The World of Ellen G. White

Gary Land

The World of Ellen G. White

Ellen G. White

Information about this Book

Overview

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

About the Author

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

Further Links

A Brief Biography of Ellen G. White
About the Ellen G. White Estate

End User License Agreement

Further Information

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

Contents

Gary Land
Editor

Contributors Jonathan Butler, Randall R. Butler II, Jerome L. Clark, Delmer Davis, Alwyn Fraser, Gerald G. Herdman, Frederick Hoyt, George R. Knight, Gary Land, Benjamin McArthur, Norman K. Miles, Dennis Pettibone, Rennie B. Schoepflin, Carlos A. Schwantes.

Contributors

Jonathan Butler has served in the Religion Department and the History Department at Union College and Loma Linda University. He is currently pursuing research in Seventh-day Adventist history under a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Randall G. Butler has taught history at Andrews University; he is currently an archivist at Loma Linda University.

Jerome L. Clark taught for many years in the History Department at Southern College of Seventh-day Adventists; he is presently pursuing a degree in library science. He is the author of the three-volume *1844* (Southern Publishing Association).

Delmer Davis teaches English at Andrews University, where he serves as chairman of the department.

Alwyn Fraser serves as chairman of the History Department at Atlantic Union College.

Gerald G. Herdman is chairman of the History Department at Andrews University.

Frederick Hoyt is professor of history at Loma Linda University; he has served as chairman of the History Department.

George R. Knight has taught in the School of Education at Andrews University and currently is in the Church History Department of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. He recently wrote *Myths in Adventism* (Review and Herald Publishing Association).

Gary Land teaches in the History Department of Andrews University and serves as an editor of *Adventist Heritage.* He recently edited *Adventism in America* (William B. Eerdmans).

Benjamin McArthur teaches in the History Department of Southern College. He wrote *Actors and American Culture, 1880-1920* (Temple University Press).

Norman Miles teaches in the Church History Department and the Christian Ministry Department of the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University.

Dennis Pettibone is a teacher in a junior academy in Colorado; he wrote his Ph.D. dissertation on the history of the Sunday law movement.

Rennie B. Schoepflin teaches in the History Department of Loma Linda University.

Carlos Schwantes taught for several years in the History Department at Walla Walla College; he is now at the University of Idaho. His most recent book is *Coxey's Army: An American Odyssey* (University of Nebraska Press).

Preface

More than 70 years have passed since Ellen White died. The world of the late twentieth century is very different from her nineteenth- and early twentieth-century milieu. Even so, America probably changed in more fundamental ways between the time she was born (in 1827) and the time of her death (in 1915) than it has since. Because of the differences between our own time and hers and those during her own age, we often have little knowledge or understanding of the society within which she lived and wrote.

This volume of short, descriptive essays attempts to provide the essential historical background for understanding Ellen White's writings. Although a general history of the United States during Mrs. White's lifetime would have provided some of this information, we have chosen to explore selected elements of the past that were either of significance to this shaper of Adventism or place her concerns within the context of the larger society. Thus the writers respectively address such subjects as eating and drinking habits, travel conditions, and entertainment, among other things. One chapter looks at Australia during the period that Ellen White lived there.

It is hoped that the themes of her work will take on increased meaning as this social background is sketched in. For those who are interested, the authors have suggested readings in both Ellen White's writings and standard historical accounts.

Finally, a word about what this book is not. First, Ellen White is not the subject of this volume; hence, she appears only occasionally in these pages. Second, these essays do not address the critical interpretive questions regarding Ellen White's relationship to her milieu. Instead, they have the more limited task of simply establishing the nature of the milieu itself.

Third, with some notable exceptions—the chapters on Portland; Michigan during the Civil War; the Sunday law movement; and, to a lesser extent, the overland railroad—the authors do not provide

information new to the scholarly world. Rather, they attempt to synthesize present historical scholarship for a more general audience.

It is the belief of the writers of these essays that historical knowledge is essential to understanding the present. Thus, awareness of our denomination's history is necessary to anyone seeking to understand its current situation. The church and Ellen White did not develop in a vacuum. In the next several pages you will discover what the world of early Seventh-day Adventism, particularly that of its prophet Ellen G. White, was like.

Chapter 1—Ellen White's Hometown: Portland, Maine, 1827-1846

Frederick Hoyt

In March 1840, William Miller visited Portland, Maine, and gave a course of lectures on the second coming of Christ. These lectures produced a great sensation, and the Christian church on Casco Street, where the discourses were given, was crowded day and night.... In company with my friends, I attended these meetings.

—Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 20.

Portland, Maine, where Ellen Harmon lived during her childhood and youth, is a beautifully situated city today; it must have been even more striking in the early decades of the last century, before the onset of urban sprawl. "This city is regularly laid out," an article in the *London Illustrated News* declared in 1859, "and handsomely built; its streets are broad, and most of them are lined with elms and other shade trees, which in the summer season give it the appearance of a city amid a forest."

"In many particulars your charming city stands unrivaled," a visitor to Portland (who identified himself only as T.H.P.) declared in a letter to the Portland *Eastern Argus* in May 1846. He was particularly impressed by its "airy and elevated position, the width and cleanliness of its streets," its "architectural beauty," and the many attractive "yards, small gardens, and ornamental trees." Portland's "safe, excellent, and capacious harbour ... studded with numerous pleasant islands" merited his praise.

His commendatory comments were also extended to the residents of Portland. They "gave evidence of order, dignity, and civility in the males, and of propriety of dress and manner, and ladylike deportment, in the females." He saw only a few "dandies and loafers," and no "street beggars" or "cases of intoxication."

This visitor believed that the "health and salubrity of [Portland's] climate" would "compare with any other in the Union."

Had his visit occurred during the winter, he might well have had less generous praise for her climate, which could then be extremely harsh. Temperatures well below zero were not uncommon (on February 1, 1826, the thermometer reached a record 24 degrees below). The harbor usually was frozen over for days or even weeks during the winter, sometimes so solidly that men could walk across the ice to the islands in Casco Bay. When ice prevented ship movements, heavy snow usually made for ideal sleighing conditions ashore.

Although Portland was a busy commercial seaport and the largest city in Maine, some aspects of her daily life indicate that she was essentially an overgrown country town. This is evidenced by the regular newspaper advertisements concerning livestock. Strayed, stolen, or lost horses were often the subject of such ads, with rewards routinely offered. But mainly it was cows that made Portland's paper—cows of all sorts, sizes, colors, conditions, and ages. These were strayed cows, stolen cows, found cows, and impounded cows. Uncounted hundreds of them must have made their home within the city limits.

Tracing her history back to early Colonial times, Portland was a proud American city that had supported the patriot cause during the Revolution and had paid dearly for this stand when the British burned the city (then called Falmouth) on October 18, 1775. Fourth of July gave Portlanders the opportunity to remember the Revolution and demonstrate their patriotism; that is, unless the Fourth came on a Sunday, in which case religious scruples operated and the celebration was postponed until Monday.

The essential ingredients for a proper Fourth of July celebration were standard: the lengthy ringing of church bells and the firing of a salute by cannon at sunrise, noon, and sunset; picnics, with lots of food and drink (largely nonalcoholic after the temperance crusades hit the city in the 1830s); parades, with much band music, usually ended at a church for prayers, patriotic orations, and the mandatory reading of the Declaration of Independence; and, of course, fireworks in the evening.

With a population of 12,601 in the census of 1830, and 15,218 in 1840, it is obvious that Portland was a rapidly growing city. For

that era, such a population placed her among important cities of [15] medium size, exceeding in population, for example, New Haven and Hartford, Connecticut; and Savannah, Georgia.

The city government of Portland was impressively organized to meet the needs of her citizens. Annual elections were held in April with eligible voters (adult males only, of course) casting written ballots to select a mayor at large and an alderman and three councilmen in each of the seven wards. The board of aldermen and the board of common councilmen, meeting together with the mayor presiding, constituted the city council of Portland, Maine.

One of the duties of the city council was to select the numerous city officials (more than 200 in 1844), who carried out a great variety of detailed and complex duties required for the proper functioning of a dynamic seaport. These officials ranged from the customary city clerk, treasurer, assessors, constable, marshal, and solicitor to the superintendent of clocks, ringer of city bells, and keeper of the powder magazine. Others were members of committees, such as the 16 on the school committee, seven overseers of the house of correction, and the nine overseers of the poor. Still others were members of bodies whose duties were related to specific specialized activities, such as the seven surveyors of hardwood, 14 cullers of hoops and staffs, seven surveyors of masts and spars, and six cullers of dry fish.

A number of joint standing committees were regularly organized by the city council. In 1844 these included committees on accounts; public buildings; new streets; highways, sidewalks, and bridges; bells and clocks; burying grounds; finance; engrossed ordinances; and the fish market. Their composition typically was an alderman and three councilmen; three had two aldermen and three councilmen. The mayor was a member of three committees.

All city officials, both elected and appointed, were apparently adult white males. No woman's name ever appeared in newspaper reports of such offices. Nor did any of Portland's Negroes apparently ever hold public office. From 1820, however, when Maine had separated from Massachusetts, there had been no suffrage restrictions against adult male Negroes who were citizens and residents.

Such an extensive government structure was obviously costly to support. In 1842, for example, the city budget totaled $32,550.21.

The heaviest expenditures were for local schools ($8,883.32): inter-
[16] est on the city debt ($5,128); "Support of the Poor" ($4,000); streets,
sidewalks, and bridges ($3,000); salaries of city officials ($2,810);
the city watch ($1,520.50); and the fire department ($1,045).

Portland was proud of its progressive public school system,
which offered free education for "scholars" between 4 and 21 years
of age. The system began with primary schools, which a student
normally entered at 4 years of age. There were eight of these schools
in 1838, all taught by women, and with women principal-teachers.

Next were four grammar, or "monitorial," schools—two for girls,
with women administrators and teachers; and two for boys, staffed
by men. Admission was by periodic public examination conducted
by the teachers, emphasizing reading, spelling, penmanship, and
arithmetic skills. No minimum age was indicated.

The capstone for the public or free school system was the English
high school for young men. Entrance was by public examination
conducted by the Portland school committee. Its curriculum was
impressive: reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, geography, En-
glish grammar, natural philosophy, bookkeeping, algebra, geometry,
surveying, Latin, Greek, history, and chemistry.

Portland had no college; but prestigious Bowdoin College, sit-
uated in nearby Brunswick, had been established in 1794. It also
operated Maine's only medical school. College training, naturally,
was only for young men. The education of girls ended with grammar
school—unless they attended one of the many private schools in the
city or patronized itinerant teachers.

Free public schooling was provided for Portland's sizable Black
population, principally in a single, segregated, Colored primary
school. For those Blacks who qualified for further schooling, two
approaches operated at different times: grammar school subjects
were added to the curriculum of the Colored public school, or quali-
fied students (apparently always boys) were allowed into one of the
grammar schools or the English high school. The Colored school was
the source of endless trouble for the school committee, especially
when its single teacher-principal was ineffective or controversial.
Lack of support for the school by the Colored population even led
to its closing in 1835.

Advertisements in Portland's newspapers offered instruction in a variety of private schools. Especially popular were seminaries or academies for young ladies. Such "finishing schools" obviously attempted to meet the needs of girls whose education in the local public schools ended with the grammar school. Other private schools for boys, or sometimes for both sexes, were apparently intended to serve those who found the public schools wanting in some respect.

A variety of specialized instruction was regularly offered to Portland residents, including penmanship (in several different systems), foreign languages (especially French), and bookkeeping. Music instruction was always available, especially vocal and choral. Instruction in dancing was offered, including the latest dances, such as the polka and the waltz from decadent Europe. There was even instruction available in horse riding for ladies, self-defense for men, and navigation for those thinking of a career at sea.

Although Portland was usually a placid, industrious, law-abiding city, misdemeanor and criminal conduct were occasionally mentioned in the press. There was a local jail and house of correction, and the state prison was not far away.

The most common law-and-order problem that reached the newspapers concerned runaway apprentice boys. Advertisements offering rewards and describing such defectors from the labor system were routine, both for hometown boys and for those from other parts of Maine. Undoubtedly many of them found their way aboard ships in Portland or other nearby harbors, where few if any questions would be asked.

Ordinary fights were not usually reported, but major episodes involving large numbers, and usually in the city's waterfront area, did reach the papers. Sometimes such fracases involved more than fists. According to the *Eastern Argus,* during a "rough and tumble" fight in "the lower part of the city" on May 5, 1840, "the 'bowie-knife' gleamed and the pistol showed its ugly phiz."

Thievery covered a variety of items from horses and sleighs, cows, jewelry, clothing, and groceries to the unusual, such as the stealing of the bell ropes from the First Parish Church in 1845. Often the only record of such crimes is to be found in newspaper ads offering rewards for the apprehension of the culprits; for example, the $10 offered by the above church.

In other instances the offenses can only be categorized as vandalism. All too often such activities were directed against local public schools, such as a series of incidents in 1835 that prompted the school committee to post a $25 reward.

But the largest reward advertised was in 1843 when the city council offered $500 (a fortune for that day) for the apprehension and conviction of whoever had committed an "atrocious deed." James Henley, an "infirm and aged inhabitant," had died after he had been "most deadly assaulted, wounded, maimed, and robbed of money by some person or persons unknown ..." Unfortunately, there is no record that this reward was ever collected.

Some offenders were juveniles, of both sexes, and sometimes very young. Thievery, destruction of property, drunkenness, trespassing, and vandalism of various sorts were noted by local newspapers, commonly with the names of the youthful offenders. But it was delinquency of another sort that provoked the *Eastern Argus* in November 1838 to an angry editorial outburst, headed "Bad Boys!": "A boy about 8 or 10 years of age threw a stone at another boy ... knocking him down, and leaving him senseless ... [and] seriously injured." An indignant editor declared that Portland needed nothing "so much as a *house of correction* for juvenile offenders," where such "desperate ruffians" could "be caught up, and reformed ..."

Portland's city council concerned itself with a variety of ordinances related to public order, ranging from prohibition against cigar and pipe smoking in city streets to violation of "Sabbath" (Sunday) closing laws for stores. But a serious recurring problem was created by fast driving or riding of horses through the streets, a "common practice" that created "great danger."

A city jail, which had been built in 1797, apparently housed offenders of all ages for short terms or until they were brought to trial. Then transfers were effected either to the local house of correction (which shared a campus with the poorhouse) or to the state prison. The warden's 1843 report for this prison reveals the types of crimes committed in Maine: larceny (39 of the 63 prisoners as of December 31, 1843); arson (5); assault to ravish (4); burglary (3); two each for adultery, passing counterfeit money, and forgery; and one each for murder with sentence commuted, murder awaiting sentence of death, manslaughter, assault to kill, perjury, and malicious mischief.

It is clear from even a casual reading of Portland's newspaper that wealth was not equally distributed in the city and that the poor were always present. Those who were unable to care for themselves were helped by a combination of uncoordinated private individual and institutional assistance, largely centered in the churches, and public aid, principally the almshouse, plus indeterminate individual begging, scavenging, and thieving.

In 1835 Portland's almshouse contained some 80 inmates of all ages, both Black and White, including children. Families were separated, but at least a school was provided for the children, taught by one of the men. The men were employed on the farm, in the brickyard, and in several shops; the women in domestic activities. Children were "bound out" as apprentices when old enough. The overseers of the poor consistently indicted intemperance as the fundamental causative factor for these people being in the almshouse and the house of correction, housed in the same three-story brick building on the outskirts of the city.

The term *almshouse* for this institution is deceptive. A careful reading of periodic reports and newspaper accounts on its activities reveals that it was a workhouse, an insane asylum, a refuge for the feeble-minded, an alcoholic institute, a jail, a hospital, a ward for the dying, a juvenile hall, a trade school, and a source of apprentices for the local labor market.

Prominent among private charitable organizations was the Widows' Wood Society, which provided firewood during winter months for the widows and the fatherless. The *Eastern Argus* believed that no other charitable group in the city "was regarded with more general favor." Other needs of this unfortunate group were met by the city's oldest charitable organization, the Portland Benevolent Society.

Another private charitable institution was the Female Orphan Asylum, which had been organized in 1828. By 1844 it was caring for 25 girls; but older girls were regularly "bound out to service," thus making room for new inmates. Inexplicably, there was no comparable institution for orphan boys.

Other groups were concerned with the welfare of Portland's needy women: the Female Charitable Society, which emphasized help in sickness and in providing clothes for needy families; and the Portland Society for the Employment of Poor Females, which

[20] functioned as an employment clearinghouse. Then, of course, there were the regular but difficult-to-document activities of Portland's women in local Dorcas societies and similar church groups.

Maine joined the United States in 1820 as a free state under terms of the famous Missouri Compromise, so she never knew slavery as an institution. But she did have a significant Negro population, numbering 1,355 (with more than half designated "mulatto"), according to the census of 1840.

The issue of slavery, however, was of continuing interest and concern to Maine and to residents of Portland. Heavy coverage of the topic was provided in local newspapers, and speakers often came to the city for lectures, including those from the South who defended the "peculiar institution."

Portland was firmly antislavery, but not necessarily supportive of abolitionists. The largest meeting ever held in Portland met in the city hall in August 1835 to hear seven speakers oppose abolitionism. In succeeding years a number of leading abolitionists visited Portland, including James G. Birney, presidential candidate of the Liberty Party in 1840 and 1844; Frederick Douglass, a fugitive slave; and William Lloyd Garrison, editor of *The Liberator*. But by October 1844 the abolitionists had so disgusted the citizens of Portland by their attacks on the government that this "unprincipled sect," as the *Advertiser* termed them, was denied use of city hall by the mayor and the city council.

Despite this concern with the abolitionists, Portland's Black community did not have high visibility in local newspapers. Infrequent notices commonly referred to the Abyssinian church, the public Colored school, or a Black resident who had gotten into trouble.

Merely scanning Portland's daily newspapers for the years of Ellen Harmon's childhood and youth quickly reveals that religion constituted an important element in the life of this city. There are references in 1846 to an impressive number and variety of churches, from the expected Baptist, Methodist, and Congregational churches to a Roman Catholic church, a Friends chapel, a seamen's chapel, an Abyssinian church for Blacks, and even a "Second Advent" congregation of Millerites.

[21] Portland's churches were active in a variety of charitable and benevolent endeavors. Sunday schools were mentioned, but there

were apparently no parochial schools. References to seminaries in advertisements and news items concerned private secondary schools and not religiously oriented or controlled institutions.

Some of the churches also sponsored cultural affairs in their sanctuaries. These included lectures on secular topics, sometimes by visiting speakers of considerable prominence. Church buildings were also used for sacred concerts of serious classical music (Haydn's *Creation* and Handel's *Messiah* were favorites offered by the Portland Sacred Music Society).

The pervasive impact of Portland's churches on public affairs is obvious. Various temperance organizations commonly held their meetings in churches with local or visiting clergymen as speakers. Surprisingly enough, no church as such became involved in the abolitionist controversy—not even the local Abyssinian church, which served Portland's Blacks. Strict regulation of Sunday activities and the virtual elimination of Sunday business undoubtedly had the support of local churches. There were also state-mandated "holy days" for Maine, formally proclaimed by the governor: Thanksgiving in November; a Day of Public Humiliation, Fasting, and Prayer in April; and the Fourth of July ("Our National Sabbath").

Of all religious topics reported by Portland's press during the years 1837 to 1846, Millerism received the most extensive coverage (with Mormonism a close contender). Although Millerites and Second Adventists may well have considered it a "bad press," they certainly could not have claimed that they were ignored by local editors.

During this period the religious world of Maine was clearly a man's world. Women's names did not appear in relation to any activities of established churches, but they did appear in newspapers when Millerism and Second Adventism were mentioned. Departures from accepted norms were unwelcome, whether these deviations were in doctrine, in worship modes, or in leadership style—and especially so, it appears, if women assumed any public religious role.

Women predominated in Portland, according to census figures, but few of them were ever mentioned in local newspapers. The most common appearance of women's names in Portland newspapers was in notices by husbands regarding missing wives. Only rarely did

[22] abandoned wives advertise concerning wandering husbands—and then usually to warn other women about them.

