the soul.

Then there is the biographical. These are accounts of Mrs. White's life, travels, and labors. Although the books fall into these several general classifications, each book may contain writing representing all five types.

When we sum up the story we find that Mrs. White was a voluminous writer. Today there are 18,000 pages in the current E. G. White books. Taking these with the earlier editions which are now out of print, we have a total of 22,000 pages. We may add to this the more than two thousand articles which have appeared in our various denominational journals. These reduced to book pages would give us another 12,000 pages. In addition to this there are many thousands of pages of manuscript matter which, because of its local or personal character, was not published. We point to these books as the fruit of a lifework, and yet no great claims were made by the writer, for she says:

"Sister White is not the originator of these books. They contain the instruction that during her lifework God has been giving her. They contain the precious, comforting light that God has graciously given His servant to be given to the world. From their pages this light is to shine into the hearts of men and women, leading them to the Saviour."—*Colporteur Evangelist*, p. 36.

The Speaker

MAKE known to others what I have revealed to you," were the words that early rang in Ellen Harmon's ears. How could she do it? She was but a girl, just turned seventeen, who could speak only in a hoarse whisper, and her health generally was not good. She was timid and unknown. Her family was poor. It was midwinter in Maine. This was her situation in December, 1844. Finally after encouragement from her father that God would not fail to open the way, she terminated the struggle by a full surrender to His will.

A few days later found Ellen Harmon at Poland, Maine, about thirty miles north of Portland. She was at an Adventist home at Mcguire's Hill, where the believers had gathered for an evening meeting. Her sister and her brother-in-law, with whom she had made the trip that day in an open sleigh, accompanied her to the service. Already the believers had heard of her unique experience, and she was asked to tell her visions to those who had gathered.

The girl of seventeen arose and in a raspy whisper began to talk to the people. Recounting the experience, she later wrote: "I continued thus for about five minutes, when the soreness and obstruction left me, my voice became clear and strong, and I spoke with perfect ease and freedom for nearly two hours. When my message was ended, my voice was gone until I again stood before the people, when the same singular restoration was repeated."—*Life Sketches*, pp. 72, 73. Thus commenced a lifework of public speaking.

Through the years that followed she filled many speaking appointments, standing before audiences large and small, audiences sympathetic and audiences antagonistic, American audiences, European audiences, and Australian audiences. She had a message appropriate for each occasion, and it was delivered in a powerful manner. She became one of the best-known and most popular women speakers of her time in America.

Most of her public speaking, of course, was with Seventh-day Adventist groups. In the earlier years it was a very common practice for Elder and Mrs. White to work together. He would lead out in a telling presentation of some vital subject, and after speaking for twenty or thirty minutes, she would follow with appropriate remarks. Very effective work was done by this team.

Mrs. White made careful preparation for her speaking appointments, choosing her text and forming a general outline of

presentation. At times she would choose two texts and have in mind two quite different lines of thought; then during the opening exercise as she faced her audience, she would decide which to present. Often she looked into faces which she had seen before in vision, and the knowledge of their needs and experiences molded the subject matter presented. Occasionally the recognition of faces in the audience led her to make a radical shift in her subject while she was speaking. Sometimes this could be done smoothly, but at other times there was an abrupt break because she was unable to make an easy change in the presentation.

Recognition of Faces in Audience

Elder and Mrs. White were at Bushnell, Michigan, on Sabbath, July 20, 1867. It was their first visit there and the announcement had reached the believers through the appointment list in the *Review* of July 16, 1867. Elder White had planned on conducting a baptism and then joining in the celebration of the ordinances, but when they arrived at Bushnell, they found a sad

state of backsliding. Sabbath morning he spoke to about sixty who had gathered in the grove for the meeting. In the afternoon Mrs. White was the speaker. She had selected a text from which she intended to preach, and at the appointed time stood before the congregation. Let us turn to James White's account of what took place:

"Mrs. White arose, Bible in hand, and began to speak from a text of Scripture. She suddenly stopped speaking, laid aside her Bible, and began to address those who had embraced the Sabbath in that place. She had never before seen one of them with the natural eye, and, of course, could not call them by name. But 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, 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."—*Signs of the Times*, Aug. 29, 1878.

For about an hour she spoke, describing the experiences of those who were before her, and then the persons addressed arose, one by one, and "testified that their cases had been described better than they could have done it themselves." Confessions were made, wrongs

were righted, and a reformation ensued. The next week a strong church was organized from this company of believers who two weeks earlier had decided to disband.

On several occasions Mrs. White was taken off in vision while she was addressing an audience. The "great controversy" vision was given to her one Sunday afternoon in 1858 at a funeral service, as she spoke a few words of comfort to those who mourned. Ten years later at the church in Battle Creek, while earnestly addressing the congregation at a Friday evening service, she was suddenly taken off in vision. For twenty minutes she continued in vision.

Divine Healing at Healdsburg

In 1883, as Mrs. White was speaking at the camp meeting in Healdsburg, California, bearing what she thought was her farewell message to the church, she was miraculously healed. For several weeks she had been critically ill, and was now failing rapidly, for all efforts to bring relief were ineffective. It seemed that her life-work was about to close. But she felt a great desire to meet just once more with the people gathered on the near-by campground. We will let her tell of this experience beginning with the time she reached the place of meeting:

"A sofa had been brought onto the platform in the large tent. Here I lay down, thinking I would deliver my farewell address. My face was as the face of one dead, without a particle of color.

"After a few testimonies had been borne, I asked Willie to help me to arise to my feet, and let me lean on him. There I stood, and began to tell the people that this was probably the last time they would ever hear my voice in camp meeting. But after speaking a few words, I felt the Spirit and power of God thrilling through every nerve of my body. Those who saw me said that the blood could be seen as it came to my lips and my forehead, and my flesh took on its natural appearance.

"Mr. Montrose, in great surprise, remarked to one of his neighbors, 'A miracle is being wrought in sight of this whole congregation!' I could not understand why all were looking so intently at me, some even arising to their feet. The Spirit of the Lord had healed me. During the remainder of the camp meeting, I spoke several times."—MS. 105, 1906.

If we were to accompany Mrs. White to her various speaking appointments, we would see her in the Opera House at Salamanca, New York, on Sunday morning, in 1890; or standing before the ship's passengers who gathered in the women's cabin for an evening meeting as they made their way up the Mississippi River twenty years earlier. The meeting was arranged by one of the businessmen on board when it was learned that Mrs. White was a passenger on the boat. Again we would find her in the State penitentiary in Oregon, talking to the prisoners, or at the veterans' home in Yountville, California, addressing the soldiers.

Mrs. White's work as a public speaker



JOHN C. KARR PHOTO

Ellen G. White Addressing an Audience of 4,000 in the Battle Creek Tabernacle at the General Conference of 1901—One of a Few Action Pictures of the Lord's Messenger

reached its peak in the camp meeting and temperance work of the seventies. As a revival speaker she was unsurpassed. As a temperance lecturer she reached her largest audiences.

On June 28, 1877, Barnum's circus came to Battle Creek, Michigan. The temperance forces, the leading citizens, and the church groups knew that on such an occasion many who were visiting the city would turn to the cheap eating houses and saloons for their meals. So plans were laid for a countermove. Under the auspices of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the large tent provided by the Michigan Conference was pitched to serve as a temperance restaurant. The patronage surpassed all expectations. Then Sunday evening, July 1, a temperance mass meeting was called. This was the climax of the concerted effort to make this occasion count for reform. Mrs. White herself gives an account of her part in this work:

"By invitation of the committee of arrangements, Mayor Austin, W. H. Skinner, cashier of the First National Bank, and C. C. Peavey, I spoke in the mammoth tent Sunday evening, July 1, upon the subject of Christian temperance. God helped me that evening; and although I spoke ninety minutes, the crowd of fully five thousand persons listened in almost breathless silence."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 275.

