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ELLEN GOULD WHITE AND THE  
AUSTRALIAN WOMAN, 1891-1900

A Thesis  
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Master of Literature

by  
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## PREFACE

In its broadest scope this thesis seeks to understand how a millenarian Christian group, Seventh-day Adventists, relates to an important social question, the status and role of women. The theatre within which this enquiry is staged is Australia in the last decade of the nineteenth century. In the spotlight is Ellen Gould White, in less-sharp focus are her Adventist contemporaries from 1891-1900. But beyond, in soft focus, is Australian society of the time.

Edwin Scott Gaustad claims that certain 'sects and seers were at the very center' of the mid-nineteenth century American experience. 'A climate of enthusiasm', he affirms, 'produced novelty in creed and in worship, in personal devotion and communal association'. From this 'ferment', within 'a whole nation engaged in daring experimentation', various churches, 'extra-ecclesiastical or para-ecclesiastical crusades and forums, councils and leagues, associations and unions' grew.<sup>1</sup> One of the still-vigorous products of this age is the Seventh-day Adventist Church, now planted in 190 countries of earth, with four million members.<sup>2</sup>

Seventh-day Adventists selected their name in 1860,

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<sup>1</sup>Edwin Scott Gaustad (ed.), The Rise of Adventism: Religion and Society in Mid-Nineteenth Century America, New York, 1974, p. xv. See especially Winthrop S. Hudson, 'A Time of Religious Ferment', pp. 1-17, and Timothy L. Smith, 'Social Reform: Some Reflections on Causation and Consequence', pp. 18-29.

<sup>2</sup>For statistics, see 'God of Miracles and Wonders: Report of the General Conference Secretary', Adventist Review: General Conference Bulletin, No. 3, 21 April 1980, pp. 8-11; 'Membership and Financial Statistics', No. 4, 22 April 1980, pp. 10-13; Office of Archives and Statistics, Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook, Washington, D.C., 1983, p. 10.

structured their state and general conference organization by 1863, and sent their first official missionary to Europe in 1874. The year 1885 saw them venture into Australia and New Zealand. By 1891 they had 500 members here; by 1900 five times that number. Currently the church in Australia has 51,047 baptised believers on its rolls.<sup>3</sup> Adventists as a religious body affirm nineteen beliefs 'in common with conservative Christians and the historic Protestant creeds'; hold 'one of two or more alternate views' on twelve 'controverted doctrines among conservative Christians'; and claim that 'in a few [five] areas of Christian thought' their doctrines are 'distinctive'.<sup>4</sup>

Adventists have long been noted for both reformatory and reactionary tendencies. They have, for instance, been among the foremost in promoting *health* reform and the stiffest opponents of *calendar* reform. One American church historian contends that the basic stance of the 'conservative', the one who is 'careful lest anything obscure the precious events of divine revelation in the past', and that of the 'liberal', who wants to be 'open to change', dwells within each person and each religious movement.<sup>5</sup> Perhaps this insight is particularly relevant for the Seventh-day Adventist Church at present, and ways to hold these opposite tendencies in creative tension could be an item which needs to be near the top of its agenda. But more will be said of this in the Epilogue.

In any case, the Adventists have dallied long in dealing

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<sup>3</sup> 'Australasian Division Statistical Report for the Year 1982', Supplement to Australasian Record, 23 July 1983.

<sup>4</sup> A Representative Group of Leaders, Bible Teachers and Editors, Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine, Washington, D.C., 1957, pp. 21-25. See 'Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists', Yearbook, pp. 11-14.

<sup>5</sup> Robert T. Handy, 'Liberal and Conservative: An Inescapable Dichotomy in American Church History?', Encounter, Vol. XXXII, Summer 1971, pp. 208-216.

with the social matter of female status and role. This is understandable in view of their supreme concern for spiritual and cosmic matters: regeneration and the Second Coming.<sup>6</sup> But the longer they find themselves living in the world, the more they discover it is impossible to avoid the necessity to address the various dimensions of human relationships. The present is very much a time of ferment and transition within Adventism, an era of growth and challenge. It is hoped that this enquiry will in some way nudge us toward a closer look at women and their role in church and society.

To say 'us' is to acknowledge this thesis is the work of a believer. It is probably as demanding and dangerous for me to write on Ellen White as for a Roman Catholic historian to write on Saint Francis of Assisi; a Lutheran to write on Martin Luther; a Methodist to write on John Wesley; or a Christian Scientist to write on Mary Baker Eddy. Yet it is my claim that, while the historian must be aware of perils in such a pursuit and open to the historiography of the 'unbeliever', the 'believer' can 'remember and participate in' the events of his/her community's history 'in a way quite different from that of the external observer'.<sup>7</sup> Since the reader should not be left to conjecture as to my stance, an account of my pilgrimage and perspectives is given in the Epilogue.

But it also needs to be stated that I am an impatient

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<sup>6</sup>See Arthur N. Patrick, 'Toward a Definition of Evangelism', Chapter 1, 'A Study of Methods Used to Secure and Maintain An Audience in Seventh-day Adventist Evangelism', Master of Divinity thesis, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 1972, pp. 1-16; cf. Loren B. Mead, 'Evangelism: Notes Toward a Better Understanding', Anglican Theological Review, Vol. LIII, January 1971, pp. 48-56.

<sup>7</sup>John Dillenberger and Claude Welch, Protestant Christianity Interpreted Through Its Development, New York, 1954, p. 308. The terms 'believer' and 'unbeliever' are my own, but they are applicable to the comment of Dillenberger and Welch.

believer. More than a century ago my church in world session examined various propositions 'thoroughly', and heard opinions expressed with 'the largest freedom pro and con'. One subject of discussion, to which they believed they went to the 'bottom', led the delegates to a 'substantially unanimous' vote:

That females possessing the necessary qualifications to fill that position, may with perfect propriety, be set apart by ordination to the work of the Christian ministry.<sup>8</sup>

But that resolution, passed by a session possessing 'the full measure of authority and influence that God has vested in His church', apparently died at the stage of implementation--when 'referred to the General Conference Committee'.<sup>9</sup> In 1895 my church's most authoritative single voice told her church worldwide: 'Women who are willing to consecrate some of their time to the service of the Lord. . . . should be set apart to this work by prayer and laying on of hands'.<sup>10</sup> Yet the church in Australia still halts between two opinions on even ordaining women to service roles at the local congregational level. To appoint females to ministerial roles is still seen to be so innovative that the matter of ordaining such women receives mainly carefully-monitored discussion in select committees.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>General Conference Business Proceedings (Continued)', The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, 20 December 1881, p. 392.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.; Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 9, Mountain View, Calif., 1948, pp. 160-161.

<sup>10</sup>Ellen G. White, 'The Duty of the Minister and the People', The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, 9 July 1895, p. 434.

<sup>11</sup>At the General Conference level, the role of women is under study by The Biblical Research Institute. At its meeting on 9 November 1983 the Biblical Research Committee of the Australasian Division of Seventh-day Adventists received a list of the topics under study at the church's world headquarters. However, the Chairman, Pastor K. S. Parmenter, expressed his opinion that the Institute had the issue 'on the back burner' at present.

There are encouraging signs, however. W. Duncan Eva, special assistant to the General Conference President, in January 1982 stimulated hope by a report to an Adventist convention in Melbourne. At Avondale College on 20 November 1983, Neal C. Wilson, General Conference President, commented approvingly on the work being done by scores of women ordained elders serving in local churches in North America. Wilson added that the General Conference sees local ordination as a question on which individual churches are to decide. After noting some relevant historical background, a recent request to the Plans and Recommendations Committee of the triennial business session of the North New South Wales Conference of Seventh-day Adventists continued:

Whereas the practice of ordaining women to specified roles in local churches in Australia has already begun, in response to needs clearly expressed by these churches, as well as the more widespread practice of appointing women to the role of elder without ordination--

It is requested that this session be invited to consider making a careful review of the matter of ordaining women in certain local churches where the need exists, for various roles such as deaconesses and elders, and--

Further, that a procedure for consultation between the conference and a local church on this matter be developed, which recognises the autonomy of the local church, but acknowledges the local validity only, of any such ordination.<sup>12</sup>

This concern came to the session floor in a low-key manner and in an abbreviated form. It passed without amendment, perhaps unanimously.<sup>13</sup>

A recent letter to the editor of the church's worldwide

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<sup>12</sup>For the full text of the proposal, see 'To the Plans and Recommendations Committee, North New South Wales Conference Triennial Session, 1983', Appendix A. Emphasis in original.

<sup>13</sup>The resolution voted read as follows: 'We recommend that the Executive Committee give study to the counsel given by the Lord's messenger that women be set apart for Christian service "by prayer and by the laying on of hands", Review and Herald, 9 July 1895, p. 434'.

'General Paper' lamented 'a waste of human potential' in a certain non-Adventist denomination, for 'only in 1978 were blacks admitted to the priesthood'. The correspondent continued:

As I thought more about this, I could not help but wonder how someone commenting on our church might describe our own waste of human potential: 'The Seventh-day Adventist Church is for males--even in 1983 no females have been admitted to the ordained ministry'.<sup>14</sup>

Two responses to this expression of concern were printed almost four months later. One correspondent declared 'the idea of women ministers does not come from the Bible; it comes from some of today's radical organizations', and warned that the church should avoid wanting to be 'like the world'. The other noted the roles women customarily fill in the church: Sabbath School leadership and teaching, especially in the departments for children and youth; treasurers; clerks; musicians; deaconesses; welfare workers; teachers in the educational system; salespersons for religious literature; doctors; nurses; counsellors. This second letter concluded:

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is really a church for families, with every member doing his part to rightly represent the character of Christ, endeavoring to win souls for Him.<sup>15</sup>

These two writers probably represent many who fail to see that if women do all these things well, if they fulfilled even greater roles on occasion in Scripture, it might advantage the contemporary church to let them employ their gifts wherever they can best minister. Ordination is not a rite designed to honour ordinands. It recognizes their adequacy for a given role and hence facilitates their

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<sup>14</sup>Jean Kinzer Murdoch, 'Reflection on Zion', Adventist Review, 18 August 1983, p. 2.

<sup>15</sup>Bessie LaBelle Turner and Zella Holbert, 'Women Ministers', Adventist Review, 8 December 1983, pp. 2, 12.



function in the community of faith. Thus it is, for a woman, not a ceremonial dress but a pair of overalls in which to do the work of God more effectively.

In some ways Seventh-day Adventists have not changed their stance of the 1890s, when the impending collapse of Turkey seemed to have such cosmic import that social issues paled into nothingness by comparison. In an article reviewing the significant events of 1983, the editor of the church's Australasian weekly noted significant legislation now before parliament:

An important bill before parliament at the present time, which has been vigorously debated during the latter half of this year, is the legislation that forbids discrimination against women on account of sex. The aspect that is disturbing is not so much the contents of the bill itself, but the fact that it was tailored by the United Nations Organisation and referred to supporting countries for endorsement by their parliaments. In this trend we can see how easy it would be in the foreseeable future for the UNO to assume the role of a super-world government, to recommend legislation in such areas as Sunday laws and other matters affecting freedom of conscience and worship. As Adventists we need to be watching these trends with more than passing interest, and to be alert and awake both to the peril they portend, the testimony they bear to the point we have reached on our homeward journey, and opportunities they offer to witness for our faith.<sup>16</sup>

Hence the struggle to forbid 'discrimination against women on account of sex' is perhaps disturbing, but not so much as the threat that the UNO might 'recommend legislation. . . affecting freedom of conscience and worship'. It is to be hoped we will ere long perceive more clearly all the issues at stake.

Thanks are due to a number of people and institutions who have facilitated my work on this project. An Avondale colleague, Dr Donald Hansen, a graduate of New England and Macquarie universities, infected me with some of his abundant enthusiasm for Australian history. Dr Miriam Dixson, Associate Professor of History at the

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<sup>16</sup>G. E. Garne, 'A Year of Significant Events', Australasian Record, 17 December 1983, p. 2.

University of New England, honed my approaches in essays during 1982, and guided my work on this thesis during 1983. I owe her much, but none of the frailties that may be found herein. Two five-day residential schools in Armidale during 1982 and 1983 provided a broader context for this endeavour, and the stimulation of contact with professors and a score of graduate students in Australian history.

The Australasian Division of the Seventh-day Adventist Church during the past decade has developed a Heritage Room and the Ellen G. White/SDA Research Centre at Avondale College. Of particular interest in these collections are the records of Adventism in Australia and the thousands of books, pamphlets, periodicals and letters in microform from its earlier North American heritage. These resources can be broadly classified under four categories: the *history* and *thought* of the Seventh-day Adventist Church; the *life* and *writings* of Ellen G. White. So the Heritage Room and the Research Centre provided a great many of the primary sources invaluable for this study. These were augmented by the resources of the Mitchell Library in Sydney, and the libraries at Avondale College, the University of Newcastle and the University of New England, plus those of other institutions.

The principal sources for this study may be placed in the order of their importance as follows. First, the published writings of Ellen White available to Australian Adventists during the 1890s in books, periodicals and pamphlets. Second, the Adventist literature of the 1890s, with The Bible Echo being accorded first place as the most widely-circulated journal and normative voice of the movement. Thirdly, the unpublished writings of Ellen White, although they would not have registered upon many Australian Adventists directly, are used to confirm and extend the conclusions reached

from the published materials. Fourthly, historical materials and writings relating to the Australian woman of the 1890s. Finally, primary, secondary and tertiary sources relating to both the interpretation of Adventism and female status and role in Australia. Frequently a large volume of source material lies beneath the conceptual surface of the text, without being listed. To say this is to infer the sources indicated are representative but not exhaustive of the subject, yet even so this thesis exceeds its specified length of 20,000 words. While it cannot hope to cite all the evidence on which its stances are based, I claim its major findings are defensible in view of all the extant data.

Avondale College's Board of Management and administrators voted permission and financial support for me to follow through a qualifying year of Australian history (1981) and then the two-year Master of Literature programme (1982-1983). Since this study was on an 'own-time' basis, I also want to record my appreciation to my wife, Joan, for patiently accommodating to my early-in-the-morning and late-at-night research and writing.

Finally, to Mrs Eleanor Scale goes the credit for transforming almost inscrutable handwriting into neat typescript, in addition to the other demands upon her secretarial skills.

It is my hope that in some small way this thesis will forward an accurate understanding of the significant role Ellen White played on the Australian Adventist stage, the continuing significance it possesses, and the clear challenges her church has before it in order to meet the implications of her dictums: 'The ways of the Lord are just and equal' and 'all these things must be set in order and justice be done to all'.

## Chapter 1

### ELLEN GOULD WHITE: AN OVERVIEW OF HER AUSTRALIAN YEARS

Ellen Gould Harmon was born near the New England town of Gorham, Maine, on 26 November 1827, and died in St Helena, California, on 16 July 1915.<sup>1</sup> The youngest of Robert and Eunice Harmon's eight children,<sup>2</sup> Ellen began about seventy years of 'public labor'.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>For autobiographical accounts see the following: Ellen G. White, The Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White, Saratoga Springs, New York, 1851, reprinted in Early Writings of Ellen G. White, Battle Creek, 1882; Ellen G. White, My Christian Experiences, Views and Labors in Connection with the Rise and Progress of the Third Angel's Message, Battle Creek, Michigan, 1860, see Facsimile Reproduction as Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 2, Washington, D.C., 1945; Ellen G. White, 'Biographical Sketch', Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 1, Mountain View, Calif., 1885, pp. 9-112; and Ellen G. White, Life Sketches of Ellen G. White: Being a Narrative of Her Experience to 1881 As Written By Herself; With A Sketch of Her Subsequent Labors And of Her Last Sickness Compiled From Original Sources, Mountain View, California, 1915. Cf. The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, 29 July and 5 August, 1915; Don F. Neufeld (ed.), Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, (revised ed.), Washington, D.C., 1976, pp. 1584-1592.

<sup>2</sup>Elizabeth (Mrs Reuben Bangs) and Ellen (Mrs James White) were non-identical twins. For information on the Harmon family, see Document Files (DF) 702, 702b, and 741 in the Ellen G. White/Seventh-day Adventist Research Centre, Avondale College, hereinafter abbreviated to EGW/SDA RC.

<sup>3</sup>A characteristic expression in the writings of Ellen White and her contemporaries. See, for instance, Life Sketches, chapter 4, 'Beginning of Public Labors', pp. 32-42. Note that all books, articles, manuscripts and letters referred to in this thesis, where no other author is indicated, were written by Ellen G. White.

probably near the end of 1844.<sup>4</sup> Her marriage on 30 August 1846 to James Springer White (1821-1881)<sup>5</sup> gave to Ellen Harmon the surname by which she is known as an author,<sup>6</sup> public speaker,<sup>7</sup> innovator<sup>8</sup> and religious leader.<sup>9</sup> While the United States

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<sup>4</sup>There has been some discussion as to whether Ellen Harmon's 'first vision' was in December 1844 or later. See, for instance, EGW/SDA RC DF 101a.

<sup>5</sup>See Virgil Robinson, James White, Washington, D.C. 1976, and Neufeld, op.cit., pp. 1598-1604.

<sup>6</sup>See Neufeld, op. cit., pp. 1592-1597. Ellen White contributed some 4,600 articles to the journals of her church, an unknown number of pamphlets, and over 90 book titles with additional compilations in process under the direction of the Board of Trustees of Ellen G. White Estate, Inc. For some years James R. Nix of Loma Linda University, California, has been compiling a bibliography of Ellen White's writings, including her pamphlets, but the end of this project is not yet in sight.

<sup>7</sup>See Horace John Shaw, 'A Rhetorical Analysis of the Speaking of Mrs. Ellen G. White, A Pioneer Leader and Spokeswoman of the Seventh-day Adventist Church', Ph.D. Dissertation, Michigan State University, 1959. In his 655 pages Shaw examines Ellen White's health and temperance speaking, as well as her religious discourses.

<sup>8</sup>A broad range of Ellen White's innovations are discussed in recent studies, with health and education forming prime examples. On health, see the following: Dores E. Robinson, The Story of Our Health Message: The Origin, Character and Development of Health Education in the Seventh-day Adventist Church (third ed.), Nashville, Tennessee, 1965; Ronald L. Numbers, Prophetess of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White, New York, 1976; George W. Reid, A Sound of Trumpets: Americans, Adventists, and Health Reform, Washington, D.C., 1982. On education, see A. G. Lindsay, 'The Influence of Ellen White Upon the Development of the Seventh-day Adventist School System in Australia, 1891-1900', Master of Education Thesis, The University of Newcastle, N.S.W., 1978; Milton R. Hook, 'The Avondale School and Adventist Educational Goals, 1894-1900', Doctor of Education Dissertation, Andrews University, Michigan, 1978. Lindsay argues that Ellen White's 'extensive writings provide the inspiration, direction and philosophy of education' that since 1872 have guided 'the largest Protestant parochial educational system in the world', pp. 4, 1.

<sup>9</sup>Neufeld, op. cit., p. 1584, commences the nine-page article on Ellen White with this summation: 'Cofounder of the SDA Church, writer, lecturer, and counselor to the church, who possessed what SDA's have accepted as the prophetic gift described in the Bible (see Spirit of Prophecy)'. For a discussion of some of the

remained the main locale of her activities, she spent 1885 to 1887 in Europe and 1891-1900 in Australia and New Zealand.<sup>10</sup> It is the purpose of this chapter to survey Ellen White's almost-nine Australian years in order to understand in what ways she might be expected to relate to the Australian woman's concerns in the 1890s.<sup>11</sup>

Three initial questions are of interest with reference to these 105 months Ellen White spent in the Antipodes. Where did she live? What places did she visit? How was her time allocated in terms of the places she lived and the locations she visited?<sup>12</sup>

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challenges to Ellen White's 'prophetic gift', see Uriah Smith, The Visions of Mrs E. G. White, A Manifestation of Spiritual Gifts According to the Scriptures, Battle Creek, Michigan, 1868; Francis D. Nichol, Ellen G. White and Her Critics: An Answer to the Major Charges That Critics Have Brought Against Mrs. Ellen G. White, Washington, D.C., 1951. For evidence that this discussion is still in process, see Donald R. McAdams, 'Shifting Views of Inspiration: Ellen G. White Studies in the 1970s', Spectrum, Vol. 10, March 1980, pp. 27-41; Walter T. Rea, The White Lie, Turlock, California, 1982; 'Documents Available from The Ellen G. White Estate', Washington, D.C., 1983. For an historian's perspective on the inter-relatedness of Ellen White and the Seventh-day Adventist Church, see R. W. Schwarz, Light Bearers to the Remnant: Denominational History Textbook for Seventh-day Adventist College Classes, Mountain View, California, 1979. The most comprehensive bibliography on early Adventism is available in Edwin S. Gaustad (ed.), The Rise of Adventism: Religion and Society in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America, New York, 1974.

<sup>10</sup> See D. A. Delafield, Ellen G. White in Europe, 1885-1887, Washington, D.C., 1975; and Arthur L. White, Ellen G. White: The Australian Years, 1891-1900, Washington, D.C. 1983.

<sup>11</sup> Arthur L. White as Ellen White's grandson and major biographer has thus far published only the last three of six projected volumes: The Early Years, 1827-1862; The Progressive Years, 1863-1875; The Lonely Years, 1876-1891; The Australian Years, 1891-1900; The Early Elmshaven Years, 1900-1905; The Later Elmshaven Years, 1905-1915.

<sup>12</sup> The diary-like account which follows, pp. 3 to 9, has been compiled with the help of 'The Ellen G. White Biographical File', consisting of 2,600 10 cm. by 15 cm. cards, chronologically arranged. It is apparent from the ensuing account that there is some imprecision in the data.

On 12 November 1891 Ellen White sailed from San Francisco for Australia aboard the SS *Alameda*,<sup>13</sup> accompanied by her son, William Clarence White,<sup>14</sup> and a staff of four women: Marian Davis,<sup>15</sup> May Walling, Fannie Bolton, Emily Campbell.<sup>16</sup> En route she spoke at evening meetings in Honolulu<sup>17</sup> and Auckland, arriving in Sydney on 8 December where she twice addressed the Sydney Seventh-day Adventist Church. The party arrived in Melbourne on 16 December 1891.<sup>18</sup>

Ellen White and her associates reached Victoria a week before a hundred representatives from the about 450 Adventists in Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and New South Wales met in

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<sup>13</sup>For a short account of the twenty-five day voyage, see Life Sketches, pp. 331-333.

<sup>14</sup>1854-1937, the third of James and Ellen White's four sons, 'editorial assistant and publishing manager for his mother'. In 1876 White married Mary Kelsey, an editor, who died of consumption in 1890. His two daughters remained in Battle Creek, Michigan, when White came to Australia. In 1895 he married Ethel May Lacey of Tasmania, to which union four sons and one daughter were born. See Neufeld (ed.), op. cit., pp. 1604-1606.

<sup>15</sup>Evidently Life Sketches, p. 331, is incorrect in giving the name 'Mary A. Davis'. Miss Marian Davis, 1847-1904, entered Ellen White's employ in 1879, and was probably her most significant literary assistant. Miss Davis returned with Ellen White to California in 1900. See Neufeld, op. cit., pp. 376-377.

<sup>16</sup>Of the other three women, Fannie Bolton is the best known. See 'The Fannie Bolton Story: A Collection of Source Documents', Ellen G. White Estate, Inc., Washington, D.C., 1982.

<sup>17</sup>Here Ellen White's party was augmented by George Burt Starr (1854-1944), a clergyman and teacher, and his wife Nellie. See Neufeld (ed.) op. cit., p. 1422.

<sup>18</sup>Sources for Ellen White's nine Australian years are abundant. The main ones may be categorized thus: first, three chapters in her Life Sketches, pp. 331-378; second, news reports and articles in The Bible Echo and Signs of the Times published by Adventists in Melbourne, and news reports and articles in The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald published by Adventists in Battle Creek, Michigan; third, the Ellen White letters and manuscripts, by far the most voluminous and detailed source. Beyond this are miscellaneous periodical and newspaper articles that will be listed from time to time.

conference from 24 December 1891 to 4 January 1892. In Melbourne, she spoke in the Federal Hall on December 19, and then to the conference delegates on several occasions, as well as to the Biblical Institute which continued after the conference closed. Thus almost immediately she was well-known not only to Victorian members but also to the Church's leaders throughout Australia.<sup>19</sup>

The fact that the majority of the Adventist membership in 1891 consisted of 'tradesmen living in capital cities'<sup>20</sup> shaped the geographical location of Ellen White's Australian ministry. While she wanted to attend the New Zealand Conference in April 1892, rheumatism and malaria confined her to a rented house in Preston, a suburb of Melbourne. Ellen White found it a 'humiliation' that for months she often had to speak, even in public halls, seated in a chair.<sup>21</sup> On 26 September she left Melbourne for Adelaide, partly in hope the 'excellent' climate there would aid her health, and partly to help the young church in South Australia.<sup>22</sup>

On 28 November, with improved health and spirits, Ellen White began her return journey to Melbourne, staying for two weeks in Ballarat on the way. Melbourne was again the centre of her activities from 12 December 1892 until she left for Sydney on 26 January 1893.

After a week with the Parramatta Church, Ellen White, accompanied by Emily Campbell and the Starrs, sailed for New Zealand

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<sup>19</sup>See Life Sketches, p. 333.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

<sup>21</sup>See Letter H-10, 6 April 1892, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup>See Letter W-54, 22 September 1892, p. 1.



on 4 February, remaining there until her return to Sydney on 20 December 1893.<sup>23</sup> After brief visits to Fountain Dale Estate, Kellyville and Parramatta, she hastened back to Melbourne, to attend the first Adventist camp meeting in Australia, and remained in Melbourne for three months.

Ellen White and her 'family',<sup>24</sup> of eight associates arrived to live in Granville, thirteen miles from the centre of Sydney, on 27 March 1894. Parramatta, Kellyville, Seven Hills, and Sydney itself are the main places visited during the next two months. But late in May 1894 she travelled 79 miles by train for a three-day visit to Dora Creek and Cooranbong. Returning to Granville, she moved house to a more healthful, hilltop location within the same suburb. Again Kellyville, Parramatta, Seven Hills and Granville are the place-names occurring in her letters and diaries until she made another visit to Cooranbong from 21-30 August. Thereafter the same geographical areas of Sydney, plus Ashfield, Pennant Hills, Fairlight, Petersham and Prospect fill the accounts until 11 April, except for another visit to Cooranbong from 14-23 January.

Ellen White left Granville for Melbourne on 11 April 1895. On 16 April she journeyed on to Launceston by boat and then to Hobart by train. After the marriage of William White and May Lacey on 9 May, Ellen White left for Launceston, reaching Melbourne, on either 14 or 15 May, and returning to Sydney about the end of May. Thereafter Petersham, Parramatta, Canterbury and Ashfield occur in

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<sup>23</sup>For a popular account of some of Ellen White's experiences in New Zealand, see S. Ross Goldstone, The Angel Said Australia, Warburton, 1980, especially pp. 121-130. A more detailed account is given in Arthur L. White, The Australian Years, pp. 69-112.

<sup>24</sup>Wherever an expression is given in parenthesis without credit, Ellen White is the source.

her travels, as does Cooranbong in July (1 to about 17). Next Sydney, Kellyville and Parramatta are visited, as is Cooranbong for probably all of August and about the first week of September. Then Granville is again Ellen White's home. With her health being poor, Sara McEnterfer, a companion-nurse from the United States, is welcomed on 15 October.<sup>25</sup> From 18 October to 11 November Ellen White 'labored' in the third Australian camp meeting held at Armadale, Melbourne. On her 68th birthday, 26 November, she again set out for Hobart, this time to attend the first Adventist camp meeting in Tasmania. Her return journey was by steamer, arriving in Sydney Harbour on 19 December. But on 25 December Ellen White and her party arrived in Cooranbong where three tents were pitched and 'a comfortable, convenient cottage' had been erected. This would be her principal residence until she left Sydney almost five years later to return to the United States.

Ellen White spent the greater portion of 1896 in Cooranbong, from which village she made visits to Sydney and its suburbs in March (18-23), September (4-7), October (2-5), November (circa 10-23), and perhaps December. She also visited Adelaide in October (17-19) with a brief stopover in Ballarat on the return journey, and a longer period in Melbourne (21 October to circa 3 November).

During the year 1897 Ellen White again spent most of her time at Cooranbong, with visits to such Sydney suburbs as Summer Hill, Newtown, Ashfield, and Stanmore in February (9-19), August (3-8), September (16-19), October (21-31), November (19-23), and December (3-6, 17-27).

Longer trips were again undertaken in 1898 by Ellen White, as she visited Victoria (25 February to about 13 April) and Queens-

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<sup>25</sup>See Neufeld, op. cit., p. 825.

land (13 October to 10 November). The trip south took her to Balaclava and North Fitzroy in Melbourne, plus Geelong and Ballarat, while her northern journey focussed on Brisbane and Rockhampton. In addition, she travelled to Sydney and suburbs in January (2-5, 27 to 2 February), April (circa 14-25), July (7-11, 21-27), and spent 23-31 December in Hamilton, Newcastle.

Newcastle continued to claim an important segment of Ellen White's time during 1899. She spent probably most of the first one of two weeks of January there, and made at least two visits in each of the months of February and March, and one visit in each of the months of April and May. But she also travelled to Sydney in May (26 to early June), and again in September (9-11), October (3 to circa 25-30) and perhaps late in December. She also drove from Cooranbong to Maitland on 8 September, and to Wallsend on 15 September. Hamilton was again visited 29 September to 2 October. From 13-22 October Ellen White spent travelling to and working in Toowoomba, Queensland. Maitland claimed her time again in October (3-14 and 19-21) and November (8-11, 18-21, and perhaps on the intervening weekend as well). Also a brief visit was made to Newcastle on 20 December.

Ellen White's last calendar year in Australia, 1900, found her continuing to call Cooranbong home, but visiting Sydney and its suburbs in January (3-19), May (10-15) and perhaps briefly in August; Maitland in January (19-22), February (9-12), April (13-15, 20-22), and May (4-7, 25-28); Hamilton in April (27-30); and Geelong and North Fitzroy in March (7-27). But on 29 August 1900 Ellen White boarded the SS *Moana* in Sydney en route to San Francisco. She indicated that for so many years her interest had been bound

up with the work in Australia that 'to separate from it', she wrote, 'seems like tearing me to pieces'.<sup>26</sup>

From this recital it is apparent that Ellen White lived in three principal locations in Australia between 8 December 1891 and 29 August 1900: Melbourne until the August 1894; Sydney until 25 December 1895; and thereafter Cooranbong, a village some forty-five kilometres south-west of Newcastle. Additionally, she spent from several days to many weeks in three other state capitals: Adelaide, South Australia; Hobart, Tasmania; Brisbane, Queensland. But as well she travelled by boat from Hobart to Sydney and Brisbane to Rockhampton return, and journeyed by train to several country towns and cities: Ballarat and Geelong in Victoria; Launceston in Tasmania; Maitland and Newcastle in New South Wales; Toowoomba in Queensland. A significant amount of travel by horse-drawn vehicle occurred in such Melbourne suburbs as Preston and Balaclava; Sydney suburbs such as Newtown, Petersham, Ashfield, Stanmore, Parramatta, Pennant Hills, Kellyville, Wahroonga, Hornsby; and in the vicinity of Cooranbong, bounded by Martinsville, Morisset, Dora Creek, Awaba, Fassifern, Newcastle, Maitland and Mulbring.

