ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE

Angel Over Her Tent

D. A. Delafield and Gerald Wheeler

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Ellen G. White

Information about this Book

Overview

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About the Author

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

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By D. A. Delafield and Gerald Wheeler

Foreword

To many young people today, Mrs. Ellen G. White has become like a character out of a myth or legend. They hear adults constantly quote from her books and tell about the important things she did for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In their denominational history books they see photographs of her surrounded by stern-looking, old-fashioned-appearing people. As a result, modern young people do not think of her as a real person whom they would enjoy knowing and being with.

Angel Over Her Tent presents Mrs. White as a person all youth would enjoy knowing. We share the loneliness of her separation from her boys during her trips in the service of the church, her concern for people in desperate need of food and help, her quiet sense of humor, her enjoyment of Sabbath afternoon picnics. The reader watches as she struggles with danger and visits faraway places. This book will give every young person a new insight into Mrs. White's life.

In addition to incidents from Mrs. White's life, *Angel Over Her Tent* tells the amazing story of how a dove and *The Great Controversy* converted a village, and how a vision of a man with five of Mrs. White's books that were really nine led a Kalahari bushman across a trackless desert to the gospel.

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Contents

Chapter 1—Young Ellen Gould Harmon

The student next to Ellen Harmon giggled to himself, sure that his trick had been the funniest one ever pulled in the history of the school. Carefully he glanced around to make sure he had his classmates' complete attention. Ellen ignored him. But the teacher did not. Seizing his disciplinary stick, he marched down the aisle between the rows of high desks and stood over the boy. His face showing anger, the teacher raised the stick to strike the unruly student. But as he swung, the stick flew out of his grip and crashed against Ellen's forehead.

Covering her face, the injured girl immediately arose from her seat and ran from the schoolroom.

Startled and momentarily forgetting about the boy, the teacher watched her go. When she did not return after several minutes, the man began to worry. Checking outside, he saw her heading down the road toward home.

Hurrying after her, he called, "Ellen, Ellen, I made a mistake. I'm sorry. Won't you forgive me?" She turned and looked at him in [10]
surprise. "Of course I forgive you," she assured him, "but where did you make a mistake?"

"I didn't mean to hit you," he explained, trying to catch his breath.

"It was a mistake for you to hit *anybody*," she replied simply. "I would rather have a gash on *my* forehead than see it on somebody else."

Quick to punish, some teachers in Ellen Harmon's day whipped their students at the slightest excuse. Occasionally the students received harder punishment than they deserved.

Ellen's family lived in the Atlantic Coast city of Portland, Maine. Friends always found her pleasant and full of the ideas and plans any bright young girl has. A serious girl, though, she had a more mature outlook toward life than some of her friends. Religion was an important part of her life. Every Sunday she went to the Methodist

church on Pine Street. Rather than following constantly changing whims of her own, she found her greatest happiness in making her life useful for Christ. People had great interest in religion during much of the nineteenth century, and Ellen shared the strong faith of many of her neighbors. It was something, she discovered, that did not become boring after a while, as did the games she played.

When she became old enough, the Methodist minister baptized her in wide, island-studded Casco Bay, near the beach home of the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. She was only twelve years old when she and eleven others braved the wind-tossed waves to be
[11] baptized like Christ. She understood the seriousness of the decision she had made.

Her father worked as a hatmaker. He was not a rich man, but he and his wife Eunice had a full and busy life raising eight lively children. Ellen had a twin sister, Elizabeth; and the two girls were the youngest members of the family.

The children worked hard to help their father make his business succeed. Ellen made crowns for the hats. Because of a bad heart she had to work while propped up with pillows in bed. Her father paid her twenty-five cents a day. She also knitted stockings for twenty-five cents a pair. Instead of spending her money, she saved it.

After many months of saving, Ellen went to her parents with thirty dollars. "Please buy tracts and pamphlets with it," she said, handing the pile of coins to them. "I want other people to know about Christ's coming again, so that they can get ready." Christ was real to her, and she wanted to help others share her feelings. It gave her a strong purpose, a goal in life.

His daughter's sacrifice deeply impressed Mr. Harmon. During the 1840's thirty dollars represented a large sum of money, and it had taken Ellen four months to earn it. A girl with less determination would have spent the money long before.

Ellen Harmon had only one desire in life—to please God. But she found it hard to accept Christ as her Saviour. Her Christian friends told her to believe in Jesus and accept the fact that He would give her eternal life. Not understanding how she should believe, she
[12] thought that if her faith was strong enough, she would feel some kind of powerful emotion, such as she felt when she was excited or happy about something. When the feeling did not come, she condemned

herself for her lack of faith. She did not know that faith would bring the blessings of God's forgiveness and acceptance whether she felt any emotion or not.

At times Ellen feared that she was somehow different from other people. It seemed to her that God avoided her because of something she had done. Fear filled her heart. She felt forever lost and sank into despair and depression. In her mind God's desire for justice overshadowed His love and mercy for imperfect men and women. Her worry began to make her actually sick.

Most people during the years of Ellen's childhood believed in a real hell where Satan and his angels would torment sinners with fire for eternity—fire hot enough to cause endless pain, but not hot enough to kill. Ministers often preached on the subject, and would try to make it seem as terrible as possible to frighten their congregations into being good. Hearing many sermons about it, she sometimes shook with horror, afraid that fire would be her fate, also. She did not know that the Bible does not really teach there is an eternal, flaming hell. No one told her that the dead actually sleep until Christ comes again.

One night at prayer meeting she had the feeling that she should pray aloud. But when she tried to pray, she hesitated, afraid she would become confused. Believing that she did not know how to correctly express herself before God, she did not try again. Later, [13]
when she prayed in private, it seemed as if her prayers mocked God. Discouragement and frustration overwhelmed her. For weeks gloom surrounded her. Nothing could seem to make her happy.

One night Ellen had a dream which she remembered for the rest of her life, a dream that made her only more miserable at first. In it she saw a special temple. Many people went inside. Somehow she knew that only the people who had gone inside would escape destruction when Christ came again. Those outside would die, would face eternal loss. But most people did not seem to care whether they were saved or not. Instead, they made fun of those who did go inside the strange little temple. They claimed the temple was a trick, because no danger threatened anybody. Some even tried to stop people from entering the building.

Ellen Harmon watched for a while, wanting to go inside, but fearing someone would laugh at her if she did. Instead, she decided

to wait until no one looked in the direction of the temple; then she would slip through the door before anyone could catch her. But the crowd around the building grew larger. Realizing that if she waited, it would become harder to get through the throng of people, she started pushing her way through the milling men and women. A fear that she might be too late nagged at the back of her mind. At first the crowd pushed and shoved her about, but as she concentrated on reaching the temple in time, she forgot about the people around
[14] her and soon did not even notice them. Entering the building, she saw that a single immense pillar supported it. Bruised and torn, a lamb stood tied to the pillar. Everyone inside seemed to know that his deeds had caused the lamb's injuries. To enter the temple, one had to stand before the animal and confess the wrong things he had done. In front of the lamb clustered rows of elevated seats. On them sat a number of happy-looking people. Light seemed to shine on their faces as they sang and praised God. Ellen knew that they had confessed their sins to the lamb, and that God had pardoned them. Now they waited for some special event.

Although she stood inside the building, fear seized her. She felt ashamed that she had to humble herself before the people in the temple. Nor did she want anybody to overhear her confess her sins. Yet a strange force compelled her to approach the lamb, and she slowly edged around the group of people sitting on the raised seats. When she turned to face the lamb, prepared to confess her sins, a trumpet blared. The people shouted in triumph, shaking the building, and a bright light flashed through the temple. Suddenly a cloak of darkness dropped over Ellen, and she found herself alone—terribly alone.

With a cry of terror, the girl shook herself awake. The dream remained so vividly in her mind that she could barely convince herself that it had not actually happened. God had left her, she felt, never to return. He wanted to have nothing to do with her. Her anxiety and torment increased.

God did not let Ellen Harmon remain in her despair for long.
[15] Soon afterward He sent her another dream. One night she seemed to be sitting by herself in her room, her face in her hands, utterly dejected. Wishing she could meet Christ, she planned how she would throw herself at His feet and tell Him all her problems and fears.

She knew He would not spurn her pleas, but would have pity on her and comfort her. If He did come, she promised herself, she would serve Him in everything she did for the rest of her life. God was real to Ellen, and she wanted His love as most people want the love of a family member or a friend.

Suddenly the door to her room opened, and a man stood in the doorway. "Do you want to see Jesus?" he asked after looking kindly at her for several moments. "He is here," the stranger added, "and you can see Him if you desire. Take everything you possess, and follow me."

Too happy for words, Ellen gathered up her trinkets and followed the angel. Leading her to a steep, frail stairway, he cautioned her not to glance down or she would become dizzy and fall. Many other people walked up the stairs with her. During the climb several did look down, and they toppled backward and fell far below.

The stairway ended at a door. The angel told Ellen to leave her possessions outside, and this she did without hesitation. Opening the door, the angel motioned for her to enter. Jesus stood in front of her, kindness and majesty in every feature of His face. His eyes penetrated her, and she knew that He understood her fears and thoughts.

At first she tried to hide from His eyes, but His smile encouraged her to come closer to Him. Laying His hand on her head, He said, [16] "Fear not." His voice filled her with happiness so great that, overcome with the emotion, she dropped to His feet. As she lay there, she seemed to be in heaven. Finally her strength returned. Christ still smiled at her, awakening great reverence and love in Ellen.

The angel guide returned and opened the door. Reluctantly Ellen realized that she had to leave now. Outside, the angel told her to pick up her possessions. Once she had them bundled in her arms, he handed her a tightly coiled green cord and told her to put it next to her heart. Whenever she wanted to see Jesus again, he explained, she should take the cord and stretch it as much as possible. But, the angel warned, she should not leave it coiled too long or it would become knotted and difficult to straighten. As she descended the stairs, Ellen's joy increased until she had to tell everybody she met along the way how to find Christ, lest her heart burst from all the happiness it contained.

The dream gave her new hope and confidence. She believed the green cord in the dream symbolized faith, and through it she began to understand how she should trust in Christ.

Up to then Ellen had kept her worries to herself. After the dream she talked about them to her mother. Mrs. Harmon sympathized with her and suggested that she go to see Levi Stockman, an Adventist preacher with whom the Harmons had become acquainted. Ellen had great confidence in him, calling the man "a devoted servant of Christ."

[17] Pastor Stockman listened to her story, studied her face, then affectionately placed his hand on her head. "Ellen," he said, tears in his eyes, "you are only a child. You have had a most unusual experience for one of your age. I believe Jesus must be preparing you for some special purpose in life."

Telling her to continue trusting in God, he prayed for Ellen and sent her home. She felt certain God would answer the dedicated minister's prayer, and the doubt and fear that had plagued her vanished.

The next time she had a chance, Ellen prayed aloud at prayer meeting. God poured His Spirit on her, and she strongly sensed His presence. For the rest of her life she remembered the calmness that came over her. Daily she learned more about her relationship with Christ, and as she did, He prepared her for the role she would play in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Chapter 2—Chosen by God [18] [19]

God had a special purpose for Ellen Harmon's life. She would represent Him to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In both the Old and New Testaments God communicated to specially chosen men and women called prophets. Since New Testament times, however, He had not chosen any particular person to bring His messages to the church over a long period of time. He spoke with men in other ways. But through the life of Ellen Gould Harmon—later Ellen G. White—He would restore the office of the prophet to the church.

To represent God required special preparation, which she had received during her time of wondering whether Christ had accepted her. When God decided she was ready, He began to reveal Himself to her in a more open way. Then one day while she prayed, she felt God's blessing come upon her "like the gentle dew," as she later described it. A love for God greater than she had ever known before filled her heart. Even nature—the flowers and the trees and the animals—seemed more wonderful. She felt as if everything around [20] her smiled and praised God.

In March, 1840, and in June, 1842, the Harmon family listened to the great preacher William Miller lecture on the second coming of Christ at the Casco Street Church in Portland, Maine. Ellen's family believed Miller and accepted the doctrine of Christ's second coming, but their Methodist friends laughed at them and eventually expelled them from the Chestnut Street Methodist Church in 1843.

The Adventists of the 1840's—people now call them Millerites—thought that Christ would come in the fall of 1844. But they had misunderstood Bible prophecy. The Bible stated that the sanctuary would be cleansed 2300 days after the prophecy began in the year 457 B.C. Knowing that in symbolic Bible prophecy a day stands for a year, Miller and his followers figured that Christ would come in the fall of 1844. They had made a mistake, however. The sanctuary Christ would cleanse was not the earth, as Miller thought, but the sanctuary in heaven that Moses had made a copy of for the Hebrews'

center of worship after they fled from Egypt. Ellen Harmon and her family and others did not know about the mistake, though. When Christ did not come, they lived through what Seventh-day Adventists now call the "great disappointment."

The thought that Christ would return had become the most important thing in the lives of the Harmons and their Adventist friends. His seeming failure to do so completely crushed their hopes. They
[21] feared that they would have to live the rest of their lives on earth. Many former Adventists rejected the idea of Christ's coming again and laughed at those who still believed in it. Ellen felt completely dejected. Although Hiram Edson and others soon found out where they had misinterpreted the Bible prophecy, the sense of disappointment remained. Those that kept their faith in the Lord's return turned more and more to prayer to help ease their sorrow. Never had many of the Adventists wanted anything more strongly than they now wanted Christ to come and take them to heaven.

One December day Ellen and four other women gathered for prayer. The cold morning light washed their faces and glistened on the simple furniture of the New England room. Ellen's turn came, and she began to pray. Each person had prayed quietly, almost routinely. Suddenly God's power seized Ellen, and a vision projected itself like a movie into her mind. Using the symbol of people taking a trip, God showed her some of the dangers and crises Christians must face as they prepare for heaven and Christ's second coming.

In the parablelike vision she saw the small group of Adventists traveling toward a city at the end of a high, narrow path. A bright light shone behind them and helped them to find their way over the difficult path. Christ led the people, who, as long as they kept their attention on Him, remained safe and would reach God's city in heaven at the end of the path. God intended for the vision to encourage Ellen and the few who had kept their faith in Christ's second coming.

[22] The vision was the first of some two thousand that Ellen received in her lifetime. Each one helped her and the young Seventh-day Adventist Church to understand God's purposes better. Some visions helped clarify a point of doctrine. Others gave warnings against bad habits and practices among church members. Several depicted the battle between Satan and Christ over the fate of mankind. But

all strengthened the church and its members, and many prevented Adventists from falling into the dangers that had destroyed other denominations. Ellen wrote what she saw in the dreams and visions and compiled these in articles and books. Her over 100,000 pages of manuscript—much of it handwritten—have resulted in more than fifty-five major books.

Ellen Harmon, however, did not spend her entire life in carefully writing out the visions. In 1846 she married James White, a young Adventist minister. The couple had four sons. Besides being a prophet, a wife, and a mother, Mrs. White also helped her husband in his preaching and other church duties. She remained busy throughout her long life.

Although specially honored by God, Ellen at first felt reluctant to accept the great responsibility of becoming God's prophet to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Many times the angel who appeared in the visions pointed out evil in church members and told her to warn them about their bad habits and traits. She dreaded revealing the evil in human nature and did not want to hurt anybody's feelings. Occasionally she had to struggle with the temptation to soften God's reproofs to the church, not realizing that she was being unfaithful to her role as a prophet. Nor did she see the dangers in such a course [23] both to her and to the church.

God decided to illustrate to Ellen her responsibility toward her fellow church members. Again He used a symbolic dream. Taken into the presence of Christ by an angel, she saw Christ frown at her, then turn His face away. Terror and agony seized Ellen, and she fell speechless to the ground. An overpowering desire to hide from Christ's frown made her understand the feelings of those who would beg for the mountains to fall on them during Christ's second coming.

A brightly glowing angel appeared and, attracting Ellen's attention, pointed to a group of people with bloodstained clothing and faces filled with horror and despair. Noticing Mrs. White, they ran to her, grabbed hold of her clothes, and began to rub their bloody rags on her dress. The blood stained her clothes. The sight of the people and their blood on her dress made her faint. She instantly realized that the smeared blood symbolized her guilt in not warning others of their faults and mistakes. No excuse to defend herself before the

angel came to her lips. She knew that she had none. Flee she could not.

"This is not your case now," the angel suddenly said. He explained that he had presented the scene to warn her of her fate should she not present God's warnings and reproofs to others. But if she would faithfully do her duty, at Christ's second coming she would gain eternal life. "You will have to suffer much," the angel emphasized, "but the grace of God is sufficient." God would give her the
[24] strength, the courage, and the insight she needed. Later, with the publication of her first book, *Christian Experience and Views,* in 1851, she included a special note to the readers. "A sense of duty to my brethren and sisters and a desire that the blood of souls might not be found on my garments have governed me in writing this little work," she wrote.

Never again did she weaken any of her warnings or instructions from God, but delivered them faithfully. Some of her fellow church leaders thought her needlessly severe at times. She did not let their attempts at pressure influence her. "I had to set my face like steel to do this," she explained. Her task brought her much heartache at times, though she knew that she would face greater sorrow if she did not fulfill her mission.

Mrs. White died in 1915, and she can no longer give personal messages from God. Her books, however, continue her task. Carefully studied, such volumes as the *Testimonies for the Church* can save the church and its members from much trouble. Some people have read wrong meanings into them, but they would do the same thing with the Bible. Her writings are valueless unless read. If Seventh-day Adventists will read them, they will find the thoughts of God given through the literary style of Ellen G. White. They will find a wonderful Christian life, one worthy of imitation. But most of all, they will find Jesus Christ.

Chapter 3—Plague, Pestilence, and the Pioneers [25]

People during the nineteenth century had little knowledge about health and medicine. Cities and towns had poor sanitation facilities, food could not be preserved well, fresh fruits and vegetables became scarce during certain seasons, and disease ran rampant. Many people died from things a pill or simple injection would cure today. Epidemics sometimes killed large portions of the population of some towns. During their travels the Whites often came to sections of New England and New York where sickness had stricken people. Occasionally God would intervene in cases of extreme illness and heal the suffering person after the primitive medical aid had failed.

One such example occurred in the spring of 1845, before Ellen's marriage to James White. She visited the home of Stockbridge Howland in Topsham, Maine, a hilly little town of sturdy old houses and lofty elm trees near Brunswick, Maine. A group of Adventists had planned a meeting in the Howland home. Ellen did not know [26] then that she and her future husband, James White, would live in some of the upstairs rooms of the large old house in less than two years. James also attended the meeting.

Ellen was a close friend of Frances Howland, Stockbridge's oldest daughter. The Howland girl suffered from rheumatic fever. Her hands had swollen so badly that the joints of the fingers could not be seen. Ellen worried about her friend, fearing that she might die. The little group of Adventists met for worship and to discuss the girl's case.

When someone asked Stockbridge if he had faith enough to believe that his daughter could be healed in answer to prayer, he replied that he did have. Several proposed that the group kneel in prayer and ask God to heal Frances should it be His will. Afterward one of the men asked, "Is there a woman here who has the faith to go and take Frances by the hand and bid her to rise from her bed in the name of the Lord?"

Stockbridge Howland's daughter lay in one of the upstairs bedrooms, helpless and feverish, her body racked with pain.

The man did not have to ask for a volunteer a second time. Instantly a woman named Curtis rose to her feet and climbed the steep stairs to Frances' bedroom. Entering it, she took the girl's hand and said, "In the name of the Lord, arise and be whole."

Obeying the woman's command, Frances pushed herself up from her bed, slipped her feet to the floor, and walked across the room.
[27] New and sudden strength and relief from pain flooded through her, and she began to praise God for the miracle He had performed for her.

Quickly dressing, she came down to the room where the group of praying men and women had assembled. A smile of gladness and gratitude burst across her face and seemed to be reflected in the faces of her friends and relatives.