But this was not her first experience in meeting large audiences on the temperance question. The year before at the camp meeting held at Groveland, Massachusetts, she gave a temperance address. This was an era when Seventh-day Adventist camp meetings drew large crowds, and broad plans were laid for the meeting. A temporary railroad siding was built nearer the camp, and special trains were run to the campground on Sunday. Five hundred believers stayed on the site, but on Sunday 20,000 people poured onto the campground, coming by carriage, boat, and train from the surrounding cities. Both morning and afternoon Mrs. White spoke, and her subject was Christian temperance. "Every seat and all the standing room throughout the entire enclosure was full, some, following the example of Zacchaeus, climbed trees to get a sight of the speaker. Standing at the upper part of the camp-ground, the eye swept over a living sea of humanity."—*Signs of the Times*, Sept. 14, 1876.

The audience gave excellent attention, and Mrs. White spoke well. Although there was no amplifying system, all heard her clearly. Her speaking voice was excellent; in fact, on such occasions she could be heard a mile away. She brought into practice in her own experience the fundamental principles of proper breathing and voice culture so clearly set forth in her writings.

Present on the Sunday afternoon at Groveland were officers of the Haverhill Reform Club. They requested her to speak at the Haverhill city hall the next evening. This she did, addressing eleven hundred people, striking in temperance at its very roots.

Speaking Appointments in Europe

A few years later Mrs. White visited Europe. Here also her work was not confined to Seventh-day Adventists. The record of her labors includes a meeting in a concert hall with the platform made of "beer tables," and on one occasion in Norway, in the "military gymnasium." Listen to her account of this important meeting:

"On Sunday, by request of the president of the temperance society, I spoke upon the subject of temperance. The meeting was held in the soldiers' military gymnasium, the largest hall in the city. An American flag was placed as a canopy above the pulpit; this was an attention which I highly appreciated. There were about sixteen hundred assembled. Among them was a bishop of the State Church, with a number of the clergy; a large proportion were of the better class of society. I took up the subject from a religious standpoint."—*Historical Sketches*, p. 207.

So it was through her long and busy life. She met literally thousands of speaking appointments. "When I stand before large congregations," she told Elder Daniells in 1902, "it seems as if I were reined up before the great white throne, to answer for the souls that have been presented before me as unready to meet the Lord in peace."—Letter 138, 1902.

Often it seemed that she would not be physically able to stand before the people, but her trust was in the Lord who gave her work. At the Sanitarium, California, church in 1901, she made reference to this oft-repeated experience:

"When I have been expected to speak to many people, at times I have felt that it was impossible for me to appear day after day before great congregations. . . . With trembling steps I have walked into the desk to speak to assembled thousands; but the moment I have stood before the congregation, the Spirit of God has always come to me with strengthening power.

"Often I said to my husband while he was with me, 'If only I could have the assurance beforehand, how much good it would do me.' He would answer, 'God has never failed to bless you the moment you rise to speak; so whatever may be your feelings, you must put your trust in Him.'"—MS. 111, 1901.

Nor was her burden alone for congregations of thousands. The messenger of the Lord did not lose sight of her responsibility to small audiences. We discover in 1903 that she not only took active part at Sabbath services in near-by churches but was also one of the speakers at the open-air missionary meetings held in a resort town nine miles from her home in northern California. Here is her account:

"In our vicinity, we are doing what we can to carry the truth to those around us. Three open air meetings have been held at Calistoga, in the Hot Springs Park. I spoke at each of these meetings. I did this that I might reach those who do not attend church. The Lord greatly blessed me in this effort."—Letter 122, 1903.

Before we close this picture of a very important phase of Mrs. White's work, let us look through the eyes of a writer of the world:

"Mrs. White is a woman of singularly well-balanced mental organization. Benevolence, spirituality, conscientiousness, and ideality are the predominating traits. Her personal qualities are such as to win for her the warmest friendship of all with whom she comes in contact, and to inspire them with the utmost

confidence in her sincerity. . . . Notwithstanding her many years of public labor, she has retained all the simplicity and honesty which characterized her early life.

"As a speaker, Mrs. White is one of the most successful of the few ladies who have become noteworthy as lecturers, in this country, during the last twenty years. Constant use has so strengthened her vocal organs as to give her voice rare depth and power. Her clearness and strength of articulation are so great that, when speaking in the open air, she has frequently been distinctly heard at the distance of a mile. Her language, though simple, is always forcible and elegant. When inspired with her subject, she is often marvelously eloquent, holding the largest audiences spell-

bound for hours without a sign of impatience or weariness.

"The subject matter of her discourses is always of a practical character, bearing chiefly on fireside duties, the religious education of children, temperance, and kindred topics. On revival occasions, she is always the most effective speaker. She has frequently spoken to immense audiences, in the large cities, on her favorite themes, and has always been received with great favor."—*American Biographical History of Eminent and Self-Made Men of the State of Michigan, Third Congressional District*, p. 108. (1878.)

Such is the picture of Ellen G. White the speaker.



Study and Writing Room at "Elmshaven"

[Above] Mrs. White's writing chair is occupied by her secretary and traveling companion, Miss Sara McEnterfer.

"Elmshaven," Mrs. White's Home 1900-1915

[Below] Mrs. White is seen in the wheel chair on the second-floor porch.

The Counselor

"I shall go forward as Providence and my brethren may open the way before me. In the name and strength of my Redeemer, I shall do what I can. I shall warn, and counsel, and reprove, and encourage, as the Spirit of God dictates, whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 232.

THUS wrote Ellen White in the year 1876. Although a large part of her work was public in its character, there was much which must be done in personal interviews, working with individuals who were seeking guidance, or were in trouble or in danger of pursuing a wrong course. This personal work was very taxing and called for much wisdom, tact, and divine aid. From almost beginning days Mrs. White's counsel was eagerly sought.

Of the three communications from her pen which appeared in 1847 in James White's initial publication, *A Word to the "Little Flock,"* the first is a letter of counsel. In this communication Mrs. White acknowledges Mr. Curtis' invitation to write to him, and then takes up certain doctrinal views which he has set forth: "I have been much interested," she states, "in your writings in the Dawn and Extra; and fully agree with you on some points, but on others we widely differ."—*A Word to the "Little Flock,"* p. 11.

With her visions as the basis for her comments, she then proceeds to take up one point after another and to specify which of his positions are correct and which are incorrect. On the two resurrections, she agrees. She agrees also on the new heavens and the new earth. But she differs on salvation for those who worship at the saints' feet after the one thousand years. She was shown that they would be lost. She differs with him on the time "when Michael shall stand up." She believes the sanctuary cleansed is the New Jerusalem temple. She recommends the "Day-Star" Extra containing the Crosier article on the cleansing of the sanctuary as presenting the true light on that subject.

From the time of this letter, written before she was twenty years of age, through her long, busy life, because of her unique position men and women came to her for counsel. Now let us turn to a certain committee meeting held on the campground in Australia in 1895. The workers were called together to study problems which had arisen in a new field of labor. Mrs. White was present and gave counsel. Note from her words the basis of this counsel:

"This morning I attended a meeting where a select few were called together to consider some questions that were presented to them by a letter soliciting consideration and advice on these subjects. Of some of these subjects I could speak because at sundry times and in divers places many things have been presented to me. . . .

"As my brethren read the selections from letters I

knew what to say to them; for this matter has been presented to me again and again. . . . I have not felt at liberty to write out the matter until now. . . . The light that the Lord has given me at different times. . . ."—*The Southern Work*, p. 97. (Italics mine.)

At such times Mrs. White's words were positive. When she spoke it was with conviction. Of this she wrote in 1911:

"The question is asked, How does Sister White know in regard to the matters of which she speaks so decidedly, as if she had authority to say these things?

"I speak thus because they flash upon my mind, when in perplexity, like lightning out of a dark cloud in the fury of a storm. Some scenes presented before me years ago have not been retained in my memory, but when the instruction then given is needed, sometimes even when I am standing before the people, the remembrance comes sharp and clear, like a flash of lightning, bringing to mind distinctly that particular instruction. At such times I cannot refrain from saying the things that flash into my mind, not because I have had a new vision, but because that which was presented to me perhaps years in the past, has been recalled to my mind forcibly."—*Writing and Sending Out of the Testimonies to the Church*, p. 24.

But frequently advice was sought of Mrs. White on matters regarding which she had no light. At such times she purposely refrained from giving counsel. Thus to one man who wrote to her regarding his future work, she penned this message:

"I am not at liberty to write to our brethren concerning your future work, for the Lord has not given me this to do. I have received no instruction regarding the place where you should locate, or what should be your future course. . . .