Portland audiences did occasionally hear a woman speak in public—usually when a daring "outsider" came to town. When a Mrs. S. C. Redlon delivered a series of lectures on moral reform in October 1841, she drew crowds of several hundred—overwhelmingly male—to city hall. Although admitting that she was "quite a pretty little woman," and that she was a good public speaker, "for a *woman,*" the editor of the *Eastern Argus* had had his "sense of propriety ... violated" by this "gentle little woman throwing herself into the desk of our city hall, before a promiscuous audience of utter strangers."

When Mary Neal Gove (later Nichols) came to Portland in October 1839 as a pioneering female lecturer on physiology, she wisely limited her audience strictly to women. This "maid-of-all-reforms" had become a convert to the gospel of Grahamism and all that such a conversion entailed: vegetarianism; whole-grain products; no coffee, tea, alcohol, tobacco, or drugs; moderation in eating; a simple diet free of spices; frequent bathing; exercise; fresh air; sunshine; dress reform; sex hygiene; and a variety of other miscellaneous reforms and prohibitions.

Her personal crusade was against the evils of the corset. Later she added hydropathy with its vast claims of "water cures" to her repertoire, eventually opening the first hydropathic medical school in the country. In Portland she delivered a series of 12 lectures on anatomy and physiology "to ladies ONLY," for only $1, including her famous attack "in which the evils of TIGHT LACING are demonstrated." Later some women complained that these lectures had been "highly indecent."

Portland's strong Puritan heritage had obviously been seriously eroded by the 1830s and 1840s. The life of her citizens was far removed from all work and no play, with pervasive religious exercises as a principal form of recreational release. By now, local newspapers regularly contained announcements and advertisements for a variety of entertainments and amusements.

Perhaps the most common form of popular entertainment was the public lecture. Portland was apparently on a regular circuit for lecturers up from Boston, who spoke on a wide range of subjects. Particularly popular were lecture-demonstrations on scientific topics,

especially electricity and magnetism. The 12 1/2 cents such a lecture
cost often included a free "Galvanic shock."

Beginning in 1840, Portland supplied enthusiastic audiences for
lecture-demonstrations on what was termed animal magnetism, mes-
merism, natural magnetism, living magnetism, or even pantheism
(and what would undoubtedly today be termed simply hypnotism).
Typically the expert (usually designated the "magnetizer"), who un-
derstood the "vital principle" or the "universal electric fluid," caused
a subject to be "magnetized" (also referred to as being put into a mes-
meric sleep, a trance, a magnetic state, a "somnambulic condition,"
or a magnetic sleep).

Although the demonstrations that emphasized control over a sub-
ject in a "magnetized" condition or that provided dramatic examples
of clairvoyance were undoubtedly high in entertainment value, the
serious aspects of the new "science" were soon apparent in their
diagnostic value for medicine. In June 1842, for example, a young
woman up from Boston was placed in a "magnetic sleep," during
which she described the nature of a disease that afflicted a gentleman
in the audience; she even prescribed remedies for him.

In April 1843 a Rev. H. Beckwith and his assistants came to
Portland for a series of four lectures and demonstrations on the phi-
losophy of mesmerism, with the promise that organic diseases would
be examined, "both in public and private, and remedies prescribed."

In August 1843 Portland experienced a major scientific and hu-
manitarian breakthrough when a new "Institute for the Mesmeric
Examination of Diseases" was opened by a Dr. Lunt, "where all
persons afflicted with any kind of disease can be examined and pre-
scribed for." The fee was only $2, and house calls would be made
by the good doctor and his staff for a mere $3.

A Mr. Sunderland came to Portland in September 1844, pro-
claiming himself the founder of a new science of pantheism, but
advertisements read like those for animal magnetizers, including
claims for "the remarkable cure of numerous cases of disease." The
Eastern Argus reported no diseases cured during his first lecture, but
at the end "two females of the audience were discovered to be in a
state of somnambulancy."

Portland was also regularly visited by that colorful American
institution, the circus. These commonly featured skilled equestri-

ans, strongmen, gymnasts, wild animals, bands, and lots of horses (Arabians were particularly emphasized in advertisements).

Typical of the era was an exhibit, usually related to a famous historic event or person, called a diorama. A complicated mix of mechanical devices, models, paintings, and special lighting and sound effects, such an exhibit represented a considerable investment in time and money. A diorama depicting the Battle of Bunker Hill and the Conflagration of Charlestown (advertised as "'76 Revived") was well received when it opened in Portland in October 1838, after two local artisans (a "machinist" and a painter) had devoted three years to its creation.

Among musical groups offering popular entertainment, the most enthusiastically received were those featuring Black musicians performing Negro songs, dances, and music. In 1844, for example, three such groups came to Portland: the Five Original Virginia Serenaders (termed a "celebrated band of Ethiopian delineators," they appeared in five concerts); the Lingo Melodists (three concerts of "Mirth and Music"); and the Congo Melodists (tickets to their several concerts were only 12 1/2 cents).

By August 1841, vaudeville, called "the most popular and fashionable amusement of the day" in advertisements, had come to Portland. With a cast of both ladies and gentlemen, the performances doubtless included a mix of music, dances, and skits. Taking no chances with disorder, the management had "engaged" what they labeled "an efficient police" to ensure that "the most positive order will be preserved."

Portlanders also were able to view in person some of the most famous people in the world, including General Tom Thumb and the Siamese Twins. "The United Brothers Chang-Eng" were in town for five days in June 1838. They could be viewed for only 25 cents; a lithograph of them was available for the same amount. Tom Thumb arrived in Portland on October 21, 1844, on the eve of the End of the World as proclaimed in that city for months past by the Millerites. From 10:00 in the morning to 10:00 at night on that fateful twenty-second of October, for only 12 1/2 cents each he exhibited himself to the citizens of Portland, including "quite a bevy of fair ladies."

Sports or athletics apparently played an insignificant part in the lives of Portland's citizens during this era, but August 1843

witnessed a momentous event in local history—two bowling alleys were opened on Public Street. However, advertisements quickly dispelled any specter of dissolute behavior by emphatically stating that these facilities were for "amusement and exercise only," and that they would be "conducted on the strictest principles of temperance and morality."

Although it appears that Portland was well supplied with amusements and light entertainment, she was also remarkably well provided with serious programs for a city of her modest size and rather isolated location. Up from Boston by stage or ship, and later by train, there came a steady procession of performers and lecturers to vie for the Portlanders' coins.

Serious lectures upon a variety of scientific topics were particularly popular during the decades of the 1830s and 1840s. A series of six lectures on geology was presented in 1837, followed a few months later by a series on entomology. In 1838 six lectures on astronomy at Portland's city hall were so well received that the speaker returned in 1840.

Other lectures covered a wide range of topics. Some were on foreign lands (India, Poland, Jerusalem); others on the theater, including six lectures on Shakespeare's plays; and on religious topics (the Shakers and the Millerites). But most impressive was the Portland Lyceum's series of lectures on historical subjects in 1843, which were of a quality that would have been praiseworthy for a major metropolis. The series opened with a lecture on John Hampden (a seventeenth-century English political leader) and closed with a presentation in two parts on the French Revolution. But the second lecture on the Seven Years' War (or French and Indian War), by the eminent historian George Bancroft, was the obvious highlight of the series. The *Eastern Argus* estimated that the audience approached a thousand, the largest for such an occasion in Portland's history, to hear Bancroft attempt "to trace the footsteps of God along the line of the departing centuries."

Portland could claim no important resident literary figure during this period, but it did glory in the fame of a native son, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who had been born and reared in Portland. The local newspapers followed his career as a professor at Harvard,

and published his poems. But most of the poetry routinely printed by these papers was of a decidedly light and popular quality.

[26]   In marked contrast was the impressive quality of the frequent concerts in Portland, which were predominantly sacred and from the great classical composers. The Mozart Society opened its 1835 concert season with a program featuring works by Haydn, including selections from the *Creation.* Two years later the Portland Sacred Music Society performed this oratorio in its entirety for the first time "this side of Boston." So enthusiastic was the reception that the performance was repeated three times by popular demand; later in the year it was performed several more times for a city that had become enthusiastic for great music that had heretofore been largely missing from its civic cultural life.

During the same week in September 1838, when the *Creation* was next presented by the Portland Sacred Music Society, that group also offered the first performance of Handel's *Messiah* in the state of Maine. Two days later it was repeated by popular demand. Tickets were 50 cents; for those under 15 (here Ellen Harmon and her twin sister Elizabeth could have qualified), only 25 cents. When this magnificent masterpiece was again presented on Christmas Day 1841, general admission had been reduced to 25 cents.

The concerts by this society took place in various churches in Portland; in the Hall of the Exchange building when it was completed in 1840; and in Beethoven Hall, which in April 1838 was filled with the music of Haydn, Mozart, and Handel. This was the hall that Portland's Millerites would later rent and fill with their shouts of "Amen," "Hallelujah," and "Glory." And this is where those fervent Millerites, including Robert Harmon and his family, met when they were disfellowshipped from their churches.

Judging from newspaper advertisements, medical and dental services were readily available in Portland, Maine, during Ellen Harmon's childhood and youth. But since the city did not have a hospital until 1855, treatment was either in the patient's home or in the physician's office. Professional nurses, of course, did not yet exist.

The M.D. degree could be obtained at the Medical School of Maine at reputable Bowdoin College in Brunswick, some 26 miles from Portland. Although its medical curriculum for the M.D. degree

demanded attendance at lectures for only three months, presentation of a thesis, and successful performance in a final examination before the Faculty of Medicine, this was equivalent to the best American medical schools.

Readily available to supplement the ministrations of physicians were numerous "patent medicines," which were regularly advertised in local newspapers. The lists of diseases and physical problems that some of them claimed to cure were impressive, and testimonials from the grateful cured were generously offered in support of their efficacy. Particularly attractive to thrifty Down-Easters must have been those products that promised to be equally effective in treating both humans and horses.

Mortality statistics for the city listed a staggering number of causes for death, from an extensive variety of fevers (typhoid and typhus to "putrid fever") and common diseases of the age (cholera and measles) to some designations that are now quaint or archaic (scrofula, "sudden," and gravel). By far the commonest cause of death was consumption, followed by "fevers," dropsy, "bowel complaints," or other diseases that had reached epidemic proportions (such as measles in 1835 and scarlet fever in 1842).

Heavily hit were the young; those under 10 often constituted close to 50 percent of deaths in a year (not counting the many stillborn). Stated differently, the average age at death during 1840 was 22.6 years, which the *Advertiser* claimed demonstrated "the superior degree of health enjoyed in Portland ..."

With the opening of the State Insane Hospital in Augusta in 1840, Maine joined the more progressive states in the treatment of the mentally ill. Occasional newspaper items indicate that Portland supplied her share of inmates at the asylum, especially during the 1840s, when the superintendent designated "religious excitement" as a prime causative factor.

The citizens of Portland, Maine, were not left to the mercy of scantily trained physicians or home remedies or patent medicines for the maintenance of their physical well-being. "Health reform" arrived Down East as early as June 1834, when Dr. Sylvester Graham, the most famous of the evangelical health reformers, came to town for a series of 16 lectures on the science of human life. For an admission fee of only 25 cents one could have heard a lecture

[28]

on some of Graham's passionately held concerns: vegetarianism, whole-grain "Graham" bread and crackers, dress reform, exercise, sex hygiene, fresh air and water, sunshine, and the evils of tobacco, tea, coffee, spices, grease, desserts, and alcohol. The impact of his lectures was dramatically demonstrated when two local bakeries began advertising "Graham bread" for sale while the series was still in progress.

Temperance agitation reached crusading proportions in Maine in the 1830s and 1840s, culminating in the adoption of statewide prohibition. This action was taken despite its negative impact on Maine's economy.

One of the principal imports into Maine was West Indian molasses. For example, 12,723 hogsheads of molasses (110 gallons each) were unloaded at Portland during the first five months of 1842. Some of it was used as molasses and some was converted into sugar, but most of this molasses was distilled into rum at local establishments on Portland's waterfront. Obviously, rum constituted an important ingredient in Portland's economy, whether it was consumed locally or shipped elsewhere.

A variety of temperance organizations were established in Portland, indicating that considerable quantities of her rum were absorbed by her own residents. The Portland Temperance Society emphasized public temperance meetings. But it was overshadowed in the 1840s by the dynamic new Washington Total Abstinence Society, which had special organizations for women (the Martha Washington Society), for children, and for young men. In 1842 the "Washingtonians" began publishing their own weekly temperance journal, "to aid in the advancement of the holy cause of temperance."

The temperance movement led to the development of various institutions—temperance stores, temperance houses, temperance reading rooms, and temperance ships. By 1835 the Cumberland County Temperance Society rejoiced that Portland had "about one fourth as many temperance stores ... as there are dram shops." Alexander Moorhead's Temperance House opened in June 1837, promising to supply patrons "with every accommodation in his power, always excluding ardent spirits." A Temperance Reading Room was inaugurated by the Young Men's Total Abstinence Society in 1841, with hours from 7:00 to 10:00 every evening except Sunday.

Captain Joseph Bates, who commanded the first American temperance ship out of New Bedford, Massachusetts, in 1827, would surely have been delighted with the annual report of the Cumberland County Temperance Society for 1834. Of the 300 vessels that had sailed out of Portland that: year (22 "ships," 12 barks, 117 brigs, 137 schooners, and 12 sloops), the large majority had become temperance ships. This included 10 of 22 "ships" (including 1 whaler) and 11 of 12 barkentines ("barks"), the two largest classes. By 1841 the *Portland,* the principal steamer running from Portland to Boston, had become a temperance ship.

[29]

It may not be accidental that the temperance crusade paralleled the development in Portland of what came to be designated as soda fountains. In the 1840s three such establishments were offering soda water, water ices, and ice cream in a variety of flavors from vanilla and pineapple to sarsaparilla.

The citizens of Maine earned their livelihood principally from agriculture, lumbering, fishing, shipbuilding, maritime trade, and a variety of small industries and businesses. As the state's largest city, principal port, and commercial center, Portland shared in and profited from these activities.

Manufacturing was extremely varied in Portland and obviously critically important for her economic well-being. The census of 1840 listed such manufacturing activities as tobacco ($6,000); hats and caps ($26,900); boots, shoes, and saddlery ($74,771); bricks ($6,000); glass, earthen ware, etc. ($5,500); confectioneries ($14,500); cordage ($29,000); carriages ($11,300); furniture ($57,260); and ships ($48,000).

Another list in this census gave quantity figures rather than dollar values. Included were 150,000 gallons of spirits (undoubtedly mainly rum), 2,365 gallons of whale and fish oil, 141,000 pounds of tallow candles, 23,000 pounds of soap, and 2,600 sides of leather. Enough of the ever-present West Indian molasses was diverted from local rum distilleries to produce 238,230 pounds of sugar in 1840.

The great diversity of artisan skills that such industries and Portland's daily needs generated was dramatically demonstrated by a parade of the Maine Charitable Mechanic Association, which took an hour to pass through her streets on October 8, 1841. There were 17 classes of "mechanics," from blacksmiths and hatters to house-

wrights and coopers. Some classes were broken down into several
[30]   specialities, such as "butchers, tanners, curriers, soap boilers, and
tallow chandlers," for a grand total of 55 separate skills.

A significant percentage of these artisans had undoubtedly come
up through the well-established apprentice system. Newspaper no-
tices routinely advertised for young boys as recruits into specific
enterprises. Similar announcements for girls were rare.

The sea in all its varied aspects critically influenced the formation
of Maine's character and personality. She had been settled from the
sea in the sixteenth century, and she continued to live largely from
the sea in the nineteenth century.

Shipping activity for Portland in 1844, for example, totaled 207
arrivals and 254 clearances, with imports for this year valued at
$403,029 and exports at $492,852. The 35,575 total tonnage of
ships registered in the Portland district formed a significant part of
Maine's shipping, which placed her third in the United States in total
tonnage, exceeded only by Massachusetts and New York.

A great variety of commodities flowed into and out of this
bustling port in her trade with other states, with Canadian and Euro-
pean ports, and particularly with the West Indies. From these islands
pineapples and citrus fruit found their way into local stores; but the
principal item in this trade was molasses.

Data from the *Portland Directory* for 1834 also illustrates the
impact of the sea on her economy. Among those occupations listed,
many had direct connection with ships and shipping: 220 mariners,
209 dealers in West Indian goods, 131 shipmasters, and 42 ship
carpenters.

Shipbuilding was an important industry for Portland. The ships
launched from her yards were a significant addition to Maine's total,
which placed her first in the United States in 1840. The "ships," brigs,
and schooners (all sailing vessels, of course) built in Maine that year
totaled more than double the tonnage of her nearest competitor,
Massachusetts.

Maritime news constituted a regular feature in Portland's daily
newspaper: ship movements, ship launchings, cargo discharged and
unloaded, and news of maritime activities from around the world.
Unfortunately, a common item concerned those who had lost their
lives at sea. The high risks involved in following the sea for a living

are dramatically illustrated by the shocking number of widows these men left behind. The *Portland Directory* for 1834 listed 276 widows [31] in a population of 12,971 (of which 7,055 were females and 5,916 were males).

Portland benefited from the establishment of regular steamship connections with Boston in the late 1830s. When fare wars erupted, passage between these cities became amazingly cheap—50 cents each way aboard the *M. Y. Beach* in the summer of 1841.

Although products from the booming Yankee whaling business moved through Portland, few whalers listed her as home port. Seamen for whaling ships were recruited in Portland and then transported to the principal whaling port, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

The sea also offered recreation for Portlanders—boat races in the harbor, fishing trips out in Casco Bay, and pleasure trips to the many islands off the city. Although fishing was important economically (seafood was an essential ingredient in Down East diets), it usually did not merit attention in local newspapers. A regular exception was the first salmon of the season, which was big news locally and usually led to a celebratory feast in a local hotel dining room.

This then was the environment that nurtured the body, mind, and soul of young Ellen Gould Harmon. In many ways it was a harsh environment that could only toughen the character of those it did not break. In the words of American historian James Truslow Adams, in this setting "the gristle of conscience, work, thrift, shrewdness, duty, became bone." Other words could well be used to characterize Down-Easters: religious fervor, a passionate search for truth, stubborn independence, Spartan toughness, resourcefulness, frugality, sturdy individualism, and a propensity to adopt and fight for unpopular causes.

Bibliographical Note   [32]

Ellen White wrote little about either her childhood or Portland, Maine. Her most extensive discussion, which concentrates on her conversion to William Miller's teachings, appears in Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 17-63. *Early Writings of Ellen G. White,* pp. 11-13, also briefly covers her early life.

Chapter 2—Michigan and the Civil War

Gerald G. Herdman

They [Southern men] ... have not ... the valor and the power of endurance that Northern men have.
—*Testimonies for the Church 1:266.*

With the firing on Fort Sumter in the harbor of Charleston, South Carolina, on April 12, 1861, the war that many feared erupted. While many rejoiced in the opening of hostilities, this internecine conflict would ultimately take the lives of more Americans than all other American wars combined.

The outbreak of war found the Union under the leadership of President Abraham Lincoln, newly inaugurated leader of the sectional Republican Party of Free-Soilers, antislavery advocates, and former Whigs. As constitutional commander in chief, Lincoln captained a regular army totaling a scant 16,000 officers and men. That number would shortly be sharply reduced by the resignation of nearly one third of its ranking officers—not the least of whom would be Robert E. Lee. Thus the army available to Lincoln for immediate duty was, as one authority notes, "at least adequate in size for the policing of New York City."

It was obvious to President Lincoln that it would be necessary to call out the organized militia of the individual states, as he was permitted to do by the Constitution. The states, then, would provide the vast majority of the soldiers ("civilian" soldiers—both in the enlisted ranks and as commissioned officers) for the Union war effort. Lincoln acted immediately, on April 15, 1861 (the day following the fall of Fort Sumter), calling for 75,000 volunteers to aid in suppressing the rebellion and preserving the Union. Based on its population, each state was assigned a quota of volunteers to serve in the Union Army. The quota for the state of Michigan, with a total

population of 750,000, was one regiment of volunteer infantry, 800

to 1,000 men, "fully armed, clothed, and equipped."