The next morning James White, Ellen Harmon, Frances Howland, and the others had breakfast together. For worship James selected the fifth chapter of the Book of James and read it with deep emotion. The physician who had cared for Frances appeared in the hall for his morning check of Frances' condition. With the door to the kitchen closed, he did not see everybody gathered about the table. James, engrossed in his reading, apparently did not hear the doctor go up the stairs to Frances' room. Not finding her in bed, the physician hurried back downstairs and burst into the kitchen, an expression of alarm on his face. When he saw his patient sitting at the breakfast table, he was amazed.

"What is she doing out of bed?" he demanded.

"The Lord has healed her," her father answered.

James White returned to his interrupted reading. "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him." James 5:14.

The doctor listened, his expression a mixture of wonder and disbelief. Knowing she no longer needed him, he turned and quietly left the house.

Later in the day Frances rode three miles, much of it through
[28] rain and mist. The ride did not appear to damage her health. Instead, she seemed to improve even more. Within a few days she requested

baptism. The cold water and weather, like the ride through the rain, did not affect her. Rheumatic fever never bothered her again.

At the same time that Frances Howland suffered from a weakened heart, William H. Hyde fought off an attack of dysentery. Internal bleeding started, and his symptoms worsened alarmingly until his doctor considered the case almost hopeless. Ellen Harmon and several others visited Hyde and found him suffering from more than physical sickness. He had become involved with a group of religious fanatics. The fanatics' beliefs had created a bad name for the Adventists and helped destroy Hyde's belief in God. With the man's faith damaged, Ellen knew that it would be difficult to pray for God's healing for him. She knew that they had to take him away from the influence of his dangerous friends. But Hyde did not have enough physical strength to travel. And the religious fanatics daily came to visit and to fill him with their wrong doctrine.

Ellen and several others, gathering at his bedside, prayed that he would at least have strength enough to go somewhere else, out of reach of the fanatics' influence. His health temporarily improved until he managed to ride to the home of an Adventist named Patten. But after he arrived at Patten's house, his dysentery worsened, and his friends feared he would soon die.

The fanatics, learning where he had gone, followed him to the Patten farm. Again their teachings began to weaken his faith. Finally his friends had to bar them from his bedroom, permitting only people [29]
with strong religious faith to enter it. They realized that Hyde had some things he needed to remove from his life. His relationship with Christ was not good; he had drifted away from God. Ellen and the others pointed out the mistakes he had made and told him where he should change. Thinking over what he had done before his sickness, William Hyde realized that he had done many wrong things. Accepting the reproofs given him, he prayed for forgiveness. His complete repentance amazed his friends and encouraged them in their own religious beliefs.

As He had done for Frances Howland, God gave William Hyde new physical strength. Immediately he dressed and walked out of the bedroom, thanking God as he went. Going into the kitchen, he saw on the table a hearty dinner such as farmers, needing and using lots of energy, would eat. "If I were well," he said, "I would eat

this food. Since I believe God has healed me, I shall carry out my faith." Sitting down at the dinner table with his friends, he ate a large dinner. Even though he had had a bad case of dysentery only a few minutes before, the meal did not harm him. He completely and permanently recovered from his bout with the disease.

Disease often stalked the early leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It threatened to slow the spread of the Adventist message. The members needed to know how to improve and protect their health. In a vision on June 6, 1863, at the Otsego, Michigan, home of Aaron Hilliard, God began to outline to Mrs. White princi-
[30] ples that would improve the well-being of Adventists. From several visions came writings that resulted in such books as *Medical Ministry, The Ministry of Healing, Counsels on Health,* and *Counsels on Diet and Foods.*

The visions on health, however, did not come until nearly twenty years after the Sabbathkeeping Adventists first began to organize little churches. Until then people had to struggle along with their limited and crude medical knowledge. In His mercy, God often miraculously healed many Adventists. Mrs. White saw such healing in her own life.

One day in 1849, when James White prepared to travel to New Hampshire and Maine, Mrs. White suddenly became worried. She was afraid that her husband would contract cholera, a dangerous disease then killing many in New England. With her own health poor, she leaned heavily upon him during times of difficulty. She would not know what to do if the one she loved died.

One night Mrs. White dreamed that she and James went walking in the countryside. As they journeyed along together, she noticed that his eyes looked bloodshot, his face had reddened, and his lips had lost their color. People around them died from the dread cholera. Turning to him, she said, "James, I think that you would make a perfect cholera victim."

He did not seem too concerned about the danger. "Let's just walk along a little further, and I will show you a sure remedy for cholera," he replied. They approached a small bridge crossing a stream. Suddenly James White darted for the stream and plunged in. Feet kicking briefly in the air, he dived for the bottom. Mrs.
[31] White felt fear well up inside her, and she wanted to scream. A few

seconds later he bobbed to the surface with a splash, holding a glass of water. Rays of light shattered and exploded in the liquid. "This water cures all manner of disease," he said, drinking it. Again he swam down into the deep water, returning with another glass of the strange fluid.

When James drank the second glass without offering her any, Mrs. White became sad. She could not understand his unusual selfishness. Sensing her thoughts, he explained, "There is a secret spring at the bottom of this river which cures all kinds of diseases. Anyone wanting to obtain water from it must plunge down to it by himself. No one can get it for someone else."

She saw that all signs of the cholera had vanished from his face. His health and strength had returned.

When Mrs. White awoke from her dream, she understood its meaning. Her fears had vanished like James's cholera, and she had a new appreciation of Jesus—who had called Himself the Water of life—and of His care for her husband. She knew that God would not let Satan use disease—then so common—to stop the growth of the tiny Adventist Church. A sense of trust replaced her worries.

Besides illustrating God's protection of His believers, Ellen White's dream also had a prophetic sense. James White did come down with cholera the next year. At the time they lived in Centerport, New York, at the home of William Harris, from which the Whites published a short-lived religious magazine called the *Advent Review.* William Harris had gone to work several miles away when the cholera attack came. The only ones present with Mrs. White [32] were Mrs. Harris, Sarah—Ellen's sister—and Clarissa Bonfoey, a woman who lived with the Whites and helped take care of their child Edson when they traveled.

The attack was severe. James had cramps every few minutes, and the pain became almost unbearable. As the disease progressed, his arms and legs began to grow cold. In an attempt to restore circulation, Mrs. White rubbed them until she was completely exhausted. His condition continued to worsen, and she knew that he would soon die. Never had she felt so helpless. Desperately she repeated to herself over and over God's promises to heal the sick. In a weak, barely audible voice, James White asked the four women to pray for him. Physically and emotionally exhausted, Mrs. White dropped to her

knees with the other women. Each word of their prayers came from agony. Strongly feeling her unworthiness before God, Ellen laid her hand on her husband's head and asked God to reveal His power to heal.

Immediately James White's pain eased. The skin of his face regained its natural color, and a peaceful smile softened his gaunt features. Never, the women thought, had they witnessed a more remarkable answer to prayer. Again God had protected the leaders of His church from disease and death.

Chapter 4—But How will We Support Ourselves? [33]

Becoming an Adventist minister in the mid-nineteenth century was a serious and difficult thing. The church gave him no regular income. Instead he had to support himself by farming or working at some trade. The time he had left over from working he devoted to the ministry. A few, including the Whites, did spend their whole time as traveling evangelists. But the Adventists had no regular church organization and no system of paying those serving as minister-evangelists or editors and writers. They had to depend on themselves and the occasional gift of farm produce. A few more wealthy Adventists donated some money, but such cases were rare.

Not until 1859 did the Adventists begin any kind of systematic offerings for the support of the clergy. For a number of years ministers received such "pay" as a bushel of wheat, a sack of potatoes, a bushel of turnips, and, at times, some cash from a believer. Entering the ministry was a risky venture for a man with a family, especially if he desired to spend his full time at it. For a time James White had [34] to mow hay and work on the railroad to feed his family.

When John Norton Loughborough began to believe that God wanted him to join the Seventh-day Adventist ministry, he faced an important decision. Somewhat younger than Mrs. White, he sensed a little of her disappointment when Christ did not come in 1844. Afterward he served for three years as a lay preacher among the non-Sabbathkeeping Adventists. In 1852, at twenty years of age, he accepted the Sabbath doctrine and felt a desire to return to the ministry. Yet he hesitated. He wanted to save enough money to support his wife.

Before his acceptance of Seventh-day Adventism he had successfully sold sash locks for windows. After joining the church, it seemed that no matter how hard he tried, he could not make his business succeed. Although builders admitted they needed locks in their construction, they would not buy any from him. Frequently the sales from a five-day week did not produce enough profit to pay

for his transportation and hotel bills. He had once managed to save thirty-five dollars, but his continuing expenses ate that up, and he could no longer afford to leave Rochester, New York, on sales trips. Things began to look desperate for him. As his income vanished, the feeling that he should enter the ministry grew. Yet with scarcely any money on hand, he knew that he and his wife could not live on an Adventist minister's tiny and extremely uncertain income.

[35] By the middle of December, 1852, his savings had dwindled to a three-cent coin. As he attended the next Sabbath meeting held in the White home on Mount Hope Avenue, it seemed that a cloud hung over everyone present. Someone suggested that prayer would remove the strange feeling. During the prayer Mrs. White went into vision. Coming out she explained that the reason such a depression hung over the meeting was that Loughborough was resisting the conviction of duty. God gave Mrs. White the vision so that she could make a special plea to John.

"He is resisting the conviction of duty," she said. "God wants him to devote himself completely to preaching."

Going home after the meeting, John began to do some serious thinking. In prayer he wrestled with his problem. The problems of supporting himself as a minister loomed before him, but the danger of resisting God's will for his life appeared even more serious. The conflict raged within his mind. Finally he made a decision. He would go preach, confident that God would open the way. His tension relaxed, and peace filled his mind.

Monday morning his wife came to him for some shopping money, not knowing he had only three cents left. "John," she asked, "can you let me have some money? We're out of matches, and I also need some thread from town."

Reaching in his pocket for the tiny silver coin, he handed it to her, explaining, "Here is a three-cent piece. It's all I have. Get a penny's worth of matches, a skein of thread, and bring me back the other cent. I want to have a little money in my pocket." He paused a moment. "You know, Mary, I can't seem to make my business
[36] succeed no matter how hard I try. I don't quite understand it."

Bursting into tears at the sudden thought of their poverty, his wife sobbed, "John, what are we going to do?"

"I am going to return to preaching."

"But if you do, how will we live?"

"I don't know, but God does. As soon as I made my decision to rejoin the ministry, I felt an assurance that God would take care of us."

Not sharing his faith, Mary ran into the bedroom and threw herself down on the bed to cry for an hour. Unable to cry anymore, she washed her face and walked to the village. John sighed as he watched her leave, then returned to his study of the message he would be preaching to others. A little later someone rapped on the door.

"Are you John Loughborough—the lock salesman?" the stranger asked when John went to the door.

John nodded.

"I'm from Middleport, about forty miles up the Erie Canal."

Loughborough invited the man inside.

"My health has been rather poor lately," the man explained after they had exchanged greetings, "and I am going to Ohio for a better climate. I want to take along some kind of business to meet expenses as I travel and find a new home. Someone suggested that I try selling locks, and Thomas Garbut recommended I contact you to get some of Mr. Arnold's patent sash locks. Eighty dollars' worth would tide me along for a while. Pick me out an assortment, and I'll come tomorrow and pick them up and pay for them." For walking a half [37] mile to the factory, Loughborough earned a commission of twenty-six dollars, a sum then having over ten times the purchasing power it would have today.

Two hours after the customer left, Mary returned from her shopping and found her husband in a cheerful mood. Somewhat upset at his behavior, she asked why he seemed so happy. He told her about his sale to a man who had traveled almost forty miles to buy some locks, and instead of going a half mile farther to the factory, had stopped at the Loughborough home. Again Mary went to the bedroom to cry, but because of a different emotion.

With the profit from the sale, John bought firewood, flour, and other supplies his wife needed.

The next Sabbath the Adventist believers in western New York held a general religious meeting. Again Mrs. White received a

vision. She was shown that Loughborough was correct in giving himself to the work of the ministry.

That night Hiram Edson, an early Adventist leader and one of the first interpreters of the sanctuary doctrine, arrived in Rochester on the nine o'clock evening train. He had not planned to attend the general meeting in Rochester, some forty miles from his home. But while praying during family worship, he had the strong impression that he should go to the city, that someone needed him there. Not able to throw the thought off, he went to the barn and prayed. The voice telling him to go to Rochester grew stronger and more persistent.

[38] Catching the first train west after the Sabbath ended, he arrived after the Adventists' evening meeting. He told James White about the strong urge he had felt to come to Rochester. "What do you want of me here?" he inquired.

"Get old Charlie [the Whites' horse]," James White replied, "and the carriage, and take Loughborough out on a six-week preaching circuit in southwestern New York and Pennsylvania."

John Loughborough continued his preaching career for over three fourths of a century. He served as an administrator and as the denomination's first historian. He helped establish tithing among Adventists. The salary for today's ministers comes from the tithe.

Loughborough accomplished much for the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but without Mrs. White's influence he might never have become a minister.

Chapter 5—The Man who Hanged Himself [39]

The decades of the 1840's and 1850's saw many kinds of social and religious movements sweep across New England and New York. They ranged from Joseph Smith's Mormonism to Sylvester Graham's program of health reform. Some of the movements, especially the religious ones, attracted strange kinds of people.

James and Ellen White often met some of them. They had a special problem with religious fanatics. When Christ did not come to earth in the fall of 1844, the Adventists faced growing doubts about the correctness of their understanding of the Bible. As the faith of many weakened, it provided an opportunity for those teaching unusual doctrines to gain followers among the confused people. Many who had once been dedicated Adventists accepted all kinds of strange beliefs. The Whites had to fight such fanaticism to protect those who kept their faith. Many of the fanatics brought dishonor to the name "Adventist." One day the Whites visited a family living [40] in the tiny New Hampshire town of Claremont. The townspeople had directed them to the husband, saying he and a friend were the local Adventist leaders. But the Whites soon found he had accepted the doctrine of holiness, which teaches that a man can reach a state of perfection where he can no longer sin. The man dressed in the best clothes he could buy, and seemed to have an air of ease and comfort about him. But he loafed and had many bad habits. Instead of supporting himself, he tried to persuade others to support him through charity, creating much prejudice against Adventists.

While he and several others sharing his beliefs sat around and bragged to the Whites about the holiness they had attained, into the room walked the man's son, a boy about eight years old. Shame filled the lad's mother when she saw the boy's dirty, ragged clothing, but the father showed no concern, completely ignoring his son. Without paying any attention to him he continued to tell about what he considered his high spiritual qualities.

When Mrs. White saw the child's terrible clothing, any belief she might have had about the man's holiness immediately vanished. She knew that Christ never taught idleness or encouraged religious devotions to the neglect of family duties. The man's wife had to completely support the family, yet her husband criticized her for not being as holy as he thought he was. He believed a holy person's thoughts should be above matters of work, of food, of daily tasks.
[41] Yet he would have starved without her. That night the Adventists held a meeting at the home of a Mr. Collier. Mrs. White, wanting to learn more about the men teaching the holiness doctrine, asked Collier what he knew about them. Refusing to answer, he explained, "If the Lord sent you here, you will soon learn what they are like."

The holiness believers also attended the meeting. While Mrs. White prayed that the Holy Spirit would enter the gathering, the fanatics began to groan and exclaim "Amen" in seeming sympathy with her prayer. She stopped, unable to continue.

Knowing that the meeting could get out of hand if the men kept trying to demonstrate their supposed sinlessness, James White stood and said, "I am distressed. Such behavior drives the Holy Spirit away. I resist their influence in the name of the Lord. O God, rebuke this evil."

The feeling of depression that had stopped Ellen's prayer disappeared, and she resumed. After she had spoken a few moments, they started their groans and amens again. Their action seemed to chill her body, and she paused a second time.

Once more James White prayed that God would stop the evil power that threatened to control the meeting. The fanatics did not attempt to flaunt their pretended holiness before the people a third time. The meeting continued quietly and orderly.

After the meeting James talked to Mr. Collier privately. "You were right," he commented. "I have learned what these men are like.
[42] They act under the influence of Satan, but claim that the Spirit of the Lord guides them in what they do."

Collier nodded. "I believe God sent you to help us," he replied. "As for them"—he motioned in the general direction of the holiness teachers—"we call their power mesmerism [an early name for hypnotism]. They have a strong control over the minds of others, and have had a bad effect on some. The local Adventists seldom hold

meetings anymore. If we do, they show up and try to run things, and we believe we should not associate with them. They appear to show great religious feeling, as you saw tonight, yet they somehow drain all the spirituality out of our prayers and leave us in a state of great depression. Tonight was the first time I ever saw anyone able to control them."

Those who had watched James White silence the holiness fanatics wondered even more about the men's spirituality. Soon the people of the New Hampshire village learned about the true character of those teaching the "cannot sin" falsehood, and the fanatics lost their followers. But it seemed that as soon as one case of fanaticism ended, another one would arise somewhere else. The Whites hurried from place to place meeting attacks on and dangers facing the little groups of men and women who would eventually become the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

In Paris, Maine, the Whites met a man who claimed God did not want him to work with his hands. In hardworking New England such an idea naturally made people dislike him. He took long, tiring journeys to places where he knew people would abuse and mistreat [43]
him, thinking that he suffered for Christ's sake. His ideas made people scorn him and laugh at him until many thought all Adventists were like him. He followed any whim or feeling that came to his mind.

God, knowing the damage the man caused to His church, sent a warning to him through Mrs. White. She told him that God said he did wrong in refraining from work and in trying to get others to follow his course. Never, she said, should he condemn people when they would not do as he did. The man spurned her warnings, saying they came from the devil, and she saw that she could not change his mind.

To keep Mrs. White from becoming discouraged, God showed her that He would counteract much of the damage the man had done.

The fanatic continued to follow his whims and impressions until his friends began to notice that he was becoming mentally ill. When he finally turned completely insane, they confined him in an asylum. Although a few of his followers still clung to his teachings, his suicide finally destroyed their faith in him. Making a rope out of blankets and sheets, he hanged himself.

Not all of the people creating difficulty for the Adventists acted quite so strangely. Some caused trouble in more subtle ways. Hypocrisy—deliberately giving a false image or impression of what one is like—often threatened the faith of early church members. People would give the appearance of being religious when they ac-
[44] tually had lives full of evil and wrong practices. As the years passed, the Whites' travels centered less in New England. They went farther west, spending some time in New York. For a while they rented a house in Oswego, New York. One day Ellen White received a vision concerning a woman attending the Adventist church in Camden, about forty miles east of Oswego. The angel showed her the little group of believers, pointing out one woman who claimed to be especially pious. "The woman is actually a hypocrite," the angel stated, "and she is deceiving the others."

Arriving at the church, Mrs. White looked around for the woman, but did not see her. Turning to a member, she asked her if everybody belonging to the group had come. She glanced about the room, studying faces, then replied that all had come. Since the woman Mrs. White had seen in the vision lived four miles away, the person Ellen asked had forgotten about her entirely. A few minutes later the hypocritical woman did enter, and Mrs. White instantly recognized her.

During the meeting an opportunity came for each to give a short testimony about his personal religious life. When the woman's chance came, she talked a long time, telling everybody she had perfect love and a holy heart. Unlike other people, she claimed, she did not have to struggle with temptations and difficulties. No discouragements or fears bothered her. Instead, she had perfect peace because she submitted her life completely to God. Not following her own desires, she tried to obey Him in every way. The others
[45] attending the meeting seemed to believe her claims. Fearing that no one would believe her because she was a stranger in Camden, Mrs. White did not say anything against the woman. When Ellen asked someone what he thought about the pious woman, he said he considered her the most active and faithful member of the little Adventist congregation.

Discouraged, Mrs. White left the meeting with her husband, and they drove to the home where they stayed for the weekend. She

knew that she could not tell what she had learned in vision about the woman without turning the people against herself. They would naturally defend their friend and neighbor from the charges of a stranger. Probably the woman would only gain more influence.