"At the present time my mind is greatly burdened in regard to several letters that I must write. Messages have been given me for certain of our brethren, and these messages must be borne whether those to whom they are sent will hear or will not hear. But concerning your future labors, the Lord has given me no instruction.

"I dare not even take the responsibility of advising you in this matter. But I would say to you, my brother, You have a counsellor in the Lord Jesus. Counsel also with your brethren; they can advise you.

"If the Lord gives me definite instruction concerning you, I will give it to you; but I cannot take upon myself responsibilities that the Lord does not give me to bear."—Letter 96, 1909.

From time to time Mrs. White was pressed by individuals who came personally to see her and seek her counsel. Although at times she had no definite message for the one seeking light, she could, nevertheless, lay down certain general principles. Thus it was when a certain man called to see her in 1891. Here is her reference to this interview:

"Brother — was introduced. He is an intelligent man, and, I should judge, one who could do a good work if sanctified by the Spirit of God. I spent an hour in conversation with this brother who was very anxious to know whether it was his duty to preach. I could not tell him this. I laid down general principles, and pointed him to Jesus."—MS. 20, 1891.

Another interesting picture is found just a

few years later, while Mrs. White was still in Australia. The president of the General Conference, G. A. Irwin, was visiting that field and had several interviews with her. She writes of this:

"He has with him a little note-book in which he has noted down perplexing questions which he brings before me, and if I have any light upon these points, I write it out for the benefit of our people, not only in America, but in this country."—Letter 96, 1899.

But Mrs. White did not encourage the people to come to her for counsel. She pointed them to Jesus:

"Frequently I receive letters from individuals, telling me of their troubles and perplexities, and asking me to inquire of God as to what is their duty. To those for whom the Lord has given me no light, I have often replied: I have not been appointed by God to do such a work as you ask me to do. The Lord Jesus has invited you to bring your troubles to One who understands every circumstance of your life. . . .

"I shall not dishonor my Lord by encouraging people to come to me for counsel, when they have a standing invitation to go to the One who is able to carry them and all their burdens."—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 487.

Of course, there were many times when it was necessary for her to take the initiative in giving counsel. Then she was impelled to speak. She often refers to this. Here are two such allusions:

"The Spirit of God rests upon me with power, and I cannot but speak the words given me. I dare not withhold one word of the testimony."—MS. 22, 1890.

"God has given me a testimony to bear to His people that He has given to no other one and I must bear this testimony which is like fire shut up in my bones."—Uncopied Letter 36, 1878.

It was no light task to stand as one to give counsel which often cut across the fond plans or determined efforts of individuals or committees, and at times for those who were esteemed associates in the work. She expressed this in 1894 in these words:

"The work is not always easy to perform. I have to take positions not in harmony with men whom I believe to be God's workmen, and I see that I must do this in the future as in the past. It hurts me more than I can tell. The dearest hope that I can have may not be realized, yet if God will show me the right way, I will walk in it."—Letter 64, 1894.

These messages of counsel were not to be accepted or rejected at will. They were not just a personal opinion, but the counsel was based upon, or called into being by, light from heaven. Thus she wrote to one who had failed to heed the message given, but whose usefulness would have been tenfold greater had he heeded the light:

"Do you suppose I would have given you such advice if I had had no light upon the matter? Be assured no such counsel would have been given you without good reason."—Letter 1, 1883.

We may ask then: Did Mrs. White have no opinions of her own? Were all her utterances inspired? Mrs. White, as an individual, held personal opinions and used her reasoning powers. She conversed freely with those about her

upon any topic of interest. While undoubtedly the revelations and her long experience often had a bearing upon her train of thought and even her ordinary conversations, yet neither those with her nor she herself took the position that everything she said or thought had its origin in divine sources. If you were in her home, you would no doubt converse with her about general world conditions, or regarding the orchard and garden, the members of her family, the progress of the work of God; and no one would consider such conversation as of particular significance. Discussing this in 1909 she said:

"There are times when common things must be stated, common thoughts must occupy the mind, common letters must be written and information given that has passed from one to another of the workers. Such words, such information, are not given under the special inspiration of the Spirit of God. Questions are asked at times that are not upon religious subjects at all, and these questions must be answered. We converse about houses and lands, trades to be made, and locations for our institutions, their advantages and disadvantages."—MS. 107, 1909.

It is not strange then that at times Mrs. White would be pressed for an opinion in ordinary matters or even in the plans for the carrying forward of the work of God, even though she had no direct light from God on the question. Nor is it strange that at times, in the absence of direct light, she might, upon urging, express her opinion in such matters, basing such an opinion upon good sense and experience. It is of interest to note that in one such case when her advice was not what it should have been, God sent a message to check the unwise action that would have resulted upon her assent to plans laid by the brethren. It was so also in the case of Nathan and David. (See 1 Chron. 17:1-15.)

When God Reversed the Counsel

In the year 1902 the newly established publishing house in Nashville, Tennessee, was sustaining steady heavy losses. A. G. Daniells, president of the General Conference, was deeply concerned, and in an interview with Mrs. White sought her assent to plans to discontinue the publishing work there because of these losses, which the brethren did not know how to check. Elder Daniells tells the story:

"She agreed that it must be put upon a basis where there would be no such losses, and said, 'If it cannot be, it had better be closed.' Not being able to give us a sure remedy, she assented to our proposal to discontinue the printing, to turn the building into a depository, and to purchase the literature from other publishing houses. This seeming agreement with our plans brought great relief and satisfaction to many who had been struggling with the baffling problem.

"Brother Crisler wrote out a part of the interview, and, with this in my pocket, I departed with a light heart. On arrival at Battle Creek, I lost no time in telling the other members of the Committee of our interview, with the assurance that Mrs. White was with us in our plans to close up the Nashville office in a very short time.

"A few days later, a letter was received from Mrs. White, stating that she had spoken according to her own judgment in agreement with the presentation we had made to her. But she was now instructed by the Lord to tell us that she had been wrong in giving this counsel, and that the printing house in the South should not be closed. Plans must be laid to prevent further indebtedness, but we were to move forward in faith."—*Abiding Gift of Prophecy*, p. 326.

Now let us give Mrs. White's account of the reversal of counsel as she writes to Elder Daniells: "During the night following our interview in my house and out on the lawn under the trees, Oct. 19, 1902, in regard to the work in the Southern field, the Lord instructed me that I had taken a wrong position."—Letter 208, 1902. (Italics mine.)

Such an experience, rather than lessening our confidence in Ellen G. White as a counselor, should strengthen our faith, for we see so clearly the hand of God overruling in His work so that a mistake should not be made.

Recognizing, however, that Ellen G. White did have her own personal opinions, some might fear that these were intermingled with the counsel she sent out in personal testimonies or set forth in her writings. Perhaps we should let her speak of this also. First we present a statement written in 1909: "I receive letters asking for advice on many strange subjects, and I advise according to the light that has been given me."—MS. 107, 1909.

She was very careful in interviews, and especially in her articles and books, to refrain from setting forth as counsel and instruction that which did not have its basis in revelation. Thus she testified of her articles and letters:

"I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision—the precious rays of light shining from the throne.

"You might say that this communication was only a letter. Yes, it was a letter, but prompted by the Spirit of God, to bring before your minds things that had been shown me. In these letters which I write, in the testimonies I bear, I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me."—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 67.

The same care was exercised in giving advice in personal interviews. In 1869 she wrote to a sister who had sought counsel on a certain point:

"Yesterday . . . I could not readily answer your question. . . . I cannot give counsel in the dark. I must know that my counsel is correct in the light. Great advantage is taken of my words; therefore I must move very cautiously. After careful reflection, seeking to call up things which have been shown me in your case, I am prepared to write to you."—*Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 565.

Her distress is not to be wondered at when her counsel was laid aside unheeded. To a certain one she wrote:

"I have much to say to you; for I love your soul. But will it do you any real good? Will it simply be received as Sister White's opinion? The position that has been taken by some of the erring brethren makes my words simply the expression of an opinion, and

this view has been advocated and has had a leavening influence in our ranks."—Letter 22, 1889.