If we look briefly at the history of the state for some years before Sumter and note the origins and attitudes of its citizens, the response of Michigan to Lincoln's call for volunteers may be more easily understood. Admitted to the Union as the twenty-sixth state in 1837, Michigan was still in many respects a frontier community. Despite well-established Detroit and its surrounding areas, where in 1860 one fifth of the state's population resided, the section of the state north of the newly established capital of Lansing was essentially wilderness.

The Michiganders in the three tiers of counties from Lansing south, stretching across the state from Lake Erie on the east to Lake Michigan on the west, were predominantly and thoroughly New England-New York in their origins. The Eastern origins of these southern Michiganders has given rise to the term "Third New England." Large numbers of the settlers in southern Michigan had moved westward upon the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825—a nearly all-water route from the East that was significantly easier and cheaper than the overland route. Many of these folk were descendants of earlier generations of pioneers who had trekked westward from New England.

This "Yankee-Yorker" influx into Michigan was such that by 1840 the state had a larger population of New England-New York stock than any other Western state. As late as 1860 New York was the birthplace of more than 25 percent of Michigan's inhabitants, while at the same time only 33 percent had been born in the state. The names of such Michigan towns as Rochester, Utica, Albion, Bangor, Hartford, and others betray the origins of their founders and settlers.

These transplanted Yankees were a "thrifty, enterprising, plucky people," as one writer termed them, with their high ideals, religion, morality, and plans for public education. Not only did these early pioneers bring their New England concepts of local government and judicial processes; they also brought their strong Free-Soil and antislavery views. One further indication of this continuing Eastern background was the fact that of the 18 governors and senators from Michigan from 1835 to 1860, all but three were of this Yankee-Yorker stock.

This Northeastern imprint on the views and attitudes of Michiganders is even more evident in Calhoun County, the area including Battle Creek and Marshall. According to the census figures of 1850, more than 50 percent of the residents of Battle Creek gave New York as their birthplace—the largest group in the city. Although this percentage would decline to 40 in 1860 and eventually to 30 in 1870, it was not until near the end of the century that the percentage of Michigan-born exceeded that of New York. It is understandable, then, that residents of Battle Creek exhibited many of the characteristics and held many of the views of their New England-New York forebears.

Concurrent with these prevailing views and attitudes was the founding of and rapid growing support of Michigan for the newly formed Republican Party. With one brief exception, from 1839 to 1841, when the Whigs captured the governor's chair, the Democrats won every state election from 1837 to 1854. When the Republican Party was formed in Jackson in 1854, however, former Free-Soil, Whig, and antislavery partisans in Michigan joined under the new party banner in 1856 and gave the Republican Party presidential candidate Fremont a state majority. The year 1854 proved to be a watershed year in Michigan politics, inasmuch as from that date until 1932 the state proved to be "persistently and overwhelmingly Republican."

Considering the New York heritage of such a large percentage of Michigan's residents, it is not surprising, then, that the reform spirit so evident in the "burned-over district" of New York would also grip Michigan in the 1840s and 1850s. Utopianism and temperance, as well as the antislavery crusade (the latter destined to dwarf all the rest)—movements that were strong and vigorous in the East—had their counterparts in Michigan.

Among the staunchest of the antislavery advocates in the state were the Quakers, who from their beginnings opposed slavery, and in Michigan participated in the operation of the underground railroad. One section of this escape line passed through Battle Creek on its way to Canada. One of the city's citizens, Erastus Hussey, a prominent business, political, and religious figure—as well as a Quaker—was one of the best known of the "conductors" on the railroad.

Along with these strong antislavery and Republican sentiments [36] there existed in Michigan an equally strong devotion to the political entity, the Union, which was threatened to relegation on the trash heap of political history by the secession of South Carolina in 1860.

Austin Blair, newly elected Republican governor of Michigan and one of the founders of the party in Jackson six years earlier, held high the torch of Unionism passed to him by the outgoing governor, Moses Wisner. In his inaugural address of January 2, 1861, Blair stressed the honor of being citizens of Michigan, but he reminded those same citizens that they possessed a still prouder title—citizens of the United States. This, he claimed, was threatened by secession, the legitimacy of which he could not admit. "Secession is revolution, and revolution ... is treason, and must be treated as such," warned Blair. He urged the people of the state to inform their representatives in Washington that "Michigan ... [was] loyal to the Union, the Constitution and its laws, and ... [would] defend them to the uttermost." Michigan was willing, Blair said, to offer to the president "the whole military power of the state for that purpose." Such strong statements are rather striking when one remembers that this was less than two weeks after the secession of South Carolina and before any other Southern states went out of the Union.

Michigan lawmakers, recognizing and accepting their responsibility in the crisis, passed an act on March 15, 1861, that gave the governor broad powers in the event of "actual or threatened war ... against ... the state, or ... against the United States." Governor Blair was authorized to order out or accept by voluntary enlistment or draft as many of the militia as needed. The next day, the legislature authorized the governor to accept and muster into service of the state two regiments (up to 2,000 men) for no less than three months nor more than three years. The act noted that secession was open rebellion, and "a state of war actually exists." Thus did Michigan and its lawmakers prepare for the exigency of armed conflict that they sensed must surely come.

In the meantime, newspaper editorials in Battle Creek and Marshall, the two leading cities in Calhoun County, voiced their support for the Union in outspoken terms. The Battle Creek *Journal,* a thoroughly Republican newspaper, expressed the opinion in late February 1861 that there must be no concessions or no compromise

[37] with the seceding states. The equally strongly Republican paper in Marshall, the Marshall *Statesman,* expressed a similar view when it noted that the North had no peace to make with the South. Rather, it was the South that had taken hostile action that the *Statesman* asserted required the immediate deployment of the "entire force of the government ... to subdue rebellion, and to stamp underfoot treason." When the conflict broke out in Charleston harbor, the *Journal* announced that with war under way a determined policy of punishment of the rebels must be undertaken. "Every man ... now understands his duty." There could be no temporizing in war: "A man is either a patriot or a traitor—if the latter, he had better keep it to himself."

Many "war meetings" were held throughout the county, which provided a forum in which citizens could express their Union sentiments and support for the national government. "Let every township contribute its mite. Our country calls! We must obey!" declared the *Journal.* At one such war meeting in Marshall called by the mayor (who was a Democrat), a resolution was unanimously adopted that offered the assistance of the city "in all ways to preserve the Union." Even the Marshall *Democratic Expounder,* an ardently Democratic newssheet, expressed Democratic support for the Union. There was no alternative but war now. This was no time to look back and find fault with the past—no time for "compromise, armistice, apologies, or delays." What was necessary now was "union—energy—work," a sentiment that actuated all men in the community, said the *Expounder.*

Michigan's swift response to Lincoln's initial call for troops was evidence that the vocal support of the Union by its officials and its citizens was not hollow verbiage. Adjutant General Robertson was inundated with requests from prominent citizens and the common people for permission to recruit units for military service. Some were doubtless impelled by the desire for rank and recognition, but many offered to serve "in any position," regardless of rank. These requests and offers, which at times bordered on demands, continued to pour into Robertson's office, despite Governor Blair's announcement on April 16, 1861, that the regiments were to be recruited from the uniformed volunteer militia.

That the adjutant general was heartened by the initial response of the citizens of his state was evident in one of his early letters:

"The unanimity with which our citizens are coming up to sustain [38] the government in this trying hour is for me one of the best proofs of the stability of our Republican institutions. Of the final result of this contest, there cannot be a shadow of a doubt—this Constitution and the Union *must* and *shall* be preserved." The sturdy folk of Michigan would not disappoint him.

The response of the people of Calhoun County was a microcosm of the response of the state. Sumter, to most Calhounites, proved to be the "match that set the whole country in blaze of patriotism and indignation." The deep concern regarding the evils of slavery that Calhoun residents had harbored for years was now translated into a "move for action." "Prompt, patriotic, and decisive" was how one writer described the initial response of the people of Calhoun County.

This prompt response was explained by one Battle Creek soldier: "We had no other opinion about the call than that it meant us.... Our only thought on the matter was that we were going down to Washington to carry out Mr. Lincoln's idea, and that we were going to whip the South for shooting down that flag."

These men, from lowliest enlisted man up through the commissioned officer ranks, may not always have divined all the political and constitutional questions producing the war, but they instinctively understood that this was *the* crisis of the Union, and—inextricably intertwined—a matter of the abolition of slavery. One Battle Creek man explained his own motivation by noting that he had been "largely guided by the things my mother had told me all through my boyhood about this slavery matter—how it would have to be settled some day and how I would have to be ready to settle it."

Unlike many of the other counties, Calhoun was represented in the first two Michigan regiments that were organized and sent to the field—the First Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiment, mustered in for three months, and the Second Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiment, a three-year unit. Both of these units would bring credit to their state. The First was the first Western regiment to arrive in Washington, and was well uniformed and equipped with state material. The First also served at the First Battle of Bull Run in July 1861 (as did the Second), and its dead were found nearest the enemy position after the Union defeat.

[39]   Although the First disbanded at the end of its three-month term of enlistment, many men joined the reorganized First (three years), which left for the front in September of 1861. This reorganized regiment served with distinction throughout the rest of the war, being finally mustered out of United States service in July 1865. Similarly, the Second Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiment, mustered into service May 25, 1861, served in both the eastern and western theaters, acquitting itself in an exceptional manner in a long list of skirmishes and battles, being finally mustered out of service on July 19, 1865.

The response of the people of Calhoun County was no mere flash in the pan. Not only did her soldiers fight in the First Battle of Bull Run, but they were also among the military units that captured Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederacy, in Georgia May 10, 1865.

However, both civilians and soldiers appear initially to have viewed the conflict in terms of a brief but glorious rush to the flag—a Union military flourish culminating in a quick Northern victory. A soldier from Battle Creek noted that all his neighbors thought the war would soon be over: "Certainly we had not the comprehension that it would be of the kind and character that it finally became."

This attitude prevailed despite Governor Blair's warning to the special session of the state legislature on May 7, 1861, that "mere outbursts of patriotic fervor" would be inadequate to suppress the rebellion—this was to be no "six weeks campaign." With a prescience granted to few at that time, Blair predicted that the "sudden and splendid outburst of popular enthusiasm ... will shortly ... disappear, and must be replaced by calm determination and resolute vigor." He foresaw a "fierce and bloody" conflict that would bring unanticipated calamities and disasters to the nation. National resources would be "rapidly consumed," he warned. The economy would be disrupted, and some who went forth to battle "joyously singing the national anthem" would be brought home in a "bloody shroud."

Despite this ominous prophecy, Blair remained confident that the rebellion would not succeed—our "revered form of government," although "tried in the fierce furnace of revolution ... [would] prove itself equal to every occasion."

[40]   The grim reality of war was soon recognized by soldiers and

civilians alike, as the fearful results of the battlefields were reported to the home folk by the newspapers and the soldiers' correspondence. Perry Mayo, a young Calhoun man and a member of the Michigan Second, wrote his parents that he had escaped from the First Battle of Bull Run with nothing more than a sprained ankle and some bullet holes in his clothing. But he described the scene as a "terrible battlefield."

Another Michigan Second man painted a vivid picture of the wagonloads of dead and wounded moving to the rear. Many of the latter, he observed, were mangled in every possible manner, with arms and legs broken, torn off, or dangling by shreds of flesh as the men hobbled or crawled along.

As such reports filtered back to the folk at home and as local newspapers published information and statistics from the battle-fields, some Calhounites saw the hand of Providence at work. The battle at Bull Run would serve as a costly lesson to arouse the North to a "proper appreciation of the magnitude of the contest and the inestimable value of the interest at stake," observed the Battle Creek *Journal.* The North must accept this military result as a "chastisement dictated by a wise, overruling Providence," the *Journal* concluded.

A conference of Calhoun Methodists meeting in Battle Creek placed Union policy on an equally high moral plane. With "freedom and ... Christian civilization ... behind our breastworks," the conferees said, the battle will be won. Inasmuch as the Lord through His "right arm will bring ... victory."

Others viewed the scene from less lofty moral heights, but claimed that participation in the conflict was a patriotic duty that, once undertaken, must be completed. It would require more than mere "summer patriotism," the Marshall *Statesman* pointed out in the discouraging summer of 1862. It would have to be patriotism that would not suffocate or faint in hot weather, or congeal in the storm and ice of winter, for "true patriotism knows no climate, no reverses, no disasters, but [is] above and superior to them all." Thus, grim determination that no reverse could shake "must now characterize the Union soldiers."

A youngster of Burlington (a small town south of Battle Creek), involved in the organization of a "juvenile" military company in the

[41]   early days of the war, exemplified this indomitable Calhoun spirit. Observing a man daguerreotyping the village, the boy inquired as to the work. He was "taking" Burlington, replied the photographer. "You may take Burlington," retorted the boy, "but *she'll never surrender.*"

When Lincoln issued his first call for 75,000 men, no one could have foretold that before the conflict was over, no less than 2,778,304 men would be furnished to the Union cause. Reduced to an aggregate based on a three-year enlistment, this total represented 2.3 million men. These totals appear astronomical when we realize that the total population of the North in 1861 was approximately 22 million.

The men were furnished to the Union by a state quota assigned by the federal government, according to the population totals in the federal census of 1860. Michigan's aggregate quota during the war was 95,007 men, of which the state furnished more than 90,000, or roughly 94 percent. Long-term enlistments (three years) were the general rule in Michigan, subsequent to the organization of the first three-months volunteer infantry regiment. Thus the total number of volunteers officially credited to the state was 90,048. Reduced to a three-year standard, that was 80,865, or nearly 90 percent. The latter was a percentage exceeded by only three other states.

One motivation to volunteer for military service was the threat of a draft if the states' quotas were not reached under any call for troops. The draft appeared to be a stigma that most localities wanted to avoid. One authority notes that the "draft seemed to most citizens as a sort of disgrace." That this was true of Calhoun residents is evident from the editorials in the local papers constantly urging enlistments so as to "avoid the draft." For whatever reasons, the draftees included in Calhoun County's 3,878 men in military service (nearly 60 percent of the available military-age men in the county) numbered less than 200, or approximately 5 percent.

A further "carrot" to induce men to volunteer was the bounty system, instituted in Calhoun County in mid-1862. A bounty was a bonus of cash to be granted to men who volunteered under a certain quota. As the calls increased in 1863 and 1864, bounties were offered at not only the local, but also the county, state, and federal levels. By the latter months of 1864, in some areas, if a
[42]   man "veteranized" or reenlisted when his three-year term expired,

by combining all of these bounties he might receive a bonus of from $600 to $800. Even Adjutant General Robertson complained that by 1865—with all the irregularities attending the bounty system—enlistments had become a matter of bargain, money "almost entirely ruling the action." This carrot policy cost the state of Michigan nearly $2 million; the total for Calhoun County alone was more than $350,000.

This attitude of firm support for the Union by the people of the county also manifested itself in the innumerable "war meetings." These meetings were called for such varied purposes as raising bounty funds; passing resolutions indicating support for the administration; or in times of crisis or calls for volunteers, to encourage larger contributions of men and money. The meetings also appear to have been useful in encouraging the people in difficult times, or in clarifying questions the public had concerning quotas, exemptions from the draft, or the progress of the war. They also provided information and publicity concerning the activities of the local folk in their efforts to support the war.

There were also constant appeals to the patriotism of Calhounites by speeches, sermons, and communications from both civilians and soldiers printed in the local newspapers. Annual gatherings such as county and state agricultural fairs provided an opportunity for much patriotic expression. Such an eminent Southern speaker for the Union cause as "Parson" Brownlow, of Knoxville, Tennessee, was featured at both the Calhoun County Fair in Marshall in 1862, and the Michigan State Agricultural Fair in Detroit in the same year. This constant stream of patriotic "propaganda" must have been some help in bolstering sagging morale or in arousing the apathetic and indifferent, as well as in maintaining the spirits of the active and vigorous. The spirit of faithful support for the war was also reflected by the fact that many men in the Michigan volunteer regiments reenlisted when their three-year terms expired in 1864. When more than one half of a regiment's members reenlisted it was designated a "veteran" regiment; Michigan had 15 such units in 1864.

One area of support that Michiganders could not possibly have anticipated at the outbreak of war was the amount of aid or relief that would be paid to the families that soldiers left behind. Governor Blair recognized that there would be such a need to assist the families

[43] of soldiers in the field, and suggested to the state legislature in May 1861 that such provision must be made. The legislature quickly passed a measure providing for such assistance, through loans to the counties. Blair signed the measure into law on May 10, 1861.

The approach appears to have worked rather successfully, for of the $14.5 million spent by Michigan at all levels of state government for its part in conducting the war, less than $3 million was spent by the state itself. No less than $11.5 million was generated by taxes at the county and local levels. Of this total, nearly one third ($3.6 million) was levied and spent by the localities entirely on assistance to soldiers' families.

The Michigan Family Relief Law went into effect on June 1, 1861, and the Calhoun County board of supervisors took action at their June 10, 1861, meeting. Each supervisor was to ascertain the need in his district and report to the entire board. An initial fund of $1,500 was established, to be raised by a property tax in the county. This initial fund would prove to be minuscule when compared with the final total of approximately $200,000 provided by the county before the program was terminated. Half of that total was provided during the war years, while the other $100,000 was given to assist families through 1866.

Initially, funds to assist families were doled out in one-dollar amounts. That would shortly change as requests began to pour in and the Calhoun board of supervisors had to occasionally meet in special sessions to provide ways and means of handling the burgeoning task. By the latter years of the war, the board was obliged to devote approximately 50 percent of the entire county budget to the maintenance of such funds, and on occasion more than 50 percent. That it was a burden that Calhoun taxpayers shouldered willingly seems evident from the lack of complaints in the newspapers, supervisors' reports, and tax records for the county.

Still another way by which the homefolk in Calhoun County demonstrated their patriotism and steadfastness was through their support of what was known as Soldiers' Relief—aid to soldiers in the field. These societies, generally titled Soldiers' Aid societies, were active in numerous Calhoun County townships throughout the war. Not only did they collect such medical supplies as bandages, cotton lint, sheets, pillows, and even mattresses to send off to the hospitals

near the battlefields, but also all types of clothing, underwear, socks, [44]
sweaters, and gloves. Cash was also distributed to the soldiers
in their own state units, inasmuch as some units were not paid
for months at a time and many volunteers were nearly destitute.
One exceedingly important contribution, especially during the long
winter months, were the antiscorbutics, or antiscurvy foods sent to
the soldiers in the field. Barrels of onions, potatoes, and cabbage
(as sauerkraut) provided a little of the vitamin C necessary for the
soldiers' diet. Considering the salt pork, coffee, and hardtack diet
that most soldiers subsisted on, such food shipments from home
provided much-needed variety and a supplement to the meager army
ration.

Through the devices of donations and proceeds from "socials,"
where gifts of food were sold at public affairs termed "sanitary fairs,"
great sums of money were raised and much material shipped to the
front. One sanitary fair in Kalamazoo raised $12,000 in September
of 1863, but this was an exception. Nevertheless, over the war
years, the money, food, and material sent off to the Calhoun soldiers
amounted to thousands of dollars. Newspaper reports make it evident
that these local ladies Soldiers' Aid societies (and it was exclusively
the work of the women of the community) sent off to the battlefields
literally mountains of sanitary supplies.

Despite the unceasing and insistent requisitions from the Union
government for men and more men, as well as constant calls from
the local community for help to assist the soldiers in the field and
their families back home, in some ways life flowed on for most
Calhounites much as it had before war erupted. Rising prices for
such products as wheat, corn, oats, beef, pork, and wool benefited
local growers. Flour and feed milling operations expanded as well.
The elementary school system in the county, exemplary in its orga-
nization, staffing, and financing at the outbreak of war, continued its
services and even expanded—despite rising costs—during the war
years. Social life continued with such entertainments as traveling
circuses, musical presentations, comedy acts, and even fledgling
touring baseball teams were regularly scheduled. Traveling lyceum
speakers, including such well-known Eastern intellectuals as Ralph
Waldo Emerson, continued throughout the war years. Annual state

and county agricultural fairs maintained an uninterrupted schedule each year.

[45]   Even politics—state and local—were not suspended during the war. Indeed, local and state political contests were as spirited and partisan as in prewar years. The Democrats, however, found themselves in an uncomfortable position as they attempted to develop a viable opposition platform to the Republicans while not appearing disloyal to the war effort.