That night God sent Ellen White a symbolic dream. In it a door opened, revealing a closet crammed with junk. An angel standing beside her told her she must clean it out. Taking a lamp and turning its flame up brighter, she began to remove the rubbish. Soon the closet stood clean and empty. Several persons had watched Mrs. White empty the closet. Turning to them, she said they should not let anyone put any more trash in the little room, but should use it for more important things.

Sunday morning included another meeting with the tiny congregation. James White planned to preach on the parable of the ten virgins, but after he started, he began having difficulty speaking. He kept losing his voice and stumbling over words. His thoughts would either jumble up in confusion or his mind would go blank so that he couldn't think of the right word to say. Realizing that the problem [46]
hindering his speaking would not go away by itself, James suggested that the group pray. During the prayer God took Mrs. White into vision.

She saw the hypocritical woman groping around in darkness symbolic of her spiritual life. Christ appeared, and looking at the woman and her husband, frowned. Mrs. White trembled at the sight of His expression, knowing that the hidden evil in the woman's life had caused Christ to frown.

Coming out of vision, Ellen, still trembling, told those present what she had seen. Amazement and disbelief crossed their faces. The woman calmly sat and listened until Mrs. White finished. "I am glad the Lord knows my heart," she said, standing. "He knows that I love Him."

His face angry, her husband rose to defend her. With his Bible in his hand, he exclaimed, "The Bible is all we want. I shall not give up the Bible for visions." Mrs. White had often heard the argument used against her.

"Don't worry, dear," the woman said, trying to quiet her husband. "The Lord knows me, and will take care of it all." Her face showing hurt and puzzlement, she turned to the little gathering and repeated

with tears in her eyes, "If my heart could only be opened that you might see it, you would see that it is pure and clean."

The other Adventists quickly felt sympathy for the woman and resentment against Mrs. White. Mrs. White was a stranger, while the woman was a neighbor. Naturally they would believe her instead of someone unknown to them. Although saddened at the people's hostility and disbelief, Ellen knew she had done her duty before God
[47] and felt sure He would take care of the woman and the problem she caused.

When the Whites left the meeting, the woman came up to Mrs. White and announced that she held no hard feelings against her. In fact, she added, she would even pray for Mrs. White. If Ellen White reached heaven, the woman promised to greet her there.

For a short time after the Whites had traveled on to other places, the Adventists in Camden wondered and debated whether they should believe Mrs. White or their neighbor. Many felt that she had abused the woman and damaged her reputation. Then something happened to prove Mrs. White's claims.

Fear seized the woman's mind, a fear so strong that no matter how hard she tried she could not escape it. A feeling that she should confess what she was really like overwhelmed her. When she could stand it no longer, she went to her friends and neighbors and began to tell them the secrets of her life. They came tumbling out. She shocked the people by telling them that the man she had lived with for years was not her husband. She had run away from her real husband in England, leaving a child behind.

Claiming special knowledge about medicine, she had sold bottles of medicine supposedly originally costing a dollar, but actually worth only twelve cents. Through a false oath she had defrauded a poor man of thirty dollars. The people now realized the truthfulness of Mrs. White's charges against her.

[48] The woman did not stop with just admitting her guilt. She tried to make right as far as possible the wrong things she had done, and at one time prepared to walk forty miles to confess to another person. When she could, she returned money that she had defrauded from people. Her repentance seemed genuine. But equally important, the Camden Adventists knew that God spoke through Ellen G. White.

Chapter 6—Letters to the Boys [49]

The whites spent a large part of their time traveling, visiting the scattered little groups of Adventists. During the 1840's, 1850's, and 1860's travel was difficult. Railroads existed in only a few places, and travel by rail was extremely slow and uncomfortable by today's standards. Coaches had no air-conditioning, and only a tiny stove for heating. Wooden benches served as seats, and the coaches rattled over crude iron rails that often broke. Frequent wrecks and derailments made riding in the wooden coaches hazardous. Rain and snow often delayed or stopped the trains, preventing regular schedules. But the railroads were the best and fastest method of travel then available.

Where no railroad tracks yet ran, the Whites journeyed by even slower kinds of transportation. They often rode in canalboats such as cruised along the Erie Canal. Away from the canals and rivers, they drove a horse and buggy. In the winter they used a sleigh. Sometimes they bounced along in stagecoaches, which traveled between many of the villages and towns. But no matter how slow [50] and uncomfortable the method, the Whites knew they had to visit the Adventist believers. Fanaticism and indifference threatened to destroy the Seventh-day Adventist Church before it began. God had chosen Mrs. White to warn the Adventists of fanaticism and heresy, and to bring them the additional knowledge about the Bible that they desperately needed. James White constantly preached wherever a few Adventists gathered, and he helped provide guidance and leadership for the struggling church.

When Mrs. White gave birth to her first child, the couple faced a serious problem. The church needed their leadership desperately—they must travel. But what, they wondered, should they do with their child? Traveling would be too hard on him. Eventually they decided to leave little Henry Nichols White with friends such as the Howlands of Topsham, Maine, while they traveled through New England, New York, and farther west.

The Whites had three other sons. One—John Herbert—died in infancy. The other two, like Henry, lived with friends while James and Ellen visited and preached to the developing Adventist churches. Naturally Mrs. White missed her children and wished she could stay with them. But she could not. When the boys learned to read, however, she wrote them letters, often one each day. In them she told her sons the latest news and expressed her love for them. Also she tried to teach them the lessons of Christian behavior. The following is a letter she wrote from Ohio to Henry and James Edson when
[51] Edson was eight years old: "My dear Henry and Edson:

"Dear children, your mother has not forgotten you. She thinks of you many times every day. We hope you will be good and faithful children. Your parents have to travel from place to place among the people of God to try to do them good and save souls.

"The Lord has inclined ... Jenny and Martha [friends of the Whites] to come into our family, to feel an interest for you, to love you, and to care for you, that we may leave home feeling free. They are not related to you. They make a sacrifice. What for? Because they love you. When you grieve them, you grieve your parents also. It is not a desirable task to have the care of children if they are ungrateful and disobedient. If you perseveringly try to do right, you will make them happy, and they will feel it a pleasure to deny themselves to have a care for you. When asked to do anything, do not say, 'Wait a minute, till I do this.' It is unpleasant to repeat to you the same things. Now, dear children, obey because you love to, not because you are driven to. I shall have confidence that you will do as I wish you to. I shall confide in your honor, your manliness.

"I have been thinking, what if either of you should be taken sick and die, and your father and mother see you no more? Would you be prepared to die? Do you love God better than anyone else? Can you forget your play to think of God, to go away alone and ask Him for Jesus' sake to forgive your sins? I know that much of your time is taken up with your studies and with doing errands; but, dear
[52] children, don't forget to pray. The Lord loves to have children pray to Him. And if you really repent and feel sorry for your sins, God will forgive your sins for Jesus' sake.

"Many times I ask myself the question, Will my dear children be saved in the kingdom? I cannot bear the thought of their being

shut out of the city with the wicked. I love my children, but God says that only the good and the holy can be saved. And if you will overcome your wrongs, love one another, and be at peace among yourselves, the Lord will bless and save you. You cannot be good, or do right, in your own strength. You must go to God and ask Him for strength. Ask Him that His grace may influence your hearts, and make you right. Believe the Lord will do it; trust Him to do it. You can be little Christians; you can love and serve God."

The letter sounds formal and stilted to modern readers. During the nineteenth century many regarded children and youth as little adults. Consequently they wrote letters to them full of adult terms and phrases. But Mrs. White's concern for her sons shows through, and when some adult would read the letter to them, the boys understood what their mother meant. Growing up in a minister's family, they would be more familiar with theological words and expressions than most children. And their mother's interest in their character showed her love.

In her extensive travels Mrs. White often observed things that forcefully reminded her that she was blessed to have strong, healthy sons. On October 15, 1859, she wrote to Edson from Enosburgh, Vermont, describing one such experience: "I want to tell you a little [53] circumstance. Yesterday we were with a family where there was a ... sick lame boy. He is a cripple for life, and never will be able to walk or run like other boys. We inquired into the case and found this ... boy's affliction was caused by his going into a brook of water when he was warm. He has since been a great sufferer. He has an ugly sore on his hip which runs all the time, and one limb is drawn up some inches shorter than the other. He is a pale, sickly, feeble fellow; has been so for five years. You may sometimes think we are too careful of you, and are too particular to keep you out of the river. My dear boy, think of this poor cripple. How easy it is for young children like you to be a little careless, or venturesome, and make themselves cripples or invalids for life. I thought, What if this poor boy was mine; what if I should be compelled to see you suffer so? Oh, how my heart would ache that I had not been more careful of you. Eddie, I could but weep as I thought of these things. Your father and mother love you very much. We instruct and warn you for your good."

Mrs. White may seem to have worried too much, but she had ample cause. Sickness raged throughout the nineteenth century. People had to be constantly careful lest they pick up an infection or injury. With only a few crude medicines available, they had to hope their bodies would manage to fight off disease unaided. Poor food and living conditions generally lowered a person's resistance to sickness. Faced with such dangers, Mrs. White and others considered avoiding all possible chances of illness and injury as the best thing to do. She
[54] urged her sons to always be careful, for she saw all about her the death and crippling that came to those who made mistakes. What actually crippled the boy Mrs. White met is not known. Perhaps it was polio, perhaps something else. But she determined not to allow her boys to risk such crippling. Unfortunately, she could not protect them from all disease. Both John Herbert and Henry Nichols died young.

Strongly sensing her duty to raise her sons with good Christian characters, Ellen G. White often spoke in her letters about correct personality traits. Once she wrote to Henry about the importance of honesty.

"We hope you are well and happy. Be a good, steady boy. If you only fear God and love Him, our happiness will be complete. You can be a noble boy. Love truthfulness and honesty. These are sacred treasures. Do not lay them aside for a moment. You may be tempted and often tried, but, my dear boy, it is at such a time when these lovely treasures shine, and are highly prized. Cling closely to these precious traits, whatever you may be called to suffer. Let truthfulness and honesty ever live in your heart. Never, through fear of punishment, sacrifice these noble traits. The Lord will help you, Henry, to do right. I believe it is your purpose to do right, and please your parents.

"You may see little dishonest acts in other boys, but do not think for a moment of imitating them. Learn to despise such things. Do not condescend to mean talk, or to mean acts. Shun the company of those who do evil, as you would deadly poison; for they will corrupt everyone who associates with them. Ever have your young mind
[55] lifted up—elevated above the low, evil habits of those who have no fear of God before them. You can have correct thoughts, correct ways, and can form a good, pure character....

"I must close. Do right because you love to. Preserve these letters I write to you, and read them often, and if you should be left without a mother's care, they will be a help to you."

Mrs. White's letters often provided her only means of contact with her children. Wanting her boys to grow up to be good Christians, she filled the letters to them with advice and instruction. The two sons that did not die in childhood—James Edson and William Clarence—spent long lives serving the denomination. James Edson carried on many evangelistic and publishing activities in the southern part of the United States. William Clarence—his friends called him Willie—held many church positions, but spent much of his life helping his mother with her writing and travels. Mrs. White was a good mother despite the difficulty of having to travel so much. The lives of her sons reveal her success.

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Chapter 7—The Disarming Dog

Following Christ's example of using commonplace things to represent important principles of life and Christianity, Mrs. White watched for daily events she could use to illustrate ideas in her writing and speaking. Many of them she recorded in her diary, where they would be available when needed. The entry for Friday, April 1, 1859, contains an example of the little incidents she looked for.

Traveling in a buggy between Battle Creek and Jackson, Michigan, Ellen White watched the landscape putting on its first spring garments. The weather was cool, and a soft breeze created by the vehicle's movement bathed her face. After a while she noticed a small short-haired mongrel dog trotting beside the carriage. Smiling to herself at the dog's decision to accompany her, she returned her gaze to the road ahead.

Several minutes later they approached a bridge across a creek. Waiting near it, a large savage-looking dog loomed up out of the
[58] dust of the road, apparently prepared to pounce upon the smaller animal. Seeing the huge black creature, the dog beside Mrs. White's buggy slowed. Although he could sense danger, he did not turn and dash away, but crouched close to the ground, his tail and head held lower than the rest of his body.

Cautiously, he crawled slowly toward the bigger animal.

Mrs. White halted her buggy to watch the dog's unusual behavior. When he passed within a certain distance of the black dog, the larger one leaped astride him, snarling, his teeth bared. The little dog seemed to know that he could not defeat his tormentor in a fight. Instead, he rolled upon the ground, his unprotected stomach exposed to the teeth of the larger dog. Had he tried to defend himself, his action would have caused his enemy to instinctively attack. By timidly rolling on his back, the mongrel dog avoided triggering the bigger creature's fighting instinct. The mongrel's act of trust left the huge dog confused. It could not fight another animal unless it

responded with equally threatening gestures. The little dog refused to return the threats. Unable to fight someone who would not fight back, the larger dog walked away, leaving his intended victim on the ground.

Slowly, carefully, the mongrel rolled on his stomach and stood. His body tensed briefly, as if he wanted to flee, but fear prevented him. Keeping his eyes on his former attacker, he slunk in the opposite direction until he thought he had put a safe distance between them. Then he burst into a run, still watching over his shoulder to see if the bullying dog followed. Seconds later the little dog disappeared [59] around a curve of the road, and Mrs. White resumed her journey.

The dog's behavior greatly impressed Mrs. White. Instead of condemning it for cowardice, in her diary she commented, "If human beings would manifest such humility under injustice as this ... creature, how many unhappy quarrels might be saved."

Wolves and many other animals besides dogs will not fight each other if one refuses to respond to signs of aggression or belligerence, such as growling, bared teeth, or the display of a bright color patch such as some birds have. When this happens, the attacking animal always gives up and goes away. It is a part of their normal behavior pattern.

Human beings act in a similar way. Some people seem determined to quarrel, but they cannot quarrel by themselves. It takes two people. When one person refuses to argue or fight back, the other has to give up and go away. Mrs. White knew the principle, and when she saw the little dog act it out, she instantly decided to record the incident so that others could understand it and see how it worked. The use of such illustrations and examples has helped make her writing practical and appealing.

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Chapter 8—A Successful Public Speaker

Today most Seventh-day Adventists think of Mrs. White primarily as a writer. Many families have copies of her numerous books on their library shelves. But many who lived during her lifetime knew her better as a public speaker. At first she presented most of what she saw and learned in her visions through sermons and talks. When an angel instructed her to "make known to others what I have revealed to you," teen-age Ellen naturally took the command as a divine order for her to speak. With books and newspapers scarce throughout the young United States, public speaking was the most common form of public communication.

To a timid seventeen-year-old girl with only three grades of formal education, public speaking seemed terrifying. In addition, three months of throat and lung disease had left her voice little more than a whisper. She did not know how she could possibly talk before large groups of people.

[62] Her whole nature shrank in horror from the thought of being God's spokesman to the church. If she had someone to go with her, she thought, then she might be able to present the instruction God had given her. But her brother—two years older than she—had even worse health than she did and was even more shy about meeting people. Because of his family and business, her father could not travel with her. He did tell her, however, that if God wanted her to journey to other towns and cities to speak for Him, He would arrange things so that she could travel safely.

But her father's assurance failed to cheer Ellen. She slipped into greater depression and melancholy. Her problem seemed to daily become more complicated and unsolvable. Although she wanted to obey God, she did not know how she could. Afraid of meeting people, her health poor, her voice nearly gone, she shrank from speaking to others about her visions. Death seemed to be the only way she could escape from disobeying God.

Ellen's friends added to her misery. Noticing her growing depression without knowing what caused it, they thought it sinful that she should let herself become so sad, especially since God had honored her by giving her a vision. The Portland, Maine, Adventists met in the Harmon home, but Ellen could not force herself to attend the meetings. The turmoil in her mind made her want to remain in her room or go somewhere else. One day someone did persuade her to come.

The little group of Adventists gathered and prayed for Ellen, prayed that she would be able to accept God's purpose for her life. John Pearson, an elderly family friend who had looked upon Ellen's [63] earlier vision as possibly from Satan, now tried to encourage and comfort the distressed young woman. Too exhausted and depressed to do anything, she just sat there, unable to pray. Her thoughts, however, joined her friends' prayers, and she realized that she would do anything possible to please God. She no longer had any fear about going out to speak to people.

In the middle of the prayers Ellen felt the mental depression that had plagued her for several days leave, and a brilliant light suddenly appeared in the room. Pearson, who had not kneeled during the prayers because of his rheumatism-crippled legs, saw a glowing sphere of light flash toward Ellen's heart. "I saw it!" he exclaimed after she came out of the vision and regained her sight and hearing. "I saw it! I will never forget it. It has changed my whole being. Ellen, have courage in the Lord."

The young woman nodded, the vision still vivid in her mind. She had seen several angels, and one of them had repeated the command, "Make known to others what I have revealed to you." Her chance to fulfill it came quickly when she went with her brother-in-law to visit her sisters living in Poland, Maine, thirty miles away.

While there she had an opportunity to speak at a small religious meeting. For the first five minutes her voice remained little more than a hoarse whisper. Then her speaking difficulty dramatically vanished, and she spoke clearly and strongly for nearly two hours. But when she finished, the soreness and difficulty in breathing returned [64] and remained until the next time she spoke at a meeting.

More and more speaking appointments came. First she traveled throughout Maine, then to other parts of New England and to New

York, and finally across the United States. Years later she journeyed and spoke in Europe and Australia. Her voice strengthened until people claimed they could hear her distinctly outdoors at distances up to a mile without any kind of electronic amplification or loudspeaker system. Audiences ranged from five to twenty thousand people, and she often kept their attention for hours. Grace White Jacques, a granddaughter of Ellen White, who often listened to her talks and sermons, said Mrs. White spoke simply, wasting no words, in a soothing but expressive tone.

Mrs. White obtained a reputation as an excellent speaker not only among Seventh-day Adventists, but among others as well. One day a young minister named A. J. Breed attended a large gathering held in Battle Creek, Michigan. Wanting to get a good seat in order to hear Mrs. White well, he went early and sat on the front row. As he waited for the meeting to start, a stranger came in and took the seat beside him.

Glancing around a moment, he turned to Breed and asked, "I understand that Mrs. White will speak here today. Is that true?"

The minister assured him that she would.

"I have come all the way from Chicago to hear her," the man said.

[65] The arrival of Mrs. White and several ministers on the platform ended his attempt at conversation. After the usual opening exercises Mrs. White stepped to the lectern. During the talk Breed noticed the stranger out of the corner of his eye. The man seemed extremely interested, sometimes leaning forward in his seat in concentration as he studied her movements and expressions.

When the meeting closed and the audience prepared to leave, the man from Chicago touched Breed on the shoulder and asked, "Could you tell me what school of elocution Mrs. White attended and where she learned public speaking?"

"She has never attended any," the young minister told him.

"But she must have. I can see the training in the way she speaks. It's obvious."

Shaking his head, Breed insisted, "No, I'm sure she hasn't had any formal training in public speaking. In fact, she's had little formal education." He briefly described the accident and sickness that had plagued her childhood and prevented her from going to school.

The stranger's face mirrored disbelief. "I head an elocution school in Chicago," he said after a pause, "and I am positive someone has taught her public speaking. She did everything tonight perfectly. For example, we teach our students the best movements to make with their hands. When they step forward with their right foot, they use their right hand to make things balance. And that's what she did every time. Her breathing, her articulation—everything she did followed what we teach. I had hoped tonight to learn the name of the school she'd gone to." Again Breed repeated that she had never [66] had any formal training in public speaking. The man stared at the floor a moment, then commented, "There's only one thing I can say: If no human being taught her how to speak, then the angels must have, because she's an expert at it."