At other times she could write of the hearty reception of the counsel given. Note this cheering word: "At times matters come up for decision, when all are not of the same mind. Then I read to them the writings given, and they accept them, and become one in their decisions."—Letter 118, 1898.

Questioners Directed to Her Writings

As our denominational work advanced and our church membership grew, there was a steady increase in the numbers of those who sought counsel either by interview or by letter. In her later years, when questions were laid before her, Mrs. White often stated that she had written on that subject, and she would request her literary assistants to turn to her books, to her articles in the papers, or to her manuscripts for the answers to the questions presented. In many cases letters of inquiry were answered by one of the secretaries, stating that the matter had been placed before Sister White, and she had directed that such and such an answer should be given. Of course, the letter was the production of, and bore the signature of, the secretary writing the letter. At other times she asked her secretaries to tell the inquirer that she had not received light on the question presented.

Near the close of her life, when asked about the future, she often directed attention to the cabinets holding her books, periodical articles, and manuscripts, stating "Here are my writings; when I am gone they will testify for me." (Reported by W. C. White, July 9, 1922.)

At one time reference was made to the many letters of inquiry, and the relation of her published works to the answers of questions:

"We receive many letters from our brethren and sisters, asking for advice on a great variety of subjects. If they would study the published Testimonies for themselves, they would find the enlightenment they need. Let us urge our people to study these books and circulate them. Let their teachings strengthen our faith.

"Let us study more diligently the word of God. The Bible is so plain and clear that all who will may understand. Let us thank the Lord for His precious word, and for the messages of His Spirit that give so much light."—MS. 81, 1908.

For seventy years Ellen White stood as a counselor. At times she was given instruction and messages of counsel which she was bidden to hold until certain developments had taken place. At other times she labored along, carefully opening the way for the presentation of the message; at still other times individuals sought her words of counsel in planning for the work or in meeting issues, and in all this she was able to testify: "I have not wittingly withheld from any one the instruction that the Lord has given me."—MS. 156, 1901.

A Personal Worker

FROM her girlhood Ellen G. White was a personal worker. Often, but not always, did she witness the fruits of such ministry. After her conversion her first work was for youthful friends. The earnestness of such efforts is revealed in the following published account:

"I arranged meetings with my young friends, some of whom were considerably older than myself, and a few were married persons. A number of them were vain and thoughtless; my experience sounded to them like an idle tale, and they did not heed my entreaties. But I determined that my efforts should never cease till these dear souls, for whom I had so great an interest, yielded to God. Several entire nights were spent by me in earnest prayer for those whom I had sought out and brought together for the purpose of laboring and praying with them.

"Some of these had met with us from curiosity to hear what I had to say; others thought me beside myself to be so persistent in my efforts, especially when they manifested no concern on their own part. But at every one of our little meetings I continued to exhort and pray for each one separately, until every one had yielded to Jesus, acknowledging the merits of His pardoning love. Every one was converted to God.

"Night after night in my dreams I seemed to be laboring for the salvation of souls. At such times special cases were presented to my mind; these I afterwards sought out and prayed with. In every instance but one these persons yielded themselves to the Lord."—*Life Sketches*, pp. 41, 42.

It was not long after this experience that she was called to stand as a messenger for God. This work laid upon her a heavy burden for the church and for the world. It would not seem strange if Mrs. White, with these larger burdens, should lose sight of the personal needs of the individuals with whom she came in close contact. However, she did not. Now and then through the years we catch a glimpse of her personal efforts to save those about her.

Labor for Unbelieving Relatives

In the summer of 1872 Elder and Mrs. White were in the mountains of Colorado for a period of relaxation and change. With them were several members of the family and Mary, a niece. Mary and her mother, one of Mrs. White's older sisters, were not Seventh-day Adventists. From a diary entry we observe the tactful way in which Mrs. White sought to lead this girl into the light of the truth:

"We arise 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 a stone for a seat, and I read a portion of my manuscript to my husband.

"In the afternoon our niece, Mary, Willie, and I walked out and, seated beneath poplar trees, we read about sixty pages of *Great Controversy*, *Spiritual Gifts*. Mary was deeply interested. We were happy in the earnest manner 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."—*Diary*, July 27, 1872.

Thus we see Mrs. White tactfully selecting reading which she hoped would awaken interest, and then eagerly watching the reaction. Through the years she sent the *Review*, the *Instructor*, the *Signs of the Times*, and the *Watchman* to her sisters and other relatives who were not in the message. She wrote letters of appeal, and did not forget to pray that God's Spirit would strive with their hearts. But this was all she could do. For several years Mary assisted her as a copyist, but she failed to yield her heart fully to God and walk in the light. In an earnest appeal Mrs. White wrote to her five years after the experience in the mountains:

"I have no wish to control you, no wish to urge our faith upon you, or to force you to believe. No man or woman will have eternal life unless they choose it, . . . with all the self-denial and cross-bearing that is involved in the Christian life. . . . God will test every one of us. He will give privileges and opportunities to all and a sufficient amount of evidence to balance the mind in the right direction, if they choose the truth. . . .

"God will work for you and make you an able instrument if you will yield your will and affections to His will and if you will become a child of obedience. But if you remain in resistance to the truth, God will remove His light from you and you will be left to take your own course and meet the result at last. I hope you will not say as your mother said to me in regard to breaking the Sabbath, she 'would risk it.' God forbid that you should dare to risk it and pursue a course of disobedience. You have tenfold more light in reference to the truth than your mother. I still have faith that she will accept the truth if you do not hedge up her way. I have written in love and have written because I dare not do otherwise."—Letter 6, 1877.

Neither this young woman nor her mother ever accepted the Sabbath truth. Mrs. White felt deeply concerning this.

The Fruit of One Pamphlet

Literature filled an important place in Mrs. White's personal missionary work. Sometimes, many years after it was forgotten, she learned of the fruits of giving away a pamphlet or a paper. So it was with a sixty-four-page pamphlet left at a little settler's cabin in the wilderness of Michigan in the summer of 1853. It was Friday, and Elder and Mrs. White, with other workers, were hastening by carriage to Vergennes. The driver was well acquainted with the road, but for some reason the party lost their way. Finally there was only a trace of a road. Through the woods they traveled, "over logs and fallen trees." There were no houses

in sight; the day was hot; and Mrs. White was ill. Twice she fainted. They had no food, no water could be found, and all suffered from thirst. Some cows were seen, but all attempts of the strangers to get near enough to obtain a little milk from them failed. In her fainting condition she "thought of the traveler perishing in the desert." "Cool streams of water," she said, "seemed to lie directly before me; but as we passed on they proved to be only an illusion." Elder White prayed that she might be sustained. The fifteen-mile journey should have been accomplished in a few hours, and they could not understand why they should be left to this wandering.

Then they broke into a clearing, and found a log cabin. The weary travelers were invited in and given refreshments. As they lingered to rest a bit and learn the way, they were soon chatting with the woman who had befriended them. Mrs. White talked of the Sabbath, the Second Advent, of the state of the world and the church. Their hostess urged the strangers to stay and hold meetings in that community, but this could not be done because of appointments already made. As they left the cabin, Mrs. White gave the woman a copy of her first little book, *A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White*, and copies of the *Review* and *Instructor* were also placed in her hands.

Twenty-two years passed by. Often Mrs. White thought of the experience and wondered why they had lost their way that summer day, and were forced to drive forty miles to reach a point fifteen miles distant. She found the answer at the Michigan camp meeting in 1876. We turn to her account of this:

"After the meeting closed, a sister took me heartily by the hand, expressing great joy at meeting Sister White again. She inquired if I remembered calling at a log house in the woods twenty-two years ago. She gave us refreshments, and I left with them a little book, *Experience and Views*.

"She stated that she had lent that little book to her neighbors, as new families had settled around her, until there was very little left of it. . . . She said that when I called upon her I talked to her of Jesus and the beauties of heaven, and that the words were spoken with such fervor that she was charmed, and had never forgotten them. Since that time the Lord had sent ministers to preach the truth to them, and now there was quite a company observing the Sabbath. . . .