Hence we can conclude that Ellen White observed Australian life and landscape within the triangle bounded by Rockhampton, Hobart and Adelaide, but that her greatest attention was given to coastal segments of this south-eastern portion of Australia. Melbourne and Sydney suburbs dominated her urban experience and Cooranbong her country-village involvement. We will now seek to assess her opportunities for close contact with Australians during these years.

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<sup>26</sup>Diary entry, 29 August 1900. See Ms. 96, 1900, p. 1.

Camp meetings were the most frequent reason for Ellen White's Australian journeys. An idea popular among United States Methodists early in the nineteenth century, these convocations were used effectively by Millerites from 1842 to 1844, revived by North American Seventh-day Adventists from 1868 and tested by their New Zealand pioneers in 1893. Hence it was with evident enthusiasm that the first Australian camp meeting was opened and swelled to 108 family tents with 445 occupants in January 1894. In addition, houses close by were rented as overflow accommodation, and 'people of the finest and noblest of society'<sup>27</sup> travelled to the grounds. Such occasions gave Ellen White sustained contact with her Adventist contemporaries and the religiously-inclined in the general population. Camp meetings proper were often preceded or followed by meetings for ministers and/or administrative conferences, so were not of short duration. As a case in point, the Middle Brighton event involved Ellen White from the opening of ministers meetings on 29 December 1893 until the close of the Australian Union Conference session on 25 January 1894, with the camp meeting proper filling the days from 5-15 of January. Ellen White notes she spoke 'at length' seventeen times, and in addition made several presentations at ministers' meetings.<sup>28</sup>

A considerable level of involvement by Ellen White in subsequent Australian camp meetings can be documented: Ashfield, Armadale (Melbourne), Hobart, Stanmore, Brisbane, Newcastle, Toowoomba, Maitland, Geelong.<sup>29</sup> While these convocations threw

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<sup>27</sup>Letter 125, 12 January 1894, cited in Arthur L. White, The Australian Years, p. 116.

<sup>28</sup>Letter 88a, 10 February 1894, p. 1.

<sup>29</sup>For a brief but adequate account of these occasions, see Arthur L. White, The Australian Years, pp. 166-171, 229-236, 364-369, 371-374, 435-437, 453-4.

Ellen White into sustained contact with considerable numbers of people, such involvement was extended by the constant stream of visitors entertained in her succession of homes and in her visitation in the communities where she lived.<sup>30</sup>

Ellen White's spiritual roots were in Methodism, Millerism, and Seventh-day Adventism. Her early cultural nurture was provided by such conservative states as Maine, New York and Michigan; it was later honed by California and Europe. In coming to Australia she carried with her this freight of attitudes and ideas plus her consciousness of a distinctive mission within her denomination.<sup>31</sup> It is evident that she had depth-involvement with

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<sup>30</sup>Ibid., pp. 325-331.

<sup>31</sup>This freight of cultural and religious ideas is somewhat elaborated in Ronald D. Graybill, 'The Power of Prophecy: Ellen G. White and the Women Religious Founders of the Nineteenth Century', Ph.D. Dissertation, The Johns Hopkins University, 1983. The Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of Ellen White's distinctive mission has been conveyed in narrative form for children, and in compilations, monographs, textbooks and periodicals for adults. For examples of narrative-style presentations, see the following: Ruth Wheeler, His Messenger, Washington, D.C., 1939; Ellen G. White (compiled), I'd Like to Ask Sister White, Washington, D.C., 1965; Ella M Robinson, Stories of My Grandmother, Nashville, 1967; D. A Delafield and Gerald Wheeler, Angel Over Her Tent, Nashville, 1969; Arthur L. White, Ellen G. White: The Human Interest Story, Washington, D.C., 1972; Marye Trim, Tell Me About Ellen White, Washington D.C., 1975; Bonnie Blue Campbell, The Time the Boat Came Back, Mountain View, Calif., 1976; Paul B. Ricchiuti, Ellen: Trial and Triumph in the American Frontier, Mountain View, Calif., 1977; Norma Youngberg and others, The Spirit of Prophecy Emphasis Stories, 3 vols., Washington, D.C., 1979, 1980, 1982. Compare the following books: Witness of the Pioneers Concerning the Spirit of Prophecy: A Facsimile Reprint of Periodical and Pamphlet Articles Written by the Contemporaries of Ellen G. White, Washington, D.C., 1961; J. N. Loughborough, The Prophetic Gift in the Gospel Church, Mountain View, Calif., 1911; F. C. Gilbert, Divine Predictions of Mrs Ellen G. White Fulfilled, South Lancaster, Mass., 1922; Francis McLellan Wilcox, The Testimony of Jesus: A Review of the Work and Teachings of Mrs Ellen Gould White, Washington, D.C., 1934; Arthur Grosvenor Daniells, The Abiding Gift of Prophecy, Mountain View, Calif., 1936; William A. Spicer, The Gift of Prophecy in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Washington, D.C., 1937; W. E. Read, The Bible, The Spirit of Prophecy and the Church,

Australian society: in the homes of its people; in its city suburbs; in the considerable gatherings of its citizens effected by camp meetings; in its coastal-country life. Jessie Ackermann made four trips to Australia and felt able to offer extended comment on her observations in a book, Australia from a Woman's Point of View.<sup>32</sup> Ellen White wrote no such volume, but she either brought to or expressed within Australia much comment on female status and function. It will be the purpose of the next chapter to profile Ellen White's basic concepts of woman's identity and role in order to place in a wider context her more specific observations of Australian women during the years 1891-1900.

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Washington, D.C., 1952; Arthur W. Spalding, There Shines a Light: The Life and Work of Ellen G. White, Nashville, 1953; Arthur L. White, Ellen G. White: Messenger to the Remnant, Washington, D.C., [1954], 1969; T. Housel Jemison, A Prophet Among You, Mountain View, Calif., 1955; Denton Edward Rebok, Believe His Prophets, Washington, D.C. 1956; D. A. Delafield, Ellen G. White and the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Mountain View, Calif., 1963; Francis D. Nichol, Why I Believe in Mrs E. G. White: Some Reasons Why Seventh-day Adventists Believe That Ellen G. White Possessed the Gift of 'the Spirit of Prophecy', Washington, D.C. 1964; Medical Science and the Spirit of Prophecy, Washington, D.C., 1971; Rene Noorbergen, Ellen G. White: Prophet of Destiny, New Canaan, Connecticut, 1972; Herbert E. Douglass (ed.), What Ellen G. White Has Meant to Me, Washington, D.C., 1973; Arthur L. White, The Ellen G. White Writings, Washington, D.C., 1973; Ronald E. Ruskjer, Ellen G. White: Prophet of the Last Days, Mountain View, 1974; Desmond Ford, Physicians of the Soul, Nashville, 1980. For journal articles, see 'Special Issue: The Influence of Ellen G. White on the Work in Australasia', The Ministry: International Journal of the Seventh-day Adventist Ministry, August 1975; Adventist Heritage: A Journal of Adventist History, Spring 1982. For a bibliography covering recent research see Arthur N. Patrick, 'The Minister and the Ministry of Ellen G. White in 1982', a sixty-page unpublished paper, Avondale College, October 1982. Attention also should be given to the interpretive and apologetic histories of Seventh-day Adventism by J. N. Loughborough, A. W. Spalding, A. V. Olson, L. E. Froom, C. M. Maxwell, and others.

<sup>32</sup>Melbourne, [1913], 1981.

## Chapter 2

### 'THE CHRISTIAN GENTLEWOMAN'

The basic purpose of this thesis is to understand Ellen White in relation to the Australian woman of the 1890s. But her written comments and interpersonal relationships during the years 1891-1900 cannot be viewed in isolation from the larger context of her entire life. Indeed, the Australian chapter of Ellen White's experience is considerably an illustration of certain basic understandings of women and their role presented in copious writings during almost seventy years. Two contentions will now be argued: first, that Ellen White was a significant author amongst Seventh-day Adventists in Australia for over five years before she arrived here; second, that the most important components in her philosophy of female identity and role derive from her interpretation of women presented in both the Old and New Testaments of the Christian Bible.

From the outset of their official Antipodean missionary endeavours in 1885, Seventh-day Adventists made publishing prominent. William Arnold, one of the original seven adult missionaries from North America, saw at least 2,168 books sold during his short stay in this country.<sup>1</sup> By November 1885 an experimental number

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<sup>1</sup>Two of the seven were women. The Bible Echo and Signs of the Times, June 1888, p. 96 noted: 'On Friday May 4, Bro. Wm. Arnold, who has been connected with the work in Australia from the commencement, left for London. With his associate in the work of canvassing for Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation, he sold



of a periodical was printed, entitled Bible Echo and Signs of The Times.<sup>2</sup> In January of the next year the Echo began publication as a monthly, while in 1889 it became a semi-monthly.<sup>3</sup> By 1888 Adventist publishing demanded a three-storey brick building in North Fitzroy, Melbourne, named The Echo Publishing Company.<sup>4</sup>

Ellen White was the most visible contributor to the Echo. Its Volume 1, Number 1<sup>5</sup> carried two articles by her, 'Science and the Bible in Education', p. 1, and 'Disease and its Causes', p. 13, while its back page (p. 16) advertised her 'illustrated' volume of 'over 500 pages', The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan from the Destruction of Jerusalem to the End of Time. The Echo

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2,168 books in the colonies'. A news note on the same page states '25,213 pages of reading matter' were distributed in the first quarter of 1888. Tracts and periodicals were important components in this total. See Echo, May 1888, p. 76.

<sup>2</sup>The definite article was not added to the title until 1888.

<sup>3</sup>Volume 1, Number 1 introduced itself in this way: 'Bible Echo and Signs of the Times, issued monthly for the Australian Branch of the International Tract and Missionary Society. Devoted to the promulgation of moral and social reforms, from a purely Bible standpoint'. Cf. the article, 'Our First Paper', p. 8. In November 1893 Echo became an eight-page weekly selling for one penny.

<sup>4</sup>See Echo, December 1888, p. 192 for details of the three-storey 'main building' and the two-storey 'press room'. Echo of 15 May 1889, p. 160 stated that 'the work was begun in September last, and is now very near completion', with the new office then in use. Echo, 1 August 1889, p. 240 reported: 'The work on our new buildings is now completed, and the hall in connection with them was formally opened on 28th ult. with appropriate services'. See also Echo, 15 August 1889, p. 256.

<sup>5</sup>Eight thousand copies were printed. See Echo, February 1886, p. 32. The number of copies for each issue does not appear to have been published. However, Echo, October 1888, p. 160 reported: 'Ten thousand copies of the last number of the Echo are being distributed from our stand in the United States court of the Melbourne Exhibition'.

characteristically selected from a wide array of Christian authors such as Chalmers, Spurgeon, Trumbull, Wesley,<sup>6</sup> plus such North American Adventists as Butler, Canright, Cottrell, Jones, Smith and the Waggoners.<sup>7</sup> Stephen N. Haskell's articles were carried with great regularity in the early years, whether he was physically in Australia, North America or Europe.<sup>8</sup> But amongst these predominantly male writers<sup>9</sup> Ellen White long commanded the most visible

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<sup>6</sup>A constant feature of the Echo was its selection from a multitude of periodicals: Atlantic Monthly, Converted Catholic, Gospel Sickle, Present Truth, Methodist Recorder, Scientific American, etc.

<sup>7</sup>D. M. Canright, a prominent Adventist author in the Echo during 1886-1878, becomes the movement's most significant opponent by 1889. See Echo, 17 June 1889, p. 192. Cf. Echo, 1 July 1889, p. 207; 15 July 1889, p. 223; 1 August 1889, p. 239; 15 August 1889, p. 255. The article on p. 255 concludes: 'We leave the matter here for the present'. But Echo of 1 September 1889, p. 272 reports: 'We have received a supply of pamphlets entitled, "Replies to Elder Canright", which we will be glad to send to any one who may desire to look at the right side of the question. The book contains 200 pages, and will be sent, post-paid, for six pence'.

<sup>8</sup>Other overseas missionaries such as J. O. Corliss, M. C. Israel, W. D. Curtis, A. G. Daniells also contributed quite frequently in the early years. Corliss' contribution as Managing Editor was more significant than his signed articles.

<sup>9</sup>Some other women did provide copy for the Echo. See, for instance, the reports by Mrs Josie L. Baker, Secretary, Australian Branch of the International Tract and Missionary Society, Echo, March 1888, p. 44; 1 March 1889, p. 77. Echo, October 1886, p. 160 extends 'a hearty welcome to our old co-laborer, Sister E. J. Burnham, who comes [from America] to take a responsible position at the Echo office'. As time goes by the initials E. J. B. or the name E. J. Burnham occur in the Echo, for instance, April 1887, p. 59, May 1887, p. 75, September 1887, p. 139, October 1887, p. 155, November 1887, p. 171. On Monday, 2 July 1888, George C. Tenney arrived in Melbourne to be Echo editor, and from the issue of August 1888 (see p. 120) 'Miss E. J. Burnham' is listed as 'Assistant Editor'. Articles by women were most frequent in 'The Home Circle' section of the Echo. See in particular the series by 'A. M.', that is, Mrs A. Muckersy, 'Women of the Bible', which began in Echo of September 1890 and reached its twenty-fourth instalment in Echo, 15 October 1891, p. 310. Mrs Florence Morrison, the wife of 'Prof. E. M. Morrison' had been 'one of the Healdsburg College faculty, and came to Australia with the purpose of assist-

position, the front page of every issue from January 1886 until 1 February 1891. Thereafter the Echo placed a section entitled 'Current Comments' on its front page, and continued to carry an article by Ellen White as the first in its 'General Articles' section which moved from the front page to page two.

But Ellen White as an author provided more copy for the Echo than the leading piece in the 'General Articles' section from 1886 until her arrival. The back page of the Echo was mainly devoted to 'Editorial Notes', and amongst these the most constant feature was a quotation from 'Mrs E. G. White' varying from one to several paragraphs in length.<sup>10</sup>

The Echo also took pains to highlight Ellen White's books. The Great Controversy was advertised constantly as a volume of 'over 500 pages', 'illustrated'.<sup>11</sup> The January 1889 Echo noted that 'the contemplated change in this paper from a monthly to a semi-monthly, goes into effect with the present number', and

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ing in the establishment of a denominational school in these colonies'. Echo, 17 June 1889, p. 192. Cf. Echo, 1 September 1889, p. 272: 'We are glad to announce the safe arrival of Sister E. M. Morrison. . . and we hope that her arrival in Melbourne will soon be followed by the inception and final establishment of a school where the principles of Bible truth may be taught in connection with other branches of education'. But by 'about November 1' 1890 the Morrison family left for South Africa. See Echo, 15 January 1891, p. 32. Mrs Morrison did not appear in the Echo in connection with the kind of school she had come to develop, but as secretary of the Australian Sabbath School Association. See Echo, 1 September 1890, p. 272.

<sup>10</sup>See, for instance, Volume 6 of the Echo (1891) which carried nineteen such sections in its twenty-four issues. Observe pp. 16, 32, 48, 64, 80, 96, 112, 128, 144, 176, 192, 208, 224, 240, 256, 272, 320, 368, 384. It will be noted later that Ellen White's material was carried in each number of Echo from 1891-1900, but in a variety of positions and modes.

<sup>11</sup>For example, see the Echo of 1887 as follows: April, p. 63; May, p. 79; June, p. 95; July, p. 111; August, p. 127; October, p. 159; November, p. 175; December, p. 191. Cf. the 1888 Echo as follows: February, p. 31; March, p. 47; April, p. 63; May, p. 79; June, p. 95; August, p. 127.

advertised the newly-produced, re-titled edition of The Great Controversy or the Conflict Between Christ and his Angels and Satan and his Angels', 'in this popular author's best style', containing 'over 700 pages, with 23 full-page illustrations'.<sup>12</sup> Frequently advertised was 'a nicely bound book of 334 pages ornamented in gold and black', entitled Sketches of the Life of Paul.<sup>13</sup> Beyond this, the Echo gave increasing prominence to a whole range of Adventist books, tracts and periodicals, the most prolific author and usually the only woman named being Ellen White.<sup>14</sup>

The consistent increase of Adventist world membership stimulated the development of a wider selection of literature, and the movement's sense of mission demanded the diffusion of its concepts via the printed page. Thus, in concert with a worldwide emphasis, the Echo gave prominence to the available literature in its 'Publishers Department'. By September 1888 the list was expanded

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<sup>12</sup>See pp. 16, 15. Echo, 1 May 1889, p. 144, reports the arrival of the new 'eleventh edition' of 'that splendid volume', containing '700 octavo pages, and twenty-six full page illustrations'.

<sup>13</sup>Echo, May 1886, p. 79. See also issues of June, p. 95; July, p. 112; January 1887, pp. 15, 16; February, p. 31; April, p. 63; June, p. 95; July, p. 111; October, p. 159; December, p. 191, February 1888, p. 31; March 1888, p. 47; April, p. 63; May, p. 79; June, p. 95; July, p. 111; August, p. 127. After this issue the Echo changes from the display style of its 'Publishers' Department' to a longer 'catalogue' of 'Publications issued by Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Houses, and for sale at this Office'. It appears Sketches was not advertised after August 1888. The volume of its advertising is of interest in view of a long-standing discussion of the relationship between Sketches and W. J. Conybeare and J. S. Howson's Life and Epistles of the Apostle Paul. See Walter T. Rea, The White Lie, Turlock, California, 1982, pp. 110-112.

<sup>14</sup>Some items Ellen White authored were mentioned but apparently not sold in Australia, e.g., Ministry of Peter. See Echo, May 1886, p. 79 and elsewhere.

from a usual thirteen or fourteen items to over sixty items under three categories: 'Books', 'Subscription Books', and 'Books in Paper Covers', plus tracts and periodicals.<sup>15</sup> This extended listing was a usual feature of the Echo for the next two years, whereupon display advertising was reintroduced.<sup>16</sup> Evidently it was deemed the list of publications was too extensive for regular inclusion in the Echo, and that it was preferable to 'send free on application' 'a very neat little catalogue of publications issued and sold by the Echo Publishing Company'.<sup>17</sup> A copy of this catalogue is no longer known to exist, but the Echo from 1888-1890 makes it clear that about ten per cent of its total book-length titles were by Ellen White, far more than the output of any other author, and the only female author named.

Thus by 1890 Australian Adventists who were keeping up-to-date with the literature of their movement would have understood Ellen White's concerns at least in part through such of her writings as they had been encouraged to buy: Bible Sanctification, 88 pp.; Early Writings, 154 pp.; Experience and Views, 111 pp.; The Great Controversy, [Vol. IV] 500 pp. and [1888 edition] 700 pp.; Life of Christ and His Apostles, 788 pp.; Sketches of the Life of Paul, 334 pp.; Testimonies to the Church, four volumes aggregating about 2,655 pp., plus three pamphlets of 244, 240, 280 pp. respectively. Also the Echo gave prominence during 1890 and 1891 to Ellen White's 'THE GREAT CONTROVERSY, VOLS. 11 and 111', that is 'The Life of

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<sup>15</sup>Echo, September 1888, p. 143.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. Echo, 1 September 1890, p. 271, with Echo, 15 September 1890, p. 287.

<sup>17</sup>Echo, 15 October 1890, p. 320.

Christ in English', whereas the French, German, Swedish and Danish editions used the simpler title The Life of Christ.<sup>18</sup>

But the Echo did more than publish Ellen White's articles and quotations, plus advertise her books. In giving its 'Prospectus for 1887' it outlined its various 'Departments': Editorial, General Articles, Sabbath School, Health and Temperance, The Home Circle, Missionary, Bible Student. Under the heading 'General Articles' it stated:

The Department for General Articles will contain both original and selected matter. The articles in this division from the pen of Mrs. E. G. White are read with much satisfaction by thousands, and are well worth the price of the paper. Sermons and extracts from various eminent preachers will also appear in this department.<sup>19</sup>

A news note six months later stated:

The writings of Mrs. E. G. White, the author of the first-page article, are read with great interest almost all over the civilized world. Not only are they well-known to English readers, but they have been translated into the Scandinavian, German, French, Italian and Roumanian languages also.<sup>20</sup>

Later in the year the Echo declared Ellen White's 'world-wide reputation' to be 'a sufficient guarantee of the character' of her German-language Life of Christ.<sup>21</sup> That her books had a considerable circulation was sustained by reports that, for instance, Pacific Press in California had 'printed and bound 20,000 copies of that excellent work, Great Controversy, vol. 4, by Mrs. E. G. White, which has now reached its ninth edition'.<sup>22</sup> Further, Echo noted

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<sup>18</sup>See Echo, 15 December 1890, p. 383, and following issues to 1 May 1891, p. 143.

<sup>19</sup>Echo, January 1887, p. 15.

<sup>20</sup>Echo, July 1887, p. 112.

<sup>21</sup>Echo, October 1887, p. 160.

<sup>22</sup>Echo, August 1887, p. 128.

that on 27 August 1887 in Melbourne 'the brethren and sisters were cheered and encouraged by a discourse from Sister White, who, though absent, spoke to them through the printed page'.<sup>23</sup>

That Ellen White was a significant author for Australian Adventists from 1886 to her arrival at the end of 1891 is deemed to be established in the foregoing discussion. But if all the denominational periodicals used in this country during those years were reviewed, the conclusion would be reinforced. The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, sent worldwide, gave Ellen White its front page and more throughout this period, plus other types of emphasis similar to the Echo. The Californian weekly, The Signs of the Times, followed a comparable pattern. Both these periodicals were known to and used somewhat by Australians. Other Echo Publishing Company periodicals such as Our Australasian Youth and Sabbath School Guide, Our Young Friends and Youth's Instructor<sup>24</sup> are not extant, hence they cannot be assessed. But beyond the sources already mentioned, Ellen White was a contributor to an 1886 volume portraying Adventists' worldwide mission endeavours,<sup>25</sup> and she received frequent mention during 1891 as co-authoring with her late husband the 'new edition' of Life Sketches: Ancestry Early Life, Christian Experience and Extensive Labors of James White and His Wife, Ellen G. White, 453 pp.<sup>26</sup> Finally on this point,

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<sup>23</sup>Echo, October 1887, p. 155. Cf. Echo, December 1887, p. 192. On the Echo's editorial attitude toward Ellen White, see the issue dated 1 May 1891, p. 144.

<sup>24</sup>See Echo, February 1888, p. 32, and 1 November 1891, p. 336. The Australian periodical Youth's Instructor should not be confused with the United States journal of the same name.

<sup>25</sup>Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, Basle, Switzerland, 1886.

<sup>26</sup>See Echo, 1 February, 1891, p. 47, and the next five numbers.

the Echo gave numerous notices of Ellen White's anticipated visit and expected arrival in Australia for what was thought could be a visit of up to one year.<sup>27</sup>

One Ellen White volume 'sold by subscription', and no doubt included in the now-unavailable advertising, was described in Echo, 15 October 1890:

PATRIARCHS AND PROPHETS, a companion volume to the 'Great Controversy between Christ and Satan,' by Mrs E. G. White, has just been issued by the Pacific Press. It is a revision of Volume I, of a series of which Great Controversy is Volume 4. The book begins with an account of the inception of sin and the fall of Satan; then treats of the creation and fall of man, and the subsequent history of the human race, especially of God's people, down to the close of David's life. The style is pure and elevated, simple, yet dignified and impressive. The mechanical work on the book is excellent. The book contains over 760 pages, on fine paper, and is bound in several different styles. There are 52 fine illustrations, most of them full-page size. The work will be sold by subscription after a time. At present we can supply the retail trade at the following prices:

Cloth	12. 6d.
Library	16s 0d.
Full Morocco	20s 0d. <sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Echo, 1 July 1891, p. 208: 'Our readers will be interested to learn that there is a good probability of our receiving an early visit from Mrs. E. G. White, accompanied by her son, W. C. White. . . . before the close of the present year'. Echo, 1 August 1891, p. 240 suggested 'our annual Conference will be held about the last of November' to coincide with the White's visit. Echo, 1 September 1891, p. 272 reported the visit 'may be postponed a few months longer than was first appointed on account of a pressure of work preventing their leaving at present'. Echo, 1 October 1891, p. 304 gave November as the White's expected arrival time, and added 'it will be a great pleasure to all our people to know that unless the providence of God orders otherwise, we shall soon have these esteemed servants of Christ with us. They expect to visit nearly or quite all of our churches before leaving Australia. It is hoped that their visit will extend over a twelve-months'. Echo, 15 October 1891, p. 320 conveys the 'welcome intelligence. . . . that we anticipate the pleasure of greeting them within a few short weeks'. See also Echo, 1 November 1891, p. 336; 15 November 1891, p. 352; 1 December 1891, p. 368; and 15 December 1891, p. 384.

<sup>28</sup>See p. 320.



Thirteen months later, the month before Ellen White's arrival, Echo published two paragraphs from her Patriarchs and Prophets conveying an idealization of the mother's role. It is now opportune to address the second contention of this chapter by noting how Patriarchs and Prophets profiles Ellen White's concepts of female identity and role.<sup>29</sup>

The foundations for Ellen White's concepts relating to women are firmly laid in her doctrine of Creation. In the first chapter of Genesis she saw man presented as 'the crowning work of the Creator, and the one for whom the beautiful earth had been fitted up'.<sup>30</sup> For her, humanity derives not from 'a line of developing germs, mollusks, and quadrupeds', but from 'the great Creator'.<sup>31</sup> Essential to this formulation is the notion of original

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<sup>29</sup> Although the volume Patriarchs and Prophets was issued in 1890, its thought forms can be traced through Ellen G. White, Spiritual Gifts, Vol. I, Battle Creek, Michigan, 1858, and The Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. I, Battle Creek, Michigan, 1870, plus periodical articles. Both Spiritual Gifts and Spirit of Prophecy were sub-titled The Great Controversy Between Christ and His Angels and Satan and His Angels, the most significant organizing concept in Ellen White's writings between 1858 and her death in 1915. Cf. Joseph Battistone, The Great Controversy Theme in E. G. White's Writings, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 1978. Echo, January 1887, p. 4 quoted 'Dr. Beecher, in his "Conflict of Ages".' Ellen White's five main volumes on the 'controversy' theme are now entitled 'The Conflict of the Ages' series, and include: Patriarchs and Prophets, 755 pp.; Prophets and Kings, 733 pp.; The Desire of Ages, 835 pp.; The Acts of the Apostles, 602 pp.; The Great Controversy, 678 pp. Related to this theme are two other volumes, Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 152 pp.; Christ's Object Lessons, 421 pp. The page numbers indicated are for Ellen White's text in the current English editions exclusive of appendices and indices. The earliest editions of Patriarchs and Prophets used in Australia were published by Pacific Press of California, but several editions were later produced locally by the Echo Publishing Company.

<sup>30</sup> Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 44. Although the concepts presented in the ensuing pages could be illustrated from many other Ellen White writings, referencing will be limited to Patriarchs since that was the most significant source used by Australian Adventists during the time under investigation.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

perfection:

Man was to bear God's image, both in outward resemblance and in character. Christ alone is 'the express image' of the father; but man was formed in the likeness of God. His nature was in harmony with the will of God. His mind was capable of comprehending divine things. His affections were pure; his appetites and passions were under the control of reason. He was holy and happy in bearing the image of God, and in perfect obedience to his will.<sup>32</sup>

Adam was of 'lofty stature and perfect symmetry', while 'Eve was somewhat less in stature; yet her form was noble, and full of beauty'.<sup>33</sup> 'God celebrated the first marriage', giving Adam 'a companion', who was 'one with him in love and sympathy':

Eve was created from a rib taken from the side of Adam, signifying that she was not to control him as the head, nor to be trampled under his feet as an inferior, but to stand by his side as an equal, to be loved and protected by him. A part of man, bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh, she was his second self; showing the close union and the affectionate attachment that should exist in this relation.<sup>34</sup>

Thus from her doctrine of Creation Ellen White developed an affirmative view of marriage as 'honorable', indeed as 'one of the first gifts of God to man':

When the divine principles are recognized and obeyed in this relation, marriage is a blessing; it guards the purity and happiness of the race, it provides for man's social needs, it elevates the physical, the intellectual, and the moral nature.<sup>35</sup>

But over against the notions of original perfection and ideal relationships Ellen White placed the stark tragedy of the Fall. Thereafter Adam and Eve were no longer 'in harmony with each other', indeed 'sin had brought discord, and now their union could be maintained and harmony preserved only by submission on the part of the one or the other':

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid.

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

Eve had been the first in transgression; and she had fallen into temptation by separating from her companion, contrary to the divine direction. It was by her solicitation that Adam sinned, and she was now placed in subjection to her husband. Had the principles enjoined in the law of God been cherished by the fallen race, this sentence, though growing out of the results of sin, would have proved a blessing to them; but man's abuse of the supremacy thus given him has too often rendered the lot of woman very bitter, and made her life a burden.<sup>36</sup>

Hence it is in relief to this shattered ideal that Ellen White presents 'the plan of redemption',<sup>37</sup> which manifests God's justice and his mercy, and fully vindicates divine 'wisdom and righteousness in His dealings with evil'.<sup>38</sup> Across the stage of earthly life move patriarchs and prophets, exemplifying 'the awful depravity resulting from Satan's policy to remove from God's creatures the restraint of his holy law', and demonstrating 'the principles of his rules of government'.<sup>39</sup>

Women do not figure significantly after Ellen White's account of the Creation and the Fall until the patriarchal age. Abraham is presented as the undoubted family leader, while the Hagar experience is seen as 'a violation of the law of God, and fatal to the sacredness and peace of the family relation'.<sup>40</sup> While Isaac's marriage is viewed as being in accord with the contemporary customs, there is at least the implication that it is well for youth in the 'bestowal of their affection' to be 'guided by the judgment of their experienced, God-fearing parents'.<sup>41</sup> Within the context of a discussion concerning Ishmael's marriage

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<sup>36</sup>Ibid., pp. 58-59.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., pp. 63-70.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 145.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 171.

to heathen wives, and of Lot's union with 'a selfish, irreligious woman', Ellen White finds occasion to comment:

He who has entered the marriage relation while unconverted, is by his conversion placed under stronger obligation to be faithful to his companion, however widely they may differ in regard to religious faith; yet the claims of God should be placed above every earthly relationship, even though trials and persecution may be the result. With the spirit of love and meekness, this fidelity may have an influence to win the unbelieving one. But the marriage of Christians with the ungodly is forbidden in the Bible. The Lord's direction is, 'Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers'.<sup>42</sup>

Ellen White reviews Joseph's 'temptation, so sudden, so strong, so seductive', culminating in the triumph of 'religious principle'.<sup>43</sup> Within the Exodus story she finds lessons from the experience of Miriam, and seems to approve the 'timid, retiring disposition' of the 'gentle and affectionate' Zipporah.<sup>44</sup> From Baal-peor comes a warning that throughout 'the ages there are strewn wrecks of character that have been stranded upon the rocks of sensual indulgence'.<sup>45</sup> Satan's agents are yet the same as he employed three millennia ago:

By worldly friendships, by the charms of beauty, by pleasure-seeking, mirth, feasting, or the wine-cup, he tempts to the violation of the seventh commandment.<sup>46</sup>

From the story of Samson and his parents Ellen White draws lessons concerning parental responsibility, 'the effect of pre-natal influences', and the problem of marriages between 'the godly and the ungodly'.<sup>47</sup> Hannah, fervent in piety, 'gentle and

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 175.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 217.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., pp. 383-386.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 457.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 458.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., pp. 561-563.

unassuming', her character 'marked with deep earnestness and a lofty faith' becomes a kind of paradigm of the ideal mother.<sup>48</sup>

Again the sanctity of marriage and the significance of parental example are underlined in the story of 'David's sin and repentance' and the tragedy of Absalom's rebellion. But probably Ellen White's most exalted expression of the mother's role is that published by the Echo the month before she arrived in Australia:

How far-reaching in its results was the influence of that one Hebrew woman, and she an exile and a slave! The whole future life of Moses, the great mission which he fulfilled as the leader of Israel, testifies to the importance of the work of the Christian mother. There is no other work that can equal this. To a very great extent the mother holds in her own hands the destiny of her children. She is dealing with developing minds and characters, working not alone for time, but for eternity. She is sowing seed that will spring up and bear fruit, either for good or for evil. She has not to paint a form of beauty upon canvas or to chisel it from marble, but to impress upon a human soul the image of the divine. Especially during their early years, the responsibility rests upon her of forming the character of her children. The impressions now made upon their developing minds will remain with them all through life. Parents should direct the instruction and training of their children while very young, to the end that they may be Christians. They are placed in our care to be trained, not as heirs to the throne of an earthly empire, but as kings unto God, to reign through unending ages.