Besides sermons and talks at Adventist religious meetings, Ellen G. White also lectured widely on temperance. The nineteenth century was a time of widespread national interest in temperance, especially as it related to the use of alcohol. Men and women of all denominations actively supported various programs either to encourage people to give up drinking or to pass laws restricting the sale of alcoholic drinks. Mrs. White, however, spent most of the time she devoted to temperance activities in educating people about the health and moral dangers of the problem.

Sometimes she held public lectures in rented or donated halls and auditoriums. Other times she took advantage of the interest many persons then had to attend camp meetings. Today for the most part only Adventists go to Seventh-day Adventist camp meetings; but during the past century people of all denominations attended the Adventist camp meetings, and church leaders conducted them as evangelistic meetings. When Ellen White spoke about temperance to a camp meeting audience, her listeners included not only Adventists, but Baptists, Methodists, and people of all faiths.

In August, 1877, Seventh-day Adventists held a camp meeting at Groveland, Massachusetts, a village located on the Merrimack River. The Boston and Maine Railroad constructed a temporary spur track [67] to the camp meeting site and ran special trains to the campground on Sunday, August 26. Five hundred people lived in forty-seven tents, and on the weekend, carriages, boats, and the special trains brought an estimated additional 20,000 people to the meetings.

The weekend had almost constant rain. Sunday dawned cloudy, but the sun broke through the clouds just before the first meeting in the morning.

The large main tent became so crowded that Mrs. White had to force her way through the mass of people to the speaking platform Sunday afternoon. Thousands, unable to get into the jammed 80-by-125-foot tent, ringed its edge, forming a living wall. Many perched in nearby trees to see and hear better.

Before the meeting Mrs. White had trouble breathing, and her throat bothered her. But as she stood, the pain left during the hour she spoke. The massive audience listened quietly and attentively. The knowledge that the people had come to hear her instruction on Christian temperance encouraged her. The crowd wanted to listen—they valued her teaching—and the receptiveness of the people made her talk even more effectively.

Two months earlier—June 28—Mrs. White had combined her lectures with a practical project to promote temperance. Near the end of June, P. T. Barnum's circus rolled into Battle Creek on its special railroad cars. Since people did not have television or radio then and had few other sources of mass entertainment, the circus menagerie and sideshows attracted large numbers from Battle Creek
[68] and nearby villages and towns. Church groups and civic leaders, knowing that many of the people would stay in town all day, feared that the visitors would go to the local cheap eating places and taverns for their meals. Widespread drunkenness could result, and Battle Creek did not want to have to repair the resulting damage. The community organized to prevent this from happening.

Under the direction of the local chapter of the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the city organized a special restaurant for the circus-goers, using the five-thousand-capacity tent belonging to the Michigan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The large tent contained fifteen or twenty tables for its patrons to use. The W.C.T.U. asked the Battle Creek Sanitarium—the Adventists' first and most famous hospital—to set up a vegetarian buffet table in the center of the tent. More people bought meals at it than from any of the other food counters, crowding its thirty-foot length until its operators had to add a twenty-foot extension.

Three days later the W.C.T.U. scheduled a series of temperance lectures in the huge tent, asking Battle Creek Mayor Austin, First National Bank cashier W. H. Skinner, C. C. Peavey, and Ellen G. White to speak. Mrs. White lectured for ninety minutes, holding her five-thousand-member audience in almost breathless silence.

Mrs. White did not limit her lectures on temperance to the United States. Visiting England, Germany, France, Italy, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, she spent from August, 1885, to August, 1887, on the European continent.

In Drammen, a city about thirty miles from Oslo, Norway, she [69] gave a sermon in a concert hall, using six beer hall tables placed together as a speaking platform. The Norwegians filled the two narrow side galleries, all the available seats, and crammed into the limited standing room. On Sunday, five days later, she accepted an invitation of the local temperance society to lecture in a military gymnasium, the largest hall in Oslo. She stood under an American flag used as a canopy to address sixteen hundred people on the religious aspects of temperance. Her audience included a bishop of the Norwegian Lutheran Church, several Lutheran clergymen, and many members of the upper social classes.

Returning to the United States, Mrs. White settled in California, then attended the important General Conference of 1888 in Minneapolis, where she gave nine major sermons and talks. The delegates to the Minneapolis meetings were divided over the issue of which should be stressed more—strict obedience to the Ten Commandments as a means of salvation, or righteousness by faith, which teaches that only Christ, not obedience as a means of earning God's favor, can restore the relationship of man and God. Supporting the idea of righteousness by faith—that only Christ, and not man's own efforts, can save him from eternal death—Ellen White spent several months traveling from church to church presenting sermons on this subject. Three years later she sailed to Australia, and among many other activities, visited and spoke at camp meetings there during her nine-year stay.

Until the end of her long life she used every opportunity to speak to the people about Christ's love and His teaching. But she did not [70] aim her talks to large groups of people only. She tried to present

each sermon or lecture as if she had prepared it for each individual present, and her personalized talks had great impact.

Even in her eighties Mrs. White continued to speak publicly. In September, 1908, she visited the camp meetings in southern California, speaking at several of them. During the last Sunday of the Los Angeles gathering, she addressed a large audience that included many members of the Women's Christian Temperance Union. She tried to relate the importance of her topic—the Sabbath—to each person present, giving Scriptural evidence for her authority. Instead of using emotionalism or flowery and sentimental expressions, she let the Bible do its own speaking through her. At the end of the sermon she did not attempt to frighten people with accounts of God's future punishment of those who did not keep the Sabbath, but simply urged them to study what the Bible had to say about the Sabbath and then decide for themselves what they would do.

When she finished the sermon, one of the W.C.T.U. members hurried up to Mrs. White and embraced her, exclaiming with tears in her eyes, "I take my position to keep the Bible Sabbath." The incident deeply impressed everybody present, and it showed the effectiveness of the speaking ability God gave to Ellen G. White.

Mrs. White's voice is now silent. But the knowledge God revealed to her is preserved in her books and periodical articles. In her lifetime she spoke to audiences of thousands. Today her writings speak to millions.

Chapter 9—Sailing to Oregon [71]

Much of the 1870's the Whites spent in California, helping organize Seventh-day Adventist churches and a publishing plant there. In 1878 James White's health—poor up to that time—improved enough for him to travel by train to Battle Creek, where he planned to undergo treatment at the Battle Creek Sanitarium. A heart condition prevented Mrs. White from going with him because she feared that the exhausting train rides might put an even greater strain on her heart. James and Ellen decided that she would travel instead to Oregon, which neither had visited before. The developing Adventist churches in the Northwest needed her instruction and encouragement, and a sea trip along the Pacific Coast seemed less exhausting than transcontinental train rides. In fact, she hoped to rest during the voyage and recover from the strain of the hard work she had been doing.

Together with a woman traveling companion and J. N. Loughborough, Mrs. White booked passage on the coastal steamer *Oregon,* [72] bound for Portland. On the morning of June 10 she could not leave her bed because of her heart trouble. Friends tried to keep her from sailing. They were afraid the trip might cost her her life. But in the afternoon she stood on the pitching deck of the *Oregon* as it nosed out into the Pacific Ocean from San Francisco Bay.

A strong wind arose, whipping the water into massive waves. Clinging to the railing, Mrs. White watched the waves—their tops lashed into foam—hurtle the steamer skyward, then plunge it into the yawning troughs between the mountains of water. The scuttling clouds, the rainbow-flecked spray, the immense loneliness of the solitary ship in the midst of a vast ocean, and the continual roar of wind and water awed her and reminded her of the tempestuous night the disciples spent on the Sea of Galilee. Steamships still carried sails then for emergency use, and as Mrs. White watched the masts stab and scribble invisible lines across the cloudy sky, she realized more strongly than ever that only God can control the oceans He

made, and that only He can protect men from the great storms that rage over the seas.

The other passengers disappeared into their cabins, seasick, but Mrs. White did not want to leave the deck. She knew that if she went inside where she could not keep her eyes on the horizon or distant waves, she would become seasick herself. Obtaining a reclining cane chair and blankets from the steward, she rested and watched night swallow the stormy Pacific.

[73] Captain Conner, an officer noted for his consideration of his passengers, made rounds on deck later in the evening and found her still sitting in the chair. Windblown spray made the night damp and chill. Because he thought it too cool for her to remain outside, Conner suggested that she go to her cabin.

Knowing that two women already lay groaning from the misery of seasickness in her stuffy cabin, she told him that she would rather remain on deck. No matter how damp, the air was at least pure. Since she seemed determined, the captain told her that she would not have to occupy her stateroom if she didn't want to. "I will see that you have a good place to sleep," he remarked as he disappeared into the darkness in search of a stewardess.

The stewardess helped Mrs. White to the ship's upper room, where a crewman had laid a horsehair mattress on the floor. Short as the walk had been, Mrs. White still managed to fall prey to the dreaded motion sickness. Collapsing on the mattress, she lay there extremely sick from Sunday evening until Thursday morning. The only food she could swallow the whole time was some crackers and a few spoonfuls of broth.

Four days after leaving San Francisco Bay, the *Oregon* crossed the sandbar at the mouth of the Columbia River and sailed into smoother water. The passengers gradually emerged from their cabins and strolled feebly about the main deck. They included several Protestant ministers planning to hold religious meetings in Portland. One of them, a man named Brown, learned that Mrs. White had passed out some religious tracts to several of the passengers. A few

[74] of the Adventist tracts came into his possession, and he discovered that one was a defense of the law of God.

In the evening, while Mrs. White lay in her stateroom recovering from seasickness, she heard voices coming through the open port-

hole. Brown, having gathered a small collection of people about him on the upper deck, was misrepresenting the Seventh-day Adventist attitude toward the Ten Commandments. "It is impossible for any man to keep the law of God," he argued. "No man ever has, and no one ever will." Brown's voice became louder, and his back stiffened as if he imagined himself behind a pulpit. "No man will ever get to heaven by keeping the law. Mrs. White—the woman who passed out these tracts among you—is all law. She believes that the law will save us, and in fact, that no one will be saved unless he does keep the law. Now I believe in Christ. He is *my* Saviour. Christ alone can save us. Without Him we cannot be saved."

Although she had heard similar charges made against Adventists before, Ellen White still shuddered. Some Seventh-day Adventists had gone too far in urging people to obey the Ten Commandments, since the Bible stated that obeying them would be a distinctive trait or characteristic of the true Christian church just before Christ's second coming. But neither Mrs. White, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, nor the tract Mrs. White had passed out taught that the law could save anybody. Brown's charge was false and unjust.

Not wanting to let the minister's claim go unanswered before his little group of listeners, Mrs. White rose from her bed and brushed [75] her dress as smooth as possible. Opening the cabin door, she faced the surprised Brown.

"That is a false statement," she said. "Mrs. White has never held that position. If I may speak for myself and for my church, we have never taken the position that the law has the power to save a single person. The law tells a person that he has done wrong. It condemns him. But it has absolutely no power to forgive a sin, no matter how great or small the sin might be. If we sin, we need an advocate—a defender—before God, and that Advocate can be only Christ. The sinner gets into trouble with God because he breaks God's law. Christ pleads in his behalf. The law cannot release the sinner from the results of his transgression, but Christ Himself pays the penalty the sinner owes because of his disobedience."

Without the law—the Ten Commandments—the sinner would not know that he had done wrong, she explained. It showed him that he needed a Saviour—someone who would make him right with God and the law. But the law could do nothing else in the way of

saving him. It could only point out sin—never remove it. Christ alone could cover man's sins when he came into the presence of God. Christ alone is man's hope for eternal life.

Turning to the minister, she said, "Please never again make the statement that instead of relying on Jesus Christ for salvation, we rely on the law of God. We have never written in support of such a theory nor taught anything like that. We believe that no person can be saved while continuing to sin, while you teach that someone can
[76] be saved and still knowingly break God's law." Embarrassed, Brown whispered to those beside him that he knew perfectly well what Mrs. White and Adventists believed. Overhearing him, she replied, "If you really know what we believe and teach, you must also know that you have misrepresented us. Never have we suggested, either in our sermons, or in our publications, that the law can save a sinner. On the contrary, Adventist speakers and ministers have repeated again and again that the Ten Commandments are powerless to save a man from the results of his wrong acts. In fact, we will speak on the topic at the approaching Adventist camp meeting at Salem. Please come and attend and learn what we do believe, for it is obvious that you are not acquainted with Seventh-day Adventist teachings."

Brown was typical of the kind of attackers Adventists often had to meet. Because the Seventh-day Adventist Church stressed the Ten Commandments—something few other churches did—ministers of other denominations assumed that obeying the Ten Commandments was the Adventists' main and most important teaching. Many religious leaders accused Adventists of being religious legalists. But such charges often stemmed from ignorance because the critics did not know that the church also taught that man's only hope of eternal life lay in Christ's intervention before God the Father. Mrs. White managed to temporarily stop Brown's false accusations, but unfortunately even today many still hold the same mistaken idea of what Adventists teach.

Chapter 10—Halfway [77]

One day a minister, feeling that he just had to tell someone about his problems, sat down and wrote to Mrs. White, mourning the fact that he did not live closer to God. "It is difficult," he said, "to put my whole heart—my whole being—into my religion." Although he had called himself a Christian for a long time and had devoted much of his life to God's service, he felt strangely depressed and unhappy. He believed that no true Christian could possibly feel as sad as he did. What, he wondered, was wrong with his life?

In reply Ellen G. White explained that his difficulties should teach him to trust in God. Problems would break down his confidence in his own ability to manage things and help him to let God control his life and daily affairs. To illustrate how he should react to his trials, she told of an incident during the battle Great Britain, France, and Turkey fought against the Russians at the Alma River in Russia. On September 20, 1854, the forces of the three countries scrambled down the steep banks of the Alma and waded across the [78] stream to attack the czarist army. The withering Russian fire drove the allies back and threatened to turn the battle into a complete rout. Then the tide of battle changed. "The ensign [a commissioned British officer who carried the company or regimental flag] ... stood his ground as the troops retreated," Mrs. White said. "The captain shouted to him to bring back the colors, but the reply of the ensign was, 'Bring up the men to the colors!'

"This is the work that devolves upon every faithful standard-bearer," she continued, "to bring up the men to the colors. The Lord calls for wholeheartedness. We all know that the sin of many professed followers of Christ is that they lack the courage and the energy to bring themselves and those connected with them up to the standard....

"I have faith to believe you will not stop at the halfway house, but will 'follow on to know the Lord,'" she commented farther on in the letter, "that you may know His goings forth are prepared as the

morning. The Lord loves us, and all He asks is that you respond to His love."

In her own life Mrs. White did not stop at any symbolic halfway house. Trusting in Christ's leadership, she did not let difficulties stop her service for God or let them discourage her. She lived the kind of Christian life she taught others to live. Not even the death of her husband kept her from following God.

Portions of the spring and early summer of 1881 James and Ellen White spent in Battle Creek, Michigan. Administrative duties had
[79] made them extremely busy for some time and prevented them from writing as much as they wanted to. James hoped to arrange their responsibilities so that they could return to California and devote time to preparing several books. He felt that they had made a mistake in letting themselves get involved in work others could do perhaps just as well. The greater and more important task before them, he believed, was to write. But try as he would, he could not seem to escape the constant demands placed on him, and the Whites remained in Michigan.

In July they received an invitation to speak at a series of tent meetings in Charlotte on the weekend of the twenty-third and twenty-fourth. Not feeling well, Mrs. White suggested that they drive the twenty miles with their horse and carriage rather than take the recently completed Chicago and Grand Trunk Railway (now the Grand Trunk Western Railroad).

As the horse plodded north to Charlotte along the crude country roads, James slipped into a thoughtful, almost sad, mood. "The future seems cloudy and uncertain," he commented, "but the Lord would not have us distressed over these things." He acted as if he expected that some great event or crisis would soon occur. "When trouble comes," he continued, "He will give us grace to endure it. What the Lord has been to us, and what He has done for us, should make us so grateful that we would never murmur or complain." Silent for a moment, he reflected on what he had accomplished in his life. Sadness haunted his eyes. Perhaps he remembered the complaining,
[80] critical attitude of too many toward his leadership. "Our labors, burdens, and sacrifices will never be fully appreciated by all," he said with a sigh. "I see that I have lost my peace of mind and the blessing of God by permitting myself to be troubled by these things."

The Whites rode along together, mingling memories of the difficulties they had faced with the many more times God had blessed them. They worried about the growth of the struggling Seventh-day Adventist Church, yet their faith told them the church would survive. Their love for each other and the church, strong as it was, grew even stronger while they talked the hours away en route to Charlotte. Neither knew it would be their last trip together.

Over the weekend the temperature dropped suddenly, as it occasionally does during Michigan summers. Chilling cold replaced oppressive heat. Although he caught a cold, James White considered his health robust enough that he would quickly get over it. After speaking several times during the meetings, he and Mrs. White drove back to Battle Creek. At home he mentioned to Mrs. White that he felt slightly ill, but he resumed his many duties.

Almost daily requests came in the mail asking the Whites to attend camp meetings scheduled throughout the country. Despite the fact that they wanted to spend more time writing, they hated to turn down the speaking appointments. Every morning they walked to a grove of trees near their home and prayed for guidance in what they should do. A week passed, and each day James White grew a little sicker. On Sabbath morning they went to the grove as usual. Dropping to his knees, James prayed with strong intensity three [81] times. Each time his words and voice revealed a greater longing for God's blessing and guidance. God accepted his prayers, and calmness flooded their hearts.

"Now I give it all up to Jesus," he said slowly, looking at his wife. "I feel a peace, an assurance that the Lord will show us our duty, for we desire to do His will."

Rising from beneath trees dressed in dusty summer green, James and Ellen White walked to the Battle Creek Tabernacle, where James opened the services by leading the singing and offering prayer. This would be the last time the Whites would stand together behind the pulpit.

On Monday James had a severe attack of chills. On Tuesday Ellen had a similar bout. A man came from the Battle Creek Sanitarium and gave the ill minister hydrotherapy treatments, the only thing they then knew to do. Wednesday, friends took them to the Sanitarium. By Friday Mrs. White began to recover, but James's condition

worsened until the doctor in charge—John Harvey Kellogg—feared for the Adventist leader's life. James White continually wanted to go to sleep, and Dr. Kellogg became afraid the older man might slip into a coma. To prevent it, he tried using strong stimulants. Then he notified close family friends that death might be close.

The doctor personally told Mrs. White what was happening. She asked to be taken to her husband's room. Seeing his face, she realized that he would soon die. She tried to awaken him. When she asked him questions, he replied with either a Yes or a No. Although he understood everything said to him, he lacked the strength to
[82] answer more than a word. Told by his wife that he was dying, he showed no surprise.

"James, is Jesus precious to you?" she inquired.

"Yes, oh, yes," he said weakly.

"Have you no desire to live?"

"No."

The people in the room kneeled around the bed. Mrs. White prayed.

Peace rested on James White's face.

"Jesus loves you," Ellen said to him after finishing the prayer. "The everlasting arms are beneath you."

He murmured, "Yes, yes."

His desire to slide into unconsciousness became stronger, and Dr. Kellogg tried more stimulants to keep him awake. His pulse became rapid, irregular, and weak. He had trouble breathing. Barely conscious, James remained in the same state until three o'clock in the morning, when he began to improve slightly. By six o'clock his pulse rate had dropped to normal, and he breathed easier. Uriah Smith, one of the editors of the *Review and Herald,* had led friends and church leaders in praying for James White during most of the night.

The dying man said he felt no pain. About noon of Sabbath, August 6, a seizure of chills caused him to drop into a coma. Torn by conflicting emotions, Mrs. White watched and waited. She and Dr. Kellogg knew that if by some chance James did live, his mind would be weakened from the brain damage he had suffered. Yet she naturally wanted him to live, to give her the strength she had come
[83] to depend upon. Using more stimulants and anything else they could

think of, Kellogg and his assistants tried to awaken James White. They failed.

Just after five o'clock in the afternoon, August 6, 1881, James White stopped breathing.