"For twenty-two years our wanderings on this journey have seemed indeed mysterious to us, but here we met quite a company who are now believers in the truth, and who date their first experience from the influence of that little book. The sister who so kindly administered to our wants is now, with many of her neighbors, rejoicing in the light of present truth."—*Evangelism*, pp. 448, 449.

Whether in America, Europe, or Australia, Mrs. White found the same needs for personal work. Sometimes she pressed for a decision. Soon after reaching Europe, she met a young man at a watch factory at Nimes, France. It was her own broken watch that brought the

two together. As soon as she met him she recognized him and recalled his experience as it had been revealed to her in vision. In discouragement he had lost his hold on God and had strayed from the truth. He was also working on the Sabbath. One evening she had the young man meet her for an interview. This she describes in a letter:

"I talked two hours with him and urged upon him the peril of his situation. I told him because his brethren had made a mistake that was no reason that he should grieve the heart of Christ, who had loved him so much that He had died to redeem him. . . . I told him I knew the history of his life. . . . I then entreated him with tears to turn square about, to leave the service of Satan and of sin, for he had become a thorough backslider, and return like the prodigal to his Father's house, his Father's service. He was in good business learning his trade. If he kept the Sabbath he would lose his position. . . . A few months more would finish his apprenticeship, and then he would have a good trade. But I urged an immediate decision.

"We prayed with him most earnestly, and I told him that I dared not have him cross the threshold of the door until he would before God and angels and those present say, 'I will from this day be a Christian.' How my heart rejoiced when he said this."—*Ibid.*, p. 450.

Large Books Bear a Harvest

When in Australia, Mrs. White was told of a family residing on a large farm. The husband and father had almost accepted the message and then had slipped back. Soon after she learned of this she was impressed to call on the family and leave some of her books with the man. The experience is told feelingly in her own words:

"I visited with him, taking with me a few of my large books. I talked with him just as though he were with us. I talked of his responsibilities. I said, 'You have great responsibilities, my brother. Here are your neighbors all around you. You are accountable for every one of them. You have a knowledge of the truth, and if you love the truth, and stand in your integrity, you will win souls for Christ.'

"He looked at me in a queer way, as much as to say, 'I do not think you know that I have given up the truth, that I have allowed my girls to go to dances, and to the Sunday school, that we do not keep the Sabbath.' But I did know it. However, I talked to him just as though he were with us. 'Now,' I said, 'we are going to help you to begin work for your neighbors. I want to make you a present of some books.'

"He said, 'We have a library, from which we draw books.'

"I said, 'I do not see any books here. Perhaps you feel delicate about drawing from the library. I have come to give you these books, so that your children can read them, and this will be a strength to you.'

"I knelt down and prayed with him, and when we rose, the tears were rolling down his face, as he said, 'I am glad that you came to see me. I thank you for the books.'—*Ibid.*, pp. 451, 452.

The man read and lent the books, and soon he and his entire family were firmly in the message together with some of their neighbors who also read the books.

An "Errand for the Master"

Late in 1900 Mrs. White made her home at Elmshaven near Saint Helena, California. A

few months after getting settled, she visited the near-by churches and institutions. When there was opportunity, she paused in the busy program to do a bit of personal work, such as she did one Sunday in September, 1901, as she and those with her drove from our college in Healdsburg to her home:

"On our return we called upon a family by the name of Lighter. They live about half way between Santa Rosa and Healdsburg, and seem to be in limited circumstances. Sister Lighter's father, a very old man, is quite feeble. The physician thinks that he will only live a short time. A few months ago he accepted the truth, but he has not yet been baptized.

"We were glad to do an errand for the Master by visiting this family. Willie read the comforting promises of God's word to the sick man, and I presented the afflicted one to the Great Physician, who is able to heal both soul and body. The family were very thankful for our visit. I know that they were comforted."—Letter 126, 1901.

We do not find Mrs. White pressing or urging unduly in her personal work. She did not make herself a nuisance. When she found an interest, or created one, she tactfully followed it up.

Missing train connections by just five minutes in 1904 at Milford Junction, the group of workers en route to Berrien Center, Michigan, found that they must wait five hours. To relieve Mrs. White of the tobacco smoke in the station, search was made for a near-by home, where she might rest and wait. She and her two helpers were welcomed by a Mrs. Muntz. Mrs. White describes her visit in these words:

"Mrs. Muntz is an elderly lady, and is a Dunkard, or a German Baptist. She is a very pleasant woman, and seemed to enjoy talking with us. She says that she respects all Christians. I spoke about the work we are trying to do, and her face brightened as I told her something of our efforts to do missionary work. She

told me that were her husband living he would enjoy talking with me; for he was a very religious man and a great reader. I told her that I was a writer of books, and employed several helpers, and she was much interested.

"While we were talking, a young woman with a child in her arms came in, and we soon found out that she was a Seventh-day Adventist. She was much interested in what I told them about our work in Washington and other places. She is the wife of the night operator at Milford Junction, and the only Sabbath-keeper in the place, I think.

"Another neighbor came in during the evening, and in the course of the conversation asked me if I would explain to her about the Sabbath. I began by reading a text in the first of Genesis. Then I read the fourth commandment. When I had read this, they said, 'Yes, but Sunday is the seventh day.'

"I explained to them that Sunday is the first day, and that the day called Saturday by the world is the seventh day. Then I read the last six verses of the thirty-first chapter of Exodus, where the Sabbath is clearly specified as the sign between God and His people.

"I had not time to say much, but what I read was sufficient, I hope, to lead them to search the Scriptures for themselves. I told them that Christ kept the Sabbath, and that the women rested on the seventh day, 'according to the commandment,' and on the first day of the week brought spices and ointment to His sepulcher.

"I read several other texts, and Mrs. Muntz wrote down all the references as I gave them. Before we parted we had a season of prayer together, and they seemed to appreciate this greatly. . . . This was our experience at Milford Junction. We think that perhaps our delay was in the providence of God. It may be the means of arousing an interest in the truth."—Letter 163, 1904.

So, in the midst of a busy program of speaking and preparing literature for the church and the world, the messenger of the Lord took time and found opportunities to give Bible studies, to speak a word in season, and have prayer, or give out truth-filled literature in a personal effort to help those around her.



Ellen G. White's "Sunnyside" Home (1896-1900) Located Near Australasian Missionary College, Cooranbong, Australia

As a Steward of Means

ADDRESSING the believers in Stockholm, Sweden, on October 19, 1886, Mrs. White reviewed briefly her past experience in connection with the cause, particularly in a financial way. Going back to pioneer days, she stated:

"We believed the message. We believed the warning that Christ was soon to come, and we felt such an earnest longing for those in sin that we were willing to make almost any sacrifice. We have known what poverty is, and it was the best experience of our lives. I have fainted more than once or twice with my children in my arms, for want of bread.

"As we went from place to place to proclaim the word of God, we suffered with heat and with cold; but God sustained us in the work, and at last He began to bring the means in for the work. When this means came in, we found many places for it.

"But affliction came into our house. My husband became a paralytic, but our prayers went up to God, and He raised him to health again. This long affliction brought us to want again. But the Lord told us what to do. We had a home and as we found those who were in affliction and had no home we would open our home to them and let them share our comforts. . . . I made the statement last night that we had invested \$30,000 in the cause. . . .

"When we went over to the Pacific Coast, many were raised up to obey God, and then we wanted means to build a meeting-house, but the people were poor, so we sent over to Michigan, telling them to sell all that we had, and there we invested our means, and a meeting-house was built in San Francisco and [another in] Oakland. . . .

"Now, I cannot afford to use my means for my own glory. I want it invested to God's glory."—MS 32, 1886.

One may rightfully ask at this point, How could James and Ellen White contribute thousands of dollars to the various interests of the denomination, when their early years were spent in the most stringent financial circumstances, and their later years were given to the ministry of the cause? It is in order that a brief statement be made on this point.

In the earlier years of the work there was no regular support for the ministry. James White turned his hand to various activities to sustain himself and his family. We read of his mowing hay, hauling stone for the railroad, and cutting wood. As he took hold of the publishing work, it brought some financial support, giving him a salary of from \$5 to \$7 a week at first, and up to \$12 a week in later years.