Let every mother feel that her moments are priceless; her work will be tested in the solemn day of accounts. Then it will be found that many of the failures and crimes of men and women have resulted from the ignorance and neglect of those whose duty it was to guide their childless feet in the right way. Then it will be found that many who have blessed the world with the light of genius and truth and holiness, owe the principles that were the mainspring of their influence and success to a praying, Christian mother.<sup>49</sup>

Thus while commenting on the Old Testament Ellen White shared with her Australian readers the significance she saw in the doctrine of Creation for female identity, and the way in which the the Fall impinges on woman's role. She salvaged from the lives of

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<sup>48</sup>Ibid., pp. 569-574.

<sup>49</sup>Echo, 15 November 1891, quoted from Ibid., p. 244.

the patriarchs, plus the experience of Israel and its kings, lessons illuminating the roles of wife and mother and showing the problems caused by deviance from God's ideal. Yet it is impossible to profile her gender-related thoughts using only the pictures drawn in Patriarchs and Prophets. Ellen White's writings on the life of Christ must also be considered. To do this we will take as evidence The Desire of Ages, the volume she completed under Australian conditions.<sup>50</sup>

Ellen White presents the Virgin Mary as an ideal mother. Though essentially unprivileged, Mary was the 'first human teacher' of the child Jesus. She was exemplary in faith even though limited in her understanding of Christ's mission. Further, Mary was a sorrowful witness to the trials of his early life:

By her vindication of what she knew to be right in His conduct, she herself was brought into trying positions. She looked upon the associations of the home, and the mother's tender watchcare over her children, as of vital importance in the formation of character.<sup>51</sup>

Of similar sterling worth was Elisabeth, one of the 'godly pair' given the promise of a son who would prepare the Lord's way.<sup>52</sup> Ellen White finds in the instruction to Zacharias and Elisabeth a springboard for comment on parental responsibility:

In childhood and youth the character is most impressible. The power of self-control should then be acquired. By the fire-side and at the family board influences are exerted whose results are as enduring as eternity. More than any natural endowment, the habits established in early years decide

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<sup>50</sup>See Robert W. Olson and Ron D. Graybill, 'How The Desire of Ages Was Written', Washington, D.C., 1979. Cf. Arthur L. White, 'The Ellen G. White Historical Writings', Adventist Review, 12 July to 23 August 1979. The Desire of Ages, published in 1898, was Ellen White's major literary project during her Australian years, though at least six other volumes and hundreds of articles were published 1892-1900.

<sup>51</sup>The Desire of Ages, p. 90. See also pp. 43-58, 68-74, 75-92, 144-153, 321, 751-752.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 97.

whether a man will be victorious or vanquished in the battle of life. Youth is the sowing time. It determines the character of the harvest, for this life and for the life to come.<sup>53</sup>

But in Ellen White's view not all the women of the four gospels possessed the characteristics of Elisabeth and Mary. Mary of Magdala and Bethany was 'looked upon as a great sinner, but Christ knew the circumstances that had shaped her life'. Instead of a case that 'appeared hopeless', Jesus 'saw in Mary capabilities for good':

The one who had fallen, and whose mind had been a habitation of demons, was brought very near to the Saviour in fellowship and ministry.<sup>54</sup>

In the New Testament accounts of such individuals as Mary Magdalene and the Samaritan woman who 'proved herself a more effective missionary than His own disciples', Ellen White found a pattern for recovering the 'fallen' and initiating them into the missionary task of the church. From being a despised woman living in an illicit relationship, the Samaritan woman was not only accepted but commissioned. Hence her case represents the working of that practical faith in Christ which illustrates a crucial truth: 'Every true disciple is born into the kingdom of God as a missionary'.<sup>55</sup>

Of course there are other gender-related comments in The Desire of Ages. Christ's attendance of the marriage feast at Cana illustrated the fact that he came 'to give to men the cup of blessing, by His benediction to hallow the relations of human life'.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 101.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 568.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., pp. 183-195.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., p. 114.

Indeed, by attending the wedding feast 'Jesus honored marriage as a divine institution'.<sup>57</sup> And there is other sensitive narration in which a woman or women are centre-stage.<sup>58</sup>

The foregoing discussion has arbitrarily limited itself to two pieces of evidence among many. Patriarchs and Prophets and The Desire of Ages have been chosen as illustrative of the contention that the most important components in Ellen White's philosophy of female identity and role derive from her interpretation of the biblical woman.<sup>59</sup> These two volumes convey Ellen White's mature reflection on these themes, and were widely circulated amongst Australians. While the 3,400 pages of her Testimonies will be seen as important to her understanding of woman, her ideological roots were biblical before they were cultural and sociological. Hence the initial focus has been upon the 1,700 pages in two volumes most concerned with the text of Scripture.

Ellen White's writings convey the basic idealism of the creationist yet the realism of lapsarian thought. These two polarities seem to be in constant dialogue, with their meeting-ground being the redemption divinely offered in Christ. Hence she conveys the constant sense that contemporary life is an experience between Genesis and Revelation, Eden Lost and Eden Restored. She has a high view of marriage, a demanding conception of parental responsibility and motherhood, yet neither her own lifestyle nor that recommended in her writings conforms fully to her religious and cultural milieu. Often an iconoclastic spirit, sometimes an

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<sup>57</sup>Ibid., p. 151.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid., pp. 788-794.

<sup>59</sup>See p. 11.



incisive critic of the status quo, usually an apocalyptic visionary and a woman with deep social concerns, Ellen White both lived within and transcended her chosen religious community of the 1890s. That other-worldly Utopianism was held in creative tension with such this-worldly necessities as educating girls and paying for the 'noble work' of 'women who labor in the gospel' was possible because Ellen White had a paradigm, an inner script, for 'the Christian woman' or 'gentlewoman',<sup>60</sup> a vision she determined to translate into reality.<sup>61</sup> And her voluminous writings were directed in part toward achieving that particular purpose in church and society.

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<sup>60</sup>See Evangelism As Set Forth in the Writings of Ellen G. White, Washington, D.C., 1946, pp. 491-495, and Ellen G. White, 'Help in Every Time of Need', Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, 7 April 1904, pp. 8-9.

<sup>61</sup>Consider too the element of dialogue between equality and patriarchy in Ellen White's writings. R. David Freedman, 'Woman, A Power Equal to Man: Translation of Woman As A "Fit Helpmate" for Man Is Questioned', Biblical Archaeology Review, January/February 1983, pp. 56-58, presents evidence that Genesis 2:18b should be translated 'a power equal to him' rather than 'a helper fit for him'. See 'Queries and Comments' in BAR, May/June 1983, pp. 25-27 for further discussion of this proposal, and for evidence supporting it from traditional Jewish commentaries. Perhaps Ellen White would have found this translation congruent with some aspects of her gender-related thought.

## Chapter 3

### THE AUSTRALIAN WOMAN, 1891-1900

R. W. Connell and T. H. Irving suggest that the interaction of ruling class and working class in Australia can be divided into four basic eras: 1788-1840, when the foundations of colonial capitalism were laid; 1840-1890, during which time a mercantile, urban bourgeoisie developed a cultural hegemony over a largely prosperous working class; 1890-1930, when a working-class mobilization occurred; 1930-1975, during which years the industrial ruling class achieved a new dominance.<sup>1</sup>

It is not the purpose of this chapter to describe or challenge this periodisation. Rather it is intended to explore another struggle inextricably related to the spectrum of issues which Connell and Irving present in their text, endnotes and documents: the status of the Australian woman in the last decade of the nineteenth century.

A large body of literature broadly relevant to this basic issue has been produced in Australia during the past two

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<sup>1</sup>R. W. Connell and T. H. Irving, Class Structure in Australian History: Documents, Narrative and Argument, Melbourne, 1980. The use of Connell and Irving's categories does not suggest that John Rickard's apologetic for a middle-class to be recognized is invalid. See his 'The Middle Class: What Is to Be Done?' Historical Studies, Vol. 19 (April 1981), pp. 446-453. Cf. two other reviews of Class Structure in the same issue of Historical Studies: Humphrey McQueen, 'The Empire Strikes Back', pp. 442-446; Robin Gollan, 'The Bones Stripped Bare', pp. 440-442. Gollan is of the opinion that 'with all its weaknesses' Class Structure 'will significantly advance the study of Australian history'. See p. 442, and cf. Rickard's summary comment on p. 453.

decades.<sup>2</sup> It is evident that the period 1891-1900 cannot be isolated from numerous factors as chronologically distant as 1788. Nor can the last decade of the nineteenth century be assumed to lack some continuity with contemporary Australian society.

In recent years the quality of gender arrangements<sup>3</sup> in Australia has been described by language varying from mild to strident. For John Larkins and Bruce Howard Australia is a 'fairly unsatisfactory male-dominated society'.<sup>4</sup> Julie Rigg sees it as sharing with other industrial nations 'something which could be labelled crudely the woman problem'.<sup>5</sup> According to Patricia Edgar and Hilary McPhee, Australia's mass media, as is the case elsewhere, has as its 'chief stooge' a distorted 'female stereotype' which discriminates against woman, perpetuating an image of her as a sex symbol and an inferior human being.<sup>6</sup> However, these comparatively restrained criticisms do not adequately convey either the force or the emotion of a large body of literature flowing from Australian presses during the seventies and eighties. Such writing may address societal factors which are seen to 'reinforce the role

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<sup>2</sup>For a sampling of this 'diverse and widespread' literature, see Susan Higgins and Jill Matthews, 'For the Record: Feminist Publications in Australia Since 1975', Meanjin Quarterly, Vol.38 (September 1979), pp. 321-333.

<sup>3</sup>The term 'gender arrangements' is taken from Dorothy Dinnerstein, The Rocking of the Cradle, and the Ruling of the World, Norwich, 1976, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup>John Larkins and Bruce Howard, Sheilas: A Tribute to Australian Women, Adelaide, 1976, p. 8.

<sup>5</sup>Julie Rigg (ed.), In Her Own Right: Women of Australia, Melbourne, 1969, p. vii.

<sup>6</sup>Patricia Edgar and Hilary McPhee, Media She, Melbourne, 1974, p. 1.

of women as incompetent, decorative, dependent and emotional'.<sup>7</sup>

But its authors also opt for emotive language as they confront what they label as blatant, subtle, unacknowledged male oppression which subjugates and exploits Australian women with pervasive, identity-destroying subordinationism:<sup>8</sup>

Australia is a sexist society. Women are exploited for their sex, their breeding power and their labour. In our homes, on the labour market, in schools, in the church, the law and in politics their needs are subjugated to those of men. They are manipulated by an increasingly subtle exploitative social system into regarding themselves as incompetent in the performance of those tasks which carry the greatest prestige and economic reward. Therefore they rarely enter the professions, they balk at coming to grips with day-to-day legal and financial matters, and in general lack confidence to perform any tasks other than those oriented towards the service of men or children. When they do enter the workforce most perform either menial repetitive tasks for a pittance, or those defined as essentially female--nursing, teaching, waitressing--all of which are extensions of home duties, caring for people, rearing the young and serving people with food.<sup>9</sup>

This assessment is consonant with Miriam Dixson's opinion that there is a pervasive problem in Australia's man-woman relationships.<sup>10</sup> Dixson both indicts the present and exposes the past in her attempt to motivate creative change.<sup>11</sup> Consumerism, she declares,

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<sup>7</sup>Jan Mercer (ed.), The Other Half: Women in Australian Society, Melbourne, 1975, p. 14.

<sup>8</sup>Note the use of these terms or their synonyms by Mercer, The Other Half, pp. 9, 12, 23.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 23. Sexism is defined well by a quotation from Elizabeth Reid in International Women's Year: Report of the Australian National Advisory Committee, Canberra, 1976, p. 8. Like racism, sexism 'takes differences, transforms them into assumptions about what a group is "really like", and imposes these assumptions on that group'. See p. 9 also.

<sup>10</sup>Miriam Dixson, The Real Matilda: Woman and Identity in Australia, 1788-1975, Blackburn, Victoria, 1976.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., pp. 211, 12-13. Cf. p. 9 as follows: 'My purpose in exploring the legacy of the Australian past in relation to the standing of women is to set ourselves free, in the present, now,

floods the global village with a model of woman that is 'part-insult, part-joke - the stunted, dehumanized Android, the dolly-bird'.<sup>12</sup> This public image pervades yet is not limited to Australia, but the 'land of mateship' adds to it factors which make Australian women 'come pretty close to top rating as the "Doormats of the Western World"'.<sup>13</sup>

This problem is symbolized by the popular song, 'Waltzing Matilda', in which a woman-rejecting swagman idolizes a surrogate, a thing, relating to an item of property rather than to a person. Dixon believes Australians have accepted Paterson's expression of the lyric (a folk song from Western Queensland?) as truth, and hugged it to their hearts in a society devoid of goddesses. Indeed, this country's gods avoid or fear women, their misogynist attitudes leading to contempt for her, and even brutality toward her. Since the accepted gods are such as horses, bushrangers and male explorers, women are pygmy figures in the contemporary Australian culture, and are largely expunged from its history. The result: impoverished relationships; rigid sex-role differentiation; denial of personhood; stunted fellowship; unshared humanity.<sup>14</sup>

Dixon's chief focus is identity, defined in psychohistorical terms, a process centred in both the individual and the communal culture. Her challenge to us, then, is to develop a society in which man and woman 'aren't separate beings but two

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from those past influences we might feel damage or retard us today; and thus to strengthen an ancient concept of shared humanity between man and woman'.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., pp. 11-13.

complementary aspects of an entity called "the human being".<sup>15</sup>  
 To achieve this will be to liberate woman from the prison of man's mind and her own, to be affirmative of life and such desirable human qualities as inwardness and sensitivity. All persons will thus share the range of qualities which add up to authentic personhood. For woman the present situation is inequality, denigration, subservience, subordination, powerlessness, impoverished fellowship. Meanwhile, as man seeks power and status he too is a starved prisoner, grasping at illusory compensations, denying himself authentic interpersonal relationships.<sup>16</sup>

This thesis<sup>17</sup> leads Dixon to express a single problem in a variety of words:

. . . the overall standing of women in Australia comes close to *lowest* among Western industrial democracies. . .

Australian woman's sense of personhood is among the thinnest, the least robust. . . .

. . . Australia is like the body of an unloved woman.

. . . Australian men withhold shared humanity. . . .

. . . the peculiarly crippled cultural definition of female-ness Australian history has bequeathed us.

The obliteration of women from top level decision-making structures. . . .

. . . Australian women are amongst the least confident and autonomous in the Western world.

. . . the single moststriking feature of our national identity is a womanlessness that amounts in some senses to her obliteration. . . .

We are also more well known than we imagine for the curiously low standing of our women.

In Australia, I suspect the relational distance between the

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<sup>15</sup>Ibid., p. 14.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., pp. 15-18.

<sup>17</sup>See, in particular, pp. 221, 131.

sexes is, by and large, stretched thinner than in comparable communities.

. . . Australian woman's not-quite-western low status. . . .

. . . the unusually diminished quality of woman in our folkways.

. . . a demeaned and debased vision of woman.

. . . contemporary mass culture is shot through with currents of insult, denigration and muted hatred for women.

. . . the curiously low standing and impoverished self-identity of Australian women.

. . . a status for women which is unusually diminished, considering we are a Western democracy.

. . . the profound unconscious contempt for women that pervades the Australian ethos.<sup>18</sup>

Such expressions also give substance to Dixson's claim that throughout her book 'a central focus is on status'.<sup>19</sup> The emphasis, though, gives primary significance to the question of identity as both woman's self-concept and society's (male and female) estimate. Hence, the quest for a 'non-sexist and humanized value system'<sup>20</sup> is engaged on the basis of Australia's need to jettison its inadequate Matildas. It is evident from this discussion that Dixson functions as a contemporary social critic on the basis of her research as a psychosocial historian.

There is a considerable body of assent to the basic judgment that 'Australian women most certainly enjoy an inferior status in contemporary society, as Dixson and other historians have argued'.<sup>21</sup> Kay Daniels and Mary Murnane, in their volume 'intended

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., pp. 21, 23, 24, 40, 45, 48, 50, 58, 60, 63, 71, 80, 109, 117, 155, 173-4, 188.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 221.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 231.

<sup>21</sup>Patricia Grimshaw, 'Women and the Family in Australian History', in Elizabeth Windschuttle (ed.), Women, Class and History: Feminist Perspectives on Australia 1788-1978, Melbourne, 1980, p. 38.

to bring the reader into an active relationship with the past',<sup>22</sup> do not imply that what has been constantly 'uphill' is now remarkably different. For Anne Summers, 'women are denied an explicit and socially valued place in what is generally identified as our culture'.<sup>23</sup> Norma Grieve and Patricia Grimshaw in 1981 perceived the Australian woman as experiencing a 'continuing inferior' or 'secondary status', 'subordination', 'exclusion', and 'sexual inequality'.<sup>24</sup>

The Australian woman of 1891-1900 can neither be divorced from nor identified with her sister of the present. But for this discussion to be fruitful, it must proceed beyond contemporary diagnoses of a social situation to ask how this situation began.<sup>25</sup> In addition to giving a critique of sexism, Summers 'adopted the device of analysing the position of women in Australia in terms of two stereotypes'. One of these derives from the early years of colonization, and forms a contrast with its 'prescriptive' opposite, the 'God's Police stereotype'.<sup>26</sup> It is on historical grounds that Summers interprets Australian women as 'stereotyped representations within a moral dualism' designed to perpetuate patriarchy.<sup>27</sup>

Dixson's explanation is more complex than Summers' dualism,

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<sup>22</sup>Kay Daniels and Mary Murnane, Uphill All the Way: A Documentary History of Women in Australia, St. Lucia, Queensland, 1980, p. XI.

<sup>23</sup>Anne Summers, Damned Whores and God's Police: The Colonization of Women in Australia, Ringwood, Victoria, 1975, p. 34.

<sup>24</sup>Norma Grieve and Patricia Grimshaw (eds.), Australian Women: Feminist Perspectives, Melbourne, 1981, pp. xi-xv.

<sup>25</sup>The issue of 'how it all began' is the one with which Grieve and Grimshaw begin in Australian Women.

<sup>26</sup>Summers, Damned Whores and God's Police, p. 468.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., pp. 19-27, 472.



even though it has significant points of congruence. The Real Matilda argues that a number of factors may reasonably be linked to form a strong chain of causation, in particular the identity and standing of the poor, convict and Irish women during Australia's formative decades. The approach Dixson takes to her subject needs to be understood in order to adequately assess her conclusions. As a case in point, she affirms the crucial importance of male attitudes to women for the process of identity formation. A precis of this concept suggests its components:

The casual poor man 'thingified' woman, treated her as slave, an unworthy being. The more acute her feelings of unworthiness, the more bearable was his own negative identity, the less threatening his self-evaluation, the more fordable was the abyss of his own worthlessness and despair. Males demeaned, demean; brutalized, brutalize; dominated, dominate; humiliated, humiliate; debased, debase. Whether such attempts are outwardly successful or not, whether they are resisted or not, they are still influential in creating impoverished selfhood. 'Women "fit" the tendency by internalizing the required male definition', and they act out the script of 'their' males who need them 'to feel more demeaned, inadequate or uncertain in identity' than they themselves feel.<sup>28</sup>

Dixson's approach, as stated earlier, seeks to include the insights of the psychosocial historian. Rather than being an exact science, such a discipline proceeds with calculated guesses, hunches, impressions, intuitions. But its attempts at expressing meaning are legitimate; indeed, they are necessary if the meaning of the past is to be exegeted for the present and future. It is important

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<sup>28</sup>This paragraph is drawn from Arthur N. Patrick, 'The Real Matilda: An Abstract and Critique', an unpublished paper, University of New England, 1982, p. 5. Note Dixson's chapter 'Women Among the Casual Poor', pp. 89-113, especially pp. 106-107. Cf. A. J. Hammerton, '"Without Natural Protectors": Female Immigration to Australia 1832-36', Historical Studies, Vol. 16 (October 1975), pp. 539-566; C. B. and M. B. Schedvin, 'The Nomadic Tribes of Urban Britain: A Prelude to Botany Bay', Historical Studies, Vol. 18 (October 1978), pp. 254-276; Michael Sturma, 'Eye of the Beholder: The Stereotype of Women Convicts, 1788-1852', Labour History, No. 34 (May 1978), pp. 3-10.

to remember, however, the tentative nature of conclusions reached in such 'exploratory' research.<sup>29</sup>

There are other options more broadly applicable to female subordination in Australia. Dorothy Dinnerstein combines social-philosophical, social-scientific, literary, and psychoanalytical streams of formal thought with her experimental study of perception and cognition to produce a creative analysis of the relationship of man and woman.<sup>30</sup> The significance of her conclusions has been observed within the Australian discussion.<sup>31</sup> Rosemary Ruether examines sexism in relation to religious, racial, psychoanalytic, social and ecological concerns.<sup>32</sup> But rather than further extend either this chapter's diagnosis of contemporary Australian society or its exploration into 'how it all began', we must now turn to factors more immediately influencing the Australian woman near the close of the nineteenth century.

One influential factor was the rapid growth and change occurring in Australia's population during the last half of the nineteenth century. As at 31 December 1851 the total population

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<sup>29</sup>Dixson well asserts hers is an 'exploratory book,' even 'a temporary scaffolding'. See pp. 11, 13. It is well to observe Timothy L. Smith's cautions lest 'psycho-history, or psychoanalytically oriented history' be allowed to 'degenerate into mere speculation'. See his 'Social Reform: Some Reflections on Causation and Consequence', in Edwin S. Gaustad (ed.), The Rise of Adventism: Religion and Society in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America, New York, 1974, pp. 23-24.

<sup>30</sup>Dinnerstein, The Rocking of the Cradle.

<sup>31</sup>Norma Grieve and Michael Perdices, 'Patriarchy: A Refuge From Maternal Power?', Grieve and Grimshaw (eds.), Australian Women, pp. 25-38.

<sup>32</sup>Rosemary Radford Ruether, New Woman New Earth: Sexist Ideologies and Human Liberation, New York, 1975. Cf. John R. Gaden, 'Reclaiming Their Freedom: Women and the Church', Grieve and Grimshaw (eds.), Australian Women, pp. 15-24.

of the country was 437,665. This almost trebled during the next decade to 1,168,149 by the end of 1861, and increased to 3,765,339 by 31 December 1900.<sup>33</sup> During this period the capital cities developed rapidly: whereas Sydney housed 95,789 people in 1861, by 1901 its population was 481,830; Melbourne grew from 206,780 in 1871 to 496,079 in 1901. In 1861 612,531 persons born in the United Kingdom were living in Australia; in 1901 there were 679,159 such persons. Thus in 1861 some 53.18 percent of Australia's population had been born in the United Kingdom, but this percentage fell to 18 percent by 1901.<sup>34</sup>

Other social changes also need to be noted. Australia's population before 1850 came from the working classes of England, Scotland, Ireland, and their children, but in the latter half of the century the population became more varied, the average age became higher, and the birth rate declined.<sup>35</sup>

Gold not only increased the population, it helped to transplant the fruitage of the industrial revolution to Australia: gas lighting, sewerage, water supply, the electric telegraph, machinery and factories. Thus the cities altered from being 'the entrepot depots between the areas of production and the markets of Great Britain' to become, as well, industrial centres.<sup>36</sup> In the country, the shepherd was eliminated by fences, the bullock-driver by the rail-way. More than this, a pervasive belief went hand-in-hand with labour shortages to create social equality, and compara-

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<sup>33</sup>C. M. H. Clark (ed.), Select Documents in Australian History, 1851-1900, Sydney, [1955], 1977, pp. 664-5.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., pp. 666, 667.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 658.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., pp. 658-659.

tive prosperity not only caused material well-being to appear to be part of a civilized life, it also made religious belief seem less necessary.<sup>37</sup> Nationalism, another mark of the late nineteenth century, flowered along with utopianism, egalitarianism, and the determination to provide education for all.<sup>38</sup>

Prior to 1850 women were 'greatly outnumbered' by men for three reasons, according to Ruth Teale: six times as many male convicts as female were transported to the colonies by the British Government; the wives of free men tended to remain in Britain; the principal sources of income were dominantly male preserves.<sup>39</sup> Indeed, as late as 1911 there were still 108 men to 100 women, but the latter 'no longer suffered the social consequences of being in short supply'.<sup>40</sup> After 1850 Australian society developed more numerous middle and upper classes, comprising immigrants without a close knowledge of convictism and settlers determined to suppress the convict 'stain' in their ancestry. On these classes Teale comments:

They perpetuated the division between 'respectable' women

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., pp. 659-661. Cf. C. M. H. Clark, A History of Australia, Vol. 5, The People Make Laws, 1888-1955, Melbourne, 1981. Clark notes that in 1888 one of two ideas voiced by 'secular improvers' was that 'the death of God had uncovered in humanity the capacity for better things: human beings could now become god-like'. See p. 53.

<sup>38</sup>Clark, Select Documents, pp. 661-663. Note the documents cited on pp. 664-816. Cf. R. A. Gollan, 'Nationalism, The Labour Movement and the Commonwealth, 1880-1900', in Gordon Greenwood (ed.), Australia: A Social and Political History, Sydney, [1955], 1977, pp. 145-195.

<sup>39</sup>Ruth Teale (ed.), Colonial Eve: Sources on Women in Australia, 1788-1914, Melbourne, 1978, p. 3. Cf. Allan M. Grocott, Convicts, Clergymen and Churches: Attitudes of Convicts and Ex-Convicts Toward the Clergy in New South Wales from 1788-1851, Sydney, 1980, pp. 4-5.

<sup>40</sup>Teale, Colonial Eve, p. 78.

(who stayed at home, in idleness) and women who earned a living. Their ideas of womanhood were those common among the middle classes in British and North American society, rather than any produced by the convict mould. The influence of liberal protestants among the governing class may well explain the paternalistic attitude of middle class men toward women; it best explains why liberal legislators in South Australia enfranchised women as early as 1894, and why a former chief justice and lieutenant-governor of New South Wales championed divorce law reform. The influence of convictism was suppressed by the middle classes; but its subtle and complex effects, as well as those of national and class mores, can be seen in the harshness and brutality of life in Australia in the decades before the First World War.<sup>41</sup>

So the years between 1850 and 1914 may be viewed as a 'formative period' of Australian history, characterized by a 'population explosion', 'urbanization', and a 'search for Australian identity'.<sup>42</sup> But within this longer period the 1890s possess a special significance. They witnessed the rapid nurturing of federal sentiment during the intense dialogue and dialectic which resulted in Federation for the six colonies in 1901.<sup>43</sup> In the 1880s Australia heard 'the voices of secular improvers' in both the city and the bush. One of two dominating sentiments proclaimed was that 'the workers of society were entitled to a larger share of the greater wealth quaranteed by improvements in the production and distribution of goods'.<sup>44</sup> But the land boom of the 1880s was followed by the disillusionment and distress of the 1890s, when depression and drought exposed the limitations of

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<sup>41</sup>Ibid., pp. 5-6.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. vii. 'By 1891 the urban proportion had risen to two-thirds, a proportion equalled by the United States only in 1920 and by Canada only in 1950'. Ibid., p. 78.

<sup>43</sup>See Clark, The People Make Laws. Note in particular chapter 5, 'Federation or Revolution', pp. 129-176.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 53. But see the whole of Chapter 3, 'Moral Improvers and Economic Developers'.

unionism, and a new set of conditions created the Labor Party.<sup>45</sup>

The decade of the nineties also saw a flowering of religious optimism, well illustrated in the pragmatic leadership of Archbishop Patrick Francis Moran (1830-1911).<sup>46</sup> Indeed, the 1890s was the climax of what went before, and a seed-plot for much which would yet come.<sup>47</sup>

It is within this larger historical milieu that the 1890s also deserve consideration as falling within 'a formative period in the women's movement':

Certainly the majority of working women, in domestic service and in factories suffered oppression entirely unrelieved by the pressure which trades unions exerted in favour of the male workforce. But it was during these years that women began very tentatively to assert their economic independence and to make their first practical steps towards achieving women's rights, such as divorce law reform, widows and deserted wives pensions, maternity allowances, admission to the higher professions and the franchise.<sup>48</sup>

Teale affirms that Australian society in the nineteenth century 'increasingly favoured the extension of women's rights and opportunities' to the extent that 'in the generation before the First World War, the Australian states led the world in many

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid., Chapter 4, 'A Time of Tumult', pp. 90-128 depicts some of the salient features of the time.

<sup>46</sup> See Patrick O'Farrell, The Catholic Church in Australia: A Short History, 1788-1967, Melbourne, 1968. For Moran, the thing that mattered most was redemption. But he envisioned that the church would transform the world, bringing the greater blessing of salvation as well as the temporal blessings of human welfare and social progress. That he could not weld these diverse elements into a viable policy for Catholicism in Australia was not fully apparent until the time of his death. See pp. 133-195.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. Vance Palmer, The Legend of the Nineties, Melbourne, 1954.

<sup>48</sup> Teale, Colonial Eve, p. viii. Teale has in view, at this point, the period from the mid-nineteenth century, to the First World War.

areas of social reform': voting, property rights for married women, limited working hours, old age pensions and maternity allowances, support for both widows and deserted wives.<sup>49</sup> The sources cited in Teale's section on 'The Victorian Age', dealing with women at home, in their families, and outside the home, sustain the comment just cited. But they also give point to her observation that there was 'entrenched opposition from both sexes'.<sup>50</sup> Rather in contrast to Russel Ward,<sup>51</sup> Manning Clark facilitates some understanding of the genesis and nature of this opposition as well as the wider context in which it was experienced.

On the more positive side, Clark notes the enormous influence of 'the blameless life of Queen Victoria';<sup>52</sup> certain expressions by William Lane, Joseph Furphy, Henry Lawson;<sup>53</sup> and the 'timid boldness' with which Louisa Lawson and Mrs Harrison Lee 'knocked at the citadel of political power and asked to be let in'.<sup>54</sup> Three women novelists 'examined marriage as an institution which prostituted a woman to a man'.<sup>55</sup> And various supporters of the women's movement worked for 'the abolition of all those laws, conventions and social customs which condemned women to a position

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 82.

<sup>50</sup>See pp. 83-265, and note p. 82.