Exhausted from illness, strain, and grief, Mrs. White collapsed into unconsciousness. The doctor and his staff carried her to her room and began another vigil. It seemed that she also would die. During the night her pulse slowed and grew weak, and her breathing became so faint that at times those taking care of her thought it had stopped. As the days passed, however, she slowly regained her strength.

To allow time for friends and relatives to come to Battle Creek, the family waited until the following Sabbath to hold James White's funeral. Ice protected his body until that time. Mrs. White remained in bed until just before the funeral service. Then she was carried to the Battle Creek Tabernacle, where an estimated twenty-five hundred persons attended the service, crowding the main auditorium and the gallery. The deacons raised the sliding partitions and allowed people to fill the vestries surrounding the main auditorium. Among the relatives present were John Whitney White, James's brother and former presiding elder of the Ohio Conference of Methodists, John's son-in-law, and James's sister, Mrs. Mary Chase.

A portrait of James White, draped in black, hung over the arch above the pulpit. Over one hundred employees of the Review and Herald Publishing Association were among the mourners. The Review employees wore black arm bands or other symbols of their [84] sorrow. Eighty-eight of them would later march beside the ninety-five carriages in the funeral procession as it made its way to Oak Hill Cemetery.

Uriah Smith presented the funeral sermon. To everybody's surprise, Mrs. White immediately arose after he finished and began to speak. In a clear voice she talked for ten minutes about her faith in God and how it helped her now during her time of great sorrow and loss. She pledged that despite the loss of her husband, she would continue the mission God had given her. At the close of the services the people filed out of the church and prepared for the sad trip to the cemetery.

An arbor of evergreens covered the short walk from the carriage pathway to the open grave, around which people crowded, many struggling to peer over the shoulders of others to see the flowers. A floral anchor stood at the head of the grave. A cross made of flowers decorated the other end. The scent of blossoms was strong in the August heat. The pallbearers lowered the casket, and soil clattered against its top. James White now rested until Christ's second coming, his work finished.

His death marked a halfway point in Mrs. White's life. Married August 30, 1846, they had lived together thirty-five years. She became a widow August 6, 1881. Nearly thirty-four years later, on July 16, 1915, Ellen G. White died. But she did her greatest service for the Seventh-day Adventist Church after 1881. She did not let sorrow stop her at the halfway mark, but pushed on to even greater things for God.

Chapter 11—The Man with a Past [85]

The winter after her husband's death Ellen White spent in California. She would center most of her activities in that state until she left for Europe in 1885. Returning from Europe, she settled in Healdsburg, California.

The Adventist Church grew rapidly, and Seventh-day Adventist camp meetings soon dotted the landscape during the summer. Mrs. White spoke at as many of them as she could. The crowds that gathered to hear her sermons greatly appreciated her spiritual, practical talks.

After she spoke at the Selma, California, camp meeting, a friend introduced her to a six-foot man whose tanned face revealed that he had spent much time outdoors. The man seemed deeply moved by his meeting with Mrs. White. Taking her hand firmly in his grasp, he said, "I'm thankful that I can speak with you." They discussed different religious topics for several minutes, and he appeared highly interested in what she had to say. She instinctively tried to encourage him in his religious life. Later Mrs. White met an acquaintance in [86] the main tent. "You know that tall man you met a little while ago?" he said, pausing to chat a moment.

She nodded.

"He's had a fascinating life." Briefly he sketched what he knew about the man.

Many years earlier the stranger had come into contact with Adventists and became interested enough to observe the Sabbath for a while. But then other matters caused him to gradually drift away.

California was still frontier country then, and law and order had only a slim hold on many of the cities and towns in the state. Large numbers of people openly used violence and force to gain whatever they wanted. Robbery and murder were common.

Some of the man's friends lived outside the law, and he became entangled in their crimes. Eventually he robbed and stole and began to burn barns and houses, a common way of getting revenge then.

Proudly he boasted of crimes, such as sheep-stealing, and people were afraid of him.

But one day his life began to change. Curiosity and boredom led him to attend a series of religious meetings conducted in Fresno by E. P. Daniels, an Adventist evangelist. At first the man considered the meetings only a form of nightly entertainment. Then after several nights the minister presented the subject of confession. The sermon deeply bothered the criminal. As he applied the speaker's words to himself, he paled at the thoughts which turned and twisted through his mind, and his mental agony became unbearable. He slipped out
[87] of the tent. The cool night air calmed him somewhat, and he went back into the tent. Daniels' words continued to burn into his mind. A few minutes later the criminal again walked out of the tent. But an unseen force drove him back to his seat. A third time he tried to leave the tent, but he found himself back inside even quicker than before. The room seemed to grow hotter and hotter, and perspiration streamed down his face. Suddenly, terribly dizzy, he thought he would faint. Satan and Christ struggled for possession of his heart.

Finally the meeting ended, and the people streamed outside. Exhausted, the man rested a moment to gather his strength. Then he pushed through the crowd to Daniels and said, "I must talk to you." Desperately he described his life and what he had just gone through to the evangelist.

"Is there any hope for me?" he said, asking the eternal question of one who has suddenly realized his true state from God. "I am lost—lost forever. Will you pray for me? Please pray. I'm afraid even to go home lest God destroy me."

Leading the man to one side of the tent, Daniels dropped to his knees. The distraught man sobbed in agony as he listened to the evangelist's prayer. The prayer soothed his troubled mind, and he felt peace come over him as he realized that God had forgiven his past life. The two stood and shook hands.

"Now," the former criminal said, "I have much to do—much to do. For example, I stole thirty-one sheep from a man in Selma. I
[88] must go and confess to him." Daniels wondered if he should encourage the man to confess to his sheep-stealing and other crimes, since he would surely be thrown into prison. Yet it was the right thing to do. The man had already made up his mind. "I would rather go

to prison and stay there than think that I was not willing to do my part, even though God has forgiven my sins," he said, understanding Daniels' thoughts. He knew the dangers he faced.

Prisons during the nineteenth century were terrible places. Disease and unhealthful conditions prevailed. Prisoners received poor food, and in some jails the inmates died from starvation. In most prisons the inmates could not talk to each other, and some guards inflicted frequent punishments, such as whipping or flogging. Some penitentiaries confined men in tiny cells with no chance for exercise. Others had factories in which they used the prisoners like slaves, making them work for twelve to fifteen hours a day. Daniels knew that his new convert had every reason for trying to avoid going to jail.

Accompanied by a friend who had often committed crimes with him, the man rode out a day later to make things right with the people he had wronged. Wandering across the San Joaquin Valley and coming over a rise, the two men saw another horseman approaching. The converted man recognized the rider as one of the people he had robbed. Reining his horse in the shade of a tree beside the road, he waited for the rider to approach.

The farmer, a man who prided himself on being the local disbeliever of Christianity, recognized him and began to tremble. He wondered if he could whip his horse about fast enough to escape. [89]
But the repentant criminal was too close. The farmer watched in horror as the man who had once robbed him slipped off his horse and ran and knelt before him. Shock replaced the horror when the man began to ask forgiveness for his robbery.

"When did you begin to act like this?" the agnostic asked in amazement. "What has changed you? I didn't know that any religion would make a thief ask forgiveness. Tell me man, what has happened to you?"

Looking up at the farmer with a strangely softened expression, the converted criminal explained that he had gone to the Selma Seventh-day Adventist camp meeting, and that God had changed his life there.

The farmer pushed the brim of his hat back and thought a moment, then glanced down at the man kneeling on the ground. "Well," he said finally, "I think I'll go to that meeting and see what it is they

have to offer." He urged his horse forward and disappeared over the rise, a little cloud of dust marking his passing.

The converted man went from one town to another throughout the San Joaquin Valley, admitting and confessing his many crimes to the people he had injured.

Word of his deeds traveled widely, finally reaching the attention of the local authorities. They called a grand jury to investigate the matter, and the jury summoned the former criminal to appear. When questioned whether the stories they had heard about him were true, he confessed to all the crimes he had committed. Startled, the jury listened, then withdrew to another room.

[90] "What will we do with him?" the head juror asked. "He's admitted to enough crimes to keep him in prison the rest of his life."

"We have no choice," someone commented. "The law says he must go to jail."

The head juror frowned. "Would you imprison a man like that—one who had had such a complete transformation? God has forgiven him, and he has asked forgiveness from those whom he has wronged. I think he deserves our forgiveness, too. I would rather have my right arm cut off at the shoulder than see a man like that go to jail. I recommend no action be taken against him."

The others finally agreed.

The story of this conversion spread even faster after the grand jury refused to bring the man to trial. People knew that only God could lead a man to repent and confess so many crimes despite danger that he might have to go to prison. A church that could change a man's life so completely must have Christ behind it, they decided, and its teachings must be correct. Many persons began to take an interest in the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a result.

When Mrs. White heard the stranger's story, she marveled at what God could do. She breathed a sigh of relief that she had taken the time to encourage the man after the friend had introduced him. The conversion of the ex-thief was one of the greatest advertisements the Adventist Church could have, the greatest witness to its claim as the true church. If she had rebuffed the man by not taking time to talk to him, she might have discouraged him and caused a great loss to the church.

Chapter 12—The Unbeliever [91]

The foreman glanced at his pocket watch and listened intently in the chilly early-morning air. The metal rails gleamed faintly in the bluish light. The sun began to flood the tops of the mountains. Then he heard it—the wail of an approaching train. The rest of the work crew turned their attention from the writhing flames of burning railroad ties and stared down the track. In a few moments they spotted the yellow eye of the headlight atop the rumbling gray bulk of the engine.

Black smoke spewed furiously from the smokestack and drifted back along the length of the train and across the plain. The workmen leaned on picks and shovels and watched as the locomotive slowed before it reached the section of the track the men were working on. The air brakes hissed the train to a crawl. The smell of pinewood smoke filled the air. Sticking his head out of the cab window, the fireman waved to the men along the track. They returned his greeting as the olive-green Southern Pacific cars rocked past. A child pressed his face against a coach window, wide-eyed, wondering what the [92] men were doing out on the lonely plain. The train began to gather speed, and seconds later—with a blast from the whistle—the Southern Pacific limited vanished in the distance, heading for Chicago. A lantern still burned on its observation car.

Mrs. White drowsed in her seat, one cheek laid against the plush mohair upholstery. The jolt of the slowing train had awakened her, and she watched the silent figures of the track crew slide past her window. A voice from the rear of the coach attracted her attention. She could by listening carefully make out the man's words above the rattle and clatter of the coach wheels on the track. He seemed to be talking about religion. She turned around to see who he was. The conductor had extinguished the Pintsch gas lamps. Not too much light filtered into the coach yet. The varnished walnut wood of the car's walls and ceiling made it seem even darker inside. But she located the person she had heard. He was talking to another man,

a man who looked as though he wished he were by himself in the dining car, eating breakfast. Instead he feebly argued with a stranger who seemed to enjoy attacking religion.

When the unbeliever saw that his seatmate no longer wanted to talk, he looked for another victim. Not all of the seats were filled, and he easily found a seat beside someone willing to talk to him. For a couple of hours he went from one person to another in the coach, criticizing and condemning Christianity. Some of the passengers
[93] agreed with his statements, laughing at his clever arguments and manner of gesturing. Others tried to defend Christianity, but soon gave up when he defeated their every attempt.

The unbeliever knew that everybody in the car was listening to him, and he enjoyed the attention. Some of the more devout Christians in the coach wished that someone would silence his ridiculing and boasts, but they could only sit helplessly in their seats or go into another chair car. With pride and triumph on his face, he walked up and down the aisle and swayed back and forth as the engineer tried to make up for lost time and regain his fifty-mile-an-hour average speed.

Spotting Mrs. White with a Bible in her hand, the man sat down in the empty seat beside her and began a tirade against Christianity. Religion, he said, reminded him of someone juggling balls. It was all a form of trickery with nothing real behind it. He compared it to sorcery and superstitious magic. On and on he ranted and raved. Mrs. White said nothing.

Still talking loudly, the man knew he had the complete attention of the passengers. His voice boomed down the length of the coach. Many wondered what Mrs. White would say to the atheist, but she remained silent. She made no attempt to argue with him. Finally the man stopped from sheer exhaustion. Turning to face him, Mrs. White quoted, "'This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.'" (John 17:3.)

Briefly she told the man about her own conversion and life. "You
[94] call religion sorcery," she said, her voice breaking with emotion. "But we have 'a more sure word of prophecy,' a promise 'whereunto ye do well that ye take heed.'" She raised her voice so that everybody could hear.

The unbelieving man objected vigorously to her reply. Trying to regain what he thought had been his advantage, he asked if she had ever read books by certain authors. Some of the books tried to find mistakes in the Bible and prove it was nothing but a collection of myths. Others were about ancient philosophy. If she answered that she hadn't read them, he hoped to make her look ignorant in front of the other passengers.

Ignoring his attempt to make her look foolish, she answered simply, "No, I have not."

"There. There, you don't know," he sneered. "Since you haven't read even these books, you don't know the first thing about the subject."

"I don't want to know," she declared firmly. "I have no time to read such trash." All the wisdom of the secular philosophers, she explained, came as a gift from God. Instead of using it in God's service, they had perverted their intelligence and twisted it to satisfy human pride and ideas. Anything worthwhile such men wrote or said came as inspiration from God. All true knowledge came from Christ, and the world's greatest men only reflected its Source as the moon reflects the light of the sun. Carefully Mrs. White explained that man could find truth only with Christ's help. She talked more to the other passengers than to the man in the seat beside her. Everybody listened, clearly hearing her above the rhythmic click of the wheels on the rails. Angry at the way Mrs. White had gotten control of the [95] conversation, the man muttered and mumbled under his breath. He turned in his seat and sat in sullen disgust. The other people in the coach, seeing how tiny, elderly Mrs. White had silenced his boasts, burst into laughter. After taking the laughter for a few minutes, the unbeliever hurried down the aisle and crossed the swaying open vestibule to another coach.

Mrs. White had not used any complicated arguments with the scoffing man. To have done so would have given him a chance to twist the discussion to his own advantage. Instead she exposed the man's ignorance by revealing to the other people in the coach that he knew nothing about God. He could not hide that fact by quoting statements from books he had read. The Spirit of God took Mrs. White's simple defense and stabbed it into the agnostic's heart, humiliating his pride. She showed that she knew true wisdom.

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Chapter 13—An Angel over Her Tent

Ellen G. White spent almost ten years in Australia. She first went to the island continent at the request of the mission board after the General Conference of 1891. Stephen N. Haskell, an Adventist leader who had gone to Australia in 1885, urged that the church send Mrs. White to help guide the newly formed groups and institution there. On November 12, 1891, she, her son William C. White, and several assistants sailed from San Francisco aboard the steamer *Alameda.*

In Australia she directed many important projects. At her strong urging, the Australian Adventists established a college. At first it was conducted in rented quarters in Melbourne, but at her insistence, a special committee found a site for it at Cooranbong, seventy-six miles north of Sydney. This college was the first to use her idea of combining work and study in a rural location, a pattern later followed in creating most of the other Adventist colleges and
[98] academies. Avondale College still continues to educate Australian young people for service for the church.

Also she helped pioneer the organization of Australia into regions called local conferences. These united to become a union conference, the first in the denomination. When the church set up a worldwide organization several years later, it followed the organizational pattern developed in Australia.

As always, she spent much time speaking and writing. Camp meetings provided her with many speaking opportunities. During the years from 1891 to 1900 she wrote countless letters to church leaders in the United States, plus many articles for the *Review and Herald, Signs of the Times*, and *The Youth's Instructor*. In 1896 she finished the book *Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing. The Desire of Ages* followed in 1898. The year 1900 saw the publication of *Christ's Object Lessons* and volume six of *Testimonies for the Church*.

Although always busy, Mrs. White still found time for evangelistic activities. At the camp meetings she presented series of talks to large crowds. One such series she conducted during the Brighton Beach camp meeting held from December 29, 1893, to January 15, 1894, in a Melbourne suburb. It was the first Seventh-day Adventist camp meeting ever held in Australia. Mrs. White had just returned from New Zealand, where she had attended camp meetings at Napier and Wellington, the first and second such assemblies the Adventists convened south of the equator.

Arthur G. Daniells, Mrs. White, and other church leaders urged all the Australian Adventists that could to attend the meetings. To [99] house the people expected to come, those arranging the camp meeting made thirty-five family-sized tents. Few thought more than that would be needed. But as reservations came in, the preparations committee had to buy and rent additional tents.

When Mrs. White arrived at Brighton Beach, the campsite contained more than one hundred tents, housing 511 people. The careful, orderly arrangement of the tents and grounds impressed the many non-Adventist visitors who flocked to the meetings. The large audiences included doctors, ministers of other churches, and businessmen. They crowded into the main tent to hear Mrs. White speak on such topics as the Ten Commandments, Sabbathkeeping, and the events heralding the second coming of Christ. The wonders of the Adventist camp meeting quickly became a local topic of conversation. Mrs. White said herself that she had not seen such deep religious dedication and enthusiasm since the Millerite meetings of 1843 and 1844.

But not everybody appreciated the camp meeting so highly. To a group of juvenile delinquents—larrikins, the Australians called them—living in a nearby town, it represented a chance to have some fun. They began to do little acts of vandalism and mischief. They attacked the tents, hurling stones at them and pulling one down. The camp meeting staff had appointed several students from the Australian Bible School to act as guards. They helped control the larrikins. Unable to do much damage, the delinquents decided on a bolder scheme. Their leader outlined a plan to pull Mrs. White's tent down on her the next night. He considered her the most important [100] person among the Adventists.

But some of the gang bragged about their plan to the camp's student guards. Learning what the larrikins wanted to do, Fairly Masters, one of the Bible School's students, went to the faculty and warned them about the teen-age gang's schemes. The teachers hurried to the Melbourne police headquarters and asked for protection for the campsite. The city sent a tall, heavy-built Irish Roman Catholic policeman out to the little tent city to guard Mrs. White's tent.

Actually Mrs. White did not worry when she heard about the teen-agers' plan. She had often faced greater dangers in her long life. Time after time angels had protected her from disease, accident, and the violence and hatred of men. Since God had taken care of her for so long, she did not see any reason for fear now. Most of the time Mrs. White did not let people give her police protection. Now she accepted it only to please those with her. After the meeting that night, she walked to her tent, prepared for bed, prayed, and fell asleep in perfect peace. She would have slept just as peacefully without the policeman. Outside, the policeman patrolled the area around the tent, watching for the troublemakers. But the boys never showed up. Some of the youthful camp guards warned the gang members not to try anything, because the city had sent a law officer.

Yawning occasionally, the policeman kept at his post. Not long after midnight, when only subdued snores and the rustle of the night
[101] wind among the leaves disturbed the campground, he paused in his circuit of Mrs. White's tent and glanced toward it. He thought he noticed something out of the corner of his eye. But the tent stood peacefully in the darkness. He started to turn his attention to another part of the campground, but before he could, he saw a beam of light suddenly hover over Mrs. White's tent. Gradually the light assumed a shape and became more solid looking. Gripping his night stick, he watched the shape of an angel form in the light and stand guard above the tent. Instinctively he dropped to his knees and crossed himself. Awestruck, he stared at the angel for several minutes, then slowly rose to his feet and began to walk away. He had decided that Mrs. White no longer needed his protection. God guarded her.

Back at the Melbourne police station, he explained to his sergeant and the other officers on duty there why he had left his post. He explained that he felt Mrs. White had greater safety than he could

give her. Strangely, his superiors did not question his story, but believed it and did not send him back to the campground that night.

The Irish policeman, however, went to the campsite on his own the next day. He wanted to see the woman the angel guarded, to hear what she had to say. He attended the main services that day and every following day. What he saw and learned about Mrs. White did not disappoint him. The more he heard, the more interested he became; and he joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Later he resigned from the police force and moved to the country, becoming an active lay member responsible for many others joining the church. God had overruled Mrs. White's usual reluctance to accept police [102] protection to provide a chance for the policeman to come to the campgrounds. And He had allowed the man to see the angel because He knew it would appeal to his Roman Catholic background, which stressed miracles. Seeing the angel was the key to the man's mind, the thing that created his interest in Adventism. Afterward, God used Mrs. White's sermons in instructing and bringing the policeman into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. But he was not the only one converted through her speaking at the camp meeting.