As leaders in the work, the Whites opened their home to visitors at all times. James White also had to lead out personally in almost every interest or enterprise calling for means. To support his own family, to entertain continually, and to head every pledge list with a substantial gift were more than could be done on a salary of \$7 to \$12 a week, and Elder White was forced to find some form of income outside the meager pay he received from the publishing house.

As he traveled from place to place he discovered a need for Bibles and concordances. Of course, we did not at that time have Book and Bible Houses ready to supply the needs of our people. So he found in the agency for these books a supplementary income which was vitally necessary to meet the demands upon his finances. In later years royalties from his books also supplemented his regular income. Near the close of his life, when he looked back on the experience, he regretted that it had been necessary to devote a part of his time to work not directly connected with his ministerial duties; but under the circumstances it seemed the only solution to a difficult financial problem. The income was used, not selfishly, but for the upbuilding of the cause of God, and the Lord blessed his efforts.

Some may feel that Elder White's experience constitutes a justification for our ministers' today dividing their interests to increase their personal incomes. But any fair-minded person will readily recognize the great change in circumstances between the salaried minister today and those of the pioneers before the days of organization and wage scales.

Mrs. White's Income and Expenses

In the early days Mrs. White's only income was from royalties from her books. These yielded but a small sum. After the death of Elder White in 1881, she was paid the salary of an ordained minister. She continued to receive the royalties from her books, and at times some financial assistance for the help of a copyist in the preparation of articles she furnished our periodicals. These monies she was instructed she should administer as a steward for the Lord. Her perception of this responsibility is clearly reflected in the terms she used in wording a terse order appended to a letter concerning the providing of some financial help for a destitute widow:

"Battle Creek, Mich., March 28, 1889
"BROTHER C. H. JONES:
"Please pay to the order of _____ \$100.00
(One Hundred Dollars) as a gift from the Lord who has made me His steward of means.

"ELLEN G. WHITE"
(Letter 28, 1889.)

Six years later she wrote as follows, and the records bear testimony that she was faithful to her trust.

"I do not profess to be the owner of any money that comes into my hands. I regard it as the Lord's money, for which I must render an account."—Letter 41, 1895.

After the death of James White in 1881 the full financial burden fell upon Mrs. White. It

was necessary that she meet her household expenses, continuing considerable entertaining. The expenses and salaries of her helpers were paid by her. She also met a large part of the initial expense in the publication of her many books. This included typesetting, the making of the printing plates, and the expense of illustrations. Often a set of printing plates was placed with each of the three publishing houses in America. These book-publishing expenses ran into many thousands of dollars. She shouldered the expense of translating her books into other languages, and there were many direct gifts to the cause.

Strict Economy Called For

To carry this heavy financial load personally called for careful planning, strict economy, and at times some borrowing. "We are economizing every way possible," she wrote from Australia in 1898. (MS. 173.) That the needs of the work of God were ever before her is indicated by the following:

"I study every pound which I invest in buildings for myself, lest I shall in any way limit the resources which I can invest in the upbuilding of the cause of God. I do not regret that I have done this. We have seen some trying times, but amid all we say, 'It pays.'"
—Letter 130, 1897.

To be pressed financially almost constantly was not pleasant, yet Mrs. White saw in it some benefits which she mentioned in 1895:

"To be restricted for want of means is, as I can testify, a great inconvenience, but prosperity too often leads to self-exaltation."—MS. 29, 1895.

This economizing to advance the work went back to very early days. We have the story of how, when they lived at Rochester, New York, she saved means out of her allowance for household expenses. Then when a crisis arose in the publishing house, with paper to pay for and no money in the treasury, she brought out a stocking containing money that James White knew not of. The bill was paid, and the work went on.

And so through their experience money was entrusted to Elder and Mrs. White and it was used, not for personal comfort or pleasure, but to advance the work and to help others. Her attitude toward this experience is revealed in 1888 in these words:

"I do not begrudge a cent that I have put into the cause, and I have kept on until my husband and myself have about \$30,000 invested in the cause of God. We did this a little at a time and the Lord saw that He could trust us with His means, and that we would not bestow it on ourselves. He kept pouring it in and we kept letting it out."—MS. 3, 1888.

Investment in the Bank of Heaven

We will now turn to some of the incidental statements Mrs. White herself made in regard to helping the cause of God in a financial way. Often it was with money at her command; sometimes it was with borrowed money. Speaking in 1890, she said:

"I am a servant to the cause of God. Since I re-

turned from Europe I have seen places where money must be raised or losses would be sustained. I donated one thousand dollars to the Chicago Mission and carry this debt, paying seven per cent interest. I saw that different churches must be helped, for they were under financial pressure, and I gave six hundred more. I had to hire the money and am still paying interest on this."
—Letter 13b, 1890.

Of course, it was her expectation that the royalty income from the sale of her books would soon meet the obligations which she incurred. Actually she was pledging an assured future income to meet the urgent present demands of the work of God. In time these debts were all paid from these incomes, just as she intended.

While Mrs. White was in Australia she found the needs very great. The work was getting a good start, but there was depression and poverty. Some of her friends in California sent money to her to buy a comfortable chair. Just then there was need for a church in Paramatta. The money was donated to aid in the church building project. Some years earlier she had a similar experience with a dress. Here is her account of it:

"Years ago when the mission first started in Europe, some of the sisters thought they would do me a great favor and they bought me a good American silk dress that cost \$45. It was just at the time that Brother Andrews wanted means to use in the mission in Europe, and I took the dress and sold it for \$50.00 and sent the money to him to use in the cause, and it came just in the right time and I was so thankful."—MS. 3, 1888.

When the Bible school was started in Melbourne, and many of our young people did not have funds to meet their expenses, Mrs. White could not pass this need by. How she met it is described in her own words:

"I have already appropriated two thousand dollars of royalties on books, to help students to attend the school. They would never have been able to enjoy the advantages of the school unless some one did help them, and as no one assumed the responsibility, it dropped on me. I carried several through the first term of school, and am paying the expenses of six during the present term, and the number may swell to eight."
—Letter 65, 1893.

Some of this money was expended to aid in clothing. Note these words in an order to the principal of the school:

"Will you please inquire of Brother _____ in regard to the clothing that he requires, and what he needs please furnish to him, and charge the same to my account. He has not received his trunk, and I fear he may suffer for the want of necessary changes."
—Letter 100, 1893.

Helping students was not a new thing, for in the United States she had set up a fund from royalty income to help in this way; and many students in this country received help. The royalties from her books published overseas were often turned back for the education of worthy young people in other lands.

Writing to a friend about this in 1908, she said:

"A brother in Europe wrote to me, 'I have a thousand dollars that is due you on the sale of your books. Could not you let us have a portion of this to help in

the education of young men, and fitting them to engage in missionary work?"

"In reply I wrote, 'Keep it all, if you can only train young men to go out and labor as missionaries. I will continue to pay interest on money, in order that I may give this to you as a donation.'

"This is how Sister White is becoming rich. I have been laying up my treasure in heaven."—Letter 106, 1908.

Then there were workers in need of help. This was before the days of the Sustentation Fund. When she saw a need, that need must be met, even if it must be financed by herself. Thus we read of a certain worker:

"Brother and Sister A. have been laboring in Ormondville, about 100 miles from here, with good results. . . . I met him in Napier, and he told me I was the one who sent him to school in Healdsburg, paying his expenses to obtain an education. I was so thankful to see the result of this investment.

"We send Brother A. . . . to the Institute at St. Helena. . . . He is a great sufferer. I have appropriated \$300 to this case, although there are many cases where every dollar is needed, but I feel perfectly clear in helping in this case. It is a case where those who love and fear God must show their sympathy in a tangible manner, and bear in mind that Christ identified his interest with suffering humanity."—Letters 79 and 33, 1893.

Various Financial Transactions

It was not long after this that Mrs. White was borrowing \$50 so she could lend \$38 to a brother about to lose his property. A few days later she pledged \$25 to help in constructing a church at Seven Hills, then raised this to \$50, and then to \$125, so they might have a house in which to worship.