<sup>51</sup>Russel Ward, The Australian Legend, Melbourne, [1958], 1980. Note such criticisms of Ward as that by Dixson, The Real Matilda, p. 58: 'Russell Ward's seminal work The Australian Legend would more accurately be titled "The Australian Legend as Envisioned by Males", or "a Male"'.  
<sup>52</sup>Clark, The People Make Laws, pp. 54, 2.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., pp. 6-8, 19-21. Cf. pp. 224-227.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., p. 54.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., p. 102.

of inferiority'.<sup>56</sup> Over against these factors Clark places the ridicule to which the Bulletin resorted: the more urbane yet perhaps more effective stance of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne;<sup>57</sup> the condescending opinion of Dr James Barrett; the double-talk and burlesque humour of the politicians.<sup>58</sup>

Since the literature on these matters is now quite abundant, it would be easy to fill the rest of this thesis with detail about movements possessing some relevance to female role and status during the 1890s. But the limits of space demand the severe restriction of this treatment. Yet it needs to be noted that although they may merit Judith Allen's categorization as 'naive instrumentalists', the early feminists in Australia can be credited with laying a worthy foundation in their struggle 'to establish theoretical equality between women and men, and to challenge their confinement to sex-divided spheres'.<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, it is to be ob-

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., pp. 191-193.

<sup>57</sup> The Archbishop, Thomas Joseph Carr, 'remarked that it was not every woman who wanted to vote. He could sympathize with them because he thought the home was the sphere of woman. Nature did not make men and women exactly alike, and "the great Creator" appointed different spheres for the one and the other. The Archbishop knew there had been a good deal of talk about the equality of men and women. But women exercised power not by mixing in the strife and turmoil of politics but in gracing the home and public life in every charitable work'. Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 193.

<sup>59</sup> Judith Allen, 'The "Feminisms" of the Early Women's Movements, 1850-1920', Refractory Girl, March 1979, pp. 10-16. Cf. Beatrice Faust, 'Feminism Then and Now', The Australian Quarterly, Vol. 46, No. 1 (March 1974), p. 27: 'The old feminism achieved much of what it set out to do. If it did not do more, it was not simply because it spent too much time on the vote, or it worked with men and did not develop a properly feminist philosophy. Its limitations were partly the limitations of Progressivism in its time and especially the failure to win the labour movement to feminism. Further, by accepting the doctrine of the two spheres, feminist philosophy developed a moralism that could only exacerbate opposition and, in America, a circularity that would eventually bring them back to the place from which they set out--the home'.



served that the Women's Christian Temperance Union as a 'canvasser and propagandist' gained much approval amongst women for 'the idea of enfranchisement'.<sup>60</sup> The comparatively-rapid success of the suffragette movement in Australia is worthy of note, insofar as it enabled women to start rising above their 'partial legal and complete political subjection'.<sup>61</sup> However, rather less can be claimed for unionism amongst Australian women in the 1890s.<sup>62</sup>

Australia, it must be remembered, was a frontier land in the 1890s, still struggling with 'the tyranny of distance'.<sup>63</sup> Clearly, despite the comparative sense of promise it held in some respects for women, it was risky for them to leave their situation in the United Kingdom of the nineteenth century, favouring 'intimate family interaction in the conjugal family', for a frontier-type situation:

The initiative they had shown did not remove the very real challenges presented by colonial life, or the very real effort and struggle necessary in most cases to meet these challenges: the different climate, the alien landscape, the dispossessed indigenous population, the immense distance from home and slowness of communication, the sparseness of rural settlement, the rudimentary character of the towns.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>60</sup>Anthea Hyslop, 'Temperance, Christianity and Feminism: The Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Victoria, 1887-97', Historical Studies, Vol. 17, No. 66 (April 1976), p. 49.

<sup>61</sup>Dianne Scott, 'Woman Suffrage: The Movement in Australia', Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society, Vol. 53, Pt. 4 (December 1967), p. 299. Cf. Norman Mackenzie, 'Vida Goldstein: the Australian Suffragette', The Australian Journal of Politics and History, Vol. VI, No. 2 (November 1960), pp. 190-204.

<sup>62</sup>W. Nicol, 'Women and the Trade Union Movement in New South Wales: 1890-1900', Labour History, No. 36 (May 1979), pp. 29-30.

<sup>63</sup>Geoffrey Blainey, The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance Shaped Australia's History, Melbourne, 1966.

<sup>64</sup>Patricia Grimshaw and Graham Willett, 'Women's History and Family History: An Exploration of Colonial Family Structure', in Grieve and Grimshaw (eds.), Australian Women, p. 137.

But the uprooting, the dislocation, the restlessness did not prevent some, especially the most financially successful, from establishing 'quite formidable kinship networks' or 'alternative groups'.<sup>65</sup> Husband, wife and children on the land, in business or trade, were apt to work closely 'together in a joint family economic enterprise'.<sup>66</sup> Hence, even the woman of genteel stock, like her poorer sisters, was soon involved in production for both domestic use and exchange, plus 'reproduction and child-socialization'.<sup>67</sup> The wives and children of poorer settlers were often involved in even the hardest tasks, such as clearing the land and pulling the plough.<sup>68</sup>

But as the nineteenth century progressed the Australian family entered a new situation through growth in industrialization and urbanization, plus the introduction of compulsory education.<sup>69</sup> Yet it can be described as 'strongly bound by instrumental ties', marked as a unit by 'solidarity and inclusiveness'.<sup>70</sup> To cite the words of Grimshaw and Millett:

There is much evidence by the end of the century of a social environment supportive of ideologies stressing the value of home and domesticity, of companionate marriage based on partnership and mutual love, of the importance of the child as a focal point of family life. A rough and relatively isolated life the colonies may have offered family groups, yet the very interdependence, both economically and emotionally, that lack of extensive kin and the colonial economic basis had ensured for families, had nurtured both a relatively democratic and affectionate family unit.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 142. See also p. 145.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., p. 146.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., p. 147.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., p. 148.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., p. 149.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., p. 150.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 153.

In other terms, there were obvious negative factors confronting women during the first century of white settlement in Australia. But in certain respects the colonies in this period 'appeared to offer a liberating environment for women'.<sup>72</sup>

What then are the conclusions of this chapter? The woman of the 1890s lived after a mercantile, urban bourgeoisie had developed a cultural hegemony over a largely prosperous working class, but within the early stages of a working-class mobilization. This woman's life sustained some continuity with Australia's contemporary 'sexist society', but it had even closer ties with the first century of colonization here. The desire to account for this historical continuity has called into being a considerable segment of the extensive women's historiography produced in Australia since 1970.

This relatively-new history has given extended attention to the places and situations from which women have come to Australia. England, Scotland and Ireland were the chief countries of origin to the end of the nineteenth century. The classes of women, it has been contended, are also important: the convicts drawn from the lower classes; the casual poor who came as assisted immigrants; the considerable percentage of uniquely-disadvantaged Irish, and so on. The way in which these women were regarded once they landed in Australia, it is affirmed, gave them long-lasting labels to wear and particular roles to fill. More than this, attention has been given to their actual experiences en route to and within the new frontier land with its harsh human and climatic environment. Although the currency classes exemplified a contrast to their convict

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

mothers rather than an aping of them, the 'imprinting'<sup>73</sup> of the formative years in the new colony appears to be significant for Australia's entire subsequent history. Further, the developments within the last half of the nineteenth century must be noted, with attention being given to the factors particularly relevant to female status and role, such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the 'first wave' of the women's liberation movement, and the suffragette movement.<sup>74</sup>

Thus this chapter has, in effect, profiled some of the principal theoretical parameters within which the ensuing discussion will proceed. Clearly it has not been possible to more than suggest the applicability of recent women's historiography for the specific task in hand.<sup>75</sup> But the summation offered seeks to sketch an historical context for understanding Ellen White's interactions with the Australian woman during the last decade of the nineteenth century.

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<sup>73</sup>A major concept of The Real Matilda, albeit a controversial idea.

<sup>74</sup>One could, with profit, note the relevance of female status and role in religious movements in Australia during the 1890s. Of particular interest in this regard is the Salvation Army. Although almost as new to this country as Seventh-day Adventists, the Salvationists quickly integrated women into their various ranks of ministry.

<sup>75</sup>One of the most helpful reviews of women's history, so strikingly neglected by Australian historians prior to 1970, is by Kay Daniels, 'Women's History', in G. Osborne and W. F. Mandle (eds.), New History: Studying Australia Today, Sydney 1982, pp. 32-50. Of particular value is its excellent list of sources, cited in the footnotes on pp. 181-183. For a useful study of how fifty historians have approached our past, and 'a knowledge of different models of Australian history they have advanced or downplayed', see Rob Pascoe, The Manufacture of Australian History, Melbourne, 1979. Note especially the section on Feminists in Chapter 4, 'History As a Circular Argument', pp. 109-118.

## Chapter 4

### ELLEN WHITE AND THE AUSTRALIAN

#### WOMAN IN HER 'HAVEN'

Ronald Conway contends that 'matriduxy in Australian domestic life has not only been maintained, but its influence steadily enhanced, over the past fifty years'.<sup>1</sup> This 'maternal dominance' or 'mother-leadership' is not due to some female determination to win power, but to male 'domestic indifference and nurturing impotence'.<sup>2</sup> To say this is to demand an answer to yet another question, why is it that 'the middle class Australian father must play the lion abroad and yet be a fox or even a rabbit in his own home'?<sup>3</sup> The claim that this matriduxy is compensatory challenges the historian to trace the roots of Australia's 'gender arrangements'<sup>4</sup> back as far as that 'broken, cold and unnatural form of society'<sup>5</sup> with which this nation began.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ronald Conway, The Great Australian Stupor: An Interpretation of the Australian Way of Life, Melbourne, 1971, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 93.

<sup>4</sup>The term is from Dinnerstein, as acknowledged on p. 32 of this thesis.

<sup>5</sup>Cited by Miriam Dixon, The Real Matilda: Woman and Identity in Australia, 1788-1975, Ringwood, Victoria, 1976, p. 115.

<sup>6</sup>For a popular-level account which documents the seamier side of early Australian life, with some reference to its profound

This chapter does not seek to present in detail the historical arguments explaining this sharp differentiation of roles or the attitudes which caused and sustain this dichotomy. Nor does it intend to argue whether or not the home is the place where woman works a 'second shift', filling the role of 'the final proletariat' or 'the last slave'.<sup>7</sup> It assumes rather than seeks to prove that the Australian woman exercises her power 'the more formidably, within the private arena of the family', since she is largely 'denied access to the public arena of society'.<sup>8</sup> Its central purpose is, however, to explore the situation of the Australian woman of the 1890s in the home, her 'haven in a heartless world',<sup>9</sup> as disclosed in her relationships and interactions with Ellen White. To some extent the conversation is one-sided, in that the extant sources enable Ellen White to say much while her close contemporaries say but little. While this fact makes the process of understanding words and events within their historical context difficult, the endeavour to do so remains a necessity.

Ellen White's woman-related concerns during the 1890s were conveyed to Adventists worldwide via The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald, the church's sixteen-page weekly. Central to these

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effects on female identity and life-style, see Ray and Richard Beckett, Hangman: The Life and Times of Alexander Green, Public Executioner to the Colony of New South Wales, Melbourne, 1980. An extensive bibliography, pp. 189-194, indicates literature with particular relevance to the period Green is known to have been in New South Wales, 1824-1855.

<sup>7</sup>Rosemary Radford Ruether, New Woman New Earth: Sexist Ideologies and Human Liberation, New York, 1975, p. 180.

<sup>8</sup>Dixon, The Real Matilda, p. 49.

<sup>9</sup>The term is derived from Christopher Lasch, Haven in a Heartless World: The Family Besieged, New York, 1977.

concerns were the roles of wife and mother, seen within the parameters of Christian marriage and parenting. Hence, biblical paradigms assume crucial significance: Abraham, for instance, is upheld in that he 'commanded his household and his children after him to keep the way of the Lord'. Eli's family history, on the other hand, 'is given as a warning to parents' of the perils of 'mismanagement'.<sup>10</sup> It is of interest to observe, however, that such didactic applications of biblical narratives seem, in Ellen White's writings, to be as applicable to the role of mother as to that of father.

Indeed, there is a decided emphasis on *parental* responsibility rather than *fatherly* or *motherly* responsibility. No sharp differentiation is drawn between male and female roles in this respect. The ideal for both parents is 'to present to the world well-ordered, well-disciplined families,--families that will show the power of true Christianity'.<sup>11</sup> This objective calls for 'faithful parents' able to 'correct' their children 'in love'.<sup>12</sup> Such parents must 'work in harmony', ever presenting their children with 'the example they wish to be imitated'.<sup>13</sup> 'The family circle' is thus to be 'an educating circle' in which mother and father bear their responsibility as teachers 'unitedly'.<sup>14</sup> Parents have 'a

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<sup>10</sup>See Ellen G. White, 'Duty of Parents to Their Children', The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, 28 March 1893, p. 197. Hereafter abbreviated to Review. 'Family Government is to be Maintained', Review, 13 March 1894, pp. 161-162; 'Words to Parents', Review, 6 April 1897, pp. 209-210; 'Words to Parents', Review, 13 April 1897, pp. 225-226.

<sup>11</sup>'Words to Parents', Review, 13 April 1897, p. 225.

<sup>12</sup>'Duty of Parents to Their Children', Review, 28 March 1893, p. 197.

<sup>13</sup>'Family Government is to be Maintained', Review, 13 March, 1894, p. 161.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

solemn work' resting upon them; 'the future of society' is in their hands, and 'the greatest power, the efficient gospel, has its effect in the well-ordered, well-disciplined family'. Ellen White is emphatic that both parents, that is 'fathers and mothers are responsible for the health, the constitution, and the development of the characters of their children'.<sup>15</sup>

It is true that in such writing Ellen White sometimes singles out a role or a responsibility of one parent. Thus, for instance, it is 'the duty of a husband and father. . . to provide for the wants of a family'.<sup>16</sup> Again, 'children are best educated to respect their parents' when they see 'the mother rendering respect and reverence to the father' and 'the father offering kindly attentions to the mother'.<sup>17</sup> But the most constant factor in Ellen White's concept of parental responsibility is the high degree of mutuality she enjoins:

Parents are to make the religion of Christ attractive by their cheerfulness, their Christian courtesy, and their tender, compassionate sympathy; but they are to be firm in requiring respect and obedience. Right principles must be established in the mind of the child. If parents are united in this work of discipline, the child will understand what is required of him.<sup>18</sup>

In 1897 The Signs of the Times, Adventist's best known 'missionary paper', published in Oakland, California, achieved a

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<sup>15</sup>'Parental Responsibility.--No 1', Review, 10 May 1898, p. 293.

<sup>16</sup>'Disease and Its Causes', Review, 27 June 1899, p. 410.

<sup>17</sup>'Obligation of Children to Parents', Review, 15 November 1892, p. 709.

<sup>18</sup>'The Duty of Parents to Children', Review, 27 June 1899, p. 405. Cf. 'The Importance of Home Training', Review, 6 June 1899, p. 353.



weekly circulation of 40,000 copies.<sup>19</sup> Like the Review, the Signs normally carried an Ellen White article in each issue. From 1891 to 1900 these Signs articles were comparable to those from Ellen White's pen carried in the Review, and discussed above.<sup>20</sup> But it is relevant to survey at this point certain features of Ellen White's thought conveyed to Australians via the Signs.

In a plea to 'bring harmony into the home life', Ellen White made no suggestion that 'unity of the family' might be achieved by female subservience. Rather, the desired harmony was to be reached by fulfilling God's will that husbands and wives 'respect each other and cultivate love and confidence'.<sup>21</sup> Yet it is true to say that there were occasions when Ellen White focussed on matters she deemed to have particular relevance for the role of either the female or the male member of the parental duo. For instance, she advised in 1896:

Christian mothers should realize that they are coworkers with God. . . . She who expects to become a mother should keep her soul in the love of God. . . . Mothers, let your hearts be open to receive the instruction of God.<sup>22</sup>

Other statements similarly focussed particularly on the role of

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<sup>19</sup>The Bible Echo, 12 July 1897, p. 224. Hereafter abbreviated to Echo.

<sup>20</sup>See, for instance, the following Ellen White The Signs of the Times articles: 'Parents Should Be Christlike', 30 April 1894, pp. 403-404; 'Self-Discipline Necessary to Parents', 7 May 1894, pp. 419-420; 'The Family Circle the School of Christ', 14 May 1894, pp. 434-435; 'Parents and Children To Be Agents of God', 10 and 17 September 1894, pp. 691-692 and 707-708; 'Parents are to Teach God's Statutes', 21 March 1895, pp. 179-180; 'Parents Work in Their Children', 16 April 1896, pp. 246-247; 'The Responsibility of Parents', 18 February 1897, pp. 101-102; 'Religion in the Home Life', 1 September 1898, pp. 553-554. Hereafter The Signs of the Times is abbreviated to Signs.

<sup>21</sup>'The Sacred Duties of Home Life', Signs, 14 November 1892, p. 22.

<sup>22</sup>'The Christian Mother a Coworker With God', Signs, 9 April 1896, pp. 230-231.

one parent:

The father is priest in his own household.<sup>23</sup>

Fathers should train their sons to engage with them in their trades and employments.<sup>24</sup>

But the overall emphasis was on the undifferentiated role of parents:

It is the duty of parents to educate and discipline their children from their earliest years. . . . Parents need not feel that it is necessary to repress the activity of their children. . . . How carefully should parents manage their children in order to counteract every inclination to selfishness.<sup>25</sup>

Or again the stress was on family and home, without isolating the function of one parent or the other:

God designs the family to be a symbol of the great family in heaven. . . . By practising self-denial in the home, we are fitted to work for others.<sup>26</sup>

While it is evident that both Review and Signs were read in Australia, no precise distribution figures are now available. Even though the Echo was coy about giving exact circulation figures for its regular issues, its distribution was considerable during the 1890s. Probably it is safe to say that by 1898-1899 the Echo was reaching a minimum of fifteen thousand Australians weekly, assuming each issue was read by at least three persons.<sup>27</sup> It is

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<sup>23</sup>'Parents and Children to be Agents for God', Signs, 10 September 1894, pp. 691-692.

<sup>24</sup>'How Parents Should Discipline Their Children', Signs, 13 August 1896, pp. 503-504.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid. Cf. 'The Responsibility of Parents', Signs, 18 February 1897, pp. 101-102.

<sup>26</sup>'Religion in the Home Life', Signs, 1 September 1898, pp. 553-554.

<sup>27</sup>This coyness persisted even through such changes as that of editorship, for example, from W. A. Colcord to Robert Hare in 1898. See Echo, 31 October 1898, p. 352. That SDA

also of importance to observe that although it was printed in Melbourne, the Echo subscribers resided in all the mainland states and Tasmania, with the possible exception of the Northern Territory. Without doubt Ellen White and her concepts were mediated to the Australian population of the 1890s most fully by means of the Echo. Indeed, this periodical carried at least one Ellen White

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publishing experienced rapid growth during the 1890s is evident from the expansion of the buildings and equipment. Echo, 15 April 1892, p. 128 reports the doubling of the floor space to 'about 7000 square feet' which the printing and publishing work 'comfortably fills'. By 1898 'a new three storey brick building, 83 x 28 feet' was required at the rear of the main office building, adding '11,650 square feet of floor space'. See Echo, 21 March 1898, p. 96; 18 April 1898, p. 128. Additional room was again provided by 'extensive improvements' in 1900 including 'a new, two-story building'. See Echo, 13 August 1900, p. 536; 24 September 1900, p. 625. The paper became a weekly in November 1893, with fifty numbers constituting a volume. See Echo, 24 December 1894, p. 400. Echo, 7 May 1894, p. 144 indicates that in December 1893 'an edition of nearly 15,000 copies was disposed of, which is a grand record'. During 1894, in the context of a vigorous discussion of 'church and state', 4000 extra copies of a special issue were ordered, and 10,000 copies were printed. See Echo, 26 March 1894, p. 96; 2 April 1894, p. 104; 9 April 1894, p. 112. Ten thousand copies of a camp-meeting edition of the Echo were printed for distribution in 'Sydney to advertise the meeting'. Echo, 8 October 1894, p. 320. The half-yearly meeting of the Echo Publishing Company on 30 July 1894 noted 105,800 copies of the Echo had been produced, indicating a circulation of 4,232 per average week. See Echo, 6 August 1894, p. 248. Twenty thousand copies of a special camp-meeting edition of the Echo were produced in 1895, 'beside fifteen thousand extra covers'. Echo, 7 October 1895, p. 320. Echo, 30 November 1896, p. 376 rejoiced that its circulation last week 'reached the highest point in its history', and that 'during the last three years its circulation has increased about 2,500'. A new 'highest point it has yet attained in its history' was reached the next year. See Echo, 5 July 1897, p. 216, cf. 3 January 1898, p. 8. Its 'constantly increasing' circle of readers was deemed to be 'nearly three times as large as it was four years ago', according to Echo, 24 January 1898, p. 32; cf. 23 May 1898, p. 168. The Annual Meeting of the Echo Publishing Company heard on 14 August 1899: 'The number of employees had increased from one, fourteen years ago, to eighty-three for last year. Since its introduction over 1,700,000 copies of the BIBLE ECHO had been sent out: nearly 300,000 of these were printed last year'. See Echo, 4 September 1899, p. 293. Cf. Echo, 9 September 1901, p. 586. One unknown factor was the number of copies sent overseas. That New Zealand received quantity shipments is evident. See Echo, 9 August 1897, p. 256. For the financial year 1900-1901 'some 40,000' of 'over 342,000 copies' of Echo were sent to 'foreign countries'. See Echo, 9 September 1901, p. 586. It is not specified whether New Zealand is a 'foreign country' or not.

article in almost every issue from 1891 to the end of 1899, with the pattern becoming more haphazard in 1900.<sup>28</sup>

Once again it can be generalized that Ellen White's gender-related articles in the Echo during her Australian sojourn were of one piece with those in Review and Signs. Although there was an occasional expression directed mainly toward one parent,<sup>29</sup> the general mode of address was to both.<sup>30</sup> Probably her basic approach is best conveyed by one of her sentences: 'Parents should

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<sup>28</sup>While the most normal pattern was to have one Ellen White article in each issue and an Ellen White quotation on the back page, there was a considerable degree of variety in the way the journal carried Ellen White's material. For instance, the number for 18 February 1895 carried two quotations on its last page, p. 56, plus an article on p. 51. The number dated 8 July 1895 carried a quotation on p. 210 and an article on pp. 211-212. The number for 12 August 1895 carried an article on pp. 252-253, a quotation on p. 253, a short article on p. 254, two quotations on p. 256.

<sup>29</sup>See, for instance, 'Cheering Words for Mothers', 1 September 1893, p. 279. But note even this includes a more inclusive reference to 'parents'. Cf. 'Home Education', 1 January 1894, p. 5, 'The mothers of the present day are making the society of the future'; 'Home Education', 3 September 1894, p. 277, 'The work of the mother is an important one'; 'A Word to Parents', 22 February 1897, p. 62, the statement that 'mothers must be willing and even anxious to qualify themselves for their important work' is followed by the word that 'fathers and mothers should be united in this work'. See also, for a similar combination of roles after a statement specifying the task of one parent, the following: 'Guard the children', 10 May 1897, p. 151; 'Don't Send the Children to School Too Early', 28 June 1897, p. 206; 'Proper Education for Children Essential', 5 July 1897, p. 214.

<sup>30</sup>'Religion in the Home', 15 December 1893, pp. 398-399; 'Right Education and Its Object', 29 January 1894, p. 27; 'Parents Should Be Christlike', 13 August 1894, p. 253; 'Self-Discipline Necessary to Parents', 20 August 1894, p. 261; 'Christian Homes and Innocent Recreation', 15 October 1894, p. 327; 'Parental Responsibility', 18 February 1895, p. 51; 'Teaching God's Statutes in the Home', 27 May 1895, p. 164; 'A Word to Parents', 20 January 1896, p. 22; 'Safeguarding the Children', 23 March 1896, p. 94; 'Parental Training', 29 June 1896, p. 198; 'Unwise Child-Training', 21 September 1896, p. 294; 'Parental Responsibility', 16 November 1896, p. 358; 'The Work of Reformation to Begin in the Home', 1 March 1897, p. 70; 'A Word to Parents', 4 October 1897, p. 318; 'The Responsibility of Parents', 21 March 1898, p. 94; 'The Responsibility of Parents', 19 December 1898, pp. 402-3.

work together as a unit'.<sup>31</sup>

Thus far, with reference to parenting, Ellen White's thought avoids the most problematical features of what Conway defines as 'matriduxy'.<sup>32</sup> Further, it accords rather well with Ruether's 'prophetic vision' of a society within which women's role is not 'the symbol and servant of male self-alienation'.<sup>33</sup> Again, it affirms something of 'that rounded complementarity' to which Dinnerstein calls woman and man.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, it partakes of Dixson's concept that male and female are not 'separate beings but two complementary aspects of an entity called "the human being"'.<sup>35</sup> But it remains for us to explore further dimensions of

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<sup>31</sup>'Parental Firmness', Echo, 4 April 1898, p. 110. It is acknowledged that such Ellen White material as Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 2, Pacific Press, 1948, pp. 448-489, were available in an earlier printing in Australia during the 1890s. These Ellen White concepts of the mother as moral guardian were initially expressed in an 1864 pamphlet, An Appeal to Mothers, and formed part of a series of six pamphlets entitled Health, or How to Live, 1865. Presented again in a 271-page volume by Ellen White and others, A Solemn Appeal Relative to Solitary Vice and Excesses of the Marriage Relation, Battle Creek, Michigan, 1870, the Ellen White materials in the 1870 volume are said to have been reprinted in Australia during the 1890s under the title A Solemn Appeal. Neither of the last-named works are available to this writer at present, however. But Ellen G. White, A Solemn Appeal, Sacramento 17, Calif., 1959 claims to be a reprint of the Australian booklet, and this has been read carefully. For historical perspectives on this dimension of Ellen White's writings, see Dores Eugene Robinson, The Story of Our Health Message: The Origin, Character, and Development of Health Education in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Nashville, 1943; Ronald L. Numbers, Prophetess of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White, New York, 1976; The Ellen G. White Estate, A Critique of the Book Prophetess of Health, Washington, D.C., 1976; George W. Reid, A Sound of Trumpets: Americans, Adventists, and Health Reform, Washington, D.C., 1982.

<sup>32</sup>The Great Australian Stupor, pp. 80-107.

<sup>33</sup>New Woman New Earth, p. 211, 204.

<sup>34</sup>Dorothy Dinnerstein, The Rocking of the Cradle, and the Ruling of the World, Norwich, 1976, p. 155.

<sup>35</sup>The Real Matilda, p. 14.

Ellen White's vision of woman in her 'haven'.<sup>36</sup>

Ellen White's discussions of marriage in the 1890s carry echoes of earlier Adventist expressions, and are inextricably linked with Adventist eschatology. Fifty years earlier marriage had been evaluated as a wife of Satan, a denial of faith in the nearness of Christ's return.<sup>37</sup> The concept of imminence continued to dominate most Adventist literature of the 1890s, yet, even so, marriage was affirmed. In an article comparing 'the antediluvian world' with the present 'very solemn time' when Christ's coming is 'at hand', Ellen White wrote:

There is in itself no sin in eating and drinking, or in marrying and giving in marriage. It was lawful to marry in the time of Noah, and it is lawful to marry now, if that which is lawful is properly treated, and not carried to sinful excess. But in the days of Noah, men married without consulting God, or seeking His guidance and counsel. So it is at the present day; marriage ceremonies are made matters of display, extravagance, and self-indulgence. But if the contracting parties are agreed in religious belief and practice, and everything is consistent, and the ceremony be conducted without display and extravagance, marriage at this time need not be displeasing to God.<sup>38</sup>

But there were other marriage-related problems in addition to a blurring of the Second Advent hope: infatuation; lack of 'true

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<sup>36</sup>The copious files of Ellen White's letters and manuscripts include hundreds of references to home, family, parents, fathers and mothers. A review of these materials indicates the unpublished statements of the 1890s fit within the conceptual parameters of the published sources indicated above. Indeed, in many instances they form the raw material which, collected and honed, found its way into articles and books. It needs to be noted that certain periodical particles published in the 1890s were actually written some three decades earlier. This last statement may be illustrated by reference to Ellen White, 'Disease and Its Causes', Echo, January 1886, p. 13. Borrowed by Echo from Pacific Health Journal, this article appeared initially in Health or How to Live, 1865. Note the 'Disease and Its Causes' series in Review, 6 June 1899, p. 358 to 6 February 1900, p. 86.

<sup>37</sup>Cf. James White to 'My Dear Bro. Jacobs', Day Star, 27 September 1845.

<sup>38</sup>'Marrying and Giving in Marriage', Echo, 8 July 1895, pp. 211-212.

love' as motivation; neglect of 'the duties of life'. Whereas 'modesty, simplicity, sincerity, morality, and religion' should 'characterise every step towards an alliance in marriage', Ellen White believed 'the majority of the marriages' of her time, and the way in which they were conducted, made them 'one of the signs of the last days'.<sup>39</sup> Perhaps the greatest single problem was marriage contracted by a Christian and a non-believer:

God has placed men in the world, and it is their privilege to eat, to drink, to trade, to marry, and to be given in marriage; but it is safe to do these things only in the fear of God. We should live in this world with reference to the eternal world. The great crime in the marriages of the days of Noah, was that the sons of God formed alliances with the daughters of men. Those who professed to acknowledge and revere God, associated with those who were corrupt of heart; and without discrimination, they married whom they would.<sup>40</sup>

It has been observed already that Ellen White had a highly-affirmative view of Christian marriage, as is evident from her discussions of its biblical foundations. That 'Jesus pointed His hearers back to the marriage institution as ordained at creation', when 'marriage and the Sabbath' were given as 'twin institutions for the benefit of humanity', enabled her to affirm the indissoluble nature of the marriage covenant:

Among the Jews, in the time of Christ, a man was permitted to put away his wife for the most trivial offences, and the woman was then at liberty to marry again. This practice led to great wretchedness and sin. In the sermon on the mount Jesus declared plainly that there could be no dissolution of the marriage tie, except for unfaithfulness to the marriage vow.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> 'Marrying and Giving in Marriage', Echo, 15 July 1895, p. 220.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> 'The Law of Marriage', Echo, 3 July 1899, p. 218. Note Ellen White finds legitimation of marriage in both Christ's attendance of the marriage in Cana and his first miracle performed there. See 'Wine at the Marriage Feast', Echo, 4 September 1899, p. 290. Note also 'The Marriage in Galilee', Echo, 28 August 1899, pp. 281-282.

And it is in this same context that Ellen White expresses her understanding of Ephesians, chapter five:

In later times, Paul, the apostle, writing to the Ephesian Christians, declares that the Lord has constituted the husband the head of the wife, to be her protector, the house-band, binding the members of the family together, even as Christ is the head of the church, and the Saviour of the mystical body.<sup>42</sup>

This last quotation could be construed as an argument for male dominance in the marriage relationship. Furthermore, certain of Ellen White's statements have been understood as stressing female responsibility to inhibit sexual expression within marriage. Here again it is important to observe that some of the strongest statements on this matter spring from or are related to materials written in the 1860s, such as A Solemn Appeal. Written within a milieu in which vitalism and phrenology were influential, Ellen White's concern is understandable that Christian wives should refrain from gratifying the 'animal propensities' of their spouses, perhaps meaning that intercourse should take place not more than once a month.<sup>43</sup>

No doubt adultery and divorce were two of the most sensitive social issues of the 1890s. Ellen White's interpretation of Christ's words in Matthew, quoted above, were in accord with the standard position held by conservative Christians. Hence, her insistence on high moral standards was unequivocal. For instance, in 1893 she wrote:

There should be connected with the mission married persons who will conduct themselves with the strictest propriety. But the danger is not alone from youth, but from married

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Numbers, Prophetess of Health, pp. 157-159; cf. The Ellen G. White Estate, A Critique of Prophetess of Health, p. 74. Note in particular the tone and content of Ellen White, 'Christianity in the Marriage Relation', Review, 19 September 1899, p. 602. Cf. note 31.



men and women; workers must build up the walls of modesty and virtue about themselves, so that women will not allure men, and men will not allure women, from strict propriety. 'Abstain from even the very appearance of evil'.