The people of Michigan, including those of Battle Creek and Marshall, demonstrated both through military service and support on the home front their steadfast support of the Union with their lives and their substance. To these granite-like folk, the possibility of the failure of the great democratic experiment begun by their forebears was simply unacceptable. They determined to "see it through," as so many expressed it, and their continuing contributions of men, money, and materiel throughout the war demonstrated that determination. Their "valor" and "power of endurance" carried them through to victory.

[46]   **Bibliographical Note**

Ellen White's published comments on the Civil War appear in Testimonies for the Church 1:253-268, 355-368.

Norman K. Miles

God cares no less for the souls of the African race that might be won to serve Him than He cared for Israel.... Who is it that held these people in servitude? Who kept them in ignorance, and pursued a course to debase and brutalize them, forcing them to disregard the law of marriage, breaking up the family relation, tearing wife from husband, and husband from wife? If the race is degraded, if they are repulsive in habits and manners, who made them so? Is there not much due to them from the white people? After so great a wrong has been done them, should not an earnest effort be made to lift them up? The truth must be carried to them. They have souls to save as well as we.

—*The Southern Work, 14, 15.*

Within the framework of American history, the nineteenth century was probably the most crucial period with regard to race relations. Racial issues headlined the newspapers as White Americans found themselves in positions of conflict and compromise with ethnic groups such as Blacks, Native Americans (Indians), Hispanics, Orientals, and European ethnics. In each encounter the Caucasian majority had to face its own fears of, and prejudices toward, the minority group. Often sheer, blind prejudice dictated the ways in which minority people were treated until greater contact modified the more extreme views. Some groups, such as Native Americans, though fought and discriminated against, were also romanticized as "noble savages." In other cases, contact and exposure between the races did little to modify stereotypes held about the minority group. In such situations complex relationships both sociological and psychological mitigated against any real racial harmony or understanding. This was especially true in the case of Afro-Americans.

In order to clearly understand the relationship between Black and White people in America during the nineteenth century, it must be remembered that in the early 1800s the United States was a new nation struggling to establish itself as an independent power, a country with a frail economy supported largely by slave labor. At the end of the century America was a vibrant, highly developed nation with a strong economy, international interests, and rapidly expanding industry. No longer Europe's stepchild, it was now a land of refuge for the Old World's "huddled masses yearning to be free." The brutal Civil War had stripped it of its innocence and its slaves, and the brief Spanish-American War had added to its international prestige and possessions. During these years of significant transformations, Black Americans passed from slavery to freedom; but it was a freedom that many White Americans refused to acknowledge and sought to limit.

These White Americans were unwilling to accept any major change in the pattern of race relations that had become established by the 1830s. In the South at that time, Blacks were slaves, the property of their masters, bought and sold at will, with no rights, liberties, or opportunities. In the North, free Blacks were the victims of segregation and discrimination. Few Northern Whites, even those who were fighting heroically to end slavery, would associate with Blacks. The belief that Black people were subhuman or, at best, inferior humans was almost universal, even among the most enlightened people of the day.

From 1830 until 1860 the United States passed from one domestic crisis to another over the issue of slavery, lurching ever closer to the brink of civil war. During this 30-year period sectional differences involving slavery polarized the nation into two camps, one antislavery and one proslavery. White abolitionists spoke out publicly against slavery and urged that immediate steps be taken to abolish it.

Many of these abolitionists acted on the basis of religious ideals, for the 1830s and 1840s were years characterized by intense religious interest and revival, a period frequently called the Second Great Awakening. The revivals, led by men such as Charles G. Finney and Theodore Dwight Weld, often spoke to issues of social reform, as well as spiritual concerns. Finney, the most prominent evangelist

of the day, organized his converts into abolition and temperance societies. Weld, who was once Finney's assistant evangelist, became a full-time abolitionist speaker. Many of Finney's followers became so outspoken in their belief that slavery was wrong that Americans regarded the evangelical revival and the abolitionist movement as one and the same. In the South this attitude was so prevalent that Finney and his disciples made little headway in stimulating revivals there.

[49]

This is not to say that Southerners were solidly supportive of slavery. James G. Birney, a lawyer and son of a wealthy slaveholder, hated the system but could do nothing about it until his father died and he inherited the estate. Birney then freed the slaves, sold the plantation, and headed north. He became a prominent abolitionist writer and editor, and in 1840 ran for the presidency of the United States as the candidate of the antislavery Liberty Party.

The Grimke sisters, Sarah and Angelina, born in South Carolina, were the children of a wealthy plantation owner. When they reached adulthood, they left the South and became antislavery and women's rights speakers. Angelina married Theodore Dwight Weld and joined his antislavery efforts. In 1836 she wrote a lengthy pamphlet, "Appeal to the Christian Women of the South," in which she urged women to use their influence to encourage the men to abandon slavery.

Some Southern churches spoke out against slavery as well. In 1837 the Thirteenth Presbyterian Synod of Kentucky issued a document that criticized slavery and urged its members to abandon the practice. For the most part, however, Southerners and Southern churches defended and supported slavery, while Northern churches generally opposed it. Between 1835 and 1858 the Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist churches split into Northern and Southern sections over the slavery issue.

A number of writers defended slavery along theological, anthropological, and sociological lines. Thornton Stringfellow, a Virginia clergyman and theology professor, defended slavery by arguing that it was a biblical institution, practiced by the patriarchs and endorsed by the apostle Paul. He further argued that Black people should be slaves because their black skin was the mark of Cain.

Thomas Dew, another Southern scholar, defended slavery by arguing that Blacks were an intellectually and morally inferior race that belonged on the lowest level of human development, which he called the "mud sill." Other Southern writers, influenced by Stringfellow and Dew, even argued that Blacks were not part of the original Creation but were the products of illicit relations between men and animals in ancient days.

[50]

In contrast, Northerners usually attacked slavery on moral grounds, arguing that it was an institution that dehumanized both master and slave. Numerous incidences of master-slave sexual encounters and the large numbers of mulatto children on some plantations were eloquent evidence that the traditional moral code was often broken in the South. In New Orleans and a few other major Southern cities, concubinage of very light-complexioned Negro women to wealthy plantation owners was openly tolerated and practiced.

Other abolitionists argued that slavery was fundamentally inconsistent with the national ideals of liberty and justice. Some urged that slavery should be abolished because it was an inefficient labor system. In the Midwest a large number of independent farmers objected to slavery because they feared that it would spread and drive them out of business, since they could not compete with slave labor.

Few among those who opposed slavery were free of some racial prejudice themselves, and some were very overt in their aversion to Blacks. Most abolitionist societies did not permit Blacks to join. William Lloyd Garrison was often criticized by other abolitionists because he associated socially with Blacks. Many Whites in the abolitionist cause assumed that Blacks were inferior humans who could be worked for but not associated with. Abraham Lincoln, who opposed the extension of slavery into free territories, stated publicly that he found the idea of Black people being socially equal to White people reprehensible.

Though they could not agree on how Black people should be treated, few on either side of the Mason-Dixon Line believed that Blacks were or could become the intellectual, social, and political equals of Whites. So pervasive was this thought that after the Civil War began, both sides refused to accept Black volunteers, reasoning that the war was essentially a White man's war. Eventually, military

necessity drove the Union government to enlist Black soldiers, and Abraham Lincoln declared a general emancipation of all slaves in states that were in rebellion against the United States.

On May 22, 1863, a Bureau of Colored Troops was established to organize Black military units in the Union Army. By December 1863, 20,830 Black volunteers had enlisted in the Union Army. During 1864 even more Black soldiers were enlisted. Men such as Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a White New England abolitionist who had supported John Brown's struggles to free slaves in Kansas, organized Black regiments from among former slaves. Though Black soldiers endured many hardships, including half the pay of White soldiers for a time, they proved to be effective fighters and fought in many of the key battles of the final two years of the war.

[51]

The end of the Civil War brought with it a new era of promise and challenge for America in the area of race relations. Formerly the relationships between Blacks and Whites were relatively simple. Blacks were most often in subservient positions; Whites were most often actual or potential masters. Now things were different. The Emancipation Proclamation had freed the Black masses, and in 1865 the Joint Committee on Reconstruction was established to lay out the guidelines for the establishment of the new social and political order that was to obtain. The committee sought to widen Reconstruction beyond President Andrew Johnson's narrow view and give Blacks significantly more civil and political protection. The Congress led the way in securing the rights and protection of Blacks in a swift series of constitutional amendments and congressional acts.

Between 1866 and 1870 the Constitution was amended to abolish slavery (Thirteenth Amendment), extend citizenship to Blacks (Fourteenth Amendment), and grant the right of suffrage (Fifteenth Amendment). In 1866 and 1875 Congress passed two civil rights acts; in 1865 and 1866 it established and continued the Freedman's Bureau, which sought to aid the freed slaves. Congress also enacted legislation to forbid Southern Whites from interfering with Reconstruction: the Force Act of 1870 and the Ku Klux Klan Act of 1871. The immediate result of these political developments was the tremendous increase of Black voters and a significant number of Black elected officials in the South.

In 1870 there were 4.9 million Black people in the United States, 3.8 million of whom were still in the South. These people represented tremendous potential as a political force at the polls. Black leaders worked with the Republican Party to establish good relations with White leaders and ensure that Black interests were looked after. The result of their work was tempered by the fact that few Blacks succeeded in making national political impact, although Southern states sent 17 Blacks, including two senators, to Congress before 1900.

[52]

It seems that Black participation was most significant on the state and local levels. It was on these levels that Blacks succeeded in significantly influencing the writing of constitutions, the establishment of public schools, and the abolition of lotteries and imprisonment for debt. In South Carolina the state legislature was for a time controlled by Blacks, and throughout the South hundreds of Blacks served as local officials.

For the masses of Black people in the South, the most immediate issues after the war were survival, work, family stability, and education. When the Civil War ended, thousands had been displaced by the conflict. Many plantations were deserted, and Blacks now had to find a way to make a living as free men in a free economy. Normally trained in only the basic agricultural skills, former field hands now had to do more than merely exist. What they really needed was land and assistance to develop as independent farmers. Most freedmen hoped that the government would redistribute abandoned land to them. The cry "Forty acres and a mule" was eloquent if quaint testimony to the freedman's understanding of his need for land as a basis of self-sufficiency. A few were able to obtain enough money to purchase land at public auctions, and the Freedman's Bureau supervised the distribution of some land to Black farmers, but the majority of Blacks were forced to work in the field much as they had during slavery, except that they were now paid wages or worked as dependent sharecroppers. As the *Arkansas State Gazette* said in an 1869 editorial, these "houseless, half-clad people" were an important element in the prosperity of the South but, like so many poor Whites, were unable to share in the wealth.

The freedmen's major asset was that they now had the freedom to move about at will to seek better employment, a course that White

planters opposed. Immediately after the Civil War a number of "Black codes" were enacted in the South. Some of these laws made it difficult for Blacks to move freely from place to place. Although strong public opinion in the North caused the repeal of the Black codes, in 1867 there was still a desire on the part of some planters for assurance that Black workers would be available in sufficient numbers. Within a few years that assurance was granted through the development of the crop lien system (sharecropping) and the convict lease system.

[53]

The sharecropping system grew out of two sets of desires. On the one hand, White planters wished to have a stable crop of workers who were tied to the land for at least one season. On the other hand, many Black freedmen desired work that would allow them to be independent and not constantly under the eye of an overseer. The sharecropping system seemed to be the perfect answer. Large sections of land were divided into smaller areas for each tenant farmer. The farmers were to work the land and share the profits of the crop with the landowner. Thus the tenant had a large amount of personal freedom but had to work very hard to make a living.

Undercapitalized and often required to provide their own seed, fertilizer, and agricultural equipment, most tenants were chronically in debt. Meanwhile, the owners enjoyed a sure work force, and the fluctuation of market prices was shared by both owner and tenant. Because of the steady decline in cotton prices during the last 30 years of the nineteenth century, few tenants were ever able to earn enough money to become landowners. Furthermore, by 1875 most states in the South had enacted peonage laws that made it illegal for endebted sharecroppers to leave the land. By then it was clear that most Black people in the South were to remain agricultural workers, with little hope of land ownership or financial security.

The convict lease system, developed during the turmoil immediately following the Civil War, also placed Blacks in a subordinate position. Sheriffs routinely leased convicts, mostly Blacks convicted of petty theft or vagrancy, to local planters. This relieved overcrowding in the jails and provided extra income for the sheriffs office. Large planters, as well as railroad, lumber, and mine operators, entered into profitable arrangements with local jails to obtain defenseless prisoners. Many were forced to work under brutal and

dangerous conditions. It was reported in 1881 that in Arkansas the death rate among convict workers was 25 percent.

[54] At the same time that society was placing these limits on the newly freed Blacks, a tremendous effort was under way to educate the freedmen. During the antebellum era, slaves had been denied access to education; thus, educational opportunity was one of the most prized fruits of freedom. A number of church groups and concerned individuals sponsored "missionaries" from the North to go south and set up schools for Black children. Between 1866 and 1875 hundreds of such schools were established throughout the South. Some were multiple-staff schools with adequate supplies, but most were one-room, one-teacher schools with few supplies. Still, these modest schools contributed to the education of the freedmen. Some of the larger institutions, such as Howard (Washington, D.C.), Fisk (Nashville, Tennessee), Hampton (Hampton, Virginia), and Alcorn (Lorman, Mississippi), eventually became well-respected colleges.

The education of Black children following the Civil War was a problem in the North as well as in the South. Although most Northern states provided schools for Black children prior to the war, the quality of this education was uneven. Cities such as Indianapolis and New York were reluctant to move toward integrated education, while states such as Pennsylvania and Illinois had pockets in which segregation continued until well into the twentieth century.

In 1870 the Illinois legislature discussed a recommendation that allowed each local district to decide whether it wanted segregated or integrated schools as long as the decision did not require the additional outlay of funds to build schools only for Black children. In effect, the legislature supported segregated schools if the community had a large Black population, but not if a school had to be built to accommodate a small Black population. Such discussions were held in other places between 1865 and 1875, with lawmakers usually supporting either segregated schools or local autonomy in deciding the matter.

With the ending of Reconstruction in the South, there developed a concerted effort to strip Blacks of the political power they had gained. Beginning with Mississippi in 1890, every Southern state found a way to disfranchise Black voters legally. Three types of

statutes proved especially effective in preventing Blacks from voting: the poll tax, literacy tests, and the grandfather clause.

The poll tax was a widely used form of voter discrimination and the easiest to implement. It involved a fee, usually $1.50, that had to be paid for the privilege of voting. This was a real impediment for most Blacks, who were usually poor. The major problem with the tax for Southerners was that it also discriminated against poor Whites. Some politicians avoided this problem by paying the tax for poor White voters if they agreed to vote for a particular candidate. In some cases, candidates also paid the tax for Black voters who agreed to vote for them. In order to head off this latter possibility, some states passed laws making it mandatory for the tax to be paid before the candidates were announced. Still, the poll tax proved so effective in neutralizing the Black vote that Tennessee, Florida, Arkansas, and Texas used the tax exclusively.

[55]

The literacy test was probably the most effective instrument for Black disfranchisement, and the most widespread. The mechanics of the test varied from place to place. In some places it was as simple as writing one's name and date of birth, although most districts required that a small section of the state constitution be read and interpreted. The successful completion of the test was determined by the person who administered the test. In many cases, Black professionals and college professors failed the test while White illiterates passed. Sometimes White persons and Black persons had virtually the same answers, but the Black persons failed the tests.

The most controversial of the efforts to control the Black vote was the "grandfather clause." The clause, usually a part of the revised state constitutions that were adopted during this period, stated that a person would be eligible to register and vote if his father or grandfather had been eligible to vote on January 1, 1860, or if he or an ancestor had served with either the United States or Confederate States military forces during the Civil War. Since most Blacks had been slaves in 1860, the clause eliminated almost all of the potential Black voters.

In 1915 the Supreme Court ruled the grandfather clauses unconstitutional, but by that time the Black electorate in the South had been almost completely decimated. In Louisiana there were 130,344 registered Black voters in 1896, but only 5,320 in 1900. In New

Orleans there were 14,000 Black voters in 1896, but only 408 in 1908. In Alabama only 3,000 of the 181,471 previously registered Black voters were registered by 1900. In Virginia the ranks of Black voters shrank from 147,000 prior to 1902 to 21,000 after 1905.

In addition to disfranchising Blacks, Southern leaders established segregation. During the 1870s and 1880s the practice of segregation appeared in such institutions as schools and hospitals, although trains and parks allowed some degree of integration. With racism increasing in the nation at large because of a new wave of immigration, Southern states in the 1890s were able to enforce and extend segregation through "Jim Crow" laws, which the Supreme Court judged constitutional in its 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision. By the early twentieth century, segregation was fully established in both practice and law throughout the South.

[56]

The effort to take political power and social equality from Black citizens was often accompanied with violent words and deeds. Southern politicians running as White supremacists appealed openly to the racial divisions in Southern communities in an effort to become elected. Hoke Smith, editor of the Atlanta *Journal,* ran for governor of Georgia on a White supremacy platform that promised to disfranchise Blacks without disturbing the political power of White citizens. During his campaign he stirred up the crowds with allegations about Black atrocities. So great were the passions stirred by his speeches that following his election there was a lynching spree that lasted three days.

Such lynching was one of the most serious manifestations of the problems in race relations in America. The South had long had a tradition of dealing with social problems with a gun and a rope. Many parts of the South contained isolated communities with few facilities for the administration of impartial justice. Often accused felons were executed without a trial. The number of lynchings is not entirely clear, for it was not until the 1880s that data regarding lynchings were collected and published. Early reports indicated that more Whites than Blacks were being lynched. Between 1882 and 1888, for instance, 595 Whites were lynched as compared to 440 Blacks. By the 1890s the trend was completely reversed. The number of Black lynchings increased sharply between 1893 and 1904, averaging more than 100 annually as compared with a yearly average

of 29 White lynchings. Sociologist E. Franklin Frazier connected the increase in lynching with the drive for political domination and considered it a method used basically for political intimidation.

The mounting racial tensions, growing pessimism, and uncontrolled phobias of the 1880s and 1890s were hardly a favorable environment for the education of Black young people. Schools begun for Blacks during the early years after the Civil War were [57] struggling for survival in an atmosphere of diminished interest in the welfare and development of the Negro.

Into this situation stepped the young Black principal of Tuskegee Institute, a tiny school in south Alabama. A former slave and a graduate of Hampton Institute, Booker T. Washington was a great believer in the industrial education that he had received at Hampton. He advocated that the kind of education most useful to Blacks combined some academic education with the learning of a trade or handicraft. Convinced that such industrial education was the only way for Blacks to secure their proper place in the economic life of the nation, Washington urged them to concentrate on economic betterment rather than protesting their lack of civil rights. According to him, the best guarantee of civil rights was for the Black population to become indispensable to the economic life and health of the nation.

In 1895 Washington was invited to speak before a biracial audience gathered in Atlanta, Georgia, for the opening of the Atlanta Cotton States and International Exposition. This exposition was designed to demonstrate to the world the great strides that the South had made in the areas of industry, education, and agriculture since the war.

On this critical occasion Washington decided to be frank, and yet not say anything that would give undue offense to White Southerners. His speech, later referred to as "the Atlanta compromise," suggested that the salvation of both races lay in their ability to put their differences aside and pursue mutual economic goals. He told Whites that by lessening their antagonism toward Black people, they could use Blacks profitably in getting rich. He told Blacks that political and social equality are less important as present goals than economic viability. Washington urged his Black brothers to make themselves useful to the White community in every manly way, and cease protesting for equality.

"The wisest among my race understand that the agitation of questions of social equality is the extremest folly, and that progress in the enjoyment of all the privileges that will come to us must be the result of severe and constant struggle rather than of artificial forcing. No race that has anything to contribute to the markets of the world is long in any degree ostracized. It is important and right that all [58] privileges of the law be ours, but it is vastly more important that we be prepared for the exercises of these privileges. The opportunity to earn a dollar in a factory just now is worth infinitely more than the opportunity to spend a dollar in an opera house."

Washington concluded that in all things purely social Blacks and Whites could be as separate as the fingers of the hand, but in all things tending toward mutual economic benefit, united as the fist.