Two brothers, operators of a music store, had joined the church, but their wives refused to accept its teachings. Nothing the men could do seemed to change their minds. They wanted nothing to do with their husbands' religion. Somehow the brothers did manage to persuade them to attend a few of the meetings at Brighton Beach.

One night Mrs. White preached on the gospel's invitation for all to accept Christ and be saved for eternal life. She appealed so strongly that the two women dropped their resistance to the Holy Spirit and walked to the front of the tent to indicate that they had decided to accept Christ and join the church. The son of one of the couples served as a leading Adventist minister for years.

A thirty-five-year-old former missionary to China attended the evangelistic services. Contact with Mrs. White at the camp meeting completely changed her life. Only the Holy Spirit can convert a person, but God used Mrs. White as a tool to help in the woman's conversion to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. A woman from [103] nearby Melbourne decided to obey God's teachings and to observe the Sabbath after hearing Mrs. White speak. Her decision made her husband terribly angry. "You either give up this silly seventh-

day Sabbath notion or get out of here," he shouted after she tried to explain what she was going to do. When she refused to stop worshiping on the Sabbath, he ordered her to leave their home. Although she was a timid woman, she had enough faith to help her stay by her decision. She left. A little later her sixteen-year-old daughter also decided to join the church. The girl told her mother about her plans, and her mother promised to come and take the teen-ager to live with her.

When she appeared at the house to pick up her daughter, the angry husband saw her and exclaimed, "Well, you have decided to give up that Sabbath nonsense, have you? And you have come back to live with me?"

She shook her head. "No," she answered, "I have come for my daughter, whom you have also driven out of the house."

Confused, the man did not know what to reply. "What are you going to do now?" he demanded after thinking a moment.

"I am going to support myself and my daughter," his wife said simply. "She will help me all she can. Somehow we'll manage."

The husband's conscience began to trouble him. He realized that as a father and husband he should support his family. In a melodramatic gesture typical of the nineteenth century, he dropped
[104] to his knees and begged his wife to give up her "terrible doctrines" and return to him.

For a moment the wife's will and courage wavered, but God strengthened her to keep her vow. "No," she said firmly, "I shall never give up the Sabbath. I shall observe it as long as I live. Although I have a duty to obey you, I have a greater duty to obey God."

Seeing that he could not force his wife to change her mind, he became worried and tried another approach. "If you will come back to me," he offered, "you may keep the Sabbath. But only promise me that you will never go to any Adventist meetings again."

She sadly shook her head, tears in her eyes. "I cannot make such a promise, though I will be a faithful wife in everything else. But you don't understand. You want me to be a faithful wife, yet you also want me to disobey God. If I ignore His will for me, how can anyone ever say I was being a faithful wife? Could I possibly be a good wife then?"

"Now I don't know what to do," he groaned. Dropping into a nearby chair, he sat for several moments holding his head. "Will you go with me to see our minister about this?" he asked, glancing up at her.

The woman hesitated before answering. Something about the idea bothered her. But because her husband begged her to go, she finally consented.

Hitching the horse to the family buggy, they drove through the dark Melbourne streets and reached the minister's house about ten o'clock.

The minister had gone to bed, but their knocking woke him up. Sleepily he invited them in and listened to their problem. The [105] husband told the preacher how he made his wife leave because she had kept the Sabbath. "Now," he asked in puzzlement, "did I do the right thing?"

The minister's eyes blinked in the light of the kerosene lamp. Setting it on a table, he replied, "You did perfectly right under the circumstances."

For a moment the husband stared in amazement at the minister. Suddenly angry, he told him, "You're wrong. I didn't do right. I abused my wife. I failed as a husband and father. I mistreated my oldest child. I have acted terrible, and you should have told me so. Instead you approved of what I did. What kind of minister are you?"

Turning to his wife, he asked her forgiveness. Together they went out to the carriage and drove home. Never again did he try to control how she worshiped. His wife found peace and happiness. But something still troubled the man—his relationship with God. His wife's life—her happiness and her faithfulness to God—made him feel guilty. He wanted a life like hers. Mrs. White, learning about the case, wrote in a letter that after the night at the minister's house, the man began to show a real interest in Adventism.

The more Mrs. White spoke, the greater her reputation as an evangelist grew. It spread to Broken Hill, a silver-mining town 450 miles northwest of Melbourne. Mrs. Roberts, a Sabbathkeeper, learned about the woman prophet and preacher, and wanted to hear her speak. She spoke constantly to her friends and neighbors about Ellen G. White until some of them knew almost as much about her as Mrs. Roberts did. One day Mrs. Roberts mentioned to a neighbor [106]

woman that she planned to visit Melbourne and hear Mrs. White.

The neighbor—who owned a local shop—had listened to Mrs. Roberts talk so much about Mrs. White that she became skeptical that anyone could possibly have the talents and abilities Mrs. Roberts claimed she had. She particularly doubted that Mrs. White could hold the attention of a large audience for several hours and often expressed her belief on the matter to Mrs. Roberts.

As Mrs. Roberts described her planned trip, the woman suddenly remarked, "You know, I've always wanted to take a holiday to Melbourne. If you don't mind, I'll go with you."

"What about your shop?" the Adventist asked in surprise.

"I'll arrange for someone to run it."

The journey to Melbourne was long. No direct rail connection existed between Broken Hill and the larger city. They had to follow a longer route that swung west, then south.

In Melbourne they learned that Mrs. White was scheduled to speak in one of the city's larger halls. Hiring a carriage, they arrived at the hall and found it crowded.

When Mrs. White walked onto the platform, the neighbor noticed her small size. "That's the woman you're always talking about?" she whispered to Mrs. Roberts. "*That* little lady?"

After the introduction and preliminaries, Mrs. White rose to speak. Momentarily she stood looking around at the audience, some-
[107] thing she usually did before each sermon or lecture. Occasionally her gaze rested on a particular person. Nervously the woman whispered to Mrs. Roberts, "I'm afraid."

"Afraid of what?" her friend asked.

"That woman is looking straight at me. I'm sure of it. She knows all about me."

Mrs. White began her sermon. Her voice, which some said reminded them of the clear tones of a bell, reached each person in the large crowd. The people sat attentive throughout the long meeting. The neighbor seemed as interested in it as everybody else. At its close, as the people filed out of the hall, she turned to Mrs. Roberts and said, "I must send a telegram to Broken Hill immediately."

"What's your hurry?"

"I want to notify those at home to close my shop on the Sabbath."

Besides speaking to large groups, Mrs. White also did personal evangelism. Near her home in Cooranbong, New South Wales—which she called Sunnyside—lived a family who owned a large fruit farm. She had a great interest in the family. The father raised excellent oranges and lemons. An avid reader, he had learned much about Adventist doctrines, but he never fully accepted them. Although he knew better, he clung to many of his old habits. Mrs. White felt disappointment that the farmer and his family did not join the church.

In a vision one night an angel stood by her bed and directed her to visit the citrus grower with copies of her books. The books, the angel said, would help convert him. Obeying the instruction, the [108] next day she collected a few of her longer books, and placing them on the buggy seat beside her, drove over to the fruit farm. Although the man was working out in the orchards, he came up to the house when he learned that she had stopped by.

In a few minutes Mrs. White turned the conversation to religion. Speaking to him as she would to a Seventh-day Adventist church member, she said, "You have great responsibilities. Here are your neighbors all around you." She motioned to the distant farms with her hand. "You are accountable for every one of them because you have Biblical knowledge they don't have. If you love what you know and follow it, you will help convert many to Christ."

He looked at her strangely. His expression seemed to be trying to tell her that he had long ago given up those points of Adventist belief that he had accepted. But Mrs. White knew it already. Ignoring his expression, she continued to talk to him as if he were an Adventist. "We are going to help you to begin to convert your neighbors." She balanced the books on her lap. "I want to give you a present of some books you can use."

The farmer politely tried to refuse them. "We have a local library from which to get books," he protested, trying to think of a way to change the subject.

She looked around the room. "I don't see any here. Apparently you have returned all those you have borrowed. Perhaps you don't like to go to the bother of taking out books from the public library." Libraries then had much stricter rules about who could take books and how they could do it. "I have brought some books for you and

[109] your children to read." By ignoring his protests, she silenced them, and he finally accepted the books.

Before she left, Mrs. White knelt and prayed with him.

When they stood again, tears rolled down his leathery cheeks. "I'm glad you came to see me. I thank you for the books," he repeated over and over.

The next time she visited the fruit farm, the man told her that he had read part of *Patriarchs and Prophets.* "There is not one syllable I could change," he commented. "Every paragraph speaks right to the soul."

"Which book do you consider the most important?" she asked.

"I lend them all to my neighbors, and the hotelkeeper thinks *The Great Controversy* is the best." Suddenly his lips began to quiver. "But *I* think *Patriarchs and Prophets* is the *best*. It is the one that has pulled me out of the mire."

Mrs. White understood human nature. She knew that a person becomes most interested in those things he is actively involved in. Getting the farmer to work for his neighbors by lending them books made him interested in Adventism again. Reading Mrs. White's books also touched his heart. He and his family joined the church, and together they helped bring in several neighboring families. Mrs. White's influence on one man had far-reaching results.

Chapter 14—Saving McCann's Farm [110] [111]

When people needed help, they seemed to turn naturally to Mrs. White for aid. In 1894 a Seventh-day Adventist neighbor named McCann came to see her about an embarrassing financial problem. The hard-working farmer—who had nine living children, the oldest a young woman of twenty-three—needed money badly.

McCann had bought a rocky ten-acre farm. Because a large well-built house stood on the property, the purchase price had been high. Like many other settlers in Australia, he had hoped to become a prosperous landowner. But a continual drought on the arid plains caused constant crop failures, and McCann, like thousands of others, could not pay off his debts. He obtained a mortgage to pay his bills. Yet no matter how hard he worked, he could not earn money to meet the installments on the loan. In fact, he couldn't even pay the interest due every quarter, and so in desperation he came to see Mrs. White.

"I have no one to help me—no one else to turn to," McCann said. [112] His weather-beaten face, half hidden by his gray-streaked beard, reflected his worry. "I've come to you, hoping you might be able to do something. I need seven pounds ten each month for the next three months. With that I can meet the payments. The state railway wants to buy an acre of the farm for its right-of-way. From the sale I will return your money at the end of the quarter."

Mrs. White translated the seven pounds ten into U.S. dollars. It equaled about thirty-seven dollars, a figure worth in purchasing power more than a hundred dollars today. In the 1890's many people did not see that much money during several months—nor did Mrs. White have seven pounds ten. Because she wrote books that the denomination sold widely, people assumed that she was rich. They could never understand that she spent most of her royalties preparing other books. She had to pay the salaries of her assistants and have the type set and the printing plates made. What little money she had left she donated to various church projects. At the moment she was so poor that she did not have enough money to ship her furniture and

other belongings from her former home in Melbourne to Sunnyside, her present country home near Avondale College.

Not wanting to send McCann away discouraged, she promised that she would do something. What it would be, she didn't know. First she tried to borrow money from the Adventist Tract and Missionary Society in Sydney, an organization similar to a Book and Bible House today. But it had a shortage of funds and could not
[113] lend her anything. Banks were scarce then and sometimes not too trustworthy.

During the past century Adventists who had extra money often turned it over to a denominational institution such as a publishing house for safekeeping. Mrs. White had deposited some money with the Echo Publishing House (now the Signs Publishing Company). Remembering this, she sent a telegram to the publishing company, asking to withdraw it. The treasurer sent back word that he could not return it because the company had used the funds for an emergency. He could not replace it until the book salesmen mailed the money from their sales.

When she met the neighbor next, she told him she would lend him the money if her son Willie, coming from Melbourne, had money when he arrived. She expected that he would. Despite the fact that she had hoped to use the money to buy a supply of fruit for the winter, she would let McCann use it. Willie arrived from Melbourne with less than five dollars in his pocket.

Unwilling to allow those holding the mortgage on McCann's farm to evict him and his family, Mrs. White tried to think of some other way to get the money. If they could keep paying the interest on the mortgage until the New South Wales state railroad bought a right-of-way through the property, they would be able to save the farm. The money from the railroad sale would wipe out part of McCann's debt. At the moment, though, Mrs. White saw no way of borrowing
[114] the monthly seven pounds ten. Puzzling over what she should do next, she thought of a family she knew who might have some extra money. She visited them and asked for ten pounds—enough to meet the interest due on the loan, plus a little extra so that she could ship her belongings from Melbourne to Cooranbong. Without hesitation, the family gave her the ten pounds. They knew that she would repay it. She had a good reputation among her neighbors for honesty. On

the following Sunday night, she and George Burt Starr, a minister and Bible teacher, drove to the McCann farm and gave the money to the happy farmer. Had he not gotten it then, the notice for him and his family to leave the home would have come a day or two later.

"If this large family had been bereft of a home," she reflected in her diary, "some of us, if Christians, would have had to help him more than seven pounds to relieve his distress. Now he hopes to sell out in a few months and get a cheaper place. He has a nice house, and we believe this will now tide over the difficulty."

[115]

Chapter 15—Hailstorms and Horses

Mrs. White greatly enjoyed pets, and she also was fond of horses, common around many homes during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One Sabbath in early February, 1895, she and several friends drove home from the church services at Prospect, New South Wales, Australia, to Granville. Jessie, the young horse pulling the carriage, trotted along peacefully, occasionally flicking her tail at some insect that annoyed her.

Glancing at the horizon, Mrs. White noticed a storm beginning to loom across the Blue Mountains. The clouds, however, seemed to be moving in a direction that would miss them. To be safe, the driver flicked the reins and urged the horse on a little faster. The carriage rattled, and the dust cloud that trailed it rose slightly higher. Gradually the sky darkened more menacingly. Mrs. White watched the clouds with increasing concern.

As they neared home, they passed the bridge on the Granville-
[116] Parramatta road. Suddenly strong gusts of wind whipped the dust higher into the sky. Thunder boomed, and lightning flickered and shimmered among the clouds. The carriage came to the turnoff leading to where Mrs. White lived, whipped around the corner, and rattled down the side road. With a clatter on the carriage roof, egg-sized hailstones pelted the earth. Gleaming white and flecked with iridescence, the hail bounced about Jessie's hooves. The ground soon disappeared beneath a white icy carpet.

The road sloped down to a gate. Stumbling on the hailstones, twice the horse slipped and fell backward on its haunches. "Byron," Mrs. White said to her nephew, "get out at once, stand by Jessie's head, and talk to her." Shielding his head with his arm, Byron jumped out of the carriage and seized the reins near the frightened mare's head. Two women remained with Mrs. White in the scanty security of the carriage. Turning to Sara McEnterfer, her traveling companion and secretary, and May Lacey, who later married Willie White, Mrs.

White said, "Get out as quickly as possible. The hail is getting even larger and heavier. The horse may get out of control at any moment."

Violent gusts of wind lashed the canvas carriage top, rocking the vehicle back and forth. Rain now mixed with the hail. As the two women helped Mrs. White down from the carriage, a blast of air snatched the seat cushions, sending them spinning through the darkened sky. Mrs. White's cushion hurtled out of the carriage, skipped across the fields, and disappeared with a splash in a nearby stream. Supporting Mrs. White, Miss McEnterfer and Miss Lacey [117] helped her across the yard and into the house. The wind slammed the door behind them. Drenched, May Lacey and Mrs. White went upstairs to change clothes. Her heavier clothing had kept Mrs. White from becoming as wet as Miss Lacey.

Grabbing a shawl, Sara McEnterfer hurried back outside to help Byron with the mare. The hail pounded the ground with even greater force than before. Byron squatted beside the horse, sheltering his hatless head under the animal's neck. Sara struggled blindly toward the carriage, but the fury of the hail kept her and Byron from trying to unhitch the horse. A hailstone struck the young man on the forehead, nearly knocking him to the ground.

Desperately Sara tried to unloose the tugs and slip off the harness while the ice stones smashed her wrists and hands. Unable to free the tugs, she stumbled back beside Byron and took the reins from him. The sound of the hail and the rumble of thunder threatened to deafen them. Frightened by the cold rain and ice continually striking her body, the horse tried to buck and struggle free. Motioning for Sara to hold the reins, Bryon went to the carriage and fumbled at the tugs. Moments later he had the horse free and led her for a few feet, but the mare tried harder to break loose and run for some kind of shelter. Byron held onto her reins, trying to calm her. When the storm slackened slightly, he reharnessed Jessie, gathered up the scattered cushions and other objects blown from the carriage, and drove into the yard near the house.

Mrs. White had watched Byron and the storm from an upper story window. As the carriage came close to the house, she could see [118] even at that distance that large swellings covered the horse's body. Soaked, Byron's and Sara's clothes clung to their bodies. When Sara

entered the house, she glanced down at her wrists and found them heavily bruised and discolored.

Sheets of rain splashed against the sides of the house, pouring in beneath the door and flooding the halls and the dining room. Dripping water drenched the stair carpet, and the kitchen and scullery floors disappeared beneath puddles. Examining the house, Mrs. White found hail had smashed the windows on the south side, hurling shattered glass halfway across the hall. The upper and lower veranda windows lay in fragments on the floor.

On Sunday morning the sun rose in a clear sky above the muddy landscape. Deciding to see what further damage the storm had done, Mrs. White and her friends walked out to the orchard. Leaves and broken branches lay everywhere. The wind had blown off almost all the peaches on one tree near the house, leaving only a little badly bruised fruit. In the garden the hail slashed the rhubarb plants to pieces and punctured the pumpkins. The corn lay in tumbled confusion.

Although she felt sad over the damage, she did not let it discourage her. Instead, she found in the storm things to be thankful about. For one thing, Jessie, the mare, had not kicked once during the storm despite the painful blows of the hail. Now Mrs. White had greater confidence in the horse and knew that she could be trusted in an emergency. Also God had spared her life and that of her friends.
[119] Ellen White's life had always been close to God, and her mind immediately responded with praise whenever she saw an example of His protection of her. She knew that the violent hailstorm could have easily killed her, her friends, and the horse.

While Mrs. White respected and cared for her animals, not all of those around her did so. One day she came out into the yard and found her hired hand lashing the horse with a whip. She employed him to help manage her business affairs and to take care of her livestock at Sunnyside. It was not the first time she had seen the man mistreating an animal. She knew that he had done it many times before. Whenever he worked with animals or young people, he tended to be unkind and severe. Probably he excused his actions with the idea common many years ago that children and animals were not human and had no rights.

Seeing Mrs. White standing a few feet away, he stopped, stunned that he should ever be caught. His arm was still poised in midair, ready to slash the whip across the horse's back. Slowly lowering the whip, he tried to hide it behind his back, then nervously fidgeted with it. Kindly, but indignantly, she quietly began to lecture him. If he had the tenderness and love of the Christ he claimed to worship, would he treat an animal the way he had just done? she asked. The employee glanced down at the ground. Animals, she continued, have a dignity of their own. God uses such creatures as the horse, the cow, and the dog as His agents to do good in the world. Each living creature had its purpose. God would judge anyone who mistreated them. The angel who stood before Balaam, who had unjustly abused [120] his donkey, now stood before the hired man, she said, watching and recording his cruelty.

Mrs. White's words pierced to the man's conscience. God had revealed his true character to her. One night while traveling on the island of Tasmania, she had seen the man in a vision. In her dream the employee traveled with a group of people having several teams of horses and wagons. Annoyed because several wagons passed him in a cloud of dust, he lashed his horses and shouted and screamed at them. But the tired animals could go no faster. Whipping them did not help. All the man did was to frighten them.