Lovesick sentimentalism prevails. Married men receive attention from married or unmarried women; women also appear to be charmed, and lose reason and spiritual discernment, and good common sense; they do the very things that the word of God condemns, the very things that the testimony of the Spirit of God condemns. Warnings and reproofs are before them in clear lines, yet they go over the same path that others have travelled before them. It is like an infatuating game at which they are playing.<sup>44</sup>

But even so it is apparent that Ellen White agonized much over the suffering and the dilemmas caused by marital breakdown, as illustrated by the sensitive stances she took in certain well-documented instances. But this deep concern did not mean she saw it as possible to restore ministerial credentials to those who had violated the commandment against adultery.<sup>45</sup>

There were, of course, other concerns that might be expected to be present in company with those already mentioned. Women's dress was a frequent focus of concern in the 1890s from the standpoints of both health and morality. In 1893 the Echo advertised a ten shilling volume, Sunbeams of Health and Temperance, 'beautifully illustrated', in part dealing with 'DAME FASHION AND HER SLAVES, Sketching the peculiarities of dress

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<sup>44</sup>'No Second Trial for Unfaithful Mission Leaders', General Conference Bulletin, 1893, p. 162.

<sup>45</sup>See Ellen White, 'Dealing With Ministers and Workers Who Have Violated the Seventh Commandment', Manuscript Release 449. Note, however, 'Counsel to An Involved Lady Colporteur and Bible Instructor', pp. 24-25, and cf. pp. 30-32. Observe, also, how the Echo shared her perspectives on eschatology, marriage, and divorce: 'In the Melbourne Divorce Court on May 18, *seven* divorces were granted in *four hours*. Six of these were wives seeking liberation from their husbands. We are again in the days of Noah, when men took wives of *all they choose*, and well it would be if mothers would teach their daughters the principles of self respect, that must underlie all social happiness'. Note entitled 'Social Ethics'. Echo, 29 May 1899, p. 184. Emphasis in original.

to health'.<sup>46</sup> Suitable clothing, the Echo believed, was crucial for 'normal circulation'; indeed, 'unbalanced circulation, meant 'dizziness, palpitation of the heart, congestions, aches, and pains'.<sup>47</sup> Hence, the Echo seemed to grasp, with alacrity, opportunities to point out the dire results of violating this important law of nature. The sudden death of an English actress 'from the effect of tight-lacing, while dancing', although presented as 'a remarkable case', was cited in order to highlight the claim that 'there are thousands of cases of lingering death from the same cause that are never mentioned'. The message of the paragraph was further reinforced by a doctor's statement, made after a post mortem, that a young woman's liver was 'half cut in two by tight-lacing', plus his learned opinion: 'That is nothing remarkable!'<sup>48</sup> Such insights provided an appropriate rationale for vigorous crusades against corsets. In one instance this warfare was waged by a poem printed in 'the shape of a woman's waist on which a corset tight is laced', followed by lines simulating 'a woman's natural waist, which corset never yet disgraced'. The desirable result was deemed to be apparent:

It's strong and solid, plump and sound,  
And hard to get one arm around.  
Alas! If women only knew  
The mischief that these corsets do,  
They'd let Dame Nature have her way,  
And never try her waist to 'stay'.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>'Publishers' Department', Echo, 1 January 1893, p. 47.

<sup>47</sup>David Paulson, M.D., 'Hygiene of Clothing', Echo, 2 December 1895, p. 374.

<sup>48</sup>'Death From Tight-Lacing', Echo, 22 July 1895, p. 230.

<sup>49</sup>Selected, 'New Argument Against Corsets', Echo, 20 May 1895, p. 157. This places in a more understandable context William White's letter of 1895, commenting to his brother Edson about his

In more dignified language, but with the same message, Echo noted that 'Russia has forbidden her girls to wear corsets', and the Minister of Education in Saxony 'has decreed that the girls attending public schools shall not wear stays'. This provided the editor with suitable grounds for admonishing his readers:

The physical well-being of the coming generation depends upon the mothers, and women cannot be efficient mothers if they possess deformed bodies. God made the human body after a divine pattern, yet there are many who try to improve on His ideal. But it results in the same kind of improvement as the savage makes with his paint and tattoo--deformity.<sup>50</sup>

Of course the Echo was concerned with a complex set of other issues at least somewhat related to these already mentioned. Indeed, it quoted the opinion that 'it is harder to emancipate woman-kind from heavy skirts than from corsets'.<sup>51</sup> It warned: 'If a lady's dress is especially conspicuous, it may be to the

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new wife, May Lacey: 'Do not look for a little sallow, pinched-up body, nor for a "stuck-up" lady. She is a good, big, wholesome woman, as full of life and goodness as can be. May is as tall as I am, and weighs a few pounds more. I tip the scale at 148, and she, at 153. Her vitals have not been crushed by corsets, nor her spirits by idle ambitions. Wherever she is, there is sunshine and comfort and peace'. Quoted by Arthur L. White, Ellen G. White: The Australian Years, 1891-1900, Washington, D.C., 1893, p. 194. An early issue of Echo agreed with the assertion that 'divine truth could not find its way into a heart squeezed and cramped by corsets'. Good Health, 'The Immorality of Tight Lacing', Echo, April 1888, p. 62. J. H. Kellogg, M.D., 'Essential Qualifications in Clothing', Echo, 1 August 1891, p. 138, asked: 'Suppose the waist does expand a little--or a good deal, even--beyond the standard seventeen inches; is it any disgrace?--No, indeed. A woman ought to be proud of a large waist. A large waist indicates large lungs, and large vital organs, which, in turn, represent the probabilities of long life. A small waist indicates precisely the opposite'. Faded and brittle journals of the 1890s in the Mitchell Library indicate the Australian waist of the 1890s was larger than seventeen inches. For example: 'The pattern is for a medium figure of 24 inch waist measurement'. See The Australian Home Journal: A Domestic Magazine of Useful Information and Amusement, 1 August 1894, p. 66.

<sup>50</sup>'The Corset', Echo, 6 August 1900, p. 520.

<sup>51</sup>Boston Record, 'Heavy Skirts', Echo, 27 July 1898, p.

advantage of the dress, but it is to the disadvantage of the lady'.<sup>52</sup> It also had an eye to well-fitting garments: 'The slim, straight-up-and-down girl will not look well in the designs that suit the roly-poly girl'.<sup>53</sup> And it frequently campaigned against the destruction of birds necessitated by the demands of fashion.<sup>54</sup>

Ellen White's writings had long fostered these kinds of concerns in a less anecdotal, more dignified, yet decidedly forthright manner. In characteristic style she declared:

Mothers are drawn away from the duties of home and the careful training of their little ones, to the service of self and the world. Vanity, fashion, and matters of minor importance are allowed to absorb the attention, and the physical and moral education of the precious children is neglected.

If she makes the customs and practices of the world her criterion, the mother will become unfitted for the responsible duties of her lot.<sup>55</sup>

Thus it is evident that Ellen White, in her writing and speaking, both echoed and stimulated Seventh-day Adventist thought. She is best understood, then, not in isolation from her chosen religious community, but in symbiotic relationship with it. To say this is not to deny the leadership she exercised, the possibility-thinking she engaged in and communicated. Rather, it is to discover the authenticity of her role. It is likewise important to affirm that the Australian chapter of her life can be adequately interpreted only if it has a prologue. Ellen White came to this country after a long pilgrimage from Maine to California and

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<sup>52</sup>S.S. Times, 'Conspicuousness in Dress', 24 September 1894, p. 301.

<sup>53</sup>Dinah Sturgis, 'Dress for Misses', Echo, 26 August 1901, p. 557.

<sup>54</sup>For example, see note in Echo, 12 December 1898, p. 400.

<sup>55</sup>'The Mother's Work', Echo, 9 August 1897, p. 154.

Europe, through Methodism and Millerism to Adventism. She, like us all, was a part of all that she had met. Probably the greatest single mistake made by her spiritual children for a half-century after her death was to isolate her from the complex historical matrix within which she functioned. For almost two decades now some attention has been given to her life by historians, often to the great concern of the faithful. There is, however, a substantial body of evidence suggesting that such an approach is crucial for the integrity of the movement which she co-founded.<sup>56</sup>

Therefore it is of great importance to observe wherein Ellen White's writings, which have some applicability to women in the domestic sphere within Australia during the 1890s, echo and extend the thinking of her chosen religious community. Adventists of the time were in love with a certain image of motherhood 'a dear old-fashioned, sweet-voiced mother, with eyes in whose clear depths the love-light shone'.<sup>57</sup> Motherhood was, for them, a worthy focus of attention.<sup>58</sup> Their 'ideal woman' was 'enthroned queen in heart and home', with home 'unquestionably' her 'sphere'.<sup>59</sup> They believed both the duration and the quality of her life were threatened by 'domestic labors and worries', such

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<sup>56</sup> Benjamin McArthur, 'Where Are the Historians Taking the Church?', Spectrum, Vol. 10, No. 3 (1979), pp. 9-14. Note for further bibliography, Arthur N. Patrick, 'The Minister and the Ministry of Ellen G. White in 1982', Avondale College, Cooranbong, October 1982, a 60-page unpublished paper, and observe the eight volumes thus far published of Adventist Heritage: A Journal of Adventist History.

<sup>57</sup> Detroit Free Press, 'Old Fashioned Mothers', Echo, 15 July 1891, pp. 214-215.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. the editorial note, Echo, 11 July 1898, p. 224.

<sup>59</sup> J. H. Egbert, D.D., 'The Ideal Woman', Echo, 15 August 1901, pp. 252-253.

as 'the rearing of children, the care of the sick, the conduct of the household, the pressure of social duties, the demands of fashion, the endless attempt to make a scanty income go as far as possible'.<sup>60</sup> 'Wife' and 'chattel' were not 'synonyms', for 'the vows of marriage are most sacred and binding' upon both spouses, 'and neither party should be compelled to sustain a relation to which the other proves utterly false and unworthy'.<sup>61</sup> The influence of the gospel, in their thinking, 'has ever been to elevate women to the high estate to which they were assigned by creation as sisters, wives, and mothers', loved but not domineered by their husbands.<sup>62</sup> They had their own version of what is now called 'marriage enrichment',<sup>63</sup> yet they demanded that a girl not marry until 'she is capable of understanding and fulfilling the duties of a true wife and thorough housekeeper'.<sup>64</sup> In their conception,

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<sup>60</sup>Youth's Companion, 'The Adult Age', Echo, 1 July 1891, p. 206. That the rearing of infants could be a highly-demanding role in the 1890s is apparent from the following: 'An infant requires feeding every 1½ hours for the first fortnight, and then every two hours until he is three months old, then once in three hours, and, if possible, a mother should keep to that time as much as possible. Regularity with children is of great necessity, and lays the foundation of good principles in after life'. The Australian Home Journal, 1 September 1894, p. 163. Ellen White counselled vigorously against frequent pregnancies, but she does not seem to have addressed the matter of birth control.

<sup>61</sup>Timely Topics, 'Husband and Wife', Echo, 1 June 1891, p. 165.

<sup>62</sup>Editorial, 'Marriage from the Bible Standpoint', Echo, 1 February 1892, pp. 40-41. Under Geo. C. Tenney as Editor, and Miss E. J. Burnham as Assistant Editor, this article probably best articulates the Adventist stance of the 1890s.

<sup>63</sup>Woman's Journal, 'A Story for Married People', Echo, 15 October 1892, pp. 310-311.

<sup>64</sup>Woman's Health Journal, 'When Should Girls Marry', Echo, 26 July 1897, p. 238. Ellen White objected to teenage marriages and marriages between partners with a wide disparity in ages. However she was not inflexible in such matters. She was married at eighteen, and her younger son, William, at forty years of age married May Lacey aged twenty-one.

husband and wife should have 'equal access to the pocket-book',<sup>65</sup> and the virtue of the wife should ever be beyond reproach before and after marriage: 'Good form requires that every young lady shall be so well trained that she shall keep her lips absolutely untouched for her husband, *after* the words have been spoken that make him such'.<sup>66</sup>

While a more comprehensive appraisal must be reserved for the final chapter, it is appropriate at this point to suggest some further perspectives emerging from this study. It has already been observed that Ellen White cannot be understood in isolation from her context within her native country. Recognition of this fact would be suggested to most readers by Donald Meyer's account of 'popular psychologies aimed at health and wealth and peace of mind', even though Ellen White is not a focus of Meyer's study.<sup>67</sup> It is however, a more explicit consideration in Ronald Graybill's recently-presented doctoral dissertation, probably the most thorough introduction thus far to Ellen White from an historical point of view.<sup>68</sup>

A further consideration also needs restating at this point. Ellen White experienced a symbiotic relationship with the Australian Seventh-day Adventist Church for nine years in the

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<sup>65</sup>G. C. Tenney, 'The Wife and the Pocket-Book', Echo, 2 April 1900, p. 228. Cf. 'Earning Money', The Australian Home Journal, 1 August 1894, pp. 61-62.

<sup>66</sup>Mrs S. M. I. Henry, 'The Holy Kiss', Echo, 22 May 1899, p. 174. Emphasis in original.

<sup>67</sup>Donald Meyer, The Positive Thinkers: A Study of the American Quest for Health, Wealth and Personal Power from Mary Baker Eddy to Norman Vincent Peale, New York, 1965, p. 13. See especially Chapter III, 'The Troubled Souls of Females', pp. 46-59.

<sup>68</sup>Ronald D. Graybill, 'The Power of Prophecy: Ellen G. White and the Women Religious Founders of the Nineteenth Century', PH.D. Dissertation, The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, 1983.

1890s, geographically inside the rough triangle formed by linking Hobart, Adelaide, and Rockhampton. She advocated a tightly-woven set of reforms to a conservative religious group living within an increasingly urbanized and industrialized society, a culture with a specific and rather unique past. To review her concepts of motherly duties, wifely responsibility and moral standards with broad relevance to the domestic sphere has been to hear a voice more in tune with the 1890s than the 1980s. But the stage is now set for the next chapter, an attempt to carry the enquiry a step further, into the more complex and controversial issues impinging on the Australian woman in the public sphere. While the domestic and the public domains are both crucial in any consideration of the Australasian woman in the 1890s, the two spheres overlap in some important respects.

Jessie Ackermann devoted 'much space', in her appraisal of the Island Continent from a female viewpoint, 'to the status of women and girls in Australia'.<sup>69</sup> She observed 'the first striking feature of the husband in Australia is his assured position as head of the home', yet she had 'never been in any part of the world where wives and daughters so systematically, and, as a rule, so successfully, manage their husbands and fathers, while the men seem so sublimely unconscious of the fact'.<sup>70</sup> This, Jessie Ackermann perceived, constituted a 'degrading' 'system', and had a pernicious 'moral effect' which was 'certainly out of keeping with the otherwise delightful relationship of husbands toward wives

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<sup>69</sup>Australia From a Woman's Point of View, Melbourne, [1913], 1981, p. 76.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., pp. 77 and 79.



and daughters'.<sup>71</sup> Miss Ackermann noted in Australia 'tokens that there is a new brand of girl in the process of evolution', and felt able to make a bold attempt to foretell the future:

To have come in close contact with such joyous, fun-loving, yet tender, sympathetic, inspiring young spirits has been one of my compensations for a strenuous life of many hardships of travel in most remote regions wherever girls are found. The world will hear much of them in years to come. They will outgrow their faults. These will vanish in the mellow years of mature womanhood. They are not of the form which mars character or dwarfs soul, but merely those common to a transition period which reconstructs the sphere of woman. Already an arrest of thought is upon them. They will make history. It will not read like that of the women of Sparta, but better still, it will be read in the moulding of national life. Without any glimmering of an idea that their hands are at this moment opening the gates of morning through which bursts the glory of a new dawn, revealing the splendid promise of a future usefulness for their kind, they press forward to a mission such as has never been appointed to girls of any other age or clime.<sup>72</sup>

Ellen White came to Australia and experienced in part Jessie Ackermann's role of observer. More often, however, she fulfilled for those who knew her the function of 'messenger'.<sup>73</sup> While the parameters of this role were as wide as Christian thought and lifestyle, we have suggested its relationship to the Australian woman in her 'haven', the home, as preliminary to an attempt to understand Ellen White and the Australian woman in the 'heartless world'.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>Ibid., p. 79.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., pp. 206, 218.

<sup>73</sup>For the Seventh-day Adventist conception of the term, see Arthur L. White, Ellen G. White: Messenger to the Remnant, Washington, D.C., [1954], 1969.

<sup>74</sup>H. E. Minchin stated to a 'very large' attendance at a farewell 'social meeting' for Ellen and William White on 26 August 1900 that 'he sincerely hoped that Mrs White's desire, to return to Australia in two years, might be granted'. 'A Farewell Service', Echo, 17 September 1900, pp. 609, 616. Pastor E. W. Farnsworth, as acting President of the Union Conference, 'presented Mr and Mrs White with two beautifully embossed autograph albums'. Ibid. That presented to Ellen White ran to 159 pages. An analysis of the entries, to be given later, is instructive for understanding how a wide cross-section of her contemporaries perceived her.

## Chapter 5

### ELLEN WHITE AND THE AUSTRALIAN WOMAN IN THE 'HEARTLESS WORLD'

In the extant written materials of the 1890s there are clear indications that many people within Australian society believed the domestic sphere to be woman's place. An anonymous author gave the following 'Advice to a Bride' in 1894:

I beg to remind my new daughter that the husband has in his daily avocations a thousand elements of disturbance to which the wife is an utter stranger; and it will be her privilege, and her title to the respect of all whose respect is worth having, to make his own fireside the most attractive place in the universe for the calm repose of a weary body or excited mind.<sup>1</sup>

The implications of this advice are threefold. First, the husband is seen to function in the public sphere beset by 'a thousand elements of disturbance', whereas the wife is sheltered from these realities of the 'heartless world'. Second, the wife's 'privilege', indeed her expected role, is to create a 'haven', a sanctuary to nurture the 'weary body' and 'excited mind' of the one whose task it is to confront the real world.<sup>2</sup> Thirdly, even the fireside which she makes 'the most attractive place in the universe' is 'his own'.

Not all Australians agreed with this categorization of male and female roles. The Woman's Suffrage League of New South Wales, one of the strident voices presenting an alternative view-

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<sup>1</sup>The Australian Home Journal: A Domestic Magazine of Useful Information and Amusement, 2 June 1894, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup>Again note the use of terminology popularized by Christopher Lasch's volume, Haven in a Heartless World: The Family Besieged, New York, 1977.

point, chose 'to fight the great battle for Equal Rights' with the pen--mightier than the sword', and 'lighter to work with'.<sup>3</sup>

The Woman's Suffrage League believed that women were to take their stand beside husbands and brothers in full equality:

Women's work is not merely washing pans and dishes and cooking their husband's dinner, as so many men suppose. The Lord placed them on this earth, just the same as he did the men, and it is their bounden duty to do all in their power to make this world brighter and happier. How are they to do this, if they are not allowed to stand side by side with their husbands and brothers, sharing equally with them in everything?<sup>4</sup>

This call for 'sharing equally. . . in everything' was, of course, both an idealistic and a minority viewpoint for the society which first read these words. And any review of traditional historiography lends support to the contention that most of its writers have been men with a precise viewpoint. These male historians have usually examined history under the assumption that civilization is constituted by a prescribed set of activities: diplomatic, economic, constitutional, political, cultural. Since women have been 'excluded from making war, wealth, laws, governments, art and science'<sup>5</sup> they constitute an ignored majority of the human race, insofar as its written history is concerned.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>The Australian Woman: Being the Official Organ of the Woman's Suffrage League of N.S.W. Number 1 appeared in Sydney on 28 March 1894 and sold for one penny. The stated intention of the paper was to publish weekly. The next issue was introduced as indicated above, except for the addition: 'Being the Official Organ of the Surry Hills Branch of the Woman Suffrage League of New South Wales. Miss Rose Scott, Secretary'. For the quoted material see E. Brown, 'We are pledged', 4 April 1894, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup>'Bee Bee', 'The Lord Placed Us Here', The Australian Woman, 4 April 1894, p. 3.

<sup>5</sup>Joan Kelly-Gadol, 'The Social Relation of the Sexes: Methodological Implications of Women's History', Signs, Vol. I, No. 4, Summer 1976, p. 810, but see the entire article, pp. 809-823.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. Kelly-Gadol with the following: C. N. Degler, 'Is There a History of Women?' An Inaugural Lecture Delivered Before

Hence, woman's problem has been tripartite at least: her relegation to the domestic sphere; her exclusion from the public sphere; the ignoring of the fact that historical significance could indeed attach to female activities.

The Australian Woman was in no mood to countenance or continue such imbalances. But this did not mean it anticipated certain feminist perspectives of the 1970s. Indeed, it was affirmative of marriage, chaste moral behaviour, and good family relationships. Perhaps it was a tongue-in-cheek claim, by one writer, that women are 'the superior article'. But this same author well represents the forthright stance of The Australian Woman: that to give women the vote was to confront and cure a complex set of problems:

It will put an end to misgovernment of one of the fairest countries on God's earth.  
 It will make it impossible for such men as Dibbs and his satellites to run that circus of theirs in our Houses of Parliament.  
 It will send only those to Parliament who have the people's welfare at heart.  
 It will bring us laws that will punish the rich as well as the poor.  
 It will put an end to monopoly of all kinds.  
 It will wipe out the 'drink curse'.  
 It will close the doors of our brothels.  
 It will purify our slums.  
 It will punish the seducer.  
 It will reform our marriage and divorce laws.  
 It will be a full stop, colon, semi-colon, and comma, combined on the brutal husband.  
 It will be a note of interrogation to the adulterer.  
 And it will be a veritable eye-opener to our noble lords (?) of creation generally, for it will show them that women are, always have been and always will be, the superior article.  
 Referring to the creation of mankind, Burns sings:  
 'His prentice han' he tried on man,

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the University of Oxford on 14 March 1974, pp. 3-31; Linda Gordon, 'A Socialist View of Women's Studies: A Reply to the Editorial, Vol. I, No. 1', Signs, Vol. I, No. 2, Winter 1975, pp. 559-566; Gerda Lerner, 'Placing Women in History: Definitions and Challenges', Feminist Studies, Vol. 3, No 1/2, Fall 1975, pp. 5-14.

And then he made the lasses. Oh!<sup>7</sup>

That there were in fact serious inequalities within Australian society of the 1890s is further suggested by an article in The Australian Home Journal. 'Pitiful queries come from all parts of the country', the author states: 'How can I earn a little money?' Many of the questioners are 'wives and mothers who work all day and earn nothing', others 'are from brave daughters who do the work of two or three servants in the household, or on the farm--and earn nothing'.<sup>8</sup> Nor is poverty in the family the reason for these questions:

The strangest part of it is that the majority of these seekers after 'a little money', for a special object, have comparatively well-to-do husbands or fathers, who would be horrified if accused of ill-treating their 'women folk'.<sup>9</sup>

The nature of the problem is elaborated quite precisely in the sixth of nine paragraphs:

The question that goes to the root of the matter is this: Why do these busy women earn nothing? They give their time strength, thought, life to building and preserving of the

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<sup>7</sup>'Maggie', 'What Female Suffrage Will Do', The Australian Woman, 4 April 1894, p. 8. Note Diana Burfield, 'Theosophy and Feminism: Some Exploration in Nineteenth-Century Biography', Chapter 3 in Pat Holden (ed.), Women's Religious Experience, London, 1983. On p. 36 Burfield notes 'some of the militant suffragettes' asserted 'the superiority not just of the feminine principle but of the female sex'.

<sup>8</sup>'Earning Money', 1 August 1894, pp. 61-62. Cf. Beverley Kingston, My Wife, My Daughter and Poor Mary Ann: Women and Work in Australia, Melbourne, 1975, for an account of how women moved into the Australian workforce from about 1860 to 1930. See p. 4. But note p. 5: 'As this is a book about the mass of women, not the interesting minorities, a great deal of it is about unrecognized work or unpaid work, that work which was done for love or for duty in the great temple of Australian society, the home'. Kingston further asserts on p. 137: 'Each step towards the achievement of some form of equality for men was won at the expense of some women, from the middle of the nineteenth century when the inequalities dividing men were reflected clearly in the lifestyles of their wives and daughters, to the middle of the twentieth century, when all but very poor and very wealthy women had similar problems of access to contraception, abortion, child care (and therefore, work), and all knew the weekly battles with boredom, the kitchen sink, the washing machine, the vacuum cleaner, the supermarket and the fridge'.

<sup>9</sup>'Earning Money', The Australian Home Journal, pp. 61-62.

home. Does the busiest man do more? Yet the most of these women never have a pound of their own to spend as they please, unless they earn it in some way and some time outside the round of their daily home duties, however exacting they may be. Why should they not be allowed to spend some of the money that comes into the home, even though it is the masculine partner of the concern who does the wage-earning? Are women children, that they cannot be trusted with money even to buy hairpins and shoestrings, unless a strict account of every penny expended be returned to this masculine partner? Possibly, in some instances, for unless women are allowed to use money--and to learn from experience how it should be used, it would be strange, it would argue more than a human endowment of wisdom, if they are not more or less childish about it.<sup>10</sup>

If the selected material, the editorials and the articles in The Bible Echo are to be interpreted as representing Australian Adventist thinking, there was little support for such exploitation of women amongst Ellen White's closest contemporaries in the 1890s. It could be of some significance, however, to observe that the Echo was edited mainly by United States missionaries and a New Zealander before and during Ellen White's Australian sojourn. But, even so, the Echo registered vigorous disapproval of certain reformatory movements it witnessed taking place. It lauded 'the solid, sensible housewives and mothers, now becoming fewer, of a half century ago', and quoted approvingly Mrs Henry Ward Beecher's statement: 'I have no sympathy for the new woman'. Woman's place was clearly to 'insure and preside over a true home':

What is the ability to speak on a public platform or the wisdom that may command a seat on a judge's bench compared to that which can insure and preside over a true home?<sup>11</sup>

The stances of various women's groups and periodicals cannot, of course, be subsumed as fitting neatly under one banner. The references already made to The Australian Home Journal and

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 62. The Journal saw itself as 'essentially a Family Paper'. See issue dated 1 October 1894, p. 143.

<sup>11</sup> 'A Noble Woman', The Bible Echo, 14 June 1897, p. 190. Cf. pp. 60-61 of this thesis.

The Australian Woman reveal two somewhat contrasting perspectives, yet the sharing of certain concerns, such as suitable remuneration. Another paper which was published from 9 August 1894 to 21 December 1895 proclaimed that its fortnightly issues 'will be democratic but not revolutionary, womanly but not weak, fearless without effrontery, liberal without license'.<sup>12</sup> While the Echo could accommodate enough to give partial support to the Women's Christian Temperance Union, it seems to have been consistently negative toward recognizing woman in the public sphere.

Yet the Echo could tacitly acknowledge the need for gainful employment by single females, and the possibility that this could be outside the domestic sphere. In 1891 it republished some 'valuable' information from the National Review, 'hints for the single women of the United Kingdom' concerning the work available to them in the colonies. The cultivation, preserving and packing of fruit was deemed to accord well with 'the capacity for detail, distinctive of the female sex'. The article concluded: 'The possibilities of horticulture are endless to women who will learn, and who are inventive and energetic'.<sup>13</sup>

While the Echo tried to take a non-committal stance on 'woman suffrage' in the first paragraph of another 1891 article, the unidentified writer in his third and last paragraph disclosed his belief that the 'legitimate work' of Christian women is 'in the more silent ways and deeds of peaceful and blessed homes'. Hence, 'many good women', the author expected, would decline the chance to vote, while some might see it as 'a means of exerting a wider influence for good'. Again, 'vicious women, like vicious

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<sup>12</sup>The Woman's Voice, 9 August 1894, p. ii.

<sup>13</sup>'Chances for Women Colonists', Echo, 1 June 1891, p. 161.

men, will employ it for their purpose', he said. The actual stances of the writer and his wife are succinctly summarized in his middle paragraph:

The writer has never been authorized by his wife to champion her right to the ballot-box; and until that better half of our domestic union begins the agitation for extended rights, why should the other half seek to impose the extension upon her? Thus far she has found in her wifely, motherly, womanly, and Christian duties a full scope for the exercise of her powers. The strength which some women prefer to employ in more prominent and notorious vocations she has employed in that work which renders home homelike and sweet--in kindly ministrations and unostentatious Christian work for the sick and distressed; and we cease not to devoutly thank God that we escaped the misfortune of marrying a woman of the masculine persuasion.<sup>14</sup>

The Echo's opinion was no doubt fed on occasion by The Signs of the Times. An 1894 Signs article cast aspersion 'upon the much agitated questions of "women's suffrage",' for the 'wild applause by a large audience' to the idea that, on an evolutionary basis, 'women should *vote and rule, as well as men*'.<sup>15</sup> The Echo broke into print several more times on the issue of the female vote in the 1890s. It deemed that 'woman suffrage' was one of the 'fads and foibles' to be 'deplored' for 'making women strangers in their home, and uprooting much of their delicacy and refinement'. Indeed, 'the true woman will trust the true man', and 'work for every good and holy cause' in 'the sacred atmosphere' of the household, and 'without any appeal to public plaudits or desire for newspaper notoriety'.<sup>16</sup> Again, on the back page of the Echo in 1898, the editor reported reception of a notice from the Victorian Woman's Franchise League, but he used this as a plea for con-

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<sup>14</sup>'Women Suffrage', Echo, 15 June 1891, p. 181.

<sup>15</sup>E. W. Whitney, 'Evolution and Women's Suffrage', The Signs of the Times, 10 September 1894, pp. 692-693. Emphasis his.

<sup>16</sup>George Ogden, 'A Week in a Jewish Home', Echo, 8 August 1898, pp. 252-253. The article was reprinted from Ladies Home Journal.



version, since 'human legislation cannot touch the source of evil'. He concluded: 'While it may be all right for women to have the right to vote if they so desire, it is a mistake to suppose that when this right is obtained that all wrongs will be set right'.<sup>17</sup> Thus the consistent attitude of the Echo during the 1890s can be summarized in the words of another back-page notice from 1900:

'They say that women can't fight, and that therefore they should not have a vote. But if the Legislative Council don't give way next time the Woman's Franchise Bill comes before it, the women of Victoria, like some of the Boer women, will do something desperate'. So said Miss Goldstein at a late Woman's Franchise meeting, held in the Richmond Town Hall. Better save the energy that would do something desperate, and expend it in holy ministrations. The soul that desires to do good can find a whole life-work even without the franchise.<sup>18</sup>

Hence, Australian thinking about woman's situation, when Ellen White resided here, was polarized between traditionalist and reformatory stances, with others trying to remain more-or-less neutral. Bias against woman moving out into the 'heartless world', except in selected instances, characterized Ellen White's religious fellow-travellers. Certainly in their opinion the public sphere was not woman's 'place', nor was it her role to actively campaign even for the female franchise lest she mar the dignity of her womanhood.

It needs to be remembered that Seventh-day Adventists of the 1890s had a long history of discussion about voting, not for women, but for Christians.<sup>19</sup> Like many religious movements

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<sup>17</sup>'Woman's Franchise League', Echo, 10 April 1899, p. 128.

<sup>18</sup>'Demanding the Franchise', Echo, 2 July 1900, p. 440.