The speech proved sensational, and Washington was soon hailed as the wisest Black man in America. From 1885 until his death in 1915, he was considered by many as the foremost Black leader in America and certainly one of the most powerful men in America, regardless of race. This 30-year period is often referred to as the "age of Booker T. Washington." He came to have enormous influence upon politicians, philanthropists, and millions of common people, Black and White. Under his leadership, Tuskegee Institute became a world-famous school, and he, an equally famous educator.

Washington was not without his critics. William Monroe Trotter, editor of the Boston *Guardian,* and the first Black Phi Beta Kappa, sharply criticized Washington's compromise attitude on the subject of Black civil rights and his almost dictatorial control over philanthropic money that came into the Black community. W. E. B. DuBois, a leading Black scholar, publicly criticized Washington in an essay that appeared in *Souls of Black Folk,* published in 1903. In a rhetorical denunciation of Washington's approach, DuBois asked:

"As a result of this tender of the palm branch, what has been the return? In these years there have occurred:

1. The disenfranchisement of the Negro.

2. The legal creation of a distinct status of civil inferiority for the Negro.

3. The steady withdrawal of aid from institutions for the higher training of the Negro.

These movements are not, to be sure, direct results of Mr. Washington's teaching; but his propaganda has, without a shadow of doubt, helped their speedier accomplishment."

Despite the controversy that surrounded him, and the attacks of his critics, Washington enjoyed the support of the White community of politicians and philanthropists, and his leadership was never seriously challenged. Nonetheless, his emphasis on industrial education did little to improve the lot of the educated Black person in the South. By 1900 many educated Southern Blacks, frustrated by the lack of opportunity for them in the South, began to move to Northern cities.

[59]

Carter G. Woodson called this movement the "migration of the talented tenth." Although the transformation went largely unnoticed at the time, it was important in that these highly trained people, with their great sense of racial pride and solidarity, were instrumental in building Black political and economic structures in Northern cities, greatly encouraging and stimulating the "great migration" of Blacks from the rural South to the urban North, which began in 1916.

By the time of World War I, relations between Blacks and Whites were at an all-time low. Segregation and harsh discrimination was legal throughout the South, and in some places in the North as well. Unfavorable stereotypes about Black people had taken on the air of reality, as many people were ready to believe anything that seemed to support their particular prejudices. Black people, as well as Orientals and some European minorities, were excluded regularly from meaningful participation in the mainstream of American social, political, and economic life. In the South, where most of the Black population lived, inflation, loss of jobs, and disastrous cotton seasons between 1914 and 1916 made survival for many Black farmers a tenuous affair.

During this critical period a sharp increase in the need for labor in Northern factories, brought on by the decrease in European immigration because of the outbreak of World War I, provided a way of escape for many Southern farmers on the verge of starvation. Not only did the North provide the promise of jobs; it promised a freer life than Blacks could expect in the South. That there was a quiet kind of racism in the North was rather insignificant to many Black Southerners when they compared it to the great indignities and

dangers to which they were exposed in the South. It was not certain to anyone whether they would find prosperity in the unfamiliar surroundings of the large Northern cities, yet the opportunity to escape from the harsh social and political oppression inspired thousands to leave the South and seek a new life for themselves in the city. Without the guidance of any real leaders, these Blacks swarmed into [60] the Chicago packinghouses, the steel mills of Pittsburgh and Gary, the docks of New York, and the auto plants of Detroit, as well as the factories and plants of scores of smaller cities.

This attempt to escape the harsh problems that most Blacks faced was destined to change the complexion of Northern cities, and eventually resulted in another different set of racial problems and tensions. But that was in the future. In 1916 the future seemed bright for thousands of Afro-Americans who boarded trains headed North for a try at a new life and their share of the "American dream."

[61]   **Bibliographical Note**

Ellen White's major comments on slavery appear within the context of her discussions of the Civil War in *Testimonies to the Church,* vol. 1, pp. 254, 258, 259, and 264-268. The same work (vol. 7, pp. 220-230 and vol. 9, pp. 217-226) discusses the needs of Blacks in the South. Further writings from the *Review and Herald,* personal letters, and miscellaneous statements on race relations and missionary work among Southern Blacks are collected in *The Southern Work.*

Chapter 4—Overland by Rail, 1869-1890

Randall R. Butler II

Moving slowly over the Great American Desert, with not an object in sight except sagebrush and distant mountain peaks, we seem much like a ship at sea. The massive train headed by our faithful steam horse, moving along so grandly, seems like a thing of life.

—*Letter 6a, June 17, 1880.*

America's expansion and growth has been a history of successive population moves westward. The Civil War briefly interrupted this process, but upon the cessation of hostilities the vast, unoccupied areas of the West once again stirred the attention of the American people. Great portions of land lying between the Mississippi River and the Pacific Ocean awaited exploitation, and the key to such development was transportation.

To cross the West by canvas-topped covered wagons meant a slow three- or four-month trek from the banks of the Mississippi to the Sacramento in California or the Willamette in Oregon.

While some merchants and gold seekers took passage aboard ships and sailed around Cape Horn to the California coast, the Overland Trail remained the only practical route for the vast majority of Americans and newly arrived European immigrants seeking a new start. Only the steam locomotive, the "iron horse," could meet the nation's need to move large quantities of people and goods over long distances quickly and inexpensively. The railroad became, by the latter half of the nineteenth century, America's premier transportation system, linking eastern cities with farms, mines, cattle herds, and towns of the West. The vital link in this sytem was the transcontinental, or Pacific railroad.

The transcontinental idea was purely a dream until the late 1840s. Prior to the end of the Mexican-American War in 1848, the United

States had only an uncertain hold on the Pacific Coast, and the intervening land was for the most part unknown and desolate.

The question of a transcontinental route became embroiled in the sectional controversy between the North and South during the 1850s. As a rule, Northerners favored a central route over the Rocky Mountains to California, while Southerners favored a route across the Southwest. This sectional division made legislation impossible until open hostilities resulted in the parting of the nation in April 1861.

The Civil War made the isolation of the West a matter of national concern. Mineral-rich California and Nevada were not safe from marauding Confederates, the entire Pacific Coast was vulnerable to foreign intervention, and the Plains Indians grew more restless as troops were transferred from their protective duty on the frontier to the battlefields in the East. By an act of Congress in 1862, the federal government contracted the Central Pacific Railroad to build east from Sacramento, California, and the Union Pacific to build west from a point later fixed by President Lincoln on the west bank of the Missouri River at Omaha, Nebraska.

The Pacific Railroad Act of 1862 and the Supplementary Act of 1864 provided a generous federal land grant and loans in the form of bonds for each mile of track laid. The Central Pacific was the first to begin construction, in 1863; the Union Pacific began a year later. The two lines joined rails in a national celebration at Promontory, Utah, on May 10, 1869. What had begun as a wartime project for the security of the Union became a harbinger of the prosperity to follow in post-Civil War America.

On May 15, 1869, regular train service began on America's first transcontinental railroad. The 1,775 miles from Omaha to Sacramento (in 1870, Oakland became the western terminus) usually took four and a half days to complete. Although it was not possible—except in cases of special excursions—to board a car in New York or other eastern city and journey uninterrupted to California, travelers could still cross the continent from coast to coast in 8 to 10 days.

Omaha was the eastern terminus of the Union Pacific, but for most travelers the overland adventure began in Chicago. There a passenger from further east would transfer to a Chicago-to-Council Bluffs (on the east bank of the Missouri River) connecting line.

Travelers would complain for several decades about the haphaz-
ardous ordeal of making the necessary transfers between Chicago
and Omaha. The weary traveler who at last arrived at Council Bluffs
was confronted with crossing the unbridged Missouri River. Each
morning, stagecoaches arrived at the train station to convey passen-
gers to a ferry situated some distance downstream.

"But a small portion of the passengers could get inside [the
coach]," wrote William F. Rae, an Englishman who made the journey
late in 1869, "the remainder having the option of either sitting on
the roof among the luggage, or else being left behind.... Through
deep ruts in the mud the omnibus [stagecoach] was slowly drawn
by four horses to the river's bank, and thence on to the deck of a
flat-bottomed steamer. Seated there, a good view was had of the
Missouri." Another traveler wrote that on reaching the western bank
of the river "the outside passengers [were] advised by the driver to
move about from one side of the roof to the other, in order to guard
against upsetting the overladen vehicle. A general feeling of relief
was manifested when the station of the Union Pacific Railway was
reached."

Even after a bridge was completed, in 1872, across the Missouri
River, from Council Bluffs to Omaha, western travelers still suffered
inconveniences. The Union Pacific refused to allow the cars of
eastern railroads to cross the river to its Omaha station. Arriving
in Council Bluffs, passengers had to remove themselves and their
luggage to the cars of the Union Pacific's subsidiary bridge line.
They had to repeat the process at the Omaha station, all at the expense
of their patience and 50 cents (later lowered to ten cents).

Reflecting on the transfer experience, John Erastus Lester, of
Providence, Rhode Island, observed that it "caused more hard words
to be spoken than can be erased from the big book for many a day."

Since only one through train left Omaha daily for the Pacific
Coast, aggravating 24-hour layovers in Chicago, Council Bluffs, or
Omaha could be avoided only by the most precise adherence by each
railroad to its own timetable. Unfortunately, this happened as an
exception rather than as a rule. For several decades travelers would
complain about the haphazardous ordeal of making the necessary
transfers between Chicago and Omaha.

Bustling confusion reigned as the time for departure from the

Omaha station approached. Excited passengers rushed about in search of luggage, which, despite the system of "checking," often went astray. Discovery of the missing luggage was followed by a frantic effort to get the baggage clerk to attach the necessary check to the trunk or valise. Passengers who successfully completed the "baggage check" proceeded to the ticket office in order to obtain berths aboard the Pullman sleeping car. The number of such berths was limited, and bitter disappointment awaited those who failed.

Above the voices of shouting passengers and railroad employees could be heard the hawking calls of the news or train boys who worked the platform and car aisles selling a wide range of items such as books, newspapers, lollipops, canned beans and bacon, fruit, coffee, sandwiches, and cigars.

In the early years, when the journey west was still considered a daring enterprise, railroad insurance agents joined the train boys in vigorously canvassing passengers. William Rae correctly suspected that rumors of the possibility of wild Indian attack or train wreck were deliberately spread in order to promote the sale of insurance policies.

The ability to pay, as always, determined the accommodations aboard the passenger cars. The more affluent travelers found quite comfortable accommodations aboard sleeping, or stateroom, cars, while the less well-to-do rode in the standard coaches or more spartan immigrant cars.

The sleeping car was the creation of George M. Pullman, of Chicago. It was first introduced in the Middle West in 1865, but the Union Pacific was the first major railroad to purchase such cars. They were called Pullman Palace cars, and their wood exteriors were painted a rich brown to distinguish them from other coaches.

Those who could afford the extra $25 first-class fare and $4 per day for the Pullman Palace car were eager to obtain a berth. The interiors were finished in polished wood and harmonious colors and were well lighted. A wood- or coal-burning stove and, in some models, hot water pipes beneath the floor, provided each car with heat. Each car was equipped with a private or semiprivate toilet and sleeping accommodations for about 30 passengers. The velvet upholstered seats were so constructed as to be readily converted into comfortable beds at night. Curtains could then be pulled around the

[67]

bed, providing the traveler with a certain degree of privacy.

Some of these cars provided an even more commodious and elegant atmosphere, with individual carpeted stateroom or drawing room accommodations. Susan Coolidge offered a woman's view of a typical drawing room in an article for *Scribner's Monthly* in 1873. Her quarters contained four broad windows, six ventilators, a long sofa, two armchairs with movable backs, mirrors, and storage space. Between two drawing rooms was a dressing closet with toilet facilities. When bedtime came, the porter entered, she wrote, and "in some mysterious way" converted the sofa and the armchairs into beds. He gave the occupants a batch of clean towels and was on his way. In such accommodations one could travel from Omaha to Sacramento for $100, a sizable sum in 1870.

The Central Pacific did not originally use Pullman Palace cars. The company chose a sleeper manufactured by the Jackson and Sharp Company, instead. The cars became known as Silver Palace cars because of their painted white metallic interiors. Although they were more attractive and were outfitted with private sitting and smoking rooms, they lacked the extreme ornamentation and the mechanically superior rubber block springs of the Pullmans.

Coach fare was less than Pullman, only $75. Of course, accommodations were simpler. Gone were the velvet upholstery, carpets, private drawing rooms, and polished wood interiors. On coach fare, travelers had a certain amount of freedom of movement, but seats were unreserved. But even this advantage had a drawback—a scramble for the better seats occurred at boarding time.

The immigrant car was devised to meet the demand of even cheaper fares west, especially for the thousands of immigrants enticed by the railroads to come to America and buy federally granted lands. Devoid of most comforts and all frills, the immigrant car was cheap at only $40 per ticket. Arrangements varied with railroad companies and time, but in general, the interiors of all such cars were extremely plain, boxlike, and poorly lighted. Some of the cars were fitted with upper slated berths, supported by heavy posts or big chains. Of course each car had toilet facilities and a wood- or coal-burning stove.

Some of the immigrant cars were equipped with hard wooden benches, but most had woven fabric seats supported by springs.

lx The World of Ellen G. White

[68] These seats could, with the use of an additional board, be adjusted to provide a bunk. Enterprising entrepreneurs and railroad agents in Omaha and at whistle stops along the way supplied boards and straw-filled mattresses or sacks at prices ranging from $1.25 to $2.50, depending on the passenger's ability to bargain.

Immigrants were not the only ones who sought the lower fare cars. Many passengers financially able to pay first-class or coach fares also rode the immigrant cars west, especially as the quality of equipment and degree of comfort improved over the years.

The Union Pacific-Central Pacific trains averaged a speed of 22 miles per hour. Track and bridge conditions affected the speed of trains. A train might travel 40 miles an hour over smooth tracks, but had to slow to 8 or 9 over rougher sections. Although speeds nearly doubled by 1880, time-consuming stops and starts at more than 200 stations and water tanks prevented any noticeable reduction in total hours spent on the journey.

The transcontinental railroad trains provided three meal stops a day. In the 1870s the Union Pacific was the first line to adopt Pullman's new "hotel car." This car contained a kitchen at one end; meals were served on removable tables set between the drawing room slots. However, the Union Pacific scheduled the car for only one trip each week.

Dining stations along the route remained the standard method for feeding passengers on western railroads well into the late 1880s and early 1890s. Passengers who did not travel with their own food supplies were given 30 minutes at dining stops to rush from their coaches, elbow their way through a station platform crowd, and wolf down a meal before the conductor called "All aboard!"

With the exception of the fine food fare of the chain of Harvey House restaurants along the route of the Santa Fe, the menus in most railroad station restaurants varied from wretched to middling fair, with a monotonous sameness about them: "Beefsteak, fried eggs, fried potatoes at almost every meal," reported New Yorker Susan Coolidge.

Station restaurants were operated by private individuals under contract to the railroads, with no required standard of service. The buildings were not much more than rough frame structures filled [69] with long tables. Large steaming platters of food were rushed from

the kitchen to the tables for the passengers when the trains came in.

The fare was simple and plentiful, and met two major requirements: it was substantial and could be hastily consumed. The most common items missing from the menus, especially at the prairie and desert stations, were fresh fruits and green vegetables. At most dining stops the price, whether for breakfast, lunch, or supper, was uniformly a dollar greenback or, on the California-Nevada section of the Central Pacific, 75 cents in silver.

Susan Coolidge advised travelers to pack their own lunch baskets for the overland trip. Indeed, lunch baskets were a common sight on the overland trains. Guidebooks urged travelers to carry a "little lunch-basket nicely stowed with sweet and substantial bits of food," since eating places were sometimes eight hours apart when trains were on schedule.

One seasoned traveler, Ellen G. White, who had crossed the plains by rail 15 times by 1880, always carried a well-stocked larder that included such items as hard-boiled and fresh eggs, canned fruits, bread and rolls, walnuts, oranges and other fresh fruits, graham flour for a breakfast gruel, lemonade, and some pressed chicken for broth.

Those with private food stocks used the stove at the rear of the car to prepare their meats. Milk and warm water could be purchased, along with a variety of sundries from vendors at station stops. The generosity of those who were willing to share the contents of their lunch baskets was undoubtedly appreciated by the unprepared, especially when trains were running late or stopped for hours as a result of an occasional washout or wreck.

The seasoned, well-informed traveler carried more than a well-provisioned larder: changes of clothing and plenty of blankets were also necessities. Overland travelers encountered a variety of weather, ranging from freezing cold to searing heat. One guidebook recommended that upon leaving Omaha in the summer, a lady should wear a light spring suit; on the second day, as the train approached the Rockies, it suggested a change to a winter suit. On the third day, across the Utah-Nevada desert, she should don a summer suit, and then on the fourth day, in the Sierras, the winter suit and "all your underclothing" would be required. The fifth and last day would bring her into sunny California and the summer suit again.

Passengers on the overland complained a great deal about the   [70]

cold and heat. The coldest weather was encountered in the western mountain ranges and after dusk in the desert. Winter made the cold even more unbearable. Although each coach was equipped with a wood or coal stove, the drafty, high-ceilinged cars were hard to keep warm. Occasionally the porters or conductors failed to supply the necessary wood or coal, and the passengers were forced to resort to blankets, warm clothing, and water tins heated at hotels or stations along the way. Even when the stove worked, it was not uncommon to awaken and find the windows frosted over.

The cold, however, was preferable to the burning summer heat and dust of the high plains of eastern Nebraska and Wyoming, or the Utah-Nevada desert, where it was heavily laced with the pungent smell of sagebrush and eye-stinging, bitter-tasting alkali. Ellen White observed somewhere west of Cheyenne that "the very air seemed hot, and seemed to burn our flesh. It seemed some like the time that will scorch men with heat." The Massachusetts editor Samuel Bowles wrote that west of Cheyenne "the eye has no joy, the lips no comfort through it; the sun burns by day, the cold chills at night, the fine, impalatable, poisonous dust chokes and chafes and chaps you everywhere."

Although equipped with ceiling ventilators, the railroad coaches lacked an adequate air circulation system. Opening the windows and ceiling vents under any weather condition risked subjecting passengers to billows of smoke and cinders from the locomotive and clouds of dust from the trackside and surrounding terrain.

The long hours confined to jostling cars traversing slowly over the vast expanse of the West provided overland travelers with ample opportunity for conversation, card playing, reading, sewing, letter writing, and viewing passing scenery through the broad car windows. A boy frequently walked through the cars with a good store of novels and newspapers for sale. Smoking and drinking were also common diversions. Before long, passengers had formed into the usual little groups and cliques, knowing one another by sight if not by name.

The variety of passengers aboard the coaches made observations by their fellow travelers a source of entertainment. On one of her trips Ellen White met a British military officer and his family and children's nurse on their way from India to England. They found the

[71]   hot Wyoming weather more oppressive than what they were used to

even in India. The Indian nurse was a center of curiosity because of her appearance, for she wore a pink calico sari, and her hands were completely tattooed.

It was aboard the same train that Mrs. White became well acquainted with a hard-drinking French theater manager and his equally hard-drinking actress companion. Mrs. White appears to have been amused by their astonishment when she politely declined their "very kind" offer to join them in what she described as their "raid ... upon [the] bottles."

Travelers aboard the transcontinental trains were a mixed lot. Not always able to choose seat companions, passengers occasionally found themselves with people they would normally avoid. The farther west the train rolled, the rougher and more obnoxious the local passengers became. The rough-booted, broad-rimmed, dusty-bearded, tobacco-chewing—and occasionally gun-toting—Westerner was both a curiosity and nuisance. Travelers were repelled by the Westerner's insistent generosity to share his plug of tobacco and bottle of whiskey. "A fiercer, hirsute, and unwashed set I never saw," said one Easterner.

Perhaps he had not yet reached Nevada, where there was a plentitude of Shoshones and Paiutes hanging about every station, using their treaty rights with the Central Pacific to ride the cars. Because these desert Indians were usually covered with dust and often unbathed on account of the lack of water, and habit, the passengers found them objectionable, and the railroad eventually restricted them to baggage cars or outside the passenger car on its boarding steps.