These were days when the conference resources were very limited. Note the financial transactions mentioned in the following statement made at a time when preparations were being made to erect the school buildings at Avondale:

"Our only course now is to prepare to build. I have hired, and am paying interest upon, one thousand pounds, which is drawing 4½ per cent interest; one hundred pounds from another, which is drawing 5 per cent interest. I have loaned the conference one hundred pounds since 1895, from which I have drawn no interest. That amount I wish to use at once in helping to build a meeting-house. . . .

"I wish to invest all that I possibly can in the advancement of the work in this country. What is done should go forward without delay. . . . Sister White is straining every nerve to advance the work in these countries that God may be glorified. She is not seeking to hoard money or live extravagantly. . . .

"In order to erect our school buildings, Mother Wessels loaned me one thousand pounds at 4 per cent interest. Brother Peter Wessels gave a donation of three hundred dollars. All this is invested in the work; every gift coming from any source has been put into the work."—MS. 80, 1897.

These heavy drains on Mrs. White's finances involved her in debt quite heavily, and gave her concern. Thus she wrote in 1903:

"I am carrying a very heavy load of debt, much of

which I incurred in my effort to establish the work in Australia on right lines."—Letter 83, 1903.

It was not many months after this that we find her borrowing money that she might join Sister Gotzian in opening a sanitarium in California.

"I have recently added to my indebtedness by borrowing two thousand dollars from the bank to help in the purchase of the Paradise Valley Sanitarium property. I could not endure the thought that the opportunity to purchase this property for so low a price should not be improved, and Sister Gotzian and I clasped hands over the table in a resolution that we would purchase it and set the sanitarium in operation."—Letter 81, 1905.

"Is Sister White Getting Rich?"

Knowing of her incomes, some asked, "Is Sister White getting rich?" She answers the question thus:

"Sometimes it has been reported that I am trying to get rich. Some have written to us, inquiring, 'Is not Mrs. White worth millions of dollars?' I am glad that I can say, 'No.' I do not own in this world any place that is free from debt. Why?—Because I see so much missionary work to be done. Under such circumstances, could I hoard money?—No, indeed. I receive royalties from the sale of my books; but nearly all is spent in missionary work.

"The head of one of our publishing houses in a distant foreign land, upon hearing recently from others that I was in need of means, sent me a bill of exchange for five hundred dollars; and in the letter accompanying the money, he said that in return for the thousands upon thousands of dollars royalty that I had turned over to their mission field for the translation and distribution of new books and for the support of new missionary enterprises, they regarded the enclosed five hundred dollars as a very small token of their appreciation. They sent this because of their desire to help me in time of special need; but heretofore I have given, for the support of the Lord's cause in foreign lands, all the royalties that come from the sale of my foreign books in Europe; and I intend to return this five hundred dollars as soon as I can free myself from debt."—MS. 8, 1904.

Much more might be said of the messenger of the Lord as a steward of means. We are not, however, attempting to give a complete chronicle of her life and work. The few items here presented give a typical and accurate picture of this phase of her experience.

In these days of well-established institutions the Sustentation Fund, various reserves, and well-defined financial policies it may not be necessary for any individual to lead out as did James and Ellen White in giving to the cause. Some may have wished that she had not borrowed money to be used in advancing the work. Under the circumstances and at the time, it seemed to be the right thing to do. We will leave others to judge as to whether or not Ellen G. White was a good financier measured by today's standards. She was, however, beyond all challenge, a faithful steward of means.

God's Messenger

I HAVE no claims to make," wrote Ellen G. White in 1906, "only that *I am instructed that I am the Lord's messenger*; that He called me in my youth to be His messenger, to receive His word, and to give a clear and decided message in the name of the Lord Jesus."—*Review and Herald*, July 26, 1906.

That which called forth this utterance and a further explanation of her call and work was a discussion over Mrs. White's status—whether or not she was a prophet. She herself, before a large gathering at Battle Creek, had explained that her work embodied much more than that of a prophet, and at that time had stated, "I do not claim to be a prophetess." In her discussion of her work she continues in the *Review* article:

"Early in my youth I was asked several times, Are you a prophet? I have ever responded, I am the Lord's messenger. I know that many have called me a prophet, but I have made no claim to this title. My Saviour declared me to be His messenger.

"Your work," He instructed me, 'is to bear My word. Strange things will arise, and in your youth I set you apart to bear the message to the erring ones, to carry the word before unbelievers, and with pen and voice to reprove from the Word actions that are not right. Exhort from the Word. . . .

"Be not afraid of man, for My shield shall protect you. It is not you that speaketh: it is the Lord that giveth the messages of warning and reproof. Never deviate from the truth *under any circumstances*. Give the light I shall give you. The messages for these last days shall be written in books, and shall stand immortalized, to testify against those who have once rejoiced in the light, but who have been led to give it up because of the seductive influences of evil."

"Why have I not claimed to be a prophet?—Because in these days many who boldly claim that they are prophets are a reproach to the cause of Christ; and because my work includes much more than the word 'prophet' signifies."—*Ibid*.

Then follows in the article a delineation of the broad work to which she was commissioned. We will quote a few sentences regarding this:

"The Lord gave me great light on health reform. In connection with my husband, I was to be a medical missionary worker."

"I was also to speak on the subject of Christian temperance."

"I was instructed that I must ever urge upon those who profess to believe the truth, the necessity of practicing the truth."

"I was charged not to neglect or pass by those who were being wronged."

"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."

"In Australia we also worked as Christian medical missionaries. At times I made my home in Coorabong an asylum for the sick and afflicted."

She concludes: "To claim to be a prophetess is something I have never done. If others call me by that name, I have no controversy with them. But my work has covered so many lines that I can not call myself other than a messenger,

sent to bear a message from the Lord to His people, and to take up work in any line that He points out."

As we contemplate the broad work given to her, we are forced to agree with Mrs. White when she says, "My commission embraces the work of a prophet, but it does not end there."—Letter 244, 1906.

This meant to Mrs. White that her life and all her energies must be fully and constantly consecrated to God. It meant that she must speak for God messages of reproof, of instruction, and of encouragement. It meant that she must write articles and books setting before the church and the world the information and light that God imparted to her. It meant that she must lead out personally in every type of Christian missionary work. It meant at times that she would be honored and lauded by those about her. It also meant that she must stand many times alone, battling evil, selfishness, avarice, waywardness, and coldness. It meant that she would be opposed and maligned. It meant sleepless nights, separation from her family, endless traveling, incessant interviews, and constant writing. Would anyone choose such a work? Oh, no. Did Mrs. White choose this work? We will let her answer:

"When this work was first given me, I begged the Lord to lay the burden on someone else. The work was so large and broad and deep that I feared I could not do it. But by His Holy Spirit the Lord has enabled me to perform the work which He gave me to do."—*Review and Herald*, July 26, 1906.

No Claim to Be the Leader

Mrs. White's position and work were unique. It would be but natural that one called to the responsibilities placed upon her might be inclined to assume the position of leader, and might even become somewhat of a dictator. This was not true of Mrs. White. In 1903 when the public press issued statements that there was a controversy between Dr. J. H. Kellogg and Mrs. E. G. White over the question of leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist people, the messenger of the Lord declared:

"No one has ever heard me claim the position of leader of the denomination. I have a work of great responsibility to do,—to impart by pen and voice the instruction given me, not alone to Seventh-day Adventists, but to the world. I have published many books, large and small, and some of these have been translated into several languages. This is my work,—to open the Scriptures to others, as God has opened them to me."—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 236.

We have already noted Mrs. White's clear perception of the place of organization in the work of the denomination, and the authority of the General Conference in planning for the advancement of the work. Speaking of her trip to Australia, she testified:

"I had not one ray of light that He [the Lord] would have me come to this country [Australia]. I came in submission to the voice of the General Conference, which I have ever maintained to be authority."—Letter 124, 1896.

This is in full harmony with the utterance recorded during her illness in Australia when she asked herself: "Have you not come to Australia because you felt that it was your duty to go where the conference judged it best for you to go? Has not this been your practice?"—Letter 18a, 1892.

Although she stood as the Lord's messenger, with instruction for the leaders of the work, she ever gave full recognition to the rightful place of organization.