<sup>19</sup>This, of course, meant men initially. And it was focussed on the temperance issue, as will be noted shortly.

they began with a certain distrust of the establishment,<sup>20</sup> applying the graphic symbols found in the biblical apocalyptic literature to certain nations in history and to their own United States. But in their interpretations of the key prophecy found in Revelation chapter 13, the depiction of the 'beast' gradually changed in Adventist literature. This process is aptly described by Jonathan Butler:

The Seventh-day Adventists felt pressures of influence from both evangelicalism and sectarian Adventism in relating to the republic from the mid-1870s and onward. As sectarians, they retained their view of America as the two-horned beast of Revelation 13, but as evangelicals, they permitted the contours of the beast to soften in a new phase of Adventist development. Pictorial illustrations in Adventist journals and books denote the iconographic metamorphosis. In the 1850s a Uriah Smith woodcut of the animal unveiled America as a hideous, boar-like beast with a long row of venomous teeth. In the 1870s and 1880s the beast gradually lost teeth, pictorially, until by 1905 it had become an affable American buffalo. S. N. Haskell, a prominent Adventist at the turn of the century, referred to the American beast as 'lamb-like', where for earlier interpreters it had possessed only lamb-like horns. Within another generation, the onetime harsh woodcut gargoyle had mollified into the gamboling little lamb of the 1940s Adventist evangelistic charts.<sup>21</sup>

The 1890s were well along in this metamorphosis. As early as 1881 Ellen White had felt able to recommend that 'advocates of temperance fail to do their whole duty unless they exert their influence by precept and example--by voice and pen and vote--in favor of prohibition and total abstinence'.<sup>22</sup> But, even so, during

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<sup>20</sup>Cf. Lowell Tarling, The Edges of Seventh-day Adventism, Bermagui South, New South Wales, 1981, p. 3; Charles Teel, Jr., 'Withdrawing Sect, Accommodating Church, Prophesying Remnant: Dilemmas in the Institutionalization of Adventism', paper presented at the 1980 Theological Consultation Between Administrators and Religion Scholars, 66 pp., EGW/SDA RC, DF 464-j. Note also H. Ward Hill's response to Teel, 34 pp., in the same DF.

<sup>21</sup>'The Seventh-day Adventist American Dream', Adventist Heritage: A Magazine of Adventist History, Summer 1976, Volume 3, Number 1, p. 7.

<sup>22</sup>Mrs E. G. White, 'Temperance and the License Law',

her Australian sojourn, she emphasised that Christians will not 'dabble in politics',<sup>23</sup> engage in 'political speeches, either in or out of the pulpit',<sup>24</sup> or make 'apparent their prejudices for or against political men or measures'.<sup>25</sup> Key sentences from this 1899 'Special Testimony' evidence the tenor of the whole:

The Lord would have his people bury political questions. . . .  
We cannot with safety vote for political parties; for we know not whom we are voting for.<sup>26</sup>

Let political questions alone.<sup>27</sup>

It is a mistake for you to link your interests with any political party, to cast your vote with or for them.<sup>28</sup>

God calls upon the teachers in our schools not to become interested in the study of political questions.<sup>29</sup>

Adventists in Australia and the world have viewed such statements as so far-reaching that some are still either casual about voting or avoid it altogether for reasons of conscience, even though the official stance for the denomination is that 'individual members have the right to vote if they choose to do so, but the

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Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, 8 November 1881, p. 290. Cf. Temperance as Set Forth in the Writings of Ellen G. White, Mountain View, Calif., 1949, pp. 253-4. Note pp. 255-6 for a fascinating Ellen White diary entry from 6 March 1859.

<sup>23</sup>'True Education in Our Churches', a testimony to the Battle Creek Church, dated 11 January 1897. See Ellen G. White, Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers, Mountain View, Calif., [1923], 1944, p. 131.

<sup>24</sup>'To the General Conference of 1897', Testimonies to Ministers, p. 331, but see pp. 331-340.

<sup>25</sup>'Special Testimony Relating to Politics, To the Teachers and Managers of Our School', 16 June 1899; see Ellen G. White, Fundamentals of Christian Education: Instruction for the Home, the School and the Church, Nashville, 1923, pp. 475-486.

<sup>26</sup>'Special Testimony Relating to Politics', p. 475.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., p. 476.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 478.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., p. 484. Cf. with these sentences Ellen G. White, Selected Messages, Vol. 2, Washington, D.C., 1958, pp. 336-337.

Church should hold itself aloof from politics'.<sup>30</sup>

Ellen White customarily wrote, often at great length, on almost every topic of significance to her denominational contemporaries. Although the deduction of her stance on woman's suffrage is largely an argument from silence,<sup>31</sup> this is an understandable silence. Indeed, it implies two conclusions: tacit approval of the Echo's position, plus a putting-into-practice of her admonition to 'let political questions alone'.<sup>32</sup>

The Women's Christian Temperance Union functioned much in the public sphere, even though the preservation of the home was one of its primary concerns. Due to its anti-liquor stance

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<sup>30</sup>See Paul A. Gordon, 'The Right to Vote--Shall I Exercise It?', Adventist Review, 18 September 1980, pp. 4-7, and 25 September 1980, pp. 11-13.

<sup>31</sup>But note a passing reference written in 1875: Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 3, Mountain View, Calif., 1948, p. 565. The most explicit two sentences are these: 'There are speculations as to woman's rights and duties in regard to voting. Many are in no way disciplined to understand the bearing of important questions'.

<sup>32</sup>Again Ellen White founds this conviction on her interpretation of Scripture. Probably her most representative statement on this point, written in Australia, is published in Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, Mountain View, Calif., [1898], 1940, p. 509. Observe parts of two paragraphs, as follows: 'The government under which Jesus lived was corrupt and oppressive; on every hand were crying abuses,--extortion, intolerance, and grinding cruelty. Yet the Saviour attempted no civil reforms. He attacked no national abuses, nor condemned the national enemies. He did not interfere with the authority or administration of those in power. He who was our example kept aloof from earthly governments. Not because He was indifferent to the woes of men, but because the remedy did not lie in merely human and external measures. To be efficient, the cure must reach men individually, and must regenerate the heart.'

Not by the decisions of courts or councils or legislative assemblies, not by the patronage of worldly great men, is the kingdom of Christ established, but by the implanting of Christ's nature in humanity through the work of the Holy Spirit'.

the WCTU was a natural fellow-traveller for Adventists.<sup>33</sup> Evidently during the Maitland Camp Meeting late in 1899 a 'Mrs Winter', the president of the Maitland WCTU branch, invited Ellen White to speak to her group one evening, which Ellen White did 'with freedom. . . for one hour'.<sup>34</sup> A sequence of statements she made from 1907 to 1914 indicate Ellen White had an open attitude toward cooperation with the WCTU.<sup>35</sup> While these references cannot be used as direct witness for the 1890s, three strands of evidence suggest that Ellen White's thinking did not alter significantly on this point during the last several decades of her life: her earlier speechmaking to temperance groups;<sup>36</sup> her letters to and mention of Mrs S. M. I. Henry, an early leader and finally national evangelist of the WCTU in the United States, who converted to Adventism in 1896<sup>37</sup>; and her silence about the Echo's comment

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<sup>33</sup>Note also Mrs S. M. I. Henry, 'Evangelistic Temperance', Echo, 28 March 1898, p. 98: 'Not until I came among Adventists, did I ever hear, from any minister in the pulpit, anything like the *whole* gospel, as applied to the body as well as the soul'. Cf. Grace G. Durland, 'The National W.C.T.U. Convention', Echo, 6 February 1899, p. 53, especially the comments by A. T. Jones, and Mrs S. M. I. Henry's resolution.

<sup>34</sup>Ellen G. White, Manuscript 79, 1907, cited in Temperance, p. 266.

<sup>35</sup>'Cooperating With the W.C.T.U.', Temperance, pp. 222-226.

<sup>36</sup>See Horace John Shaw, 'A Rhetorical Analysis of the Speaking of Mrs Ellen G. White: A Pioneer Leader and Spokeswoman of the Seventh-day Adventist Church', Ph.D. Dissertation, Michigan State University, 1959, esp. pp. 199-220.

<sup>37</sup>Nine letters from Ellen White to Sarepta Henry are extant from 1898 and 1899. See also Echo, 21 March 1898, p. 96. Note 'Henry, Sarepta Myrenda (Irish)', Don F. Neufeld (ed.), Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, (revised ed.) Washington, D.C., 1976, pp. 581-582. Observe that it was after one of her temperance lectures that a Catholic woman enabled Ellen White to see 'the selfishness of taking the lives of animals to gratify a perverted taste' and thus to 'no longer patronize the butchers'. See Ronald L. Numbers, Prophetess of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White, New York, 1976, pp. 172-173; cf. The Staff of the Ellen G. White Estate, A Critique of the Book Prophetess of Health, Washington, D.C., 1976, p. 82.

on the WCTU during the 1890s. In short, we can declare that during the 1890s Ellen White probably encouraged Australian women to give qualified support to the activism of the Women's Christian Temperance Union.

But the WCTU was not without problem features from the Adventist's point of view. While the Echo applauded the marshalling of 'influential and consecrated women who are devoted to a much-needed moral reform', and could accept that temperance work was multi-dimensional,<sup>38</sup> it both feared and attacked certain basic WCTU objectives:

Four things connected with this petition are worthy of note: (1) Professed believers in the gospel confessing they have no power to cope with iniquity; (2) A professed Christian organisation appealing to civil power for assistance in prosecuting its work; (3) A conviction expressed that 'pure hearts' may be made, and 'the moral tone of society' raised by civil law; and (4) A petition that the law itself should be raised to the standard of 'Christian morals'.<sup>39</sup>

Clearly, the Echo's greatest concerns with the WCTU surrounded such religious matters as 'fraternising and hob-nobing [sic] with the Catholic Church',<sup>40</sup> seeking to 'unite church and state, or to enforce religious observances [Sunday] by law'.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Florence J. Morrison, 'Women and the Temperance work', Echo, 1 September 1892, p. 262. Note the British Women's Temperance Association included 'at least fifty distinct lines of work'.

<sup>39</sup>W. A. C. [Colcord], 'That World's W.C.T.U. Petition', Echo, 7 May 1894, pp. 138-139. The grounds for Colcord's opposition were denial of 'the power of the gospel, and thus the right to the name Christian'; 'neither Christ nor His apostles ever once appealed to earthly powers for assistance in their work', 'men's hearts cannot be made pure by the law'; the petition suggested a 'movement for uniting of church and state and the enforcement of religious ideas and customs upon the people'. Colcord's stance needs to be interpreted in the light of the Echo's possible perception of the WCTU's origin and history. Cf. 'The Women's Christian Temperance Union', Echo, 28 February 1898, pp. 65-66.

<sup>40</sup>Editorial note, Echo, 15 October 1894, p. 328.

<sup>41</sup>See editorial note, Echo, 22 November 1897, p. 368, lamenting 'the result of enforcing Sunday observance by law,--

So the Adventists claimed a desire for equality of sexes, but their concepts of wife and mother made it impossible for them to be happy about women being active in the public sphere. They were uneasy about voting, except for temperance, and this fact together with their concepts of female propriety kept them fence-sitting while the suffragettes campaigned. They were devoted to the cause of Christian temperance, but could give only qualified support to the WCTU. In each of these areas Ellen White functioned in basic harmony with the thinking of her denomination. But such was not the case in one disputed area: 'just and equal remuneration' for ministers' wives and other women 'bearing responsibilities'.<sup>42</sup>

The motive for Ellen White's counsel in this regard was plainly stated: 'The ways of the Lord are just and equal'.<sup>43</sup> She called Adventists to 'study the Scriptures for further light' on the fact that the capabilities of husband and wife are needed in 'missionary effort':

Women were among Christ's devoted followers in the days of

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the fining and imprisonment of many honest, God-fearing, Christian men'. Cf. the editorial note, Echo, 19 December 1898, p. 408. Cf. Grace G. Durland, 'The National W.C.T.U. Convention', Echo, 6 February 1899, p. 53. The Adventist mind called for '*Christian* temperance' and yet 'nothing which marks denominational difference'. One of their most-published concerns of the 1890s was the union of church and state, which Adventists feared could arise in the country's educational system, its constitution, and its laws. See especially the Echo for 1894. Concern in the minds of Australian Adventists was exacerbated by arrests and imprisonments of fellow members in the United States for Sunday labour. But when the Firth brothers of Parramatta were convicted for working on Sunday and ordered 'to be set publicly in the stocks for the two hours', Adventist fears intensified. See the account from Sydney Morning Herald, 8 May 1894, reprinted in Echo, 21 May 1894, pp. 153-154; cf. A. G. D. [Daniells], '"In the Stocks" for Conscience Sake', Echo, 14 May 1894, pp. 145-146.

<sup>42</sup>Ellen G. White, 'Teachers and Wages', Manuscript 69, 1898, pp. 2-4. See Manuscript Release 959.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

His ministry, and Paul makes mention of certain women who were helpers together with him in the gospel.<sup>44</sup>

Hence as Ellen White saw, over several years, wives working without pay in such cities and towns as Melbourne, Cooranbong, Wallsend and Maitland, she determined that 'all these things must be set in order and justice be done to all'.<sup>45</sup> How to get the money to do this was no small problem. 'In the past I have appropriated the means to sustain this kind of work, but my fund is now exhausted', she lamented in 1899.<sup>46</sup> So to fill this lack she called for families to 'cut off every needless indulgence';<sup>47</sup> she attempted to borrow money,<sup>48</sup> and she felt it to be her duty, she said, 'to create a fund from my tithe money to pay these women who are accomplishing just as essential work as the ministers are doing'.<sup>49</sup> Only the conviction that 'many men and women' have the ability and the call 'to preach and teach the Word' could enable a Seventh-day Adventist to so use the sacred tithe.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Letter 142, 1909, pp. 4-6. This is a later statement, but its concepts accord with The Desire of Ages, published in 1898. Cf. Chapter 2 of this thesis.

<sup>45</sup>Letter 137, 1898, pp. 1-10.

<sup>46</sup>Letter 83, 1899, pp. 4-5.

<sup>47</sup>Letter 24, 1900, p. 3.

<sup>48</sup>Letter 83, 1899, p. 5.

<sup>49</sup>Letter 137, 1898, pp. 9-10.

<sup>50</sup>Letter 142, 1909. Cf. note 44, above and Arthur L. White, Ellen G. White: The Early Elmshaven Years, 1900-1905, Washington, D.C., 1981, pp. 392-397. Ellen White's thoughts on 'just and equal' pay are still ahead of her denomination in Australia. On the ordination of woman for ministry Ellen White was silent, though she did recommend women being 'set apart' for the service of the Lord 'by prayer and the laying on of hands'. See Ellen G. White, 'The Duty of the Minister and the People', The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, 9 July 1895, pp. 433-434. This, for most Adventists, would indicate ordination. On 5 December 1881 the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists voted: 'That females possessing the necessary qualifications to fill the position, may, with perfect propriety, be set apart by ordination to the work of the Christian ministry'. See 'General Conference: Business Proceedings (Continued)', Review 20 December 1881, p. 392. Cf. Arnold V. Wallenkampf, 'On Woman Ordination to the Gospel Ministry', unpublished paper, Washington, D.C. 1978, p. 6.



Much has been written on Ellen White's role in stimulating the founding and shaping the nature of Seventh-day Adventist education in Australia, with its intent to develop the physical, mental, social and spiritual dimensions of personhood.<sup>51</sup> Similar to earlier North American experiments such as the Oberlin Institute in Ohio,<sup>52</sup> expressed partially in Battle Creek College in Michigan, tested in suburban Melbourne from 1892-1894, Ellen White's ideas found their fullest expression in Cooranbong, New South Wales, from 1895 onward. For the concerns of this thesis it is important to observe that Ellen White recommended for young women tertiary education of a sort, in a co-educational setting. That the nature of this education was such that it needed a long development to achieve full secular accreditation on a tertiary level, that the relationships of male and female students were tightly controlled, does not diminish the significance of this daring experiment. After all, it was an essentially tertiary education for females; and it was co-educational.

The Agricultural Gazette for 1899 reports a visit to Avondale by W. S. Campbell, at the request of 'Mr Cook, the Minister of Agriculture', 'along with Mr Fegan, M.P.' Campbell and Fegan observed a 'large two-storied building for girls', and saw some 'splendid solid-looking specimens of young vegetarians running about'. Campbell noted that 'all hands work at the farming and gardening, for each pupil is required to perform some sort of manual work

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<sup>51</sup>For both bibliography and discussion see A. G. Lindsay, 'The Influence of Ellen White Upon the Development of the Seventh-day Adventist School System in Australia, 1891-1900', Master of Education thesis, University of Newcastle, 1978; Milton Raymond Hook, 'The Avondale School and Adventist Educational Goals, 1894-1900', Doctor of Education dissertation, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 1978.

<sup>52</sup>George Knight, 'Oberlin College and Adventist Educational Reforms', Adventist Heritage: A Journal of Adventist History, Spring 1983, Volume 8, Number 1, pp. 3-9.

for two and a half hours each day, both boys and girls'. He outlined at some length the subjects upon which young ladies were examined in 'the science of housekeeping', and noted that 'ladies who complete any department of school work must be prepared to pass examinations' on a complex set of subjects:

Preparative, cost, composition, and dietetic value of hygienic foods; table service, and care of the dining-room; the making and care of fires; care of kitchen and appointments; dish-washing, measuring, principles of boiling, steaming, stewing, baking, cooking of grains, preparation and preservation of fruits and vegetables; bread-making in all its branches.<sup>53</sup>

Taking Campbell's observations as evidence, Avondale's education for young women in the late 1890s gave them preparation for the domestic rather than the public sphere. Its concepts of female role fitted well with those of the editors and authors of the Echo. And both made regular appeal to Ellen White, who also reinforced the principles of 'social purity',<sup>54</sup> separation from the evils of

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<sup>53</sup>W. S. Campbell, 'The Seventh Day [sic] Adventists' Settlement and Industrial College at Cooranbong', The Agricultural Gazette of New South Wales, February 1899, pp. 200-204. Cf. the editorial report of a class in the 'useful arts' of 'cooking and nursing the sick' for ladies, at the same time as ministers had 'an institute for instruction in Christian work', Echo, 15 January 1892, p. 32.

<sup>54</sup>Note the extent of Adventist publishing on this theme during the 1890s, especially the writings of J. H. Kellogg, M.D. In 1899 Ellen White deemed 'other parties' had sufficient institutions to care for babies and 'abandoned women', but this remark, though written in Cooranbong, probably referred to Kellogg's work in Chicago and elsewhere in the United States. See Letter 205, 1899, p. 7. Note W. S. Sadler, 'A Warning to Mothers', Echo, 13 November 1899, p. 374. Adventists' ethics kept them well away from 'the squalid street and square where the fallen women flaunt it in the fierce electric glare'. 'In Defense of the Bush', The Collected Verse of A. B. Paterson, Sydney, [1921], 1981, pp. 78-79. Ellen White does not seem to have addressed the issue of prostitution in Australia.

city life,<sup>55</sup> and the role of women as guardians of that which was good in society.<sup>56</sup>

Woman's role and function inside and outside the home are so closely linked that in this chapter our discussion has not always separated them. Seventh-day Adventists in the 1890s may be, in the main, identified as conservative Christians with some important aberrations from mainstream Christianity. Their concepts of woman were more conformist than radical, yet they felt very free to argue their way out of Saint Paul's injunction, 'Let your women keep silence in the churches'.<sup>57</sup> Viewed across the full range of their faith and practice, it can be said that their movement was reformist in nature,<sup>58</sup> but probably least so in such matters as the status of woman in church and society.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>See Ellen G. White, Country Living: An Aid to Moral and Social Security, Washington, D.C., 1946. Note especially Letter 45, 1893; 'Special Testimony on Education', February 1894, republished as 'Work and Education', in Fundamentals of Christian Education: Instruction for the Home, the School, and the Church, Nashville, 1923, p. 326; Letter 90, 1897; Manuscript 81, 1900; Testimonies, Vol. 6, [1900], 1948, pp. 178-179.

<sup>56</sup>An editorial note, 'Lady Gamblers', Echo, 19 June 1899, p. 208 reported that the first three prizes in a lottery fell to ladies. Then it commented: 'It is but a natural conclusion that if the mothers and the sisters of the people countenance and encourage this kind of work, it must produce a nation of gamblers'.

<sup>57</sup>'Woman's Relation to the Cause of Christ', Echo, 15 March 1892, p. 90. The unidentified author has Paul 'rebuking garrulity rather than prohibiting Christians from witnessing for the cause of Christ'. Ellen White never seems to refer to such Pauline passages as 1 Cor. 14:34 and 1 Tim. 2:12, even though her writings allude to or quote most of the Scriptures.

<sup>58</sup>For a popularized version of a doctoral dissertation on one aspect of this reform, see George W. Reid, A Sound of Trumpets: Americans, Adventists, and Health Reform, Washington, D.C., 1982.

<sup>59</sup>Note the stance of Wallenkampf in the paper referred to in note 50, above. Contrast the gently-progressive approach of Laurel Ann Nelson Damsteegt in a series of unpublished papers

Jessie Ackermann also spent considerable time in Australia as a female reformer in the 1890s and later. A conservative Christian, a temperance worker, an author, a social reformer, Miss Ackermann in some ways compares with the Seventh-day Adventists and their Ellen White. But in other ways Jessie Ackermann contrasts strongly with the Adventists and their 'messenger': she was affirmative of the WCTU in general and the 'marked bearing' it had on women securing the franchise in particular; although she believed the Australian woman was 'indifferent' to the vote, for her it 'took the form of a great principle'; she lamented 'the most appalling inequality' in women's legal status 'in every state of the Commonwealth'; she cried aloud for Australia to develop 'a clear-brained, all round woman' accepting of her sex even in such innovative roles as that of 'lawmaker'; she denounced 'the sweat-box of factory life'; and declared: 'Much of the evil into which young girls fall is due to the cruelly low price paid for their services'.<sup>60</sup>

Here, then, were two American women interacting with the Australian woman of the 1890s. Neither was conformist. Although both were reformist in their approach, one was more oriented to social action, the other to spiritual regeneration. Jessie Ackermann worked from a Christian base more akin to that of biblical prophetism; Ellen White functioned more from a background

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presented at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan: 'Attending Spirits', 1975, 58 pages; 'Reflections on the Woman Ministry', 1975, 50 pages; 'Humble Giants', 1977, 113 pages. Cf. Kit Watts, 'The Role of Women in the Seventh-day Adventist Church', an unpublished paper presented to the Biblical Research Committee of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, 1972, 58 pages.

<sup>60</sup> Jessie Ackermann, Australia From a Woman's Point of View, Melbourne, [1913], 1981, pp. 153-155, 163, 171, 179, 187, 190, 205.

of biblical apocalypticism.<sup>61</sup> Miss Ackermann was concerned about Sydney and society; Mrs White's people focussed on the saving of souls from the last generation upon which 'perilous times' had come.<sup>62</sup> Yet, even so, Ellen White spilled on to Australian women the fragrance of her idealism, blessing their role in marriage, family and society in numerous ways. And despite Ellen White's profound conviction of an imminent end for all things, she and her religious compatriots fostered institutions that put foundations under the castles of their dreams. Like Paterson, they extolled the country, and were judgmental of the city and its sin:

And the women of the homesteads and the men you chanced to meet--  
Were their faces sour and saddened like the 'faces in the street'?  
And the 'shy selector children'--were they better now or worse  
Than the little city urchins who would greet you with a curse?  
Is not such a life much better than the squalid street and square  
Where the fallen women flaunt it in the fierce electric glare,  
Where the sempstress plies her needle till her eyes are sore  
and red  
In a filthy, dirty attic toiling on for daily bread?<sup>63</sup>

So Seventh-day Adventists of the 1890s opted for what they believed to be the best on this earth, while keeping a close eye out for the new earth. Thus it was rather incidental that the Australian woman's status was somewhat bettered by them in their church and their society.

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<sup>61</sup>Contrast Isaiah 58 and the Book of Daniel. For one account of the concerns present in apocalyptic literature see D. S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic, 200 B.C. - A.D. 100, London, 1964.

<sup>62</sup>This is, for instance, the pervasive message of the Echo throughout the 1890s.

<sup>63</sup>The Collected Verse, pp. 78-79.

## Chapter 6

### ELLEN WHITE: ATYPICAL WOMAN IN AUSTRALIAN CHURCH AND SOCIETY

For many years Seventh-day Adventists have shown interest in assessing Ellen White from a variety of perspectives: as others knew her, as a homemaker, neighbour, writer, speaker, counsellor, personal evangelist, steward of money, messenger of God.<sup>1</sup> Successive generations of Adventists have read about her as 'a mother in the home, a neighbor and friend in her community, ever ready to give spiritual help or to join in neighborly ministry'.<sup>2</sup> For a long time the faithful have thought of her 'as a public speaker. . . much sought after, often outside denominational circles', and as a 'most successful' writer.<sup>3</sup> Further, the church's official literature names her as a 'co-founder'<sup>4</sup> of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, as a formative influence in shaping its doctrine,<sup>5</sup> its

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<sup>1</sup>See Arthur L. White, 'Ellen G. White--the Human Interest Story', The Ministry, January to September 1948. The individual titles indicate the contents: 'As Others Knew Her', 'The Homemaker', 'As a Neighbor', 'The Writer', 'The Speaker', 'The Counselor', 'A Personal Worker', 'As A Steward of Means', 'God's Messenger'. Republished in Arthur L. White, Ellen G. White: Messenger to the Remnant, Washington, D.C., [1954], 1969.

<sup>2</sup>Article, 'Ellen Gould White (1827-1915)', The Ministry, July 1955, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>'White, Ellen Gould (Harmon)', Don F. Neufeld (ed.), Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, (revised ed.), Washington, D.C., 1976, pp. 1584-1592.

<sup>5</sup>Ron Graybill, 'Ellen White's Role in Doctrine Formation', Ministry, October 1981, pp. 7-11.

'publishing work', its organization,<sup>7</sup> its 'medical ministry that now belts the globe',<sup>8</sup> and its 'educational work, with schools throughout the world'.<sup>9</sup> The 1955 article in the Adventist's journal for their ministers, cited above, is typical of her church's assessment of Ellen White's role as a religious leader and a possibility-thinker:

Her fearless messages of reproof and rebuke kept the church pure and led its members to high standards. Views of future developments made the church alert to coming events and their attendant opportunities and dangers.<sup>10</sup>

That Ellen White wrote on a wide variety of subjects becomes apparent from the titles of her approximately 4,600 periodical articles and her almost-100 books.<sup>11</sup> Usually once a year Seventh-day Adventist churches around the world acknowledge her 'spiritual gift' and enunciate their understanding of it during a Saturday morning sermon. A pamphlet is prepared by Ellen G. White

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<sup>6</sup>Compilation, The Publishing Ministry As Set Forth in the Writings of Ellen G. White, Washington, D.C., 1983. See in particular pp. 5-6.

<sup>7</sup>R. W. Schwarz, Light Bearers to the Remnant, Mountain View, Calif., 1979, pp. 86-103.

<sup>8</sup>Cf. George W. Reid, A Sound of Trumpets: Americans, Adventists, and Health Reform, Washington, D.C., 1982. Note especially Chapter 5, 'Ellen G. White's Role in Adventist Health Reform'.

<sup>9</sup>Cf. Emmett K. Vande Vere, The Wisdom Seekers, Nashville, 1972 which focusses on one of these educational institutions, Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan. For worldwide listings and statistics see Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook, Washington, D.C., 1983. This annual volume in its 962 pages gives 'A Directory of the General Conference, World Divisions, Union and Local Conferences and Missions, Educational Institutions, Food Companies, Health-Care Institutions, Media Center, Publishing Houses, Periodicals, and Denominational Workers'.

<sup>10</sup>'Ellen Gould White (1827-1915)', The Ministry, p. 2.

<sup>11</sup>The books are divisible into those written during her lifetime and those compiled chiefly from periodical articles, manuscripts and letters since her death.

Estate in consultation with the administrators at the church's headquarters in Washington, and distributed to ministers. Sometimes this is read, though more often it is used as a source from which to draw ideas or excerpt comments. The author of the 1973 'sermon' expressed this opinion on the scope of Ellen White's literary output:

The scope of her writings is so broad and the range covered so varied that seldom a question is asked in the area of Christian living for which an answer cannot be found. Whether the subject researched is in the area of education, science, medicine, religion, literature, history, ethics, music, art, fashion, mental hygiene, missionary endeavor, geology, ecology, health, diet and nutrition, the home, child training, church-state relationships, welfare, temperance, social, editorial, or youth work, God has given through Ellen White guiding principles that are not only sound and practical, but extremely relevant for the time in which we live today.<sup>12</sup>

This thesis has been written with an acute consciousness that the status and role of women is one of Ellen White's concerns, but a matter sometimes lost amongst a multitude of other more dominant issues. Until the 1970s women's concerns were seldom discussed officially by Seventh-day Adventists, and detailed attention has not yet been given to this matter as addressed by Ellen White throughout the whole range of her writings. The period in direct focus, 1891-1900, was for Ellen White pressured by so many events and other writing objectives that nothing comparable to Jessie Ackermann's Australia from a Woman's Point of View came from her pen. In her grandson's major biography for those years, the crowding of events and tasks is very apparent:

To the reader Ellen White comes across as a highly diversified person: bearer of supernatural messages; endurer of intense physical suffering; writer of a constant stream of letters (seventeen, totalling 113 pages, to one person alone during

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<sup>12</sup>Mrs Hedwig Jemison, 'Looking Ahead Through the Prophet's Eyes', Spirit of Prophecy Day, Washington, D.C., 23 June 1973, p. 6.



1898); speaker in churches, halls, tents and the open air; planner of where to build churches, how big to make them and where to hold camp meetings; planter of fruit trees and gardens; quieter of untamed cows; author of such masterpieces as The Desire of Ages; counsellor of everyone from the General Conference president to a maori lad; loving mother-in-law and benign grandmother; fund-raiser; philanthropist; health and welfare worker; visualizer of institutions now well known-- Avondale College, the Sanitarium Health Food Company, Sydney Adventist Hospital.<sup>13</sup>

Given this profile of her activities, it is apparent that Ellen White was an atypical woman for both her church and her society in Australia during the 1890s. Since she was such a prolific writer on a wide spectrum of issues, and a woman living in an age experiencing some ferment on the status and role of women, it would seem natural to expect her to say much more on women's issues. Thus it is deemed to be important to account for the relative absence of comment on feminist concerns in her copious writings. To address this issue it is necessary to examine in more detail the movement of which Ellen White was a cofounder and a principal spokesperson. Several chief characteristics of Adventism must be noted in order to understand the seeming paradox that a copious literature by a woman in the 1890s does not address at length key women's issues.

First, from its outset Adventism focussed its eyes on the apocalyptic literature of the Old and New Testaments.<sup>14</sup> Thus it

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<sup>13</sup> Arthur N. Patrick, 'A Third Book of Chronicles: Ellen White in Australia and New Zealand', Avondale College, 1983, p. 2, an unpublished review of Arthur L. White, Ellen G. White: The Australian Years 1891-1900, Washington, D.C., 1983.