It was customary on Sundays to hold religious services in one of the cars. The Rev. Mr. Murray, aboard a train rolling through western Wyoming in 1872, delivered a sermon entitled "To Die Is Gain," and a choir sang, "Nearer, My God, to Thee." "Here in the very midst of the Rocky Mountain wilderness," wrote John Lester, "our thanksgivings were offered up; and our music floated out upon the air, and resounded through the deep caverns and among the towering hills."

It was less convenient for those who worshiped on a day other than Sunday. Unless traveling in a stateroom or coach that was empty or nearly so, Ellen White and other Sabbathkeepers found [72] it necessary to pull the sable curtains about their section of seats

for privacy. The curtains helped shut out the noisy banter, laughter, card playing, and other activities, thus creating a more peaceful atmosphere for Bible reading and rest.

Wrecks were inevitable, particularly in the early years of operation. In general, they were more annoying than serious, but loss of life was all too common. There were many causes for train wrecks, but most frequently they resulted from poorly constructed roadbed, washouts, landslides, inadequate braking and signaling systems, hotboxes (overheating of axle bearings), unguarded crossings, fire-prone wooden coaches, and human error on the part of trainmen. Train derailments were frequent. Occasionally bridges gave way under the weight of locomotives, and most tragic of all, trains often crashed headlong into one another.

Although employee fatalities were twice those of the passengers, the latter group suffered the larger number of injuries. Often the fateful difference between the two groups could be measured in minutes or a few short hours. Passing over a trestle just a short distance west of Wyoming's Dale Creek Bridge, Ellen White and her fellow passengers saw at the bottom of the gorge the shattered remains of a freight train that had crashed through the same trestle only a week before. It was just under two hours ahead of a passenger train.

In terms of passenger miles, however, by the turn of the century rail travel was relatively safe—one fatality to each 51 million miles of train travel, one injury to each 12 million miles.

It is unlikely that the knowledge of these overall figures, and assurances of the railroad companies, completely calmed the fears of the passengers. There were at least two sites on the Union Pacific-Central Pacific route where passengers openly expressed their anxiety—the Dale Creek Bridge, and Cape Horn, in California.

Dale Creek, on the western slope of Wyoming's Black Hills, ran in a granite gorge 120 feet deep. In the spring of 1868 the Union Pacific spanned the 650-foot-wide gorge with a pine timber trestle, the largest on the line. The structure swayed alarmingly when the wind blew up the canyon. William Rae remarked that "more than one passenger ... breathes more freely ... once the cars have passed in safety over this remarkable wooden structure."

[73]   Government inspectors required the railroad to tie down and

anchor the trestle with cables until a new steel bridge on stone pilings could be completed in 1870. The light, airy, box-truss frame of the new bridge still did not inspire confidence among the passengers that it could withstand the constant buffeting of the wind. "This ... bridge looks like a light, frail thing to bear so great [a] weight," wrote Ellen White. "But fears are not expressed because of the frail appearance of the bridge, but in regard to the tempest of wind, so fierce that we fear the cars may be blown from the track.

"In the providence of God the wind decreased. Its terrible wail is subdued to pitiful sobs and sighs, and we passed safely over the dreaded bridge."

Perhaps it was the crossing of Dale Creek that inspired Rev. Murray's sermon "To Die Is Gain," and the choir's choice of the hymn "Nearer, My God, to Thee."

At Cape Horn, on the western slopes of California's Sierra Nevadas, timid passengers were warned by the guidebooks not to look down upon the winding gorge of the American River 2,000 feet below. John Beadle agreed that although Cape Horn offered the finest view of the Sierras, the sight was not good for nervous people. The right-of-way for the rails had been chiseled out of solid rock by Chinese laborers suspended in baskets along the face of the cliff.

Cape Horn was the steepest, most winding part of a 105-mile stretch that dropped from 7,017 feet to 30 feet above sea level. According to William Humason, nearly half the descent was made without the aid of power. "The conductor and brakeman ran the train with brakes on most of the way."

Wrote William Rae, "The velocity with which the train rushed down this incline, and the suddenness with which it wheeled around the curves, produced a sensation which cannot be reproduced in words.... The axle boxes smoked with friction and the odor of burning wood pervaded the cars. The wheels were nearly red hot. In the darkness of the night they resembled discs of flame."

There was great adventure as well as danger in transcontinental travel. Passengers were filled with awe at the immensity of the land. Westward from Omaha, the trains rolled past the fertile farmlands and onto the grassy plains of central and western Nebraska. In the summer months passengers were often treated to the wild spectacle [74]

of prairie fires, usually begun by sparks from the locomotive igniting the dry grass.

"These looked grand and awful," wrote Mrs. White. "We could see the lurid flames stretching like walls of fire for miles across the prairies; and as the wind would rise the flames would leap higher and higher, brightening the darkness of night with their awful light."

Awe gave way to boredom as an endless expanse of plains was broken only at two- or three-hour intervals by a water tank and a cluster of sod and adobe houses. The monotony was interrupted occasionally by the sighting of unfamiliar wildlife. Antelope and prairie dogs were the most common, but elk, wolves, coyotes, and bears were also seen. Only small herds of buffalo were spotted along the Union Pacific right-of-way. Hunters and sportsmen continued to decimate their ranks throughout the 1870s. Although the railroad companies frowned upon the practice, amateur hunters sometimes fired from the cars at the antelope and buffalo that wandered within range of trackside.

Indians also provided some diversion for the passengers, especially the Shawnees and Paiutes in Nevada. But for the most part, these sad remnants of a once-proud heritage were few and far between: the Pawnees on a reservation in central Nebraska; the Sioux, Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Crow in western Nebraska and Wyoming.

The scenery grew more fascinating for the passengers as they left the plains behind. The first glimpse of the snow-topped Rocky Mountains always sent a wave of excitement through the coaches. Mrs. White wrote to her children, "I hesitate whether to place my pen upon paper to give you even the faintest, slightest description of the wild, romantic scenery of the Rocky Mountains. Immense mountaintops rise above mountains. Some mountains of lesser dimensions are wavy and appear smooth and regular in shape. Mountains of masonry have the appearance of being hewed, squared, chiseled, and polished by art and piled one above another in grand towers, stretching upward toward heaven as though directing the minds of all who look upon them to God."

Unfortunately, the grand sight yielded to the anxiety of crossing Dale Creek and the barren plains of Wyoming. Eastern travelers were struck most by the lack of trees and tilled land, and by the

[75]　endless expanse of sagebrush. "The scenery over the plains has

been uninteresting.... Mud cabins, adobe houses, and sagebrush in abundance," commented Ellen White. Her observation reflected the general sentiment of a nation that still regarded with little value the treeless plains and deserts of the West.

Once across Wyoming, overland travelers were treated to new, even more spectacular scenery than they had witnessed in the Rockies. Most were at a loss for superlatives to describe the towering castlelike rock formations of Utah's Echo and Weber canyons. "The scenery here is grand and beautiful," observed Mrs. White.

"These are in lofty domes and pinnacles and fluted columns. These rocks resemble some cathedral of ancient date standing in desolation. The imagination here has a fruitful field in which to range.... Standing at a distance from these wonderful shaped rocks, you may imagine some ruined city, bare, desolate, but bearing their silent witness to what was once."

Shortly after entering the narrows of Weber Canyon, everyone caught a glimpse of Thousand-Mile Tree, a lone pine of more than 60 feet in height amid the desolation of rock and sage. A sign in the tree's lower boughs marked the distance from Omaha. Sentinel Rock, Eagle Rock, Hanging Rock, Pulpit Rock, Devil's Gate, and Devil's Slide kept the passengers fascinated and entertained while the trains thundered through the narrow canyon.

After transferring from Union Pacific to Central Pacific cars in Ogden, the westbound travelers faced the most arduous and monotonous portions of their journey. It took a full day to cross the deserts of Utah and Nevada. The Great American Desert was a befitting name for this barren, desolate land. In the summer, heat and alkali dust reduced whole trainloads of passengers to misery. Sweltering in their seats, they faced the alternative of keeping doors and windows closed, thus enduring semiasphyxiation, or opening them to clouds of alkali dust swirling up with the passing cars. Even winter did not spare travelers from the dust, unless a blanket of snow lay over the ground.

It was with understandable relief that everyone put the parched desert behind and passed "over the hump" of the Sierra-Nevadas. Once again many travelers were at a loss for superlatives to describe the rapid, winding descent of the heavily forested western slopes, which included the frightening yet exhilarating Cape Horn experi-   [76]

ence. Trains generally made the descent at night, which enhanced the adventure.

"Our last night on the train," wrote Mrs. White, "was spent in ... viewing the scenery.... The moon was shining clear and bright.... We passed Cape Horn in the light of the moon. The wintery scene, ... viewed by the light of the moon, is grand. We can look 2,000 feet below. The soft light of the moon shines upon mountain heights revealing the grand pines and lighting up the canyons. No pen or language can describe the grandeur of the scene."

By midmorning, westbound trains arrived at the Oakland terminal. The tired, weary passengers rejoiced universally with the conclusion of the journey. It was a long, hard four and a half days from Omaha, and most passengers had begun their trip from one to three days further east or south. After a week of noise, dust, and tobacco and locomotive smoke, the disembarking passengers looked forward to a warm bath and quiet rest. The weeklong adventure would provide them with a lifetime of memories, and future generations with a nostalgic look at the way it was before the modern interstate freeways, jet planes, and Amtrak.

[77]   **Bibliographical Note**

The largest part of Ellen G. White's comments and observations about traveling west by rail are unpublished but available to the public in her manuscript and letter collection at the White Estate. The June 17, 1880, *Review and Herald* contains some interesting details of one trip west. A few brief comments about her traveling experiences can also be found in *Life Sketches*.

Chapter 5—The Rise of Urban-Industrial America

Carlos A. Schwantes

Life in the cities is fake and artificial. The intense passion for money getting, the whirl of excitement and pleasure seeking, the thirst for display, the luxury and extravagance, all are forces that, with the great masses of mankind, are turning the mind from life's true purpose. They are opening the door to a thousand evils. Upon the youth they have almost irresistible power.

One of the most subtle and dangerous temptations that assail the children and youth in the cities is the love of pleasure. Holidays are numerous; games and horse racing draw thousands, and the whirl of excitement and pleasure attracts them away from the sober duties of life. Money that should have been saved for better uses is frittered away for amusements.

Through the working of trusts, and the results of labor unions and strikes, the conditions of life in the city are constantly becoming more and more difficult. Serious troubles are before us; and for many families removal from the cities will become a necessity.

—The Ministry of Healing, 364.

Americans maintain an incredible number of historic shrines commemorating the nation's important people, places, and events: George Washington's Mount Vernon plantation, the Gettysburg Battlefield, the site where the first transcontinental railroad was completed, even the National Baseball Hall of Fame. But where is the memorial to the triumph of urban America, the process that dramatically transformed a nation? Was the rapid urbanization phenomenon

too complex, too encompassing, mind-boggling, or downright distressing to memorialize? Are the great cities monuments in themselves? Perhaps the triumph of urban America is best enshrined as statistics in federal census reports.

[80]   The 1920 census recorded one of the great landmarks in American history: For the first time, more people lived in urban areas than in rural areas. The number of Americans living in centers with more than 2,500 inhabitants had grown from 19 percent in 1860 to 39 percent in 1900 and to 52 percent in 1920. A nation born in the country had moved to town, or so it seemed.

Actually, rural America was growing too, but not nearly as fast as the urban centers. Most impressive was the increase of cities with populations of 100,000 or more. The number leaped from 9 in 1860 to 38 in 1900 and to 68 in 1920. The rate of growth was especially high in the newly settled West. Denver, for example, a frontier town of 4,700 in 1870, grew to more than 107,000 two decades later. During the decade of the 1880s, Seattle grew by more than 1,000 percent, and its rival on Puget Sound, Tacoma, by more than 3,000 percent. But statistics piled upon statistics cannot begin to convey the hopes and fears that the growing metropolises excited.

A series of technological innovations, such as the telephone, electric streetcar, and skyscraper, enabled cities to reach upward and outward with dramatic grasps toward sky and horizon. Growth, however, was not a matter of technology alone, for cities also offered numerous cultural and economic allurements, ranging from the amenities of public libraries, symphonies, and lyceums to jobs and other forms of financial opportunity. Yet while admirers praised city life for its refinement and opportunity and regarded technological triumphs as confirmation of the nation's inventive genius, critics found much to fault.

Historians have labeled the last three decades of the nineteenth century in the United States the "Gilded Age" for good reason: a glittering facade that Americans called progress concealed a multitude of problems. Not without cause was a best-seller of the age called *Progress and Poverty*. Especially in the metropolises of the 1880s and 1890s, streets, water and sewage facilities, and housing and social services for the poor were abominable.

Cities had simply grown too fast and with too little planning. In an age that granted private enterprise nearly unrestricted freedom, and lionized the conspicuously rich, the desire to make a profit shaped the urban environment. Parks and other green oases were called the lungs of the city because their trees and grasses supposedly purified and freshened stale air, but in many neighborhoods the most visible green was on the dollar bill. There were no profits in parks and greenbelts, not when land prices were measured by the square foot.

[81]

Gently curving boulevards pleased the eye, but there was no money in asthetics. Besides, rectangular shaped lots lent themselves best to private development for profit. Consequently, cities spread outward along a repetitive, monotonous grid-shaped pattern of streets that contributed to the visual ugliness of the typical American cityscape.

City streets were not only ugly and unkempt but quite often paved with little more than promises. In Chicago, for example, two thirds of the streets remained unpaved as late as 1900. When it rained, streets became muddy quagmires and open sewers. Part of the problem was the nineteenth century's dependence on horse-drawn transportation. If street surfaces were too smooth, horses had trouble getting traction. And the horse was a far worse polluter than is the automobile. On New York City streets alone, at the turn of the century, horses deposited an estimated 2.5 million pounds of manure and 60,000 gallons of urine every day.

Garbage in the streets, the daily addition of tons of manure, polluted water and air, swarms of flies and mosquitoes, all mocked the idea of public health. In 1900, Baltimore and New Orleans, for instance, scarcely had any underground sewers. In most cities, individuals maintained their own privies. A leading authority on public health observed that a single privy "may render life in a whole neighborhood almost unendurable in the summer." Methods of purifying drinking water were equally primitive. The danger to health posed by dirty drinking water was not generally recognized until the 1890s. Only gradually did the germ theory of disease replace the notion that "sewer gas" or miasmic vapors caused illness and death. Cholera, malaria, typhoid fever, and smallpox regularly visited crowded urban neighborhoods. In the Memphis, Tennessee,

area in 1878 a severe yellow fever epidemic killed nearly 5,000 people.

Congestion compounded the problem of maintaining good public health. In the tenth ward of New York's Lower East Side in 1880, 47,000 people crowded into 48 city blocks. Because of high land costs, private developers covered nearly every square inch of ground. In some of the tenement buildings, more than half the rooms lacked windows. In response to a reform law passed in 1879, New York developers perfected the "dumbbell" tenement, a five- or six-story structure with four apartments to a floor. A slight indention between buildings formed a shaft that was supposed to admit light and air to the inner apartments, but more than anything it was a source of bad odors and noise. The typical tenement building remained dark, cheerless, and disease ridden.

The diversity of problems overwhelmed municipal governments in the late nineteenth century. Lord James Bryce, a British observer who visited the United States several times in the 1870s and 1880s, found that "the government of cities is the one conspicuous failure of the United States." Prominent educator Edward D. White was more blunt when he wrote in 1900 that "with few exceptions, the city governments of the United States are the worst in Christendom—the most expensive, the most inefficient, and the most corrupt."

The fact was that urban governments were not originally designed to cope with a host of complex issues. Moreover, rural-dominated state legislatures, reflecting a prejudice against the metropolises, often denied cities the power to alter their governments to respond to new circumstances.

In addition, because a majority of Americans in the late nineteenth century worshiped at the shrine of privatism, they believed in limited government that was at worst fragmented, feeble, and ineffective, and at best was not much better. As a result, a number of informal institutions and arrangements developed, such as the city machine, a political organization that provided the poor a variety of social services in exchange for their votes. Corrupt though they typically were, city machines functioned as primitive social welfare agencies.

Aiding the poor was not the only reason for the existence of the city machine. This organization thrived on the rapid urban

[82]

growth that multiplied opportunities for graft. Politicians and city employees were obligated to the machine bosses for their jobs. They were expected to remember their benefactors in a variety of ways, usually financial: policemen occasionally purchased promotions and dispensed favors for a price, politicians collected bribes from utility companies in exchange for awarding franchises. Favored contractors granted kickbacks to the city officials who hired them.

Outraged taxpayers, bearing the cost of excessively expensive additions to city hall or some other project that enriched the machine politicians and their cohorts, demanded reform but usually accomplished little. When in the 1890s Chicago reformers tried to defeat a corrupt alderman in a slum district, they ran into opposition from important corporations, streetcar conductors, telephone operators, peddlers, and others who obtained jobs, licenses, and a variety of favors from the culprit. Change in the form of civil service examinations and other reforms would eventually come, but cleanup was usually a dishearteningly slow, two-steps-forward-one-step-back struggle.

[83]

Despite its many perplexing problems, the city remained a magnet attracting new residents from Europe and the rural regions of America. The theme of farmers' sons and daughters leaving the family homestead for the bright lights and other allurements of the city was well grounded in fact. In the age before radio, television, motion pictures, and automobiles erased many of the distinctions between rural and urban life, city attractions proved enticing to country folk. This was especially true of those living in isolated areas where educational and cultural facilities were limited and jobs off the farm were scarce.

The city dominated rural and small-town America in other ways as well. During the two decades that followed the end of the Civil War in 1865, the spiking together of a nationwide network of railway lines greatly extended the economic power of the city. Increasingly, the items stocked by the village general store were manufactured and packaged in a distant city. With the rise of manufacturing giants that dominated the new nationwide markets, small-scale local industries found it impossible to compete.

Farmers who raised cash crops discovered themselves at the mercy of commodity speculators and big city buyers. Often the low

price they paid the farmer for his wheat, cotton, or corn bore no apparent relationship to his costs or hard toil. Perhaps most irritating of all, with the increasing importance of urban America the farmer lost status and prestige. In the eyes of many city people the sturdy yeoman of yesterday became the "hayseed" of today.

Inevitably, tensions arose between city and country. For a good many rural folk the city was "enemy terrain," a phrase used by the Democratic Party's 1896 presidential candidate, William Jennings Bryan. As spokesman for rural America, Bryan portrayed cities as parasites living off the country: "Burn down your cities and leave your farms, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic, but destroy our farms, and grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country."

The hostility expressed by Bryan and a good many other Americans was not merely a result of their fear or envy of the city's growing economic power. City life itself appeared threatening to people who cherished traditional values and ways of doing things. A casual walk through the city was frequently sufficient to unnerve people not accustomed to the restless sea of strangers. The brownstone mansions contrasting with squalid tenements, street smells and factory smoke, the discordant sounds of whistles blowing, bells ringing, and vendors shouting, was too much.

To folk whose lives followed the time-honored rhythms of nature—planting in the spring, harvesting in the fall; rising at dawn, retiring at dusk—the accelerated pace of city life was artificial. People there arranged activities according to the clock in increments of minutes and even seconds, a degree of preciseness irrelevant to life in the country. City people further divided their days into distinct blocks of work time and leisure time, and they spent their leisure in a variety of ways disturbing to rural Americans: in addition to public baseball and prizefights, many attended theaters, burlesque houses, pool halls, and saloons. Rural America had its vices, but none seemed as blatant as those of the metropolis.

Saloons especially disturbed critics of the city. East of the Mississippi River in 1880 there was one saloon for every 438 persons; in cities the number of saloons increased noticeably. Saloons in many locales outnumbered churches. The saloon served as a poor man's social club, but it was also a center of vice, often providing easy

[84]

access to drugs, gambling, and sex, in addition to liquor. Many a saloon served as a link between crime and the city machine.

For Protestants of a small-town or rural background the metropolis was unquestionably the devil's playground. Increasingly, it was also home for new arrivals from the Old World, immigrants whose culture and behavior appeared strange to old-stock Americans and whose swelling numbers made the established group apprehensive. Three fourths of the population of turn-of-the-century Chicago was foreign-born. New York's Italian population in 1890 was half that of Naples, and its Irish numbered twice that of Dublin. A person could walk for blocks through the immigrant neighborhoods without hearing a word of English.