A tall, dignified man suddenly appeared in front of the horses. They reared up to avoid running him down. Grabbing the bridles, the stranger stopped the horses and began to stroke them to calm them. Turning to the driver, he demanded, "What is your name?" Mrs. White's hired hand answered, and the tall man wrote it down in a book. Glancing up from the book, the stranger—actually an angel, Mrs. White knew—inquired, "Do you remember Balaam?" Understanding the reference to the Old Testament prophet, the wagon driver nodded. The angel repeated the warning that had come to Balaam, then added, "A merciful man is merciful to his beast." This ended the vision.

Thus Mrs. White knew what to say to her employee when she caught him abusing her horse. He could make no excuses. God had shown her his cruelty, and she wanted to be sure he never mistreated anything again. But not always did she have a chance to [121] do something about the cruelty to animals she saw about her.

In 1896 she often journeyed from Granville to nearby Sydney. The route went past a large stockyard containing thousands of sheep and cattle waiting for slaughter. One day as she and some friends drove along the road, they came upon a herd of cattle milling across it. An enormous ox, noticing the approaching carriage, loomed suddenly and defiantly in the middle of the dust cloud, ready to charge the vehicle.

A drover (cowboy) galloped to the front of the herd and reined his horse to a stop beside the ox. Tossing its long horns wildly about, the creature flashed anger, bewilderment, and fear from its eyes. "Keep to the right," the Australian cowboy yelled to Mrs. White; "drive past as quickly as possible. He may not charge then." Cautiously her driver edged the horse and carriage along the side of the road and passed the bellowing cattle. The huge ox stood watching them, making no move. Mrs. White believed that an angel had held the animal back, preventing it from harming them. The driver clucked to the horse, snapping the reins, and the animal broke into a trot.

Seeing the ox grieved Mrs. White. She saw in the event more than just God's protection from an angry beast. She knew that heat and thirst had enraged it. His nature revolted against the men's cruelty, and he would not allow anyone to control him. He felt an intense, unreasoning hatred toward all men.

[122] Mrs. White knew that animals did not naturally hate mankind. They could have great love for human beings. "The intelligence displayed by many ... animals approaches so closely to human intelligence that it is a mystery," she wrote. "The animals see and hear and love and fear and suffer. They use their organs far more faithfully than many human beings use theirs. They manifest sympathy and tenderness toward their companions in suffering. Many animals show an affection for those who have charge of them, far superior to the affection shown by some of the human race. They form attachments for man which are not broken without great suffering to them."—The Ministry of Healing, 315, 316.

But no animal could learn to love the men herding them to the slaughterhouse. The drovers cared little for the sheep and cattle except for the money they would get when they sold the animals to the slaughterhouse. Many of the creatures became injured, yet the

men paid no attention to the wounds. Mrs. White saw a steer whose horns had broken off close to the skull. Blood flowed down its head. Other cattle hobbled along, lame. On a different trip to Sydney she counted eight sheep dead on the road, overcome by the exhaustion of the journey, the terrible heat, and the cruelty of the drovers. Once she passed men picking up heavy sheep unable to travel any farther and bouncing them into the wagons, the sheep landing on their backs. When some died from the treatment, the drivers tossed the bodies out along the side of the road. At the slaughterhouse the animals remained in open corrals until fattened for the butchering. Then the butchers knocked them unconscious, slit their throats, and bled them [123] to death. Working in a slaughterhouse soon made men indifferent to suffering.

Seeing in such cruelty ample reason for not eating meat, Mrs. White wrote, "What man with a human heart, who has ever cared for domestic animals, could look into their eyes, so full of confidence and affection, and willingly give them over to the butcher's knife? How could he devour their flesh as a sweet morsel?"—The Ministry of Healing, 316.

"Think of the cruelty to animals that meat-eating involves, and its effect on those who inflict [death to the animal] and those who behold it. How it destroys the tenderness with which we should regard these creatures of God!"—The Ministry of Healing, 315.

Mrs. White knew that in some places meat is the only food most people can buy, but she wrote that wherever they could easily obtain fruit, grains and nuts, vegetables, and dairy products, they should not eat meat. Besides the cruelty to animals, God showed her many dangers to one's health that come from eating flesh.

Not only did she urge others to be kind to animals, but she was kind to them herself. Climbing aboard a wagon, she and two nurse-companions—Emily Campbell and May Walling—drove out to a nearby orchard to pick oranges. Stopping beside the citrus orchard, the three women picked up baskets from the back of the wagon and walked among the trees to gather fruit. The return journey was even slower than the trip to the orchard. The fat old mare would not hurry. She plodded along, each step stirring up little puffs of dust, the wagon creaking behind her. But Mrs. White did not push or hurry the horse. While wanting to get home quickly, she reconciled [124]

herself to the fact that she would have to wait awhile. “We then drove home as fast as this elephant of a horse would walk, for trot she would not,” she commented later with a note of humor. The horse pulled the wagon as best she could, and that satisfied her.

Chapter 16—Saved by a Milk Pan [125]

Writing to her son Edson on August 10, 1896, Mrs. White mentioned a household accident that had injured her face. She had gone outside to where she kept a crate of oranges. Beside the crate stood a pile of tree stumps workmen had pulled from the fields while clearing land for what is now Avondale College, and Mrs. White used them in her cookstove. Stooping over the crate to fill a milk pan with oranges, she suddenly felt dizzy and slumped forward. The stumps seemed to rush upward, the jagged roots ready to claw at her face. Instantly she realized that if she fell against the stumps, the gnarled wood would slash and cut and bruise her face, probably disfiguring her for the rest of her life. Just as instantly she prayed for God to protect her.

Quickly she shielded her face with the milk pan she had intended to fill with oranges. The fall knocked her unconscious. When she revived and struggled up off the ground, she glanced at the pan. The blow had bent it almost double. Striking the pile of stumps first, it had protected her face. A spot throbbed with pain below one eye, [126] and her cheek had swollen, but she felt thankful that the fall had not injured her worse.

Ella White, Mrs. White's granddaughter, stood a short distance away and saw the accident. There were no doctors nearby, and Ella raced into the house and pounded up some wood charcoal. Using the pulverized black powder and some hot water, she applied poultices to her grandmother's face until the soreness left and the swelling went down.

The accident could have destroyed Mrs. White's eyesight and prevented her from writing books, letters, and magazine articles. It could have crippled her service to God, perhaps ending it. But God had protected her, and she was able to continue her work. In the years that followed she wrote and supervised the compilation of such books as *The Desire of Ages, The Ministry of Healing, Christ's*

Object Lessons, and volumes six through nine of *Testimonies for the Church.*

Pain from the injury lasted for about a year, but she considered it better than blindness and a mutilated face. During the painful months she continued to pray for healing. Eventually the cheekbone mended, and the pain left her face. Once again God had rewarded her faith and trust in His protection.

Chapter 17—Personal Glimpses [127]

To many young people today Mrs. White has become like a character out of a myth or legend. They hear adults constantly quote from her books and tell about the important things she did for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In their denominational history books they see her photographs, surrounded by stern-looking, old-fashioned-appearing people. As a result, modern young people do not think of her as a real person whom they would enjoy knowing and being with. For example, they do not realize that she often went on picnics with her family and grandchildren.

One Sabbath she spoke at a church at Napa, California. Her daughter-in-law, May Lacey White, planned that after the services they would eat outdoors. Driving home in two different carriages the family passed a quiet little mountain stream, and everyone agreed this was the place they should stop and eat. Someone took the picnic basket out of the carriage and set it on the ground. May White unfolded the large checkered tablecloth and spread it on the grass. [128] Other members of the family arranged blankets and soft cushions around the cloth.

Mrs. White had been riding in a two-seated surrey following her son's carriage. Untucking the sealskin covering her legs, Willie White helped his mother down from the vehicle. Then he unhitched the horses and fed them grain. Sitting down around the picnic lunch, the family thanked God for the blessings He had bestowed upon them.

Sandwiches made up a main part of the picnic. Some contained peanut butter and olives, others had nut food and eggs. Besides the sandwiches, they had sliced tomatoes, olives, whole-wheat sticks, dried figs, fresh pears, almonds, a hot dish kept warm in a fireless cooker (a device warmed by a soapstone heated beforehand), and milk and oatmeal cookies.

After dinner, Mrs. White rested while her daughter-in-law took the children on a nature walk. After the walk, the children clustered

about their grandmother and listened to her point out common objects of nature around the picnic site and make parables about them to bring out a lesson. Tiring of that, they listened to May White read from the manuscript of their grandmother's next book, *Prophets and Kings.*

In 1900 Mrs. White left Australia and returned to the United States. Settling in northwestern California, she purchased Elmshaven, a sixty-acre estate near St. Helena, a town about seventy miles north of San Francisco. The property included a seven-room house, a cottage, a large barn, some livestock, as well as orchards,
[129] vineyards, garden, hay land, pasture, and woodland. She obtained the whole estate for a sum rather small even in her day.

The orchards had many prune trees, and the neighboring farms also possessed large prune orchards. In the spring white blossoms covered the California hills. When the fruit ripened in the fall, school closed for two weeks so that the children and young people could help harvest it. Mrs. White's grandchildren often came over to help pick in her three prune orchards. Adults shook the fruit off the branches, and the young people picked it up and placed it in boxes. The children earned a nickel for filling a box holding three full buckets of prunes. The fruit growers dipped the prunes in boiling water to crack the skins, then spread the fruit out on long trays to dry.

Sometimes Mrs. White supervised her grandchildren as they worked around Elmshaven. Although she strongly believed in keeping youngsters busy, she would not use force to make them work, nor would she scold them if they made mistakes. Her attitude encouraged them to work even harder.

Besides harvesting prunes, the grandchildren picked grapes, which Mrs. White's assistants would squeeze into grape juice for those at Elmshaven to use. Olive trees also grew on the estate. Each fall the family picked and cured barrels of them in salt brine. Often Ella White and the other grandchildren scampered down into the shadowy cellar containing the stored olives and thrust their hands into the open barrels, trying to see how many olives they could hold at a time.

[130] Believing that no one had an excuse to serve poor meals, Mrs. White kept lots of healthful food in her pantry and storage cellars.

She served much fresh fruit during the summer. In the winter she substituted canned fruit. For spreads on her whole-wheat bread, she used cottage cheese, thick cream, honey, jam, peanut butter, and coconut butter. Her favorite dishes were baked corn souffle, tomatoes and macaroni, and tiny cooked mustard greens. She never served meat, but did have the meat substitutes then available.

She raised her own chickens and fed them grain instead of the meat scraps some farmers used. The fowl provided the eggs used in her home. She kept five cows to provide milk, which she sterilized by boiling in big pans on her wood-burning cookstove. Instead of butter, she used cream. Although she ate only two meals a day herself, she welcomed members of her family and visitors to use her pantry to prepare an evening meal for themselves.

On Sabbath afternoons Willie White and his family took long walks among the heavily forested hills near Elmshaven. On their return they would stop at Mrs. White's home. She would gather her grandchildren about her and tell them about the new earth, especially the wonders she had seen in her visions. During the fall and winter they often sat in front of the crackling fireplace, singing hymns and reading stories. Grandmother White loved to sing. The White family stayed close together on Sabbath, the children never going off alone or with neighbor children.

On warm Sabbath days they gathered out in the yard underneath a favorite tree. Mrs. William White read to her children from the [131]
Youth's Instructor or *Our Little Friend*. As she read, Grace, her daughter, often climbed the old shade tree and perched on one of the large branches. There the girl watched the orchards and forested hills rolling off toward the horizon. As the Sabbath sun crept down behind the hills, the family and any visiting friends sang and prayed.

When the grandchildren visited Mrs. White in her writing room at Elmshaven during the week, they scampered up the dark, narrow backstairs instead of coming up the wide formal stairs as they did on the Sabbath. In the room they would find her writing on her lapboard, using the light coming in through the bay window. Mrs. White would put down her pen and greet each child with a kiss.

She especially liked to play with Arthur White, then only a toddler. Setting him on her lap, she caressed and cuddled the child. Giggling, Arthur would try to count the buttons running down the

front of her dress. But always he got tangled up in his special numbering system. Laughing, his grandmother would hug him.

Mrs. White seemed to have much to write, and she could not spend a lot of time with her grandchildren. When she felt she must resume writing, she would mention some interesting things on the farm she knew about. In the fall she might tell them about a tree in her apple orchard that bore an unusual amount of large fruit. The children would hurry off to sample the apples. Other times she might tell them about a new calf, or the hatching of some chicks. Instead of scolding her grandchildren for bothering her and shooing them away
[132] when she needed to get back to work, she thought of something interesting for them to do.

Mrs. White always seemed cheerful and at peace. Happiness radiated from her. Never did her children feel tense, nervous, or ill at ease around her. Her deep blue-gray eyes glowed with an alert kindness. When her grandchildren were around, her face always filled with her love for them.

She had a sense of humor and could laugh and enjoy the amusing things of life. One time as she spoke to a large audience, some of the people began to smile in the middle of her sermon. Knowing that she had said nothing humorous, she wondered what caused the disturbance.

Glancing around the rostrum at the ministers behind her, she saw her grown son William sleeping in his chair. She smiled to the audience and said, "I hope that you will not feel too badly about Willie sleeping while I'm preaching. He is tired, and besides, he has attended meetings with me in many places. In fact, Willie has been going with me to meetings since he was a baby. I would take him to the platform in a little basket. He would sleep while I preached, and as you can see, Willie has never quite overcome that habit."

Mrs. White always took advantage of chances to help other people. Whenever she heard of some young man without money or a job, she took him in and helped him find a job and start a new life. Some of them she employed as business assistants.

To those needing clothing she gave garments she no longer used.
[133] Many times she donated to poor families the new clothes she had just bought for herself. Always she remembered that the poor have a sense of pride, too, as well as the wealthy. Once Sara McEnterfer

planned to give some of Mrs. White's carefully patched dresses and coats to a woman—once wealthy—who had lost most of her money. Learning of Sara's plan, Mrs. White told her to send the new ones she had bought for the coming season. "She has been used to much better things," Mrs. White explained, "and I would not hurt her feelings by giving her my old clothes."

Besides gifts of clothing, food, and money, she tried to provide medical help for the needy sick. Sara McEnterfer, a nurse, spent much time treating the people while Mrs. White lived in Australia. In fact, she almost did the work of a visiting community nurse. People responded to the efforts of the two women. To show their gratitude, a group of fishermen that the Seventh-day Adventist women had aided sent a large crate of fish to Avondale College. The head cook, learning of its delivery, became upset. She went to see what Mrs. White wanted done with the fish. "Shall I throw them out?" she asked.

Surprise showed on Mrs. White's face. "Throw them out?" she exclaimed. "Of course not. Aren't there plenty of people who would be thankful to have fish? Find some of them. And then send the fish to them with our compliments."

Then Mrs. White had her secretary write the fishermen a letter of thanks for their kindness, telling them she greatly appreciated the thought behind their gift. She always respected the beliefs and rights [134] of others, and she had great tact and courtesy.

Much of her writing Mrs. White did in the night, often rising as early as one or two o'clock in the morning. Her secretaries laid out her pen and paper the night before. They draped a heavy robe over her writing chair and placed her wool-lined slippers beside the bed so that she could get up by herself. Lighting a kerosene lamp, she would write until morning.

Not only did she spend the early morning hours writing, but she also spent much time during the night in prayer. Her prayers, whether given in public or overheard late at night, created a great impression on people's minds. H. M. S. Richards, Voice of Prophecy radio program speaker, states that as a boy in Colorado he heard Mrs. White preach. Until he heard her pray, he considered her only a pious woman. "When she prayed in public at one of the meetings

I attended," he said, "I knew that she was God's messenger. She talked to God as though He was right there."

Sometimes the power of her prayers erased doubt in people's minds. Danish-born John Matteson, a former Baptist minister, accepted the Seventh-day Adventist faith but found it difficult to believe that Mrs. White was a true prophet. As is true today, the lives and activities of false prophets have caused many people to doubt that there is such a thing as a real prophet. Matteson first met Ellen G. White in 1866. Later he wrote that he considered and weighed well all her actions and words.

[135] "I have been at one period of my life a skeptic," he explained, "and I now let skepticism bring in her objections, and let the Bible, the Spirit, and reason answer." He studied Mrs. White through the eyes of doubt and disbelief. Then his opinion changed. "I happened accidentally to overhear her family prayers twice, unknown to her, as she was alone with her husband and children. What was she doing? Planning cunningly how she might lead her admirers to bring their sacrifices before her? Or how she might be revenged upon her enemies and bring shame upon them? No! Childlike and earnest pleadings were not only heard by me, but by Jesus and the angels. She communed with God."

An early Seventh-day Adventist church school teacher, Mrs. Alma McKibbin, also overheard Mrs. White's private prayers. Quite ill, Mrs. McKibbin spent a night in the home of Sarah Peck, one of Mrs. White's secretaries. Miss Peck had invited Mrs. McKibbin there with the intention of taking the sick woman to St. Helena Sanitarium for a medical examination. The Peck house stood just east of Mrs. White's home, facing her upstairs bedroom.

Too ill to sleep, Alma McKibbin lay on the sitting room couch and stared out into the darkness. The still night air carried sounds remarkably well, and Mrs. McKibbin heard the distant rustlings of night creatures in the orchards and fields. A pale yellow light suddenly glowed in Mrs. White's bedroom window. She has gotten up to write, Mrs. McKibbin thought. But then a voice crossed the quiet darkness between the two houses. Mrs. White was praying.

[136] "Such a prayer I never heard," Mrs. McKibbin wrote years afterward. "She was praying first of all for the people of God; she was praying for everyone that knows this truth, that we might be true and that we

might realize our responsibility to give it to others. Then she prayed for herself."

Prayer, Mrs. McKibbin realized, was the source of Mrs. White's spiritual strength. It was her means of constant contact with God. Only through prayer could she have remained God's messenger and done the special service He expected of her.

In the morning Mrs. White would sometimes come to family worship and ask, "Did you hear the music in my room last night?" The others always had to shake their heads and answer No. The angels came with music in her night visions, but she alone had the privilege of hearing it. The other members of her household went about their duties or slept, oblivious to the music of heaven. Perhaps it was a partial reward for the countless difficulties she suffered while serving God and the church.

[137]

Chapter 18—The Circling Dove

Mrs. White died at Elmshaven on July 16, 1915, but her work and influence did not end with her life. Today Adventists sell hundreds of thousands of her books around the world. The reading of such books as *Steps to Christ, Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing,* and *The Great Controversy* have helped in the conversion of thousands. Many people consider *The Great Controversy* [1] as having the most powerful influence. Countless stories tell of the book's impact on people's lives.

One unusual story about it comes from the Philippine Islands. Regino Balaois had reached the amazing age of 115—at least that is how old he and his friends believed he was. One day Reuben Balosteros, a young colporteur passing through Laguna Province on the island of Luzon, stopped to sell books in Balaois's little home village of Famyi. Balaois enjoyed sitting in a chair in front of his
[138] home and watching the daily life of the village swirl about him. Seeing the ancient man, the Adventist book salesman approached him and soon sold a copy of *The Great Controversy.*

After buying the book, Balaois sat down in a shady spot in his backyard and began to read. Having read for a while, he glanced up and noticed something unusual. A white dove had flown into the garden and had begun to circle over the man's head. Never, he thought, had he seen a bird act quite like that before.

The next day Balaois went out to read again, and again the dove returned, repeating its strange behavior. There must be, he finally decided, some connection between his reading the book and the coming of the bird. He decided to mention the strange event to his friends. "This must be a good book," he commented, holding the copy of *The Great Controversy* up, "because every time I read it, the white dove returns and flies in circles above me. Do you think it is a sign that God has sent the book to teach us?"

[1] Also published under the title The Triumph of God"s Love.

Regino Balaois's age gave him much respect among the villagers, but his tale about the dove naturally caused some doubt among the people. "You're getting old and seeing things," someone commented.