<sup>14</sup> See William Miller, Evidences from Scripture and History of the Second Coming of Christ About the Year A.D. 1843 and of His Personal Reign of 1000 Years, Brandon, Vermont, 1833. Cf. editions of 1836, 1838 and 1840. Note N. Southard, 'Second Advent Believers', in I. Daniel Rupp (ed.), An Original History of the Religious Denominations at Present Existing in the United States Containing Authentic Accounts of Their Rise, Progress, Statistics and Doctrines. Written Expressly for the Work By Eminent Theological Professors,

was inevitable that prime concerns within these writings would deeply inform the Second Advent Movement in all its phases. Apocalyptic 'has the prophetic tradition as its father and faith in the ultimate triumph of God in times of peril and persecution as its mother'.<sup>15</sup> Its categories often include a pessimistic view of human history, 'dualism, division of time into periods, teaching of Two Ages, numerology', ecstasy, claims to inspiration, 'esoterism'. Further:

To these might be added the idea of the unity of history and the conception of cosmic history which treats of earth and heaven; the notion of primordially with its revelations concerning creation and the fall of men and angels; the source of evil in the universe and the part played in this by angelic powers; the conflict between light and darkness, good and evil, God and Satan; the emergence of a transcendent figure called 'the Son of Man'; the development of belief in life after death with its various compartments of Hell, Gehenna, Paradise and Heaven and the increasing significance of the individual in resurrection, judgment and eternal bliss. These various 'marks' belong to apocalyptic not in the sense that they are essential to it or are to be found in every apocalyptic writing, but rather in the sense that, in whole or in part, they build up an *impression* of a distinct kind which conveys a particular *mood* of thought and belief.<sup>16</sup>

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Ministers, and Lay Members of the Respective Denominations, Harrisburg, 1844, pp. 668-691. Cf. Arthur N. Patrick, 'Charles Fitch, Hiram Edson and the Raison D'Être of the Seventh-day Adventist Church', unpublished paper, Andrews University, [1971]; Arthur N. Patrick, 'The Christology of William Miller', unpublished paper, Andrews University, 1972. For a comprehensive bibliography see Vern Carner, Sakae Kubo, Curt Rice, 'Bibliographical Essay', in Edwin S. Gaustad (ed.) The Rise of Adventism: Religion and Society in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America, New York, 1974, pp. 207-317. This considerable literature has been microfilmed, and is available for study at the Ellen G. White/SDA Research Centre, Avondale College, and at similar such centres in the major geographical divisions of the world. See Jean Hoornstra (ed.), The Millerites and Early Adventists: An Index to the Microfilm Collection of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1978.

<sup>15</sup>D. S. Russell, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic, 200 B.C. - A.D. 100, London, 1964, p. 104.

<sup>16</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 105. Emphasis his. It is important to observe how Seventh-day Adventists were influenced by a cluster of factors toward their stance on 'Hell, Gehenna, Paradise and Heaven', taking a minority viewpoint in the nineteenth century, but one that is

Hence the apocalyptists wrote of 'the dramatic conflict between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan', they affirmed both primordality and eschatology, and employed freely such categories as universalism, determinism and supernaturalism. They looked forward to a cataclysmic end of a 'supramundane character':

God has set a limit to the powers of evil in the world; the era of conflict will soon be over; the triumph of God's predetermined purpose will provide the key to all life's mysteries and problems. This triumph will come, not by a gradual transformation of the universe and not by a whittling down of the power of evil, but by a supernatural and catastrophic intervention. This intervention will take the form of a great crisis, usually seen as about to happen in the writer's own day. God will break into history in a mighty act of judgment and establish his kingdom.<sup>17</sup>

Much informed non-Seventh-day Adventist opinion at present sees biblical apocalyptic as vital for an understanding of 'what the Christian faith has given men in the way of historical consciousness', future 'direction of mind', and ethics.<sup>18</sup> Adventists have honed their hermeneutics enormously since the mid-1950s in particular, and thus are slowly outgrowing certain earlier abuses

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increasingly that of non-Adventist biblical scholars in the twentieth century. For preliminary documentation on this historical development, see LeRoy Edwin Froom, The Conditionalist Faith of Our Fathers, two vols., Washington, D.C., 1965, 1966.

<sup>17</sup>Russell, The Method and Message, pp. 105-106.

<sup>18</sup>For an example, see Klaus Koch, The Rediscovery of Apocalyptic, London, 1972, p. 130. Cf. Timothy L. Smith, 'Social Reform: Some Reflections on Causation and Consequence', in Gaustad (ed.), The Rise of Adventism, p. 21: 'These volumes [such as Tuveson's Redeemer Nation, Marty's The Righteous Empire, Heimert's Religion and the American Mind] are proof that what was once a minor fascination with peculiarly Adventist expressions of the doctrine of the Second Coming has now become a widespread historical inquiry into the nature of apocalyptic and millennial thought on both sides of the Atlantic and in all four centuries which span the history of the peopling of the United States. The Revelation of Saint John the Divine has come into its own, possibly in part because our age has come to see man's predicament to be so desperate that only apocalyptic solutions seem sufficient'. See especially Ernest R. Sandeen, 'Millennialism', in The Rise of Adventism, pp. 104-118.

of apocalyptic.<sup>19</sup> But in the 1890s their literature, so full of such matters as 'The Eastern Question',<sup>20</sup> saw little need to address social concerns like the role and status of women. In such a climate eschatology found it easy to eclipse sociological matters.

Second, these apocalyptic categories of thought were generally pessimistic about both church and state. A religious group believing the history of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome was symbolized by the wild animals of Daniel 7,<sup>21</sup> that part of the history of Christianity is portrayed by the 'beast' symbol in Revelation 13:1-10, that the future destiny of the United States is delineated in Revelation 13:11-18,<sup>22</sup> was likely to be suspicious of all secular governments.<sup>23</sup> These concerns led Adventists to

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<sup>19</sup>Note Howard B. Weekes, Adventist Evangelism in the Twentieth Century, Washington, D.C., 1969. For a fuller bibliography see Arthur N. Patrick, 'Resources Relating to Ellen G. White and Contemporary SDA Faith', unpublished paper, Avondale College, 1981. Note especially Gordon M. Hyde (ed.), A Symposium on Biblical Hermeneutics, Washington, D.C., 1974; W. G. C. Murdoch, 'Principles of Interpretation of the Prophetic and Apocalyptic Literature of the Bible', in North American Division Bible Conference 1974, Washington, D.C., 1974. Cf. Desmond Ford, 'The Abomination of Desolation in Biblical Eschatology', Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Manchester, 1972.

<sup>20</sup>See for instance, The Bible Echo, 6 September 1899, p. 367. Note the three titles advertised on this page: The Coming King, The Alarm of War, and The Eastern Question.

<sup>21</sup>See especially the writings of Uriah Smith listed in The Millerites and Early Adventists: An Index to the Microfilm Collection of Rare Books and Manuscripts, p. 25.

<sup>22</sup>For one example of the way Revelation 13 was presented, see Ben Asher, 'He Spake as a Dragon', Echo, 6 February 1899, p. 51. See, for the longer history of this type of interpretation, LeRoy Edwin Froom, The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers, four vols., 1946, 1948, 1950, 1954. Volume four focusses especially on Millerite and early Adventist approaches to apocalyptic. To understand the continuity and change in Seventh-day Adventist hermeneutics, see Jonathan M. Butler, 'Adventism and the American Experience', in Gaustad (ed.), The Rise of Adventism, pp. 173-206.

<sup>23</sup>Adventist concern about the relationship of church and state is in focus more than forty times in the Echo for 1894 alone.

engage in vigorous campaigning to ensure Australia's constitution conformed to their ideal that governments should make no laws respecting any establishment of religion nor hindering the practice of faith.<sup>24</sup> So prolonged, vigorous and effective was this campaign that at least one Australian historian credits Ellen White with having an influence upon the final shape of this country's constitution.<sup>25</sup>

A third major influence on Adventist's thinking was their concept of the pilgrim nature of the church as a remnant or new Israel in a hostile world. The 'last generation', the era in which they believed they were living, was deemed to be beyond corporate redemption in whole or even in part, for even the most democratic nations were doomed to descend into totalitarianism. The believer's lot was to live in 'a wicked and adulterous' end-time, charged with a special mission: to give a saving message

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In a special issue, dated 2 April 1894, the Echo carried the following articles relating to religion and politics: 'The Church and the Civil Government', 'Religio-Political Associations', 'Christian Electors' Association', 'The Lord's-Day Observance Society', 'National Scripture Education League', 'The Church in Politics', 'The Council of Churches and the Premier', 'They Got Others to Go', 'What Is the British Sunday?', 'Religion and the State Schools', 'Sunday Laws: Their Origin, Development, Nature, and Object', 'Christian Legislation', 'The Logic of Religious Legislation'.

<sup>24</sup> Adventists felt they and others had won a long battle on 2 March 1898 when the Federal Convention voted: 'The Commonwealth shall not make any law prohibiting the free exercise of any religion, or for the establishment of any religion, or imposing any religious observance, and no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office of public trust under the Commonwealth'. See Echo, 14 March 1898, p. 88. But, the Echo said, although this was 'straight so far as the Commonwealth is concerned', and set 'forth the correct principle upon which civil governments should stand respecting the matter of religion', it had 'one defect, one weak point': 'Like the first amendment to the Constitution of the United States, it leaves the states free to make religious laws and enforce religious observances'. Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> J. D. Bollen, Protestantism and Social Reform in New South Wales, 1890-1910, Melbourne, 1972.

couched in tones of urgent warning. Hence, almost every 'act of God' and of man--accidents, celestial phenomena, droughts, fires, floods, inventions, pestilences, wars, religious laxity and religious intolerance--reinforced the Adventist conviction that the end of all things was at hand, and thus stimulated their sense of mission.<sup>26</sup> Against such a cataclysmic backdrop, sociological concerns such as female liberation seemed hardly worth contention. And in any case, no ultimate good would be achieved even by just laws, Adventists believed, since depravity in all its forms could be cured only by spiritual regeneration.<sup>27</sup>

It is well to couple a fourth with these three observations: Christianity in general, and more particularly its sect-like components,<sup>28</sup> has not usually been radical in promoting female liber-

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<sup>26</sup>P. Gerard Damsteegt, Foundations of Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1977; cf. C. Mervyn Maxwell, Tell It to the World: The Story of Seventh-day Adventists, (revised ed.), Mountain View, Calif., 1976. Note the perspectives of W. A. C. [Colcord], 'The Meteoric Shower', Echo, 2 December 1895, pp. 369-370, and 'The Outlook' feature article entitled 'The Falling Stars', Echo, 19 February 1900, pp. 130-131. This last concludes with the reason for 'the falling of the stars' which 'philosophy has not yet given', and will never be able to give: 'Inspiration gives the reason in the fact that God is speaking of the greatest prophetic event, and the generation [their own] to whom these things are proclaimed as signs of that great event will be the people who will behold the Lord's coming'. Cf. 'This Generation Shall Not Pass', Echo, 15 December 1892, p. 379. Contrast the interpretation of Harold L. Wright, 'Falling Stars, Rising Hopes', Adventist Review, 24 November 1983, pp. 4-6.

<sup>27</sup>But observe the important continuity and change in Adventist's relationship toward social issues, well documented and described by Butler. See note 22, above.

<sup>28</sup>For this use of the term 'sect' see Bryan Wilson, 'Sect or Denomination: Can Adventism Maintain Its Identity?', Spectrum, Volume VII, Number 1, 1975, pp. 34-43. Note Ronald Lawson, 'Beyond the Seventh-day Adventist Fringe', Spectrum, Volume 14, Number 2, 1983, pp. 47-49. Cf. the vigorous 'cult' versus 'Christian' debate surrounding the volume Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine, Washington, D.C., 1957. That this debate is in no way settled is clear from the 'Currents Interview: Walter Martin', in Adventist Currents, July 1983, pp. 15-24, 28.

ation. The immorality of sexism, even in much Protestant theology, has been hidden under a privatized, sentimentalized morality defined as 'feminine' and thus with no role in the actual world of 'competitive male egoism and technological rationality'.<sup>29</sup> Hence, woman's status in the home has been lauded as being of superior moral value. Therefore, confined from the crucial spheres of real power, females have been rendered powerless, dependent, and limited in scientific and technological training.<sup>30</sup>

Ellen White and her Adventist contemporaries had more to say about the evils of trade unionism than the perils of capitalism,<sup>31</sup> perhaps because of the impact the unions had on an individual's attitudes and relationships. They devoted more space to the prophetic destiny of Turkey than to the wellbeing of the mothers, sisters and wives of those who were to become Anzacs. Given the four concerns enumerated above, it made sense that they should be other-worldly in their focus, for the God of heaven was about to set up 'a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed'.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Rosemary Radford Ruether, New Woman, New Earth: Sexist Ideologies and Human Liberation, New York, 1975, pp. 198-199.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid. Note the thrust of the book in the light of Chapter 8, 'New Woman and New Earth: Women, Ecology, and Social Revolution'.

<sup>31</sup>Observe the attitudes toward unionism stated and implied in 'The Labor Problem', Echo, 1 November 1892, p. 325; 'The New South Wales Labor Trouble', Echo, 15 November 1892, p. 341; editorial note, Echo, 3 September 1894, p. 280. The editorial note, 10 September 1894, p. 288 says: 'Strikes are destructive at their best', and equates the 'shearing troubles' with 'civil war thinly disguised'. Cf. E. J. Waggoner, 'The Labour Struggle', Echo, 19 June 1899, p. 204. See also Ellen White's comments as conveyed in a pamphlet prepared by the Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 'Counsels from the Spirit of Prophecy on Labor Unions and Confederacies', Washington, D.C., n.d.

<sup>32</sup>Daniel 2:44. The second chapter of Daniel is one of the most-quoted portions of Scripture in Adventist literature. Cf. the Adventist stance on the Christian's responsibility in time of war, in Ron Graybill, 'This Perplexing War: Why Adventists Avoided Military Service in the Civil War', Insight, 10 October 1978, pp. 4-8.

Yet, in something of a creative tension with these concerns nourished in the fertile soil of biblical apocalyptic literature, Adventists sensed a commission to 'occupy' the earth until the Lord should come.<sup>33</sup> Indeed all of life, including education, had for them a poignant quality as a preparation for 'the whole period of existence possible to man'.<sup>34</sup> Their creationism helped them idealize the present life, in order to restore as nearly as possible God's original intention. This called them to emphasize the family, parental responsibility and morality.<sup>35</sup> It led them to separate from the evil, and to choose the good. Their movement, born in an era of reform,<sup>36</sup> determined to emphasize clean living, bodily and mental health, and simplicity of lifestyle. It was inevitable that these convictions would elevate woman in the domestic sphere at the same time as they somewhat disregarded her potential in the public sphere.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup>Again Adventists have often quoted Christ's words in Luke 19:13, 'Occupy till I come'. Cf. the fuller context of Butler's quotation from Edwin Gaustad, noting that although Seventh-day Adventists expected 'a kingdom of God from the heavens, they worked diligently for one on earth', Gaustad (ed.), The Rise of Adventism, pp. 191, 205.

<sup>34</sup>Ellen G. White, Education, Mountain View Calif., [1903], 1952, p. 13. Probably an account of their educational system in best accord with the traditional Adventist mind is that by W. J. Gilson, 'The History of Seventh-day Adventist Education in Australia and New Zealand', a thesis, n.p., n.d., in two volumes.

<sup>35</sup>Cf. Chapter 2 of this thesis, 'The Christian Gentlewoman'.

<sup>36</sup>Schwarz, 'The World in Which Adventism Began', Light Bearers, pp. 13-23. See in particular the sources listed on p. 22. Note also both text and bibliography in Gaustad (ed.), The Rise of Adventism.

<sup>37</sup>Jessie Ackermann, Australia From A Woman's Point of View, Melbourne, [1913], 1981, p. 169: 'Among the classes of women who do not vote must be reckoned the average churchwoman--I mean members of the churches generally. Some of these consider politics and voting as worldly, almost to the point of sin. The idea of



Further, it is noteworthy that Adventism needs to be interpreted in terms of its relationship to revivalism in the United States during the mid-nineteenth century and onward,<sup>38</sup> and as standing over against the later 'social gospel' emphasis in other Christian groups.<sup>39</sup> In this regard it is important to observe how Ellen White's Australian Adventist associates of the 1890s viewed her contribution to their individual lives and their church. Many of those who wrote the 159 pages of the album presented to Ellen White in August 1900 emphasised her 'many kindnesses', her 'great kindness', or 'the many temporal and spiritual blessings we have received from you'.<sup>40</sup> In this respect Ellen White fulfilled for her community the role of mother par excellence: 'Your motherly interest and love shown to me', wrote Frances N. Waugh, 'I shall not forget'.<sup>41</sup> Arthur S. and Carrie Hicksox began their tribute: 'I shall never forget your personal interest in me

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Christian citizenship has never dawned on them'. Thus this stance of Christian separateness was, at the time, not only a Seventh-day Adventist one. Cf. William G. McLoughlin, 'Revivalism', in Gaustad (ed.), The Rise of Adventism, pp. 119-153.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid. McLoughlin gives a mature review of this relationship, and in so doing cites the literature with which this enquiry can be extended.

<sup>39</sup>Cf. Loren B. Mead, 'Evangelism: Notes Toward a Better Understanding,' Anglican Theological Review, LIII (January 1971), pp. 48-56, as interpreted in Arthur N. Patrick, 'Toward A Definition of Evangelism', Chapter 1 in 'A Study of Methods Used to Secure and Maintain An Audience in Seventh-day Adventist Evangelism', a Master of Divinity Thesis, Andrews University, 1972, pp. 1-16. Adventists have functioned primarily in the 'Individual-Religious Evangelism' quadrant of Mead's diagram, but with an increasing inclusion of dimensions from his 'Social-Religious Evangelism' quadrant. On this point it would be instructive to explore developments during the 1970s. Note, for instance, the content of Spectrum, Vol. 7, No. 2 (1975), an issue directing attention to 'the question of woman's place'. See particularly, Gerhard Hasel, 'Equality From the Start: Woman in the Creation Story', pp. 21-28.

<sup>40</sup>See pp. 20, 90, 53, 118; cf. p. 124.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., p. 63, n.p., n.d.

and my family. You have been to us a faithful mother in Israel'.<sup>42</sup>

But over against this 'mother in Israel' perception of Ellen White, she was also seen by her contemporaries as an atypical woman--a person with a message to convey, a counsellor, an advisor or instructor. The Hicksoxs observed in their second paragraph: 'We shall miss your godly counsel and advice'.<sup>43</sup> For James and Alice Rodd, Ellen White was 'a kind friend, one to whom we could come for advise [sic] and council [sic] in time of need'.<sup>44</sup> The Adventist 'workers' in Adelaide stated:

We shall miss you, and your good counsel and cheering words;  
we trust the words of counsel God has spoken through you  
to us, will not be lost, but will ripen in glad fruition. . . .<sup>45</sup>

So to be associated with Ellen White was to 'have learned many valuable things'; her 'many writings' were 'always a source of blessing, comfort and encouragement';<sup>47</sup> they were both 'timely' and the source of 'Present Truth'.<sup>48</sup> Like Fred S. Sharp, it seemed the Adventists in Australia interpreted Ellen White as an atypical woman in that they would 'ever look with gratitude to God for the counsel' that so often it had been their 'privilege to receive' from her.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>42</sup>Ibid., p. 126, written in East Maitland, 13 August 1900.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 31, written at Avondale, 9 August 1900.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 128, written in Adelaide, 13 August 1900.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., p. 122, written from 'Sunnyside', 29 August 1900.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., p. 143, cf. pp. 110, 103, 15, 95, 147, 146.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., p. 112, n.p., August 1900.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 137, written from the Medical and Surgical Sanitarium, Sydney, 14 August 1900.

The public press rather frequently noted Ellen White's speaking appointments at Adventist camp meetings during her career in the United States, New Zealand and Australia. For instance, an advertisement in The Brisbane Courier on 12 and 13 October 1898 listed her as one of the speakers for the forth-coming Logan Road camp meeting, billing her as an 'Authoress', while on 15 October a small classified advert stated 'SUNDAY AFTERNOON, 3 o'clock: Mrs. E. G. White will preach'.<sup>50</sup> Further, The Courier of the following Saturday carried a news item describing the location of the camp meeting, its daily time table, the food, plus Adventist beliefs and life-style. This report added:

The principal speakers at the gatherings will be Mrs E. G. White (authoress of the 'Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan'), Pastors A. G. Daniells, S. N. Haskell, G. T. Wilson, and W. C. White, Dr Caro (of the Medical and Surgical Sanatorium [sic], Sydney), and Messrs. Jesse Pallant and T. Whittle.<sup>51</sup>

Although they recorded Ellen White's participation, the Brisbane reporters evidently did not draw particular attention to the fact that a woman was speaking in public. For instance:

In the afternoon, Mrs E. G. White delivered a very practical and interesting address to a congregation of about 700 persons on 'The last call to the supper'.<sup>52</sup>

Early in the afternoon the people began to gather on the ground, until there were over 1000 present to listen to Mrs. E. G. White's address. Her subject was temperance. She spoke of the intemperance at the present time--intemperance not only in drink, but in food, in luxuries, and in pleasure. The cause of the terrible increase of disease in these days was intemperance and neglect of God's laws of health. The Adventists had established a school in New South Wales away

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<sup>50</sup>The Brisbane Courier carried the camp meeting notices amongst its front-page classified advertisements.

<sup>51</sup>'Seventh-day Adventists: Camp Meeting at Woolloogabba'. The Brisbane Courier, Saturday, 15 October 1898.

<sup>52</sup>'Seventh-day Adventist Camp Meeting', The Brisbane Courier, Monday, 17 October 1898.

from the temptations of the city, where young men and women are being educated in the sciences and manual training, and are being taught the principles of health, temperance, and industry that all the powers of body and mind may be equally developed.<sup>53</sup>

Other subjects on which Ellen White spoke included 'Duties of Parents to Their Children', 'Practical Godliness', 'John XV', and the love of God. Although the reports sketched the content of her discourses, and described them variously as 'most impressive' or 'instructive', beyond the mention of her name they did not highlight the fact that a female was functioning in the public sphere. Ellen White recorded that she spoke up to an hour and a half to 'large congregations eight times, and six times before a much smaller number', with one Sunday afternoon audience 'estimated at fifteen hundred'.<sup>54</sup>

In December 1899 and January 1900 the Newcastle Morning Herald and Miners' Advocate carried reports of the Hamilton camp meeting and letters discussing with vigour the pro and con of Adventist beliefs. Some audiences were larger than those in Brisbane, and mention of a similar type was made about Ellen White's involvement:

Mrs E. G. White will speak in the afternoon. This lady has a world-wide reputation as a writer and speaker. Her husband, Elder James White, was the founder of the denomination, and with his wife laboured as a pioneer in that cause from 1846 to 1881, when his death occurred. Their work extended over the United States and Europe. Since 1881 Mrs White has carried on her work with the aid of her son, Mr. [W.] C. White. At present this lady is located at the Avondale School settlement, near Morrisett [sic], where she has lately completed a large book on the life of Christ, entitled 'The Desire of Ages'.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Manuscript 153, 1898. Cf. Arthur L. White, Ellen G. White: The Australian Years, 1891-1900, Washington, D.C., 1983, pp. 363-371.

<sup>55</sup> 'The Adventist Camp Meeting', Newcastle Morning Herald, 24 December 1898.

Mrs E. G. White delivered to a large and attentive audience one of her most effective discourses, based on 1st Peter, chapter one.<sup>56</sup>

While the main focus of discussion, in letters to the editor of the Herald, concerned the perpetuity of the Ten Commandments and the Saturday-versus-Sunday issue, Ellen White was the target for one correspondent:

Sir,--Observing the great attraction just now towards the Seventh Day [sic] Adventists, and being informed that at an early date they will leave us, cause these few remarks. I presume that others abstain from writing because a very old lady is known to be well up in the front of the faction. To honour old age is an old maxim; yet her position as a preventive of attack is more than can be afforded them. The records of congregations of 1000 and 1500 are startling, and the chances are that the news will cause perplexity to some people's nerves, for they more than the churches bring Scriptures to bear them through.

. . . Now that so many sects are prevailing around us, we surely need not be unhinged by these Adventists, who avowedly are only among us for a little while. Yet less [sic] any hasty conclusion be made by looking on the caressing and sister love capability, we read in the Bible, 'Let the woman learn in silence;' again, 'I suffer not a woman to teach'.--I am, etc.

John S. Thomas.<sup>57</sup>

However, the Adventists do not seem to have replied to this particular thrust, even though their general pattern was to be forthright with the reasons for their faith and practice. Probably it was easier to ignore John S. Thomas than to get into the rather complex task of exegeting the New Testament on the status and role of women, as they had done in other settings.<sup>58</sup>

What, then, can be said as a conclusion to this enquiry? Ellen Gould White, a woman, was a co-founder of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination. She exerted a powerful influence upon the

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<sup>56</sup>'The Camp Meeting', Newcastle Morning Herald, 28 December 1898.

<sup>57</sup>Newcastle Morning Herald, 31 December 1898.

<sup>58</sup>Cf. p. 88 of this thesis.

church throughout her seventy year tenure as its most unique charismatic leader. She retains a role as the most profoundly influential person in the continuing life and mission of this particular religious body. While Seventh-day Adventists are currently 'sustaining a deepened understanding of the ministry of Ellen G. White resulting from biblical, historical and theological studies',<sup>59</sup> there is compelling evidence that Ellen White's place in the church's heritage is a secure one.

But herein the researcher is confronted with a seeming paradox. Adventists accord Ellen White this historical significance and continuing influence, yet in various countries they have experienced real difficulty in accepting such basic legal requirements as that equal pay should be given for equal work; that the full range of Christian vocations should be open to women; that women have an equal right with men to choose whether to invest their talents in the domestic or the public sphere, or in both. In short, the role and status of women in the church is often more confined than it is in, for instance, North American and Australian society at large.

This thesis began as part of a larger purpose, and so needs to be interpreted in that light. The greater objective, of which this study forms a part, was to understand the role and status of the Australian woman in the last decade of the nineteenth century. How can her situation be interpreted accurately? What was her self-understanding? What were her specific roles in marriage, in the family, and in society? What resulted from the

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<sup>59</sup>The quoted words are, more or less, a summary of the sixty-page unpublished paper, Arthur N. Patrick, 'The Minister and the Ministry of Ellen G. White in 1982', Avondale College, October 1982. See the Epilogue for a short explication of the 'transformationist' approach to research relating to Ellen White.

conglomeration of English, Scottish, Irish, Aboriginal and other women in this country during the first century of white settlement?

Such questions, of course, demand some assessment of the flush of literature about this Colonial Eve, her identity and role. How was she influenced by such diverse stereotyping as that described in Damned Whores and God's Police? Is she The Real Matilda, one of a class 'pretty close to top rating as the "Door-mats of the Western World"? Should she be confined in her roles, given a male interpretation as My Wife, My Daughter and Poor Mary Ann, perhaps as a domestic slave to the demands for comfort and good living?<sup>60</sup>

As an initiation into this enquiry, this thesis focusses upon an outsider during her Australian sojourn in the years 1891-1900. In counterpoint with Ellen White is a strikingly similar yet very different outsider, Jessie Ackermann.<sup>61</sup> It becomes important, then, to observe to what extent Ellen White had contact with Australians of the 1890s preliminary to addressing her actual comments. Thus, the first chapter examines this dimension, defining the geographical limits of her life and travel on this continent.

But of even greater importance is the cultural, historical and religious baggage Ellen White carried with her to this country. She cannot be understood as a person or a woman without giving attention to the socio-religious matrix which nurtured her in Maine, western New York, Michigan, California and Europe, before Australia. Methodism, Millerism, revivalism and Seventh-day Adventism are all

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<sup>60</sup>The titles woven into this paragraph are recognizable as some of those germane to Chapter 3.

<sup>61</sup>The similarities are indeed striking, for instance, North American origin, conservative Christian background, reformist concerns. Also, both women travelled extensively and wrote voluminously. But to some extent these likenesses serve to augment the significance of certain contrasts, as has been noted earlier.

significant, as are slavery, health quackery and reform, innovative patterns in education, and more. Some judgment was called for on which of these factors were more important than the others. The second chapter suggests biblical foundations were, for Ellen White, crucial. A larger contextualization applying to Adventism opens chapter six. And, in chapter two, the Australian Adventist perception of Ellen White, prior to her arrival, is addressed in tandem with the consideration of her leading woman-related ideas.

The main theoretical parameters of the study relating to the Australian woman are enunciated most fully in the third chapter. The inference is that factors were present which a woman such as Ellen White might be expected to capitalize upon during the 1890s. Yet, in something of a contrast to this expectation, the fourth chapter evidences a concentration on woman in the domestic sphere within Adventism of that time, while the fifth chapter notes a corresponding minimization of woman in the public sphere, with some notable exceptions.

An underlying conclusion of this study is that Adventism and Ellen White must be understood in relationship to each other. Hence, biblical apocalyptic literature and millennial thought patterns must be observed closely, in relation to Adventism's precise sense of mission. Further, Adventism's approach to fulfilling its purpose is heavily conditioned by its stance within Christianity in general and revivalism in particular.

Therein, of course, lies some difficulty. Many sincere Christians during twenty centuries have opted for slavery, oppressive patriarchy, racism and other essentially anti-Christian stances.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>Cf., on this point, the cogent presentation by Kit Watts, 'The Role of Women in the Seventh-day Adventist Church', a paper presented at the request of The Biblical Research Committee of the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, February



The universal church has found it easier to quote, for instance, some of Saint Paul's words than to exegete passages it may not wish to hear, such as Galatians 3, verse 28: 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male or female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus'.

Ellen White and the Adventists of the 1890s believed that Christian identity and mission had supremacy over what were, to them, social considerations. Given their eschatology, their stance is understandable and has inner consistency. Yet the fact that the church remains in the world in 1984 presses upon it the responsibility to ask if it should address more fully both spiritual and temporal matters. The answer to this question in Adventist literature is, increasingly, yes.<sup>63</sup>

Herein lies, perhaps, the chief didactic conclusion from this study. Despite her usually symbiotic relationship with Adventism of the 1890s, Ellen White also was a pioneer thinker, a 'messenger' sometimes well ahead of her contemporaries. Her recommendation to ordain women for Christian service in local church settings, though given in 1895, is still generally either

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1972. Note pp. 13-14, for instance.

<sup>63</sup>See, for instance, James J. Londis, 'Waiting for the Second Coming' Adventist Review, 5 January 1984, p. 10: 'Have we pressed for stiffer penalties for drunk drivers? No, we left that to mothers whose children were killed and maimed. Have we been shouting about the hypocrisy of a government that spends tens of millions of dollars to get people to stop smoking with one hand, but on the other spends tens of millions of dollars to subsidize tobacco growing? Do we champion the cause of oppressed peoples as we once championed them in 1855? Is our life style sacrificial and simple, or have we been totally seduced by materialism? Do we really care that millions of people are starving to death?' Cf., as a significant historical study relevant to this area of concern, P. H. Ballis, 'In and Out of the World: Seventh-day Adventists and New Zealand Politics, 1886-1918', a B.A. Honours Research Essay, Victoria University of Wellington, October 1983.

unknown or neglected. Some of her concepts of male/female egalitarianism, and of just payment for women, are still largely in front of the experience of her church.<sup>64</sup>

So, Ellen White was atypical in both her church and its society of the 1890s. In a way, history is a jig-saw which forms both a picture of the past and a mirror for the present. Gender-related problems still afflict Australian society and the Seventh-day Adventist church. Ellen Gould White, though by no means a radical feminist, is still beckoning her church to look closely at the picture and into the mirror.<sup>65</sup> To understand the past may be one of the best ways to transform the future.