[85]

A growing percentage of the immigrants who congregated in America's large cities after 1880 came from Southern and Eastern Europe. They were the "new" immigrants. In contrast to the "old" immigrants from Northern and Western Europe—mostly Protestants, except for the Irish and some Germans—the "new" immigrants tended to be Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, or Jewish.

For a variety of reasons, the "new" immigrants assimilated only slowly into the larger American society. As strangers in a strange and occasionally hostile land, they clung tenaciously to the language and faith of their fathers and clustered in urban ghettos or enclaves. These offered them the protection of the familiar and encouraged them to maintain their ethnic identity. All of this posed a challenge to the traditional beliefs and practices of America's Protestant majority.

Some Protestants, such as Henry Ward Beecher, pastor of Brooklyn's wealthy Plymouth Church and one of the most influential ministers in America, accommodated themselves to the city. The sentimental and egotistical Beecher won a large and loyal following by preaching a smug and complacent Christianity that bolstered the individualistic social and economic aspirations of the city's middle and upper classes. Others, the Social Gospelers, reached out to the poor and disinherited by establishing city missions and insisting that Christians address themselves not only to heavenly rewards but also to the problems on earth.

Some Protestants, however, never did come to grips with the metropolis. For them it was always an alien and hostile world

hopelessly steeped in rum and Romanism. Theirs was the gospel of flight to the safe haven of the suburb and countryside.

Expansion of electric streetcar and steam railway services to the outskirts of the city during the 1890s made possible the rise of numerous suburban communities. In large cities many wealthy residents and those who felt threatened by the urban environment fled to the suburbs, which offered the advantage of contact with nature while being close enough to the city to enjoy its economic [86] and cultural benefits. In the early years of the twentieth century the Country Life movement enjoyed a brief vogue. The sponsors of this notion were romantics who believed the countryside to be the salvation of the nation.

Ironically, just as new transportation technology made flight to the suburbs possible, a number of municipal reform movements arose to attack targets ranging from vice to impure milk. Aided by the muckrakers, who exposed the "shame" of the cities, municipal reformers grew even more noticeable and successful after the turn of the century. Some cities experimented with new forms of government—professional managers and commissioners took over many of the functions of mayors and aldermen—and instituted civil service in an effort to break the stranglehold of corrupt city machines. They also initiated or supported some rudimentary programs to provide social welfare for the needy. But for some these reforms made no difference: they had abandoned the city and its masses to pursue a safe, sanitized, and individualistic way of life in suburban, small-town, or rural America.

The city that bewildered and frightened so many old-stock Americans was preeminently a manufacturing center, home to a large number of working-class families. Their dependence on factory jobs and wages seldom allowed them the option of escaping to the country.

Despite the facts, however, one of the persistent themes in nineteenth-century American thought held that the nation's unoccupied frontier lands served as a safety valve during periodic economic depression to relieve the discontent of urban-industrial workers. Where the city's industrial workers were to acquire the money and knowledge necessary to take up farming was never adequately explained. In truth, just the opposite migration took place: the city functioned

as a safety valve for rural unrest. During hard times thousands of agrarians came to the city seeking work but usually succeeded only in heightening the struggle for a limited number of jobs, depressing the wage rates, and thereby worsening urban unrest.

Even during the best of times the lot of an industrial worker in the late nineteenth century was precarious. Although wages tended to increase from the late 1870s until the depression of the 1890s, workers were not handsomely rewarded. In 1893 the average annual income for all workers was about $450, and to earn that a person [87] toiled 10 hours a day, six days a week. After paying for life's bare necessities, little remained to buy a home or provide for emergencies such as sickness or injury. The disablement or death of the principal breadwinner was a family catastrophe, for no one had yet invented the social safety net later provided by workmen's compensation, sickness and accident insurance, Social Security, and pension plans.

Industrial labor was not only arduous but also dangerous. Exposed gears and pulleys regularly crushed hands and wrenched off arms. Heat, dust, and toxic fumes that built up in poorly ventilated factories sapped workers' vitality and contributed to premature aging and death. Factory and mine inspection laws that might have prevented industrial accidents were either nonexistent or at best poorly enforced. In fact, until the turn of the century, few laws spoke to the specific needs of workers. Lawmakers, reflecting society at large, had difficulty comprehending a rapidly changing world.

During the last three decades of the nineteenth century, Americans witnessed a technological revolution as machines replaced skilled craftsmen and powerful new corporations employing hundreds and even thousands of unskilled workers turned out an ever expanding array of products. Sullen artisans, whose skills had once guaranteed their independence, ended up selling their labor for wages. People accustomed to the simple, face-to-face relationships of a preindustrial age resisted the system of working for wages. They objected to its impersonality and even regarded it as a form of slavery.

So dramatic was the transformation of the American economic landscape that many people were overwhelmed by a sense of loss and fear. They searched in vain for old landmarks and familiar pathways

to guide them safely through the strange new world of corporate monopolies and trusts, labor unions, and industrial violence.

No problem caused more concern than the nation's ever more obvious division into rich and poor. At the turn of the century, 80 percent of Americans lived at the margin of subsistence while the remaining 20 percent controlled almost the entire wealth of the country. Members of a small but conspicuous financial elite, who made more money in a single day than the average worker earned in a year, competed to outdo one another in flaunting their wealth. At a sumptuous dinner at Delmonico's, cigarettes rolled in hundred-dollar bills were passed out after coffee. The wife of one millionaire spent $50,000 for a bathtub carved from a single block of rare pink Carrara marble. Another told reporters that the only thing economical about her private railway car was the solid gold plumbing: "It saves polishing, you know!" Finally, there was the tycoon who gave a dinner party for his dog and presented him with a diamond collar worth $15,000.

[88]

The ostentatious wealth of the new millionaires dazzled and excited Americans, but when contrasted with the grinding poverty of the increasingly prominent class of wageworkers, it troubled those who idealized the United States as a republic of individualistic, common people. The lopsided distribution of wealth and the violence that punctuated the era's labor-management relations caused many to fear that "the American people will not forever sit still in close quarters upon narrow rations, while a handful of men clutch the spoils that properly belong to the whole community as the product of their industry."

Some warned that the disturbing new economic order would expire in a cataclysmic finale "more horrible and far-reaching than the French Revolution." The powerful new engine of wealth production seemed to lack an effective governor as it propelled the nation's economy along an ever more dangerous course alternating between unprecedented peaks of prosperity and equally unprecedented valleys of depression.

Americans plunged into severe economic depression in the mid-1880s. Thought leaders in an age that had as its byword "survival of the fittest" were resigned to the human misery that periodic slumps, panics, and crashes caused. They were often inclined to view de-

pressions as natural phenomena similar to hailstorms and floods. Some even spoke in lofty tones of the salutary effects of hard times, of how they chastened real estate speculators, stockjobbers, and the improvident generally.

But unemployed workers viewed such troubles from the considerably different perspective of the empty stomach. "Hard times," said a nineteenth-century observer, "create empty stomachs and reflecting minds. People then commence to study and to sympathize with ideas which they regarded as ridiculous but a few years earlier." Some plunged into radical politics; others lashed out in violent protests against wage cuts and mass layoffs. More than anything [89] else, depressions reminded workers of the power employers held over them because of the wage system.

In the struggle for survival, workers found sustenance in their lodges, clubs, and unions. These provided camaraderie and, frequently, vital death and disability benefits. Many also sponsored lyceums, study groups, brass bands, and picnics, all popular forms of activity in an age innocent of motion pictures, radio, and television.

For a few years one of the most popular labor organizations was the Noble Order of the Knights of Labor. Functioning as a combination lodge, political reform club, and trade union, the Knights grew to international proportions in the 1880s, and was for a time the dominant labor body in the United States and Canada. Though not the first labor union in North America, the Knights attained greater influence than any predecessor.

In keeping with their idealistic motto "An Injury to One Is an Injury to All," Knights sought to unite "all branches of honorable toil without regard to nationality, sex, creed, or color." Only a mixed bag of doctors, lawyers, bankers, stockbrokers, professional gamblers, and liquor sellers were excluded. Elaborate and secret rituals and mysteries created by people steeped in the rites of Masonry, the Odd Fellows, or the Knights of Pythias provided members a sense of dignity, a welcomed escape from loneliness, and protection from the prying eyes of employers.

Knights opposed the wage system and ultimately hoped to perfect a viable alternative such as worker-owned and -operated cooperatives. They also promoted a host of less encompassing reforms such as abolition of child labor, equal pay for men and women doing

the same work, and health and safety laws. In their struggle with recalcitrant employers they used both the boycott and the strike.

Although Knights were committed to peaceful change through education and political and ecnomic persuasion, they still aroused hostility in many quarters. Some people feared economic strangulation by boycott; others objected to labor organizations in general. Catholic church leaders disapproved of the Knights' secrecy and of certain quasireligious elements in their ritual, and though Knights eliminated the objectionable features in 1881, some Catholic leaders continued to condemn the order for several more years.

[90]   Despite such opposition, the Knights prospered. After they abandoned secrecy, their membership doubled and quadrupled, reaching a high of 700,000 in early 1886. But rapid growth was but a prelude to an even more rapid decline.

A protest staged in Chicago's Haymarket Square in 1886 fatally tainted the Knights in the opinion of many people, although the order was not responsible for the violence that erupted there. Anarchist speakers had just finished addressing a large crowd of striking workers when police arrived to disperse the gathering. When someone threw a bomb, panic-stricken officers opened fire. In the melee, seven policemen and four workers were killed, and about 70 persons were wounded. The Haymarket riot caused an immediate revulsion against anarchism and other protest movements, the Knights included. Membership dropped precipitously, and the order never recovered.

Rightly or wrongly, many Americans in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries associated labor unions with violence. During that time the United States had the bloodiest labor-management relations of any industrialized nation. Major outbursts of violence erupted during the great railway strikes of 1877 (the nation's first widespread work stoppage), the Haymarket riot of 1886, the Homestead strike of 1892, and the Pullman strike of 1894. During the 1890s, Rocky Mountain mining camps—particularly those in the Coeur d'Alene region of north Idaho—remained in an almost constant state of turmoil punctuated by dynamite blasts, beatings, and shootings.

The problem was that labor and management confronted one another with no commonly accepted precedents or principles to guide

their actions. Many employers could no more accept the legitimacy of organized labor than many workers could accept the permanency of the wage system. Inclined to regard any demand by labor as a dangerous challenge to management's prerogatives, some employers preferred to confront their workers across the barricades rather than at the bargaining table. Employers occasionally precipitated trouble by firing union workers and replacing them with lower paid nonunion, or "scab," labor, planting spies in union meetings, intimidating union sympathizers with thugs and hired gunmen, and using [91] agent provocateurs to foment the violence that discredited organized labor in the eyes of the public.

Americans who glorified individualism, abhorred the notion of social classes, and idealized their nation as a promised land of unprecedented economic opportunity found it impossible to comprehend the causes of worker protests and equally impossible to imagine that any good could come of the trade union movement. The very term *organized labor* sounded alien to many an ear. The fact that the new industrial era was also an age of organization often eluded people accustomed to a preindustrial world in which economic relationships were commonly conducted between individuals.

In such a simple world, employee and employer possessed relatively equal power. The employer set wages, hours, and working standards, and the employee was free to accept or reject these. Perhaps by informal bargaining he could get the employer to modify his terms. If not, he could always take another job down the road. At least, that was the vision of preindustrial America that many held.

But in the industrial era the employer was often a corporation. The corporation represented "individualism incorporated": that is, in the eyes of the law a corporation was an artificial person entitled to the same constitutional privileges and immunities as a flesh-and-blood person. The same American glorification of individualism applied to both, although in reality the corporation possessed far more power than any actual person. An individual railway engineer, for example, was scarcely on an equal footing with his employer when that employer happened to be the Pennsylvania Railroad or some other large corporation. People who insisted that the old equality still applied in such a relationship could never understand

that only by uniting with fellow workers could a lone employee hope to acquire bargaining power equal to that of his employer.

A later age would describe the relationship between organized capital and organized labor as one of the countervailing power. But in the late nineteenth century people often referred to corporations as "trusts," "monopolies," "soulless machines," or "octopuses" whose grasping tentacles reached everywhere; labor unions were referred to as "communistic" or "un-American." Of the two forms of organization, labor usually seemed the greater threat. Thus when workers [92] joined together to protest long hours, low wages, or dangerous working conditions, many observers called for repression: "Give the workingmen and strikers gun bullet food for a few days, and you will observe how they take to that sort of bread." Time and again, state and federal troops were called out to help corporations resist the demands of organized workers. In most cases, middle- and upper-class Americans blamed labor and not organized capital for violating America's time-honored principle (or myth) of individualism.

Shaping such public opinion were a press and pulpit generally hostile to organized labor. Although a few Protestant clergymen sought to adapt their beliefs to the new age by promoting the social gospel and even Christian socialism, most Protestant spokesmen supported traditional economic individualism and were inclined to see the evolving social order as just. In fact, in no place did the new business elite find greater favor than in the Protestant churches. Baptist clergyman Russell Conwell in a celebrated lecture, "Acres of Diamonds," preached a gospel that celebrated riches: "I say that you ought to get rich; you have no right to be poor." He suggested that it was wrong to be poor.

Defender of the economic status quo, Henry Ward Beecher maintained that the poor should be content to live on bread and water, arguing that a man "who cannot live on bread is not fit to live." Protestants shared Beecher's condemnation of the eight-hour day, viewed poverty as a sign of personal sin, and advocated suppression of strikes. Some, such as a Lutheran congregation in Wisconsin, even forbade members to join labor unions.

The Roman Catholic Church's response to industrialism was at first ambivalent. While some conservative bishops opposed the Knights of Labor, James Cardinal Gibbons—for more than 30 years

the nominal head of the Catholic Church in America—thought the order posed no real danger to Catholics. He established himself as a supporter of the workingman. In 1891 Pope Leo XIII issued a famous encyclical, *Rerum Novarum,* which called the condition of the working class "the pressing question of the hour." Though upholding private property and condemning violence, Leo maintained that the laboring poor suffered under "a yoke little better than that of slavery itself" and asserted it was the duty of the state to foster social justice. Largely as a result of the work of Cardinal Gibbons and the *Rerum Novarum,* the Roman Catholic Church enjoyed a reputation as a friend to labor, a reputation that Protestantism progressively lost. It need not have been that way.

Many of America's pioneer labor leaders were Protestants who based their call for economic and social reform on a New Testament vision of justice for the poor and a condemnation of riches. Some of the early labor anthems were adaptations of songs that workers sang in Protestant churches, such as "Hold the Fort" and "In the Sweet By and By":

> "There's a glorious future in store
> When the toil-worn shall rise from the dust;
> Then the poor shall be trampled no more,
> And mankind to each other be just.
> "In the sweet by and by,
> When the spirit of justice shall reign;
> In the sweet by and by,
> When the spirit of justice shall reign."

But as the nineteenth century wound to a close it became ever more evident that Protestantism was losing its working-class members. The close alliance between Protestantism and wealth, and the attitude of Protestant clergymen toward labor's struggle, had not gone unnoticed by workers. "We believe much in Jesus and in His teachings, but not much in the teaching of His pretended followers," one workingman declared. For many working-class worshipers, it was increasingly difficult even to find a Protestant church to attend. As the church adopted an increasingly middle-class stance, it not

only alienated many workers but also discovered compelling reasons to abandon physically the working-class neighborhoods of the metropolis in order to flee to suburban or rural environments.

The changes accompanying the abrupt rise of urban-industrial America were so disturbing to so many people that one historian aptly described the years from 1890 to 1917 as a shake-up period. During that epoch new forms of organization—national labor unions and large corporations—challenged the nation's traditional, individualistic norms and values; the metropolis intruded on rural and small-town life. At the same time, the primary agents of change themselves evolved rapidly. The idealistic Knights of Labor, for [94] example, lost out to the more cautious American Federation of Labor in the 1890s. Eventually, after labor and management learned to resolve most of their differences through collective bargaining, industrial violence waned. And as memories of the nation's preindustrial past faded, Americans more or less reconciled themselves to the corporations, labor unions, and cities that defined American life in the twentieth century. Indeed, many today find it difficult to understand fully the forebodings expressed by the first generation of Americans to confront an urban-industrial world.

[95]   **Bibliographical Note**

Ellen White comments critically on city life in The Ministry of Healing, 363-365, and Testimonies for the Church 9:89-96. She also points out the spiritual condition of the cities and the duty of Adventists to evangelize the urban areas in Testimonies for the Church 9:97-100. Although references to unions appear in several of the above passages, Testimonies for the Church 7:84, offers an eschatological view of labor organizations.

Chapter 6—When America Was "Christian"

Jonathan Butler

Among the Christian exiles who first fled to America and sought an asylum from royal oppression and priestly intolerance were many who determined to establish a government upon the broad foundation of civil and religious liberty.... Republicanism and Protestantism became the fundamental principles of the nation. These principles are the secret of its power and prosperity. The oppressed and downtrodden throughout Christendom have turned to this land with interest and hope. Millions have sought its shores, and the United States has risen to a place among the most powerful nations of the earth.

—The Great Controversy (1888), 441.

Writing of antebellum America as if it were Zion, Horace Bushnell declared, "The wilderness shall bud and blossom as the rose before us; and we will not cease, till a Christian nation throws up its temples of worship on every hill and plain."

This renowned Congregationalist theologian and cleric looked for the day when "knowledge, virtue, and religion, blending their dignity and their healthful power, have filled our great country with a manly and happy race of people, and the bands of a complete Christian commonwealth are seen to span the continent."

Like other nineteenth-century evangelicals, what Bushnell meant by "a complete Christian commonwealth" was a Protestant nation. And indeed, in many respects nineteenth-century America became Protestant. In political life, both houses of Congress were dominated by Protestants, and reflected the Protestant agenda of political concerns such as temperance and Sunday "blue laws." In the media, the major newspapers and journals were owned by Protestants, and

showed their bias. The Monday editions published the full texts of Sunday's sermons.

In 1878 a premier prophetic conference was held in New York City, and the New York Tribune printed 50,000 copies of an "extra" to provide verbatim reports on it. In education, the public schools used McGuffey's Eclectic Readers, which mixed Protestant piety and American patriotism in a series that sold 122 million copies in its original and revised editions. The suffusing of American primary education with a Protestant ethos established the public schools as virtually a Protestant parochial school system. And in religion, in the spirit of Bushnell's "temples of worship on every hill and plain," Methodists alone aimed to build "two churches a day" across the nation.

Times have changed. It is the regret of many twentieth-century evangelicals that Protestantism no longer functions as the culture-shaping power of American life as it once did. One American church historian contrasts the nineteenth-century "Protestant hopes" to make America "Christian" to the "historical realities" of our time. Another refers to the shift "from a sacred to a profane America." While most legislators still list their religious affiliation as "Protestant," they certainly do not evoke an explicitly Protestant vision for American life. The secular media usually compartmentalizes religion into "local" or "entertainment" reports. The struggle to put prayer into public schools and the rise of fundamentalist Christian schools provide one index of the fact that Protestants have lost their hold on education. And the nation that once measured success in the building of churches now stares at empty pews, especially in mainline Protestantism.

In 1800, American religion, though the reasons and characteristics were different, had also reached a low ebb. In the aftermath of military victory in the war for independence, the American churches suffered spiritual defeat. The French Revolution inspired the transformation of deism, with its antagonism for revealed religion, from an aristocratic to a popular movement. Moreover, westward migration carried a vast population to "uncivilized" and "unchristian" settlements beyond the reach of the churches.

In the first flush of enthusiasm evoked by the Revolution, America had seen itself as a latter-day Israel. The dark, tyrannous powers

of Europe lay behind it, and the Promised Land fell within its grasp. Thomas Jefferson recommended the pillar of cloud by day and light by night as the national symbol of the American Israel. Ezra Stiles [99] entitled his Connecticut election sermon of 1783 "The United States Elevated to Glory and Honor." With his back turned on Europe, Stiles exuberantly predicted, "This will be a great, a very great nation, nearly equal to half of Europe." He hoped for the day when "the Lord shall have made His American Israel high above all nations which He has made—in numbers, and in praise, and in name, and in honor."