Spoke With Decision and Authority

As God's messenger, Ellen White spoke with decision and authority. "I speak that which I have seen, and which I know to be true."—Letter 4, 1896. "I implore you [the church members] not to treat this matter with your criticisms and speculations but as the voice of God to you."—Letter 36, 1890. The messages were not to be parried, for she adds:

"What reserve power has the Lord with which to reach those who have cast aside His warnings and reproofs, and have accredited the testimonies of the Spirit of God to no higher source than human wisdom? In the judgment, what can you who have done this, offer to God as an excuse for turning from the evidences He has given you that God was in the work?"—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 466.

Whether men would hear or not, whether they followed or rejected the counsel she imparted, the attitude of others had little effect on her. She knew her message was of God. Usually the messages were gratefully received by those to whom they were directed, and through the years Mrs. White was honored, loved, and highly respected by her brethren in the ministry and by Seventh-day Adventists around the world. The messages which she bore orally and in writing have exerted an immeasurable influence upon the remnant church and the world.

The work of Ellen G. White was not unknown to the world. Of course, there were varying concepts of her call and her mission. Her public ministry and her writings and the influence of her long life of service drew the respect of her contemporaries. George Wharton James, writer and lecturer of note, in his work *California—Romantic and Beautiful*, in 1914, paid tribute to Mrs. White in these words:

"Near the town of St. Helena is the St. Helena Sanitarium and the home of Mrs. Ellen G. White, who, with her husband, practically founded the church of the Seventh-day Adventists as it is governed today. Mrs. White was also the inspiration and guide of the early day movement toward more hygienic living, and the treatment of disease by what are now known as the Battle Creek Sanitarium methods. . . .

"These sanitariums are to be found in every country of the civilized world, and most of them are specific and direct tributes to her power and influence as an organizer.

"Every Seventh-day Adventist in the world feels the influence of this elderly lady who quietly sits in

her room overlooking the cultivated fields of Napa Valley, and writes out what she feels are the intimations of God's Spirit, to be given through her to mankind.

"This remarkable woman, also, though almost entirely self-educated, has written and published more books and in more languages, which circulate to a greater extent than the written works of any woman of history."—Pages 319, 320.

On Mrs. White's death there was wide editorial comment across the United States. *The Independent*, a weekly journal of the time, published in New York City, devoted a little more than a full column in noticing her life and death. Overlooking some inaccuracies in historical data, and omitting some misstatements, we quote from the article:

"An American Prophetess"

"Mrs. Ellen G. White, leader and teacher of the Seventh-day Adventists, lived and died in comfort and honor. . . . Mrs. White hoped to be one of those who would be taken up alive to meet the Lord in the air. But the Lord delayed His coming, and she entered into rest, just as others do, at the age of eighty-eight, and her burial took place a few days ago at the Advent headquarters at Battle Creek, Michigan. Her husband, Elder White, shares with her the honor of founding the Seventh-day Advent Church, but she was its one prophetess.

"Ellen G. (Harmon) White, born in Gorham, Maine, was a very religious child, and when thirteen years old, in 1840, in the midst of the Millerite excitement, heard the Rev. William Miller preach on the speedy coming of Christ, and she was greatly affected. At the age of seventeen she had her first vision, and was bidden, she believed, by the Holy Spirit, to proclaim the speedy advent of Christ to glorify His saints and destroy His enemies. She dreaded the duty, but was given strength to accept it, and was rewarded with a long succession of revelations thru her life. Before she was twenty years old she married Elder White, and their following began to grow.

"Her revelations were in the nature of instructions to their disciples, mostly aimed at their spiritual life, not forgetting to forbid the sins of custom and fashion. . . . Saturday was the Sabbath; and the Lord's coming was close at hand. . . . At first the children were taken out of school to devote themselves to preparation for the advent, but after a while they learned patience, and established schools of their own, and entered on a great missionary propaganda, which took Mrs. White for years to Europe and Australia.

"Of course, these teachings were based on the strictest doctrine of inspiration of the Scriptures. Seventh-day Adventism could be got in no other way. And the gift of prophecy was to be expected as promised to the 'remnant church' who had held fast to the truth. This faith gave great purity of life and incessant zeal. No body of Christians excels them in moral character and religious earnestness. Their work began in 1853 in Battle Creek, and it has grown until now they have thirty-seven publishing houses thruout the world, with literature in eighty different languages, and an annual output of \$2,000,000. They have now seventy colleges and academies, and about forty sanitariums; and in all this Ellen G. White has been the inspiration and guide. Here is a noble record, and she deserves great honor.

"Did she really receive divine visions, and was she really chosen by the Holy Spirit to be endued with the charism of prophecy? Or was she the victim of an excited imagination? Why should we answer? One's doctrine of the Bible may affect the conclusion. At any rate she was absolutely honest in her belief in her revelations. Her life was worthy of them. She showed no spiritual pride and she sought no filthy lucre. She lived the life and did the work of a worthy prophetess, the most admirable of the American succession."—*The Independent*, Aug. 23, 1915.

We might naturally ask, What effect did this important position have upon Mrs. White? Did it lead her to draw attention to herself. Did she use her gift to build herself up in popularity or financially? No. Ever did she feel that she was a frail agent, doing the Lord's bidding. There was no self-exaltation, no self-aggrandizement. She amassed no fortune. Her own appraisal of her status is illustrated in a conversation which took place in her home about the year 1902, as it has come to us from the individual concerned.

A new housekeeper and nurse had come to the White home. She was a woman in her twenties, and as she crossed the continent to enter Mrs. White's employ, she contemplated, "I am going to the home of the prophet. How will it be?" The evening of the first day Mrs. White and the new housekeeper were thrown together for a time, and after quite a silence, Mrs. White spoke, pausing between each sentence:

"Sister Nelson, you have come into my home. You are to be a member of my family. You may see some things in me that you do not approve of. You may see things in my son Willie you do not approve of. I may make mistakes, and my son Willie may make mistakes. I may be lost at last, and my son Willie may be lost.

"But the dear Lord has a remnant people that will be saved and go through to the Kingdom, and it remains with each of us as individuals whether or not

we will be one of that number."—As related to the author in 1939 by Mrs. M. J. Nelson.

Although Ellen White, because of her unique work, was often the center of attention, she never asked others to look to her. She did not establish herself as an example or criterion. She was a fellow Seventh-day Adventist seeking to please her Lord, hopeful of a crown of reward when the conflict was over, but with no assurance of salvation except as she was faithful and trusted in the merits of her risen Saviour.

As she neared the end of the way, it was a triumphant experience. She knew her Saviour and Friend. She looked forward to a home in the new earth. Often, as she hurried down the hall from her bedroom to her writing room, she would be heard humming the words penned in 1845 by William Hyde, after he had heard her account of the first vision of the new earth. The full wording will be found in *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 1, page 70, and in the *Church Hymnal*, Number 305. It was one of the hymns in our first hymnbook issued in 1849, bearing the heading, "The Better Land." It was especially the last part of the poem and hymn that she dwelt upon.

"We'll be there, we'll be there in a little while;
We'll join the pure and the blest;
We'll have the palm, the robe, the crown,
And forever be at rest."

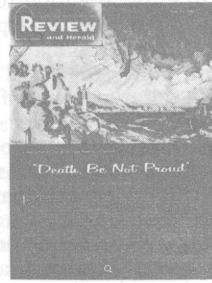


White Family Graves, Oak Hill Cemetery, Battle Creek, Michigan
The small headstones in the front center of the picture mark the graves of James and Ellen White.

IN THE ELLEN G. WHITE HOME THE

REVIEW and HERALD

WAS INDISPENSABLE

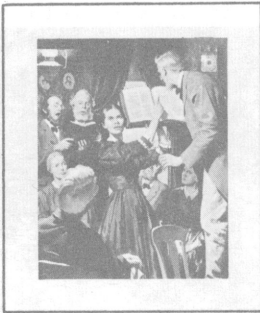


"I have been reading the *Review* this morning," she wrote on March 5, 1905. "This paper should be in every family of our people, not only in America, but in every country. It is our church paper for the world."
—E. G. WHITE, Letter 93, 1905.

Twenty-five years earlier she declared: "Those who consent to do without the *Review and Herald* lose much. Through its pages, Christ may speak to them in warnings, in reproofs and counsel, which would change the current of their thoughts, and be to them as the bread of life."
—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 599.



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