"If that is so," Balaois replied, "then come over to my house and listen to what the book has to say. Watch for yourselves and see if the dove comes when I start reading the book."

Impressed with the elderly man's statement, the villagers decided they would come and see what happened. The next day they met in Regino's garden and silently waited as he began to read. Suddenly [139] someone pointed to the sky. Instantly all heads swiveled in the same direction. To their astonishment they saw a beautiful white dove fluttering and wheeling over the old man's head. No one could explain the bird's actions. They could only agree with Balaois's idea that the power that sent the dove to the garden must approve of their reading the book.

"We must see what the book teaches," the people of Famyi agreed among themselves. Daily the neighbors came to Regino's garden and listened to him or another man read from *The Great Controversy.*

One day as Regino Balaois sat alone reading the book, the dove appeared again. No one had seen it for a while. Suddenly the bird spoke. "Keep the Sabbath," it commanded.

Instantly he knew what the creature meant—Saturday, the seventh-day Sabbath. He had read about it in the book. Still surprised by the dove's latest strange deed, Regino summoned his neighbors and told them what had happened, that he believed that God had commanded through the bird that they keep the Sabbath described in *The Great Controversy.*

God had a reason for using the dove. Most of the people of the Philippines are Roman Catholic. They believe in miracles and are greatly impressed when they think they see one. Knowing the impact the dove's actions would have on the villagers of Famyi, God sent it to begin to break the hold of the Catholic Church on the people's minds. It was the best way of breaking through their superstitions. The miracle of the dove created an interest in the teachings of *The* [140] *Great Controversy* and emphasized their importance. The bird's command helped them to believe in the Sabbath and to have the courage to obey.

Balaois and his friends did not know of a single group that followed the beliefs found in Mrs. White's book. They decided to form a church of their own and call it the Church of the Pure Religion. The little group agreed it was a good idea, but one person pointed out that they needed to be baptized. "But who will do it?" another asked.

After discussing the problem among themselves for a while, they decided that Balaois would baptize the man who had helped him read to the villagers. The neighbor, in turn, would baptize Balaois. Then both would baptize the others. The little church had nineteen members. The next time Reuben Balosteros, the colporteur, passed through the area, he visited the group and called in an ordained minister. The minister organized Balaois and his neighbors into the first Seventh-day Adventist church in the region.

Another miracle connected with the sale of a copy of *The Great Controversy* took place near Cordelia, California. An Adventist selling door to door sold an English copy of the book to a Catholic Italian immigrant farmer named Oberti. Although Oberti had learned to speak some English, he could not read the language. Oddly, knowing that he couldn't read the book, he still accepted the delivered copy and paid for it. Oberti put *The Great Controversy* on a shelf in the kitchen of his little cabin and returned to work in his cherry orchard.
[141] After dinner that evening he remembered the book. Deciding to look at the pictures, he took it down from the kitchen shelf and opened it. Turning to the frontispiece, he studied it, then flipped past the title page, the publishers' preface, the introduction, the table of contents, and the list of illustrations, and finally came to the beginning of chapter one. Forgetting that the book was in English, he read the first page and continued on to the next. Suddenly he realized that he understood the English words. Interested in what Mrs. White had to say, he continued reading until he finished the chapter. He went to the second chapter and before many days finished the entire book. God had given him the ability to read the English language.

The ideas Oberti found in the book remained in his mind, and he accepted the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and joined it. He served as an officer in his local church for many years. In addition, from the day he first started reading *The Great Controversy* until the end of his life he could read English.

Mrs. White knew the impact her book could have on people. It could reach people who could not be contacted in any other way. The Holy Spirit influenced those who read, convincing them of the truth of what they found. "By reading it, some souls will be aroused, and will have courage to unite themselves at once with those who keep the commandments of God," she wrote in Colporteur Ministry, 128.

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Chapter 19—The Bushman's Story

Not all of the stories about people influenced or converted center around *The Great Controversy, The Desire of Ages, Steps to Christ,* or her other books written for the non-Adventist public. One account tells how the *Testimonies for the Church,* a nine-volume collection of articles, pamphlets, and letters of instruction written for Adventists, helped in the conversion of an African Bushman.

The South African Bushmen live in the remote wastes of the Kalahari Desert of Botswana (then known as Bechuanaland). Rejecting modern civilization, they have constantly fled the presence of both other African tribes and the white man. Today, driven out of much of their former homeland, they roam the rolling, sandy desert searching for food. Many scientists fear the Bushmen will soon die out.

Unrelated to the Bantus, a main African race of people, the Bushmen stand only about five feet tall when full grown. Their yel-
[144] lowish-brown skin wrinkles easily, making them look old at an early age. Wearing only simple skin garments and decoratively scarring their bodies, the people wander the Kalahari Desert collecting roots, fruits, and nuts, and hunting the small animals that live in the dry region. Christianity has made little progress among the tiny family groups and bands of Bushmen.

Sekuba and the other members of his family crawled into their crude semicircular hut of grass and twigs one cold night in 1953. The desert always cools rapidly after sunset, and in the winter the Bushmen suffer much from the cold. As Sekuba dropped off to sleep, he pulled his bow and quiver of poisoned arrows close beside him. He slept prepared for any emergency. He had to. Life on the desert was a constant struggle. To survive, the Bushmen had to learn much about their desert home. The Bantu and the white man might consider them ignorant savages, but the little desert people had great intelligence and knowledge. They knew the desert's many secrets—where to find wild ostrich eggs, how to suck the moisture

out of the sand, what plants would give them poison to tip their hunting arrows, and where the watery tsama melons grew after the flash floods moistened their seeds. The Bushmen knew how to live in a world where other men would have died.

Stirring in his sleep beneath the hard glintings of the winter stars, Sekuba dreamed a strange dream. The next morning he tried to describe it to his wife and family, but they could not explain the meaning of the shining being who spoke from the strange fire that hid him by its great brightness. Why had the being told Sekuba to journey east and find the people of the "Book"? And the other books [145] the voice talked about—what were they? Sekuba's family could not help him understand. They only knew it was an important dream.

Sekuba felt he must begin his journey east immediately. His sense of urgency baffled the others. They could see only the problems he would face as he traveled across the lonely desert. "How will you talk to these people of the 'Book'?" one challenged him as he gathered his few belongings.

He related his dream again. "The 'Book' talks," he answered, not knowing how, but only that it did. "The 'shining one' taught me the words of the 'Book.' I understand them. I will know what it says to me." The little family protested no more. Somehow they shared the wonder of the dream, and hunting food as they went, they walked toward the eastern border of Bechuanaland.

Leaving the more barren part of the desert behind, Sekuba and his relatives met a few scattered Bushmen who had contact with the Bantu tribes. Sekuba decided to leave his family near the less isolated Bushmen. He told his wife that he would return after he found the people with the "Book." Carrying only his kaross (a skin blanket made from the hide of a springbok), a handful of biltong (dried meat), and his bow and arrows, he journeyed on alone.

The Bushman had come about 150 miles from the place where he had seen his strange dream when he saw a Bantu farming village shimmering in the African heat. It belonged to the Bamangwato tribe. His fear of strangers fought within him as he approached the [146] scattered huts.

A Bantu man saw Sekuba, and his face filled with surprise and fear as he watched the little man come across the dusty plain. The late afternoon sun tinted everything a reddish hue. He knew that the

Bushman could be dangerous at times, but the one approaching did not touch his arrows in his quiver or show any other signs of hostility. In fact, he seemed rather shy, even if he did have the courage to come into a Bantu village. The Bantu man decided not to run for help.

Sekuba paused in front of the villager and waited for him to speak.

"I see you," the Bantu said, greeting the Bushman according to African custom.

Returning the greeting, Sekuba asked, "Where will I find the people with the 'Book'?"

The other man stood in amazed silence for a moment. When he did not answer, the Bushman continued, "I have come to find the people who worship God."

"You speak our language!" the Bantu farmer finally blurted. Few Bushmen spoke a language other than their own.

"The 'shining one' taught me," Sekuba replied briefly. Seeing the puzzlement on the Bantu's face, he quickly told him about the vision that had come to him in the desert. "Can you take me to one who can teach me more about the 'Book'?" he added.

"This is marvelous." The Bantu continued to stare at the brown-
[147] ish-skinned man. "I will take you to our pastor." Entering his hut, the Bantu told his family about the strange little man who had come out of the desert seeking a minister. They came outside to see the Bushman who claimed to have learned Tswana from a supernatural being.

Then the Bantu and Sekuba followed a dusty path toward some more scattered huts. Villagers appeared and clustered about them, curious about the Bushman. Sekuba's guide paused to tell them how the desert dweller spoke their language. Some of the Bantus followed the two toward the minister's house. Several people tried to tell Sekuba's story at the same time.

The native minister raised his hand for silence. "These seek to speak for you," he said to the little man, "but I would like you to tell me yourself."

Taking his chair out of the house, the Bantu minister sat down in front of the others. His black suit and white clerical collar gave

him dignity and respect in the eyes of the assembled villagers, who squatted on the ground in front of him.

Proudly and happily Sekuba stood before the native pastor. His long journey across the Kalahari had apparently ended in success. In fluent Tswana he told him of the bright being who had come to him in a dream and told him to seek the people of the "Book." The villagers listened in solemn awe. As he finished his story, he asked, "Have I found the people who worship God—who have the 'Book'?"

In reply, the minister went into his little house and returned carrying a Bible. Sekuba instantly recognized it. "That's it!" he [148] exclaimed, bowing his head and clapping his hands softly. "That is the 'Book.'"

"Your journey has ended," the native pastor exclaimed. "You shall stay with me tonight."

After the pastor led the group in prayer, the Africans—still marveling at Sekuba's strange story—wandered off to their huts.

The pastor lent the Bushman a sleeping mat and said he could sleep on the floor of the little hut used for cooking. He ordered his servant to prepare a meal for Sekuba. His stomach full after the lean days of desert travel, Sekuba went to sleep, content that he had found the object of his search. In a few days he could go after his family.

During the night he received another vision. The "shining one"—an angel—came again. "This is not the true church," he said, to Sekuba's surprise. "You must continue your search. You must find the Sabbathkeeping church and ask for Pastor Moyo. He will not only have the 'Book,' but also the four brown books that are really nine." Sekuba had forgotten to ask the pastor about them.

The next morning Sekuba arose early and patiently waited until the Bantu pastor emerged from the shadowy interior of his house. "I must leave you," the Bushman said politely. "I cannot stay here. The 'shining one' came in the night and told me to find a people who keep the seventh day as Sabbath."

Startled, the pastor did not know what to say. "This is the chief's church," he finally managed to sputter. "Would the chief be wrong? [149] You have not understood the shining one. He did not tell you to seek another church," the minister argued irritably.

"Sir, I understood the shining one correctly. He showed me plainly what I must do. There are people who worship God on the seventh day. Please tell me where I may find them."

The pastor became furious. Loudly he threatened the tiny man. Hearing angry voices, the neighbors began streaming from their homes to see what was happening. Haranguing the villagers, the pastor turned them against the Bushman. Hostility welled up in the people's minds and faces. They felt insulted because a desert savage had rejected their church. "The shining one told me to find the seventh-day church," Sekuba repeated each time he had a chance to speak in his defense. But the angry people ignored his words.

As the argument around Sekuba continued, the Bantus became offended. They feared the Bushmen, yet looked down on them as inferior. They took Sekuba's wish to find another church as an injury against their chief's honor. Somehow they had to avenge their hurt tribal pride. At first they hurled abuse and ridicule on him. When Sekuba persisted in wanting to know where to locate the Sabbath observers, the mob placed him under arrest for defying the authority of the chief's church. The angry villagers hustled their prisoner aboard a truck and rode the forty miles to Serowe, capital of the Bamangwato tribe. There they dragged the defenseless man before the chief.

[150] In the Kalahari he would have instantly killed anyone who threatened him. Now he stood before the unfriendly tribesmen's leader in the native court outside Serowe and listened to the charges made against him. The awe and power of his two visions still ruled his life. When the tribal leader demanded to know if the native pastor's claims were true, he answered that he had only asked for help to find the church that worshiped on the seventh day. He did not know much about the God who had sent the glowing being to speak to him, Sekuba continued, but he did know as long as he lived he would do what the dream had told him.

The chief recognized that Sekuba was talking about the Sabbath doctrine. He knew that the Bushman wanted to find the Seventh-day Adventists. The Bantu ruler's wife was one, so he knew about their beliefs. Not wanting the desert man's story to spread around and bring people's attention to the Adventists at the expense of his own church, the chief told Sekuba to be quiet. Sekuba refused. Again

he stated he would obey and tell about his dreams as long as he had life.

A sizable crowd had gathered around the open-air court. The villagers who had brought Sekuba to Serowe had circulated among the Africans, turning the people against the Bushman. They feared the strange, secretive Bushmen and saw a chance to get revenge on one. Soon the mob began to get out of control. The chief wanted to make a decision on how to punish Sekuba. If the mob attacked Sekuba, the chief would lose prestige. He did not want that to happen. To prevent it, he decided to take the case to the district commissioner. At least then he would be making some kind of [151] decision himself. It would be better than letting the mob take over.

The district commissioner, a European employed by the colonial government, patiently heard the details. He understood the reasons behind the Bantus' actions. Not seeing any particular need to offend them, at first he threatened Sekuba also, warning him he would be punished for disturbing the peace. The Bushman did not change his story under the pressure. He continually repeated his desire to obey the visions and find the Sabbathkeepers. Never once did he get tangled up in the details of his story. The fact that Sekuba could speak a language other than his own amazed the district commissioner enough, but that the uneducated native could logically cling to his tale of the angel's visits astounded him even more. A feeling almost of awe crept over the white man.

The commissioner mulled the case over in his mind. Sekuba had not committed any crime. In fact, he rather respected the courtesy and courage of the little Bushman who had the rare ability among his race of speaking fluent Tswana. Turning to the waiting Africans, he studied them a moment. They still milled angrily about. His gaze shifted to Sekuba's face. The crowd became silent as it sensed that the commissioner was about to pronounce judgment.

"You have committed no crime," he addressed Sekuba. "You are free to go tell anyone you want to of your faith." The white man signaled for the crowd to return to their homes, and Sekuba resumed his search undisturbed.

Darkness found the Bushman alone in the dry wilderness outside Serowe. He rested a moment, wondering what he should do next. [152] The angel in the dream had told him to find Pastor Moyo. But where

did the man live? Sekuba had no idea which way he should go. So far he had not prospered too well. He had nearly gotten into trouble. He had to find someone to help him. Perhaps, the Bushman thought, the shining one would come again if he asked him to. He had never talked to the great God before, but he would try. Alone in the desert he talked to the God whom he knew little about and whom he could not see—unlike the moon and stars his people normally worshiped. Sekuba prayed that God would direct him, would send him some kind of sign. Finishing his prayer, he curled up beneath a scrub bush and dropped off into confident sleep.

In the light of dawn he saw on the horizon a small cloud. Such a thing being rare in the dry, clear air of the semiarid country bordering the Kalahari, he accepted it as his sign. Gathering up his few possessions, he prepared to follow the cloud. He glanced at the sky. The sun would soon be high in the sky, searing anyone who ventured to walk abroad, but the heat did not bother Sekuba. He was used to it, and besides, he no longer wore only his loincloth. In Serowe he had picked up some European-style clothes.

Each day the cloud hovered in the northeast. For seven days and a distance of 118 miles he used it as a guide. At the end of his week of journeying he noticed buildings in the distance. They belonged to Tsessebe, a little settlement huddled beside the railroad running from the Congo to the city of Cape Town. The border of
[153] Bechuanaland and Southern Rhodesia was not far away.

The cloud disappeared, and Sekuba knew that he would find his goal in the railroad town. Since it was late in the day—almost sunset—he decided to spend the night outside the town rather than try to reach it after dark. He felt more secure and comfortable in the semidesert around the town.

Walking toward Tsessebe, Sekuba met a Bantu. Sekuba had his kaross draped over his quiver of arrows, and he wore European clothing. The Bantu did not recognize that the little brownish man was a Bushman, especially since Sekuba spoke Tswana. The Bantu gave him directions and continued on his way. Had he known Sekuba's identity, his fear and distrust of Bushmen would have turned him against the little desert dweller.

Sekuba found Pastor Moyo's house and tapped on the door. When the minister came to the door, he greeted him with *"Dumel-*

ong," the Tswana expression for "Good morning." His kaross slipped off his shoulder, revealing his quiver of arrows and startling the Adventist pastor. He invited the Bushman inside. Using his ability to speak fluent Tswana, Sekuba again told of his dreams and the teachings of the shining one. "He commanded me to find the people with the 'Book' who worship on the seventh-day Sabbath," he concluded.

Moyo went to a crude shelf on one wall and returned with his own Bible. "That is it," his visitor nodded, but he remembered something else the angel had told him to look for. "Where are the four books that are really nine?" Instinctively the pastor reached for the four brown volumes of his set of *Testimonies for the Church.* Happiness [154] covered the Bushman's wrinkled face. "Yes," he exclaimed, "you belong to the people."

All day the two talked together, Pastor Moyo explaining to Sekuba the great themes and doctrines of the Bible. He helped the Bushman understand a little about the God who had sent His angel to teach him how to read and write in the Tswana language and to tell him to find the Seventh-day Adventists. The pastor read to him about Christ, how He came as an infant to save the world, and how He would come a second time to take His followers to a faraway place called heaven.

Although Sekuba's miracle awed the Adventist minister, fear and distrust of all Bushmen lurked in his mind. He had grown up sharing the attitude of almost all Bantus who had met or who knew about the strange people of the Kalahari Desert. God knew that He must help Moyo overcome his suspicion. He sent the pastor a dream. In it he saw a text—Ezekiel 36:8. Awakening, he got up, lighted a candle, and flipped open his Bible. Locating the verse, Pastor Moyo read, "But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall shoot forth your branches, and yield your fruit to my people of Israel; for they are at hand to come." He understood what God wanted him to know. His fear of the Bushmen vanished. God knew that the Bushmen were ready to accept the Bible, and He wanted Pastor Moyo to help them.

Sekuba studied the Bible with the Seventh-day Adventist pastor for two weeks. Then he decided he must return to his own people and tell them what he had learned. Before he left, he made Moyo [155] promise that he would come and teach the Bushmen more.

Instead of returning to his nomadic life in the Kalahari Desert, Sekuba decided to live in the Nata crown lands, government-owned territory outside the areas where the various Bantu tribes lived. He was tired of the hazardous life of the desert hunters. With those willing to join him, he would start a new, more highly civilized life, one in which they would not have to move every few days or weeks to find food and water.

After Sekuba and his family had settled down as farmers, Pastor Moyo traveled to their new home by bicycle. His first visit lasted a week despite the fact that he had to go to a nearby trading post to buy his food. Besides Sekuba's family, he taught a number of Bushmen who had also taken up farming and who lived near Sekuba.

Sekuba grasped the teachings of the Bible. A few months later—in 1954—Pastor Daniel Mogegeh baptized him. The next year, his wife, brother, and sister accepted the rite of baptism. The Bushmen learned the Bible well. Their tradition of passing memorized stories and myths about their gods and ancestors down from generation to generation enabled the new Christians to remember long Scripture passages. Bushmen are intelligent people. They have to be to survive in the harsh environment of the Kalahari Desert. Their keen minds have learned to recognize every source of food and water.

Sekuba never lost his ability to speak, read, and write in the
[156] Tswana language. The Seventh-day Adventist Church ordained him as elder, evangelist, and pastor of the first Bushman church. Because of their harsh life, Bushmen do not live long. Sekuba died in 1957, only four years after his visions. But before his death he saw ten more members of his tribe baptized into the Adventist Church. Today at least fifty Bushmen have joined the church.

In his search for the people with the four books that were really nine, Sekuba had unconsciously recognized one of the important traits of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. God has given it the gift of prophecy, which invites all men to accept Jesus and follow Him to heaven.