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<sup>64</sup>In her paper, 'The Role of Women', Watts contends 'Ellen White's writings are progressive' in their comment on this matter (p. 20), whereas Graybill suggests 'Mrs White's supernatural gifts were negatively related to feminism, since they said nothing about the potential of ordinary women, and she gave little encouragement to women to move out of traditional roles'. Cf. 'Abstract' and Chapter 7, 'Feminism and Prophecy', in Ronald D. Graybill, 'The Power of Prophecy: Ellen G. White and the Women Religious Founders of the Nineteenth Century', Ph.D. Dissertation, The Johns Hopkins University, 1983, pp. 164-186. But note in particular Graybill's important qualifications on pp. 185-186 which, in effect, highlight a measure of congruence between his findings, those of Watts, and this thesis.

<sup>65</sup>Cf. what is probably the most-remembered quotation from Ellen White's writings, cited in the Epilogue, p. 125.

## EPILOGUE

When writing his Pilgrim's Progress, John Bunyan deemed it was necessary to write an apology for his book. His rationale rather fully explicates his inner convictions. It is incumbent upon me to tell my readers with what background I have come to the writing of this thesis, the convictions with which I lived during the task, the climate within which the project has been completed, and certain options which seem to present themselves to my church in the immediate future.

At this point, since this is an epilogue, those readers who are uninterested in such matters can close this thesis with a clear conscience and pass on to other things. These lines are, then, not required reading. They are meant only for those who want them.

On 23 February 1934 I was born into a second-generation Seventh-day Adventist family living in Avondale Road, Cooranbong, New South Wales, Australia. 'Sunnyside', Ellen White's two-storey home from 25 December 1895 to 29 August 1900 was in the same street, a kilometre nearer Avondale College. My maternal grandparents, John and Charlotte Pocock, joined the church during David Steed's and Robert Hare's evangelistic series which began in Parramatta during 1892.<sup>1</sup> A migrant from England during the previous decade; a Christian of Baptist persuasion; a tradesman skilled as a cabinet-

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<sup>1</sup>R. Hare and D. Steed, 'Parramatta, N.S.W.' The Bible Echo, 15 September 1892, p. 285; editorial note, Echo, 1 January 1893, p. 16; R. Hare and D. Steed, 'Parramatta, N.S.W.', Echo, 15 January 1893, p. 28; editorial note, Echo, February 1893, p. 48; editorial note, Echo, 1 March, 1893, p. 80.

maker, coach builder, wheelwright; John Pocock lost his employment when he became convinced that Saturday is the Christian day of rest and worship enjoined in the fourth of the Ten Commandments.

Charlotte Pocock feared for her husband's sanity that he should accept such a strange belief, but upon further Bible study she became certain that this was indeed the truth. For years the family eked out a precarious existence in Arcadia, amid the steep sandstone hills south of the Hawkesbury River. They shared their new-found biblical understanding with their neighbours, and their enthusiasm for Ellen White's writings.<sup>2</sup>

John Pocock spent a number of months in Cooranbong, living as a member of Ellen White's family of helpers carving a college from the bush: 'The Avondale School for Christian Workers', which was to become Avondale College, since 1974 an accredited College of Advanced Education. Finally on 2 April 1899, at Ellen White's insistence, the Pocock family moved to Cooranbong.<sup>3</sup>

My early nurture included the profound convictions that the senior Pococks had developed from their close contact with an unselfish, hard-working, people-caring, five-foot-two-inch American woman visionary and possibility-thinker. The Ellen White of their memory organized emergency food and clothing for the destitute; practical nursing care for the ill; spoke often to the public and the church; wrote incessantly. John Pocock remembered that her best hours for writing were from three to seven in the

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<sup>2</sup>Cf. John Pocock, 'Arcadia', Echo, 19 December 1898, p. 405.

<sup>3</sup>Ellen White's main references to the Pococks occur in the following letters: S-113-1897, 9 June 1897; H-61-1899, 3 April 1899, pp. 2-4; W-63-1899, 4 April 1899, pp. 3-5; H-70-1899, 14 April 1899, pp. 2-3; K-75-1899, 20 April 1899, p. 3; B-105-1902, 14 July, pp. 2-5. Cf. Ellen G. White, Welfare Ministry: Instruction in Christian Neighborhood Service, Washington, D.C., 1953, pp. 336-337.

morning. He said she sometimes had up to forty pages written by 7 am when her secretaries were beginning their day.<sup>4</sup> In the album Adventists presented to Ellen White as she was leaving for North America the following entry occurs on pp. 53-54:

Avondale  
Cooranbong  
August 13/1900

Dear Sister White

it is with feelings of sorrow that we write these few farewell lines to you we trust you will come back to Avondale again, we wish to thank you for your great kindness to us and also for your kind words of council and cheer, we shall indeed loose a kind friend. But we pray that God will abundantly bless and keep you safe on your journey and that your labours in the Message may be crowned with great success. Now we commit you to Him who is able to uphold you with His Everlasting Arms.

We remain

Yours in the Truth

John and Charlotte Pocock

Though absent in body, we're with you in prayer  
And we'll meet you in heaven--there is no parting there.<sup>5</sup>

Joseph Patrick and Amelia Annie Brown, immigrants from Ireland and England respectively, married in Rockhampton during 1889. To this union of a cab owner with a domestic servant were born three sons: Charles, Sydney and William. Joseph Patrick died of tuberculosis in 1893; in 1894 Amelia joined the Adventists through reading some of Ellen White's writings. With her boys, Amelia attended the 1898 Brisbane Camp Meeting, and there met Ellen White who gave attention to the family's situation and invited them to Cooranbong where she felt assistance could be

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<sup>4</sup>Dr Robert Olson, Secretary of Ellen G. White Estate, believes eighteen to be the maximum number of pages written by Ellen White before breakfast.

<sup>5</sup>The handwritten original is here transcribed exactly.

afforded them'.<sup>6</sup> The 1890s were hard times for a widow with three small sons. But years later the boys remembered that on Saturdays their mother was able to give them a special treat: one whole egg each. Once as they walked up Dora Creek they saw a tramp sleeping under the bridge. They hurried home, but soon each lad returned carrying his Sabbath egg, to give to the hungry swagman. Ellen White heard of the boy's gifts, and sent one of her helpers to Amelia with a basket of eggs.<sup>7</sup> The album presented to Ellen White contains the following entry on p. 48:

Avondale  
Cooranbong N.S.W.  
August 10th 1900

Dear Sister White

I cannot express in words, the thoughts of my heart, concerning your leaving Australia. But I take the privilege of sending you my earnest prayers and good wishes for a safe and pleasant journey. I shall never forget what your writings have done for me and the joy and peace in my life from reading The Great Controversy beside the blessings from your talks. With the prayer that God will keep us faithful, with respectful love your sister

Amelia Patrick<sup>8</sup>

Most of us, looking back, can see various forks in our life's road, decision-points which have shaped all subsequent events. In 1938 my family bought a small dairy farm on a tributary of the Hastings River, thirty-five kilometres north-west of Wauchope. At eleven years of age I left the Papinbarra Public School to help clear steep, newly-felled acres in the headwaters

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<sup>6</sup>Some of the details and the quoted words are from Charles Patrick's typewritten 'Life History' which he gave me before his death on 2 September 1976. My father, William, died on 6 October 1972 while I was still in the United States.

<sup>7</sup>Conversation with Sydney Patrick, who died on 4 August 1975.

<sup>8</sup>Again the handwritten original is reproduced exactly.

of the Wilson River. At fourteen I joined my older brother in contract timber-cutting in the Bellangry State Forest. We were both baptized by immersion in Lake Macquarie at the Eraring camp meeting, in December 1949. I spent the next eight years securing a Leaving Certificate at matriculation level, completing a two-year primary teaching course, and finally a four-year Bachelor of Arts in Theology degree. Then followed pastoral-evangelism in New Zealand for a decade, a district pastor's role for two-and-a-half years on the western edge of Chicago, one year of part-time lecturing at Andrews University in Michigan, a decade lecturing in the Department of Theology at Avondale College.

In December 1957 the first Andrews University extension school was conducted on the campus of Avondale College. Arthur L. White, Ellen White's grandson and now major biographer, was one of the the three lecturers whose perspectives I absorbed with youthful enthusiasm. As a young pastor one of my ambitions was to own all of Ellen White's published writings. Joan and I formed our marriage and raised our three children with the concepts of Ellen White's Messages to Young People, The Adventist Home, and Child Guidance in focus. I usually tried to read all of her comments on the principal biblical passages selected for sermons, in addition to giving some attention to the Hebrew and more to the Greek original.

One would hardly choose to toil through the four-and-a-half academic years of post-graduate study in which I engaged between 1957 and 1973, unless one had some convictions about and commitment to Adventist faith and its communication. Graduate study, intermittent for me between 1957 and 1970, climaxed with over two years in residence at my church's principal institution

for theological training, Andrews University, and nine residential months in an ecumenically-orientated institution, Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis.<sup>9</sup> These details are recounted to support the claim that I came to the present task with quite a thorough background in Adventism from the familial, educational, and professional points of view. And at every stage of my pilgrimage, from childhood memory to adult research, Ellen White has been significant.

But, as historian Jonathan Butler so aptly says, 'no doubt the next generation of Seventh-day Adventists will grow up at the knee of a different Ellen White from this one'.<sup>10</sup> Why is this so?

Since 1973 Seventh-day Adventists have developed at their world headquarters in Washington, D.C., an efficient archival department. Further, well-organized heritage rooms are in constant use at the church's major educational institutions, such as Andrews University in Michigan and Loma Linda University in California. Again, Ellen G. White/SDA Research Centres have been established in eight major geographical areas of the world to house large quantities of primary source materials from the early 1800s to the present. Adventists have also developed a large body of university-trained constituents, including historians able and determined to assess the movement's heritage. More than this, extremists on both right and left of the church's mainstream have

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<sup>9</sup>The areas of academic concentration were as follows: a Master of Arts (M.A.) in Systematic Theology; a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) with course work in Old and New Testament, Church History, Systematic Theology, Missiology; a Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) with its academic concentration in Biblical Studies and its professional emphasis focussing on the communication of Scripture through the teaching/preaching ministry of the church.

<sup>10</sup>Jonathan Butler, 'Prophet or Plagiarist: A False Dichotomy', Spectrum, Vol. 12, No. 4 (June 1982), p. 48.



broadcast, in quantity, cassette and printed materials presenting their particular perspectives.

The results for Ellen White studies have been significant. During the past decade an increasing disquiet has entered the Adventist community as long-cherished ideas have been challenged by new research findings, or in contrast, have been stoutly defended by traditionalists. The fresh data surfacing in Australia during the past five years, relating to Ellen White, clusters around such areas as her personal life, the historical context of her writings, her relation to other authors, the role of her literary assistants, and the development of her thought during the seventy-years of her ministry. All these areas of enquiry impinge on Ellen White's authority, that is, on her ability to speak with absolute accuracy on the whole gamut of historical, medical, educational, scientific, biblical and other issues important to Seventh-day Adventists.<sup>11</sup> A reference to the area of medical science will serve to illustrate how the church viewed Ellen White's authority to speak on all of the wide range of matters which she addressed in her prolific writings. In 1971 Ellen G. White Estate produced a booklet, Medical Science and the Spirit of Prophecy, which gave the then-standard view:

The Spirit of Prophecy is medically up to date. Before starting medicine I was well acquainted with the health ideas found in the writings of Mrs. E. G. White. Since finishing medical school I have been in practice for nineteen years. I have not had to change one medical idea that I have gotten from the writings of Mrs. E. G. White, but all my medical books have had to be replaced with up-to-date versions based

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<sup>11</sup>For an introduction to the voluminous bibliography of publications relevant to this paragraph see 'The Life and Writings of Ellen White: A Review of Some Recent Studies', in Arthur N. Patrick, 'The Minister and the Ministry of Ellen G. White in 1982', an unpublished paper, Avondale College, October 1982, pp. 2-14. Cf. the further references listed on pp. 23-24, 42-43, 59-60 of the same paper.

on more modern medical research. The books Counsels on Diet and Foods, Counsels on Health, The Ministry of Healing, Medical Ministry, and Temperance are as current as ever. As medical science advances, I find these guides do not become out-dated, but are still ahead of modern medical research on many health subjects.

When medical science disagrees with the Spirit of Prophecy, given a little more time, medical research comes to the same conclusions found in the inspired messages. This has happened a number of times in the past nineteen years. Considerable research of the medical literature shows that today the majority of the health principles and information given by Mrs White have scientific backing.

I am confident that the health information of the Spirit of Prophecy that is yet unproved can be accepted by faith with no danger that such faith will have been misplaced when scientific corroboration becomes evident.<sup>12</sup>

This concept of virtual inerrancy in medicine, history, geology, and so on, is stoutly defended by a vocal segment of the church, especially by reactionary right-wing groups in the United States and Australia.<sup>13</sup> The opposite extreme, leading to rejection of Ellen White's leadership and denigration of her integrity, has also been proclaimed with energy.<sup>14</sup> In between, a whole range of less radical options are presented.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>These words, by Dr Jackson A Saxson, are cited by the Board of Trustees on pp. 3-4. The booklet was published in Washington, D.C.

<sup>13</sup>See, for instance, such publications as Pilgrims' Waymarks, Pilgrims' Rest, Adventist Observer, Alma Torch, Landmarks: The Journal of the Adventist Laymens Fellowship, etc. Some of these publications were ephemeral, others continue at present. A set of five recent but undated cassettes by Willard Santee, entitled 'Circle of Apostasy', illustrate the conflict between the official Adventist position and this particular pressure group. However, a similar approach to the writings of Ellen White by Lewis R. Walton, Omega, Washington, D.C., 1981, made Walton a folk hero for many conservatives. See DF 597-J.

<sup>14</sup>Cf. Gregory G. P. Hunt, M.D., Beware This Cult! An Insider Exposes Seventh-day Adventism and Their False Prophet Ellen G. White, Belleville, Canada, 1981. For examples of more restrained but still strident approaches, see Walter T. Rea, The White Lie, Turlock, Calif., 1982; LimboLine; Christian Perspectives.

<sup>15</sup>Note Adventist Forums newsletters and the journals entitled Spectrum and Adventist Currents, as well as the church's

In other words, events within the Adventist community have again illustrated the applicability T. M. Ludwig's theory of what happens when religious change is precipitated by new information in fresh circumstances. In instances where 'the meaning and security of the accepted tradition' of a group are questioned, Ludwig suggests three typical kinds of responses occur: 'alienation, reversion to the old tradition (as a sort of nostalgic backlash), or transformation of the tradition'. Robert M. Johnston, in using Ludwig's categories, comments further on this matter:

Only the last option tries to bridge the gulf between the new situation and the religious tradition, to resolve the cognitive dissonance. Normally the third process is continuously happening, but in times of drastic disjunction it cannot keep up with events, and there is danger that one of the other two responses, which are basically destructive, may come into play.<sup>16</sup>

In a five-page letter written on 24 June 1981, one of the life-time trustees of Ellen G. White Estate commented at some length on contemporary studies concerning Ellen White. On page five he summarized both 'the real conflict' and his own stance:

The real conflict and issue today is this: Are Seventh-day Adventists being conditioned to view Ellen White as pastoral and not canonical? Shall we accept the view that a Seventh-day Adventist theologian is more dependable than a Seventh-day Adventist prophet?

I highly respect many of our Seventh-day Adventist theologians. I have sat at their feet and been taught by them. I admire and respect them highly. I would like to remind you, however, that you can search the Bible from Genesis to Revelation and you will not find a single text marking out theologians as having the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Scriptures indicate

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official publications. Cf. the ten points 'for those who wish to give Ellen G. White greater authority than Scripture', and the sixty points 'for those who wish to reject Ellen G. White', in Desmond Ford, The Adventist Crisis of Spiritual Identity, Newcastle, Calif., 1982, pp. 324-330.

<sup>16</sup>Robert M. Johnston, 'Orthodoxy and Heresy in the Biblical Period: Some Reflections on An Elusive Category', a paper presented at the San Francisco Meeting of the Andrews Society for Religious Studies, December 1981, p. 10.

however, that prophets have a gift of the Holy Spirit. Ellen White had that gift and she was canonical insofar as doctrinal interpretation authority is concerned.<sup>17</sup>

Delafield's view, that Ellen White 'was canonical insofar as doctrinal interpretation authority is concerned', has since been declared not to be the official view of the church.<sup>18</sup> However, it is important to note that certain areas of thought within Adventism are experiencing some transition. The fact that extremist pressures have created disunity and the loss of hundreds of members and ministers in Australia since 1980 is a matter of record.<sup>19</sup> This indicates that it is imperative for the church to affirm and elucidate Ludwig's third option which Johnston has recommended, lest continued reversion and alienation ensue.<sup>20</sup> One quite comprehensive explication of how this proposal might proceed was given three years ago by Fritz Guy, first in an address and then in revised form for publication. Guy observed that 'the future of

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<sup>17</sup>D. A. Delafield to P. C. Drewer, 24 June 1981.

<sup>18</sup>Cf. the statement 'The Inspiration and Authority of the Ellen G. White Writings, Adventist Review, 23 December 1982, p. 9.

<sup>19</sup>Probably, since 1980, for about sixty ministers in Australia and New Zealand, conflict over Ellen White's writings has been one of the most crucial components leading to their resignation or termination from service in the Adventist church. According to a recent survey 'insecurity in employment or lack of job satisfaction' afflict over thirty per cent of those who remain. See Eric H. Winter, 'Ministers in Conflict: A Study of Role Conflicts Experienced by the Pastoral Leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church', an M.A. Project Report, Andrews University (Avondale Campus), 1983.

<sup>20</sup>For other analyses of the dilemma facing the church, employing sociological perspectives, see the following: John W. Knight, 'Religious Belief and the Establishment and Maintenance of Seventh-day Adventist Tertiary Education', B.Ed (Honours) Thesis, University of Queensland, 1973; John W. Knight, 'B.A.s, M.A.s, and M.U.G.s: The World Not Turned Upside Down--A Case Study in Sociocultural Change', Ph.D. Thesis, University of Queensland, 1977. Cf. the research of Robert Wolfgramm, a Melbourne-based sociologist, which may be available in a graduate thesis during 1984.

Adventist theology depends on the existential relevance of its content, the manageability of its difficulties, and the possibility of its continuing development'. After defining Adventist theology in terms of its 'conceptual content', he suggested categories which profitably may be used to expand Ludwig's notion of transformation:

On the other hand, the term 'Adventist theology' can refer to the activity of theological reflection and construction within this particular community of faith. This activity consists of an ongoing consideration of the bases, definition, and implications of beliefs such as those listed above, and may include (1) reformulation, as eternal truth is understood afresh in the language of each different culture and each new generation; (2) clarification and specification, as new questions arise and require a more careful investigation and more precise answers; (3) elaboration, as the church enlarges its thinking by probing deeper and looking farther; (4) application, as the ongoing course of human history produces new situations; (5) reinterpretation, as further study and the witness of the Holy Spirit indicate that the Biblical revelation means something slightly different from what it has been understood to mean.<sup>21</sup>

A review of recent Adventist history shows to one of its foremost authors that certain 'faulty conceptions' about Ellen White 'have been corrected', and a 'view of her work--something denied by the church but in practice held by many Adventists--slowly is being abandoned'. Hence, this author says:

We have understood more about the mysterious process of inspiration, that blending of the divine with the human, as we have learned that her use of sources was wider than we had realised.

Thus the church has avoided opposite errors with regard to Ellen White's writings--from raising them to the place of Scripture or relegating them to the category of works of Christian piety.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Fritz Guy, 'The Future of Adventist Theology: A Personal View', unpublished paper, Andrews University, [1980], p. 2; cf. Fritz Guy, 'Adventist Theology Today', Spectrum, Vol. 12, No. 1 (September 1981), pp. 6-14.

<sup>22</sup>W. G. Johnsson, 'Three Years After Glacier View', Adventist Review, 22 September 1983, pp. 3, 14. See Appendix C.

One expression of the transformationist stance, of a type rather frequently presented to the Australian SDA Church during the past five years,<sup>23</sup> suggested recently that some of the basic components of this 'clearer understanding' might be profiled by these seven propositions:

1. Ellen White's writings make a striking appeal to timeless truth even though they are historically conditioned to a significant degree.
2. Ellen White's writings contain certain unique elements even though they depend in an evident way on both the SDA and non-SDA literature of her time.
3. Ellen White's writings on health placed the Advent people on vantage ground by relating bodily health to basic spiritual well-being and by pointing out numerous paths to right living, even though she reflected a number of the same mistakes as her SDA and non-SDA contemporaries.
4. Ellen White made constant and generally effective use of the Bible in her writings, even though she employed Scripture in a variety of ways, not all of which are accurate in terms of the meaning and intent of the Bible.
5. Ellen White often helped the Church develop and express its theology, even though her own doctrinal understandings during her lifetime underwent both growth and change.
6. Ellen White retained a position of control over her literary output, even though her literary assistants and advisors had more than a minor, mechanical role in the preparation of her writings for publication.
7. Ellen White's writings reveal a considerable literary beauty, even though her use of the writings of others and the role she assigned her assistants/advisors indicate that this literary excellence should not be used as a proof of her divine inspiration.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>See, for instance, Arthur N. Patrick to K. S. Parmenter, a five-page letter dated 9 December 1983.

<sup>24</sup>Arthur N. Patrick, 'Adventist Thought Leaders and Ellen White's Ministry', a paper prepared for the Australasian Division Spirit of Prophecy Resource Committee, 22 September 1983, pp. 2-3. Cf. Arthur N. Patrick, 'Presenting Ellen White's Ministry: A Meditation on Pastoral Responsibility in Teaching and Preaching on the Life and Writings of Ellen G. White', an unpublished paper, Avondale College 1983.

It is acknowledged that these options are seen as inadequate by the alienationist and as heretical by the reversionist. But they represent more-or-less adequately the approach of the transformationist.

This thesis has been completed within the uncertainties and dilemmas of the climate that the church has experienced since 1980. But it is intended neither as a polemic nor as an apologetic. It is, as has been emphasised, the work of a believer standing consciously and by conviction within Adventist heritage.<sup>25</sup> Its author chooses to seek an understanding of the reactions of both reversion and alienation, not to sustain controversy but to seek ways of cooperation in the larger purpose for which humans and Christians exist. This thesis is offered to its readers as another of many examples the church already has of the transformationist approach to Adventist heritage in general and to Ellen White studies in particular.

Seventh-day Adventists frequently refer to those 'landmark' truths which they deem as crucial to their past identity and present mission. Charles Teel suggested in 1980 how to juxtapose responsibly the old and the new, how to 'resolve the dilemma of belief in which old landmarks and new light are held in tension':

This tension must never be resolved. It is a tension that must be encouraged as administrators and academics learn to approach questions of faith and order in mutual trust and as peers. Any resolution of the tension suggests a resolution in favor either of old landmarks or the new light. If the tension is resolved in favor of new light, the present becomes so relativized that there is no continuity with the past. If the tension is resolved in favor of the old landmarks, the past becomes fixed so that there is no continuity with the present. If this tension which now exists among the children

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<sup>25</sup> See Appendix B for a symbolic summary of how Ellen White fits in my conception of Adventist heritage. Published as 'Landmarks and Landscape', Adventist Review, 27 October 1983, p. 4, this summation has been used quite frequently since July 1982.

of the Advent pioneers can be a truly creative tension, it may be a healthy sign that accommodation is being resisted. It may be an indication that the faith of the father is indeed becoming the faith of the children. And the children's children.<sup>26</sup>

Perhaps Teel's formulation simply expresses in more sophisticated words the main thrust of Ellen White's intention in the quotation for which she is, probably, best remembered by her denomination:

The work begun in feebleness and obscurity has continued to increase and strengthen. . . . In reviewing our past history, having travelled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God. . . . We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Charles Teel, Jr., 'Withdrawing Sect, Accommodating Church, Prophesying Remnant: Dilemmas in the Institutionalization of Adventism', a paper presented at the Theological Consultation for Seventh-day Adventist Administrators and Religion Scholars, Colorado, 1980, p. 37.

<sup>27</sup>Ellen G. White, Life Sketches: Being A Narrative of Her Experience to 1881 As Written By Herself; With a Sketch of Her Subsequent Labors and of Her Last Sickness Compiled From Original Sources, Mountain View, Calif., 1915, pp. 195-196. Note her view of ideological development conveyed in Ellen G. White, Counsels to Writers and Editors, Nashville, 1946, especially pp. 28-51. Cf. Alden Thompson, 'The State (and Future) of the Church', Westwind, Spring 1983, pp. 9-13. The section of Thompson's article most relevant to this Epilogue is given in Appendix C.



## APPENDIX A

### TO THE PLANS AND RECOMMENDATIONS COMMITTEE, NORTH NEW SOUTH WALES CONFERENCE TRIENNIAL SESSION, 1983

#### 1. Ordination of Women as Deaconesses and Elders

Whereas Ellen White in her writings approves the ordination of women for Christian service in the local church, for example, she counselled the world Church in 1895:

Women who are willing to consecrate some of their time to the service of the Lord should be appointed to visit the sick, look after the young, and minister to the necessities of the poor. They should be set apart to this work by prayer and laying on of hands. Review and Herald, 9 July 1895, p. 434, and--

Whereas the General Conference in session in 1881, after thorough discussion, recorded a 'substantially unanimous' vote--

That females possessing the necessary qualifications to fill that position, may with perfect propriety, be set apart by ordination to the work of the Christian ministry. Review and Herald, 20 December, p. 392, and--

Whereas Pastor Neal Wilson during his recent visit to Australia commented approvingly on the work being done by the scores of women ordained elders serving in local churches in North America, and--

Whereas Pastor Wilson commented that this matter was seen by the General Conference to be a question for local churches to decide, and--

Whereas the practice of ordaining women to specified roles in local churches in Australia has already begun, in response to needs clearly expressed by these churches, as well as the more widespread practice of appointing women to the role of elder without ordination--

It is requested that this session be invited to consider making a careful review of the matter of ordaining women in certain local churches where the need exists, for various roles such as deaconesses and elders, and--

Further, that a procedure for consultation between the conference and a local church on this matter be developed, which recognises the autonomy of the local church, but acknowledges the local validity only, of any such ordination.

II. Credentials for Women in Ministry

Whereas the Seventh-day Adventist Church in various parts of the world has proved that women function effectively in ministerial roles, and--

Whereas a number of female members of our congregations are continually involved in training for ministry, and--

Whereas these persons frequently seek some assurance from us and from the denomination's leaders that they can anticipate serving in ministerial roles,--

We request this session to initiate active study, at whatever levels are appropriate, on the question of credentials for women in ministry.

# Adventist Review

General Organ of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

October 27, 1983

## Landmarks and landscape

By ARTHUR N. PATRICK

In April, 1982, I again flew across the United States. For the first time in my flying experience there, visibility was excellent. From the warm sky above Los Angeles I saw the serene Pacific Ocean and the vast sprawl of the City of the Angels hugged by mountains. I saw marks of human effort and the panorama of nature, a vast continent spread below me.

If you asked me to draw a street map of Las Vegas, state the depth of the Grand Canyon, or give the location of the John Hancock Center in Chicago, mistakes would mar my response. You may ask a thousand other simple questions about the continental United States that I could not answer. You may discount my claim that I saw a panorama of a great country beyond the vision of a surface traveler. Through the miracle of transport I was shown a useful vista of *landmarks* and now I can interpret better a vast *landscape*.

To the benefit of Seventh-day Adventists, Ellen White was given a jet-aircraft vision of crucial realities in an age of spiritual surface travel. She saw landmark truths: God as the one whom to know is to love; health as the right arm of the third angel's message; education dealing with the whole person throughout the whole period of existence possible to humanity; history as moving toward a supreme confrontation between good and evil.

all to climax in the universal declaration that God is love, and many other distinctive features of faith precious to Seventh-day Adventists. She was shown such landmarks so she could encourage and guide the Advent people.

Some are tempted to claim either too much or too little for Ellen White's ministry. Those who would require her to give the equivalent of a detailed surface survey have difficulty with certain statements in her writings. Those who deny her spiritual gift, assessing her to be a fraud or false prophet, miss the enduring value of her prophetic vision. Either of these options can lead to conflict and disillusionment.

Ellen White wrote from an attitude of urgency, sensing an imminent end to all things earthly. Since her death Seventh-day Adventists have benefited from surface advances into the historical background of Scripture, aspects of science, causes of certain diseases, details of Christian history, and so forth.

In responding to detailed insights of painstaking investigation, we must remember the abiding usefulness of Ellen White's direction-setting, panoramic vision. On occasion she gives a "surface exploration" account. To deny a role for either her panorama or our detailed investigation is to reject part of God's gift of knowledge to humanity.

## EDITOR'S VIEWPOINT

Ellen White and her writings have come under special attack during the past three years. Some who once were strong—perhaps unrealistically strong—advocates of the “red books” have renounced them completely as they have learned of her use of literary sources and assistants. Some have exulted in a sense of “liberation” from the “bondage” of Ellen White!

But again, as with the challenge to our doctrines of the sanctuary and the judgment, much good has come. The church has been led to a clearer understanding of the place of Ellen White's writings vis-à-vis the Scriptures. A statement of our present understanding of this topic, “The Inspiration and Authority of the Ellen G. White Writings” (see *ADVENTIST REVIEW*, Dec. 23, 1982), sets out our position clearly by means of a series of affirmations and denials.

Faulty conceptions have been corrected. The “verbal inspiration” (dictation) view of her work—something denied by the church but in practice held by many Adventists—slowly is being abandoned. We have understood more about the mysterious process of inspiration, that blending of the divine with the human, as we have learned that her use of sources was wider than we had realized.

Thus the church has avoided opposite errors with regard to the Ellen White writings—from raising them to the place of Scripture or relegating them to the category of works of Christian piety.

We think that out of this study and debate Ellen White and her writings have emerged more clearly than ever as a divine light to God's great Advent movement. Spurn them as the critics will, they call us ever upward—“Come up higher.” We need their counsel, their stimulus, their promises, their encouragement.

W. G. Johnsson, *Adventist Review*, 22 September 1983, p. 5.

## Authoritative Documents

The role of Ellen White in Adventism is very much under discussion at present. But also at stake is the way in which we are to understand and treat the Bible. The *Adventist Review* of December 23, 1982, contains a listing of 10 affirmations and 10 denials which seek to clarify the current understanding of the church with reference to Ellen White and the Bible. The church seems to be committed to defending the authority of Ellen White in Adventism, and I believe it should. Adventism without Ellen White would hardly be a community that any of us would recognize.

In order to maintain Ellen White's authority, however, the church's more knowledgeable spokesmen are being much more explicit about the human element in the inspiration process. Inevitably and quite rightly, an informed view of inspiration must begin with a description of the biblical phenomenon. But to analyze the Scriptures in such a manner without robbing it of its authority is a delicate task, indeed. The convening of Consultation II in November 1981 represented an honest — one could almost say desperate — attempt by the church to come to grips with the problem in the light of the evidence (see report in *Spectrum*, December 1981).

The stakes for the church are considerable, for Adventism could swing to either of two extremes we could slide in the direction of mainstream Protestantism and treat the Bible as a mere human book, thus robbing it of its power to change lives. Or, we could turn our backs on investigation, choosing to deny the human element in Scripture in hopes of retaining its power. Personally, I believe Ellen White's writings offer us a third option, one which recognizes that authoritative documents written under inspiration represent a mysterious blending of the human and divine. The wealth of written material from the pen of Ellen White and her staff will no doubt be analyzed and scrutinized at great length. Some will do so in an attempt to diminish her authority, others to establish it. It is still too early to tell which road the church as a whole will take.

Alden Thompson, *Westwind*, Spring 1983, p. 11.

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