But the exhilaration of the moment waned. The war had left the Colonies depleted and disarrayed. The basis for optimism had been the boundless land, the enlarging population, and the diversity of interest. These very factors now undercut the hopefulness with anxiety. For more than two decades, then, the new Israel wandered in the wilderness wondering how to fulfill its promise.

As far as the American churches were concerned, the most promising and yet the most frightening feature of their new nation was the fact that it now separated church and state. The churches were no longer "established," but voluntary organizations. This dramatic innovation of American life reduced the denominations to one resource for spiritual renewal—persuasion.

So, convinced of the Tightness of their cause, Protestants in particular expected revival preaching to make America "Christian." Revivals had succeeded before. The Great Awakening of the 1740s had solidified a national consciousness that prompted the American Revolution. But following the Revolution, as with other postwar eras, the nation stood in dire need of spiritual rejuvenation.

While the first ripples of revival occurred in the 1790s, the great revivalistic wave called the Second Great Awakening engulfed the nation for almost two generations beginning in 1800. Typical of other great revivals in history, the schools figured prominently at the outset. The most important revival in Virginia happened among the students at Hampden-Sydney and Washington colleges in 1787.

In 1802, at Yale, President Timothy Dwight delivered a notable series of chapel talks to combat "freethinking" among the students, and prompted a revival. The real significance of the Yale revival was the fact that two students in Dwight's student body became

prominent leaders of the New England awakening. Lyman Beecher served as its organizer, and Nathaniel Taylor as its theologian.

[100]   The Second Awakening introduced a new kind of revivalism from that of Jonathan Edwards and the Great Awakening. In the earlier Calvinist awakening, the faithful heard the preaching of God's Word and were "surprised" by the revival that resulted. They had only waited for revivals, as their God arbitrarily elected a few and damned the many without human assistance. In the Second Awakening, however, preachers provoked revivals by the use of "means" or techniques. With a shift from Calvinism to a new American orthodoxy—Arminianism—man cooperated with God in bringing on revivals.

For Charles Finney, the celebrity evangelist of the era, the new revivals were "man-made." The revivalist elicited them by means of "new measures." On the rugged Kentucky-Tennessee frontier, camp meetings provided a distinctive technique in American religious life marked, around 1800, by wild physical "exercises" such as falling, running, jumping, barking, and jerking.

In western New York, where Finney knew great success in the 1820s, revivals were more tame but no less novel or controversial. "Bred a lawyer," Finney employed the tactics of a trial attorney as part of his new evangelistic techniques. He wore legal gray instead of clerical black. He referred to the "wicked" in his audience as "you" instead of "they." The "convicted sinners" were coaxed to the "anxious bench," a front pew roughly like a witness stand, where the lawyer-like evangelist fiercely cross-examined men and women in regard to their spiritual destinies.

Among the more scandalous new measures of Finney's meetings was the practice of women testifying and praying in public. Another measure, the "protracted meeting"—a townwide revival campaign that lasted several weeks—was the camp meeting brought to town.

The results of the Second Awakening were astounding. Lyman Beecher had opposed adamantly the disestablishment of the church in his home state of Connecticut, for he thought religion could never prosper on an "open market." Within two short years of this gloomy projection, however, he reversed his position as the Protestant phalanx swept the nation.

Under the experiment of religious freedom, Protestantism thrived and triumphed in establishing itself as the culture-shaping religious force in American life. Between 1800 and 1835 the nation's church [101] membership doubled as a result of the revivals. And when French observer Alexis de Tocqueville visited the United States in the 1830s, he reported that "there is no country in the world in which the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men than in America."

Congregationalists, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians had dominated the Colonial scene as established churches, but under a "free enterprise" system of religion the Methodists and Baptists came into their own. Both Methodists and Baptists proved especially adaptable to the American frontier conditions. The Protestant achievement, however, crossed denominational lines. The crusade to Christianize America engaged a wide range of Protestants in an ecumenical task that saw, by the 1830s, the American wilderness begin to "bud and blossom as the rose."

In their effort to Christianize America, Protestants sustained and spread Second Awakening enthusiasm through numerous voluntary organizations. In these societies, Congregationalists or Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists or Quakers, laid aside their sectarian differences to combine energies in specific religious tasks. American Protestants, then, expressed less concern for matters of faith than practice. They focused less on belief than behavior. The theological quarrels between various religious groups were minimized by the more pragmatic frame of mind. American Protestants, as the vernacular would have it, were "all going to the same place." That is, they were marching in lockstep toward a Christian America—their kingdom of God on earth.

Societies founded for tract distribution or missions, education or temperance, antislavery or peace, enlisted the broadest possible support in the pursuit of single objectives. Pooling their resources in these societies, Protestant efforts flowed toward that larger, all-important objective of transforming American society in their image.

The missionary organizations, both home and foreign, were the most instrumental in this process. The circuit-riding Methodist missionary offered the best example of the expansiveness of the Protestant vision, as he showed up everywhere. Indeed, people

commonly characterized the severity of a cloud burst or a blizzard by saying that "nobody was out but crows and Methodist preach-

ers." Numerous missionary organizations cropped up as Protestants sought to serve the Indians, or frontier areas, or foreign fields.

Bible and tract societies supplied the devotional literature for this missionary expansion. They served Sunday schools that trained children. They fed education societies, which built colleges and seminaries for the preparation of missionary personnel. Humanitarian groups provided another form of missionary endeavor whereby Protestants worked toward moral and social reform.

Voluntary societies became so pervasive that Orestes Brownson, himself an erstwhile social reformer, complained that "matters have come to such a pass that a peaceable man can hardly venture to eat or drink, to go to bed or get up, to correct his children or kiss his wife" without the guidance or approval of some society.

However one viewed the Protestant resurgence as the new nation took shape, the United States clearly illustrated Kenneth Scott Latourette's point that the nineteenth century was "the great century" in the history of Christianity.

American Protestants of the early nineteenth century unified in their revivals and voluntary societies and therefore spurned "the spirit of sectarianism" that quenched enthusiasm or drained energy from the organizational enterprises. There were, however, dissenters within, and defectors from, the great Protestant empire.

The Unitarians and Universalists withdrew from evangelical religion because of the doctrinal harshness of revivalist preaching. James Freeman Clarke's Affirmation of Faith summarized the minimal theology of Unitarians: "The fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the leadership of Jesus, salvation by character, and the progress of mankind onward and upward forever." Their well-to-do New England urbanity led to the quip that Unitarians believed in the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, and the neighborhood of Boston. Universalists were their less sophisticated rural counterparts who found eternal punishment intolerable.

Still other critics faulted evangelical religion for its doctrinal laxity. This group revived confessionalism and the sacramental life. The Old School confessionalists brought charges of heresy against New School or New Divinity men who supported the revivals. A

number of heresy trials resulted in the early 1830s, though in each case the charges were dismissed.

The "high church" sentiment found its ablest spokesman of what was termed "evangelical catholicism" in John W. Nevin. He wrote *The Anxious Bench* as an outright attack on the "new measures" of revivalism.

[103]

The Second Awakening ethos produced unusually widespread religious ferment, marked by boundless expectation and unbridled enthusiasm. The millenarian and utopian movements of this time were less a rebuttal of evangelical revivalism than unique extensions of it. American church historian Winthrop Hudson identifies three emphases of revivalist preaching that created the climate of enthusiasm out of which came the new religious sects and social communities of this era. First, revivalists demanded an immediate confrontation with God, which could take the form of a vision of new revelation. Second, the revivalists stressed the potential for complete sanctification, which encouraged the holiness impulse and a life free from sin. Finally, they heightened millennial expectations of a golden age to come. All the groups that deviated from the evangelical religion of the era contained one or another of these emphases, and usually all three of them.

Ann Lee and her Shaker following, or John Humphrey Noyes and the Oneida Perfectionists, or Joseph Smith and the Mormons—each blended a new revelation with perfectionist and millenarian ideas in the formation of communal societies. The similarities between them ended in the way they viewed marriage and sexuality in the communal context. The Shakers rejected it altogether in adopting celibacy; the Mormons went to the opposite extreme in embracing polygamy; the Oneida Perfectionists fell somewhere in between in opting for the sexual promiscuity of "spiritual wifery."

William Miller and the Millerites also flourished in this religious climate and should not be dismissed, according to social historian Whitney Cross, "as ignorant farmers, libertarian frontiersmen, impoverished victims of economic change, or hypnotized followers of a maniac, ... when the whole of American Protestantism came so very close to the same beliefs." Cross believes that Millerites held to "the logical absolute of fundamentalist orthodoxy," much as another

historian, Timothy Smith, finds among them "a sensational variant of the views [other Protestants] all preached."

Prior to the American Civil War, evangelical Protestantism held a position of dominance, despite the factions that either opposed it or introduced their own novel versions of the Protestant vision. For the most part, America had achieved "a Christian commonwealth" of Bushnell's terms. The Civil War, however, was a watershed between an earlier and later America in which Protestantism began to lose its firm grip on the nation and became just one hand among many that reached for a hold on American life.

After the Civil War, Protestantism faced a conspicuously different population. In the decade before the war, the number of foreign born had increased by about 85 percent. Between 1860 and 1870, there occurred a further increase of almost 35 percent. This first great influx came from Ireland and was mostly Catholic, or from Germany and was made up of both Catholic and Lutheran Protestants, none of whom shared the Calvinist-Methodist roots of American evangelicals. By 1900, out of a population of 75 million, one third of Americans were either of foreign birth or children of foreign-born parents. Most of these new Americans were Catholics, Jewish, or Eastern Orthodox.

Not only did the demographic landscape profoundly change after the Civil War, but the intellectual climate shifted radically as well. In the earlier half of the century, geology rewrote the Genesis account of the origin of the world in the work of Charles Lyell. Biology, however, came to symbolize dramatically the era's intellectual revolution with the publication of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859.

Evolution was not new, nor was it confined to biology. Philosophers such as Hegel and Comte had heralded evolutionary thought earlier in the century, and Herbert Spencer superseded Darwin in importance by spelling out the implications of evolution in philosophy and ethics, psychology, and sociology. On the heels of the "new science," a "new history" adapted its methods to fresh ways of understanding the past. "Higher criticism" soon followed with its disturbing reinterpretation of the Bible.

Intellectual change in America was accompanied by a rapid urban and industrial transformation of the nation. Before the war a

simple Jeffersonian ideal had prevailed. The people were lured by the land, the unsettled, beckoning West. But as early as the decade of the 1840s, the population of the cities increased by 90 percent while the country as a whole grew only 36 percent. By 1860 the capital [105] invested in industry, the railroads, commerce, and urban property exceeded the value of the farms. The Civil War then escalated this industrial growth into an explosion. The military needs put heavy demands on industry, and industry responded with immense growth and expansion. By the end of the war, America clearly had evolved from a rural to an urban and industrial society.

Conflicts arose politically between rural western interests and the powerful urban commercial interests concentrated in the East, but rural America gained no more than regional victories. Rural Americans also fought a losing battle in the face of the changing social values of the big city. It became increasingly difficult to "keep 'em down on the farm once they'd seen" New York and Chicago, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C.

The demographic, intellectual, and urban-industrial changes in national life posed serious challenges to American Protestants. The new immigrants eroded the Protestant domination both ethnically and religiously. The new science imperiled pivotal Protestant views of the Bible and history. The new industrialism left rural and small-town Protestants at a loss in dealing with the wage-earning masses of the megalopolis.

The new immigrants aroused nativist reaction on the part of old stock Americans for several reasons. Culturally, the Irish and Germans of the first wave and the Southern and Eastern Europeans of the second wave brought with them new folkways, customs, and values. Socially, they prompted apprehension by their poverty, illiteracy, and lack of sanitation. Politically, they seemed to arrive one day and vote the next in machine-style, "block" voting patterns. Economically, they did cheap labor for an industrializing nation, but they also depressed the wages and lowered the standard of living for Americans of longer standing.

Religiously, Protestant-Catholic tensions resulted from the nativist sentiment. Roman Catholicism was portrayed as part of an international conspiracy to subvert American democracy. Samuel F. B. Morse, inventor of the telegraph, had written a series of letters to

the New York Observer in 1834 to this effect, entitled "A Foreign Conspiracy Against the Liberties of the United States." In the same period, Lyman Beecher and Horace Bushnell believed that Roman Catholicism sought to conquer Middle America and thus that area would become a battlefield of cosmic importance.

[106]

The Civil War diverted American attention from all but the conflict at hand, but the conspiracy theme was revived in 1887 with the formation of the American Protective Association. That organization pledged its members "to strike the shackles and chains of blind obedience to the Roman Catholic Church from the hampered and bound consciences of a priest-ridden and church-oppressed people."

In addition to their concern that Catholics were plotting to overthrow America's democratic institutions, Protestants collided with Catholics in two areas that embodied, for evangelicals, bulwarks of "a Christian commonwealth." One was Sabbath observance. From Colonial Puritan days, American Protestants had looked upon strict Sunday observance as a cornerstone of the communities' religious, social, and even political life. The "Continental Sunday" injected into American culture by the Catholics permitted a more relaxed, permissive observance and seemed to Protestants to sap the nation's strength.

Another issue that divided Protestants from Catholics was temperance. While traditionally Protestants had drunk, they had long lambasted the evils of drinking to excess. Temperance societies proliferated in the late 1820s and 1830s with temperance pledges of varying degrees of strictness. As the temperance crusade shifted toward prohibition, Protestants divided on the question of whether persuasion alone could achieve their ends or whether coercion was necessary. Protestants had come to see temperance as vital to the nation's welfare morally, politically, commercially, and domestically. Catholics dismayed them, then, by bringing in "their grog shops like the frogs of Egypt upon us."

On the issues of Sabbath observance and temperance, Protestants hoped they could hang on to or reassert their ascendancy in American culture by way of two legislative efforts: the Sunday "blue law" and prohibition.

The new science prompted a less united response from Protestants than the new immigration. Henry Ward Beecher, the prominent

pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church in Brooklyn, spoke for Protestant liberalism in declaring that ministers cannot afford to become "apostles of the dead past" by letting "the development of truth run ahead of them." Beecher counted himself "a cordial Christian evolutionist." In a similar vein, philosopher John Fiske, in his *Outline of Cosmic Philosophy,* coined the formula "Evolution is God's way of doing things."

[107]

The theory of evolution actually posed less serious a problem than the "scientific" study of the Bible. Biblical scholars pointed up apparent conflicts within the Bible that challenged its authority. Ultimately, Protestants developed different ways of understanding biblical authority; but first, many of them sought a new basis of authority, either in "evangelical liberalism" or in "scientific modernism."

Among evangelical liberals, Bushnell became a key figure in framing a theology that provided escape from bondage to the verbal form in which doctrine had been cast. He fashioned a Christocentric theology based upon internal Christian experience rather than external dogmatic authority. Later nineteenth-century theologians would enlarge upon this system by posing a spiritual faith based neither on the church nor on the Bible but on the Christian experience of man. In this way, evangelical liberals believed the Bible remained aloof from the assaults of "higher criticism."

Scientific modernists suggested a more radical approach on the relation of science to religion than did the evangelical liberals. They used psychological and sociological analysis to explain not only religious experience but doctrine and church practice. Biblical theologian Shailer Mathews defined modernism as a faith in which "science" became the final arbiter on matters of religion. His sociohistorical approach to theology viewed all doctrinal statements as products of a cultural context. Thus, historic Christian doctrines were neither normative nor permanent.

Appalled by the accommodation within Protestantism to the new science, conservatives launched a counterattack. This involved primarily an emphatic, dogmatic denial, based on their indifference to "scientific" studies. Princeton theologian Charles Hodge, for example, adopted a defensive posture impervious to the new scholarship when he insisted, "We can even afford to acknowledge our incompe-

tence to meet them in argument, or to answer their objections; and yet our faith remains unshaken and rational." The notorious heresy trials that resulted when conservatives brought charges against liberals gained wide attention in the public press, but were confined largely to Hodge's own Presbyterian church in the North.

Protestant conservatism, however, involved more than an attack on liberals. The conservatives proposed an agenda of their own. The "dispensationalist" and "premillennialist" speculations of J. N. Darby in England inspired "prophetic" Bible conferences in America. Meeting annually after 1876, these conferences supplied the leadership in the newly established "Bible schools." The popularity of the *Scofield Reference Bible,* annotated according to dispensationalist theories, further solidified the importance of the "prophetic" movement in virtually all Protestant denominations.

The new science divided Protestants into two divergent parties—modernists and fundamentalists. Urbanization and industrialization presented challenges that similarly split American Protestantism. The working-classes confronted Protestants with an impenetrable barrier. Their evangelistic successes were achieved among white-collar workers who had come from rural areas, not the blue-collar ethnic masses. The poor, the destitute, and the unskilled laborers were an entirely lost cause for Protestants. The finely dressed, sophisticated Protestant congregations made all but the middle and upper-middle classes uncomfortable.

By the 1870s the radical criticism of society that had marked the antebellum socialistic and millenarian movements in the 1830s and 1840s had passed away. Historian Henry F. May observed that "in 1876 Protestantism presented a massive, almost unbroken front in its defense of the social status quo," and Roman Catholicism did likewise. By the 1890s several outbreaks of violence between labor and management had shaken people from their social complacency. And by the turn of the century a two-party Protestantism revealed itself in two different gospels: the gospel of wealth and the social gospel.

The gospel of wealth baptized laissez-faire economics into American evangelicalism. The foremost apostle of the system was steel magnate Andrew Carnegie, who believed civilization depended on the "sacredness" of property, free competition, and free accumula-

tion of wealth. He tempered the harshness of his economic survival-of-the-fittest, however, with the Wesleyan slogan that one should not only "gain all you can" and "save all you can," but "give all you can."

Carnegie's gospel interlaced the stewardship of money, time, and talent, and found able clerical spokesmen in Phillips Brooks, Henry Ward Beecher, and Russell Conwell. In his famous lecture "Acres of Diamonds," Conwell exhorted that everyone had a "duty to get rich." The diamonds were in one's own backyard.

The Social Gospel countered the economic individualism of a Carnegie and a Conwell with social concern for the laborer. Social Gospelers sought to bridge the chasm between the management types in Protestant pews and the unchurched laboring man by combating social injustice.

"Social Christianity" implied that the individual conversions of Dwight Moody's evangelistic campaign had not done enough. The social environment to which these individuals returned after the evangelist left town must itself be transformed. Drawing upon an Old Testament prophetic tradition, Social Gospelers wanted to save society, not just "souls." Thus, Baptist Social Gospeler Walter Rauschenbusch's *Christianizing of the Social Order* (1912).

If late-nineteenth-century Protestants divided in their response to an increasingly complex social and intellectual order, the non-Protestants that flooded America in this period pushed pluralism to seemingly limitless proportions. Between 1860 and 1900 a half million Jews poured into the country, escaping the anti-Semitism of Russia, Poland, Austria-Hungary, and Romania.

While Eastern Orthodoxy maintained a lower profile on the American scene than Judaism, it too added ethnic color to the urban landscape, primarily from immigrants of Russian background. The Lutherans staked out the Midwest by way of German and Scandinavian migration. Buddhism made its appearance among the Chinese and Japanese on the West Coast. Numerous esoteric faiths with varying links to the Orient introduced such religious systems as Hinduism, Theosophy, and New Thought. And in this ambience, Christian Science took hold and eventually flourished.

In the course of the nineteenth century, America evolved from a Protestant nation to a Protestant-Catholic-Jewish-Eastern Orthodox-

Mormon-New Thought-Buddhist-Hindu country—and even this is not a complete list of the ingredients in the religious salad bowl.

[110]   In 1885 Josiah Strong, president of the American Home Missionary Society, wrote the book, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Present Crisis,* in which he summoned Americans to Christianize the world. He believed that Anglo-Saxon Americans bore two great traditions—"civil liberty" and "spiritual Christianity"—which were, for him, republicanism and Protestantism. While Strong saw the social, intellectual, and religious upheavals of late-nineteenth-century America as threats to the Christianization—really, Protestantization—of the world, he nevertheless fully expected to "save America for the world's sake." The course of human events steadily moved toward an ever more democratic and Christian world.

In the twentieth century, however, both democracy and Christianity occupy mere enclaves on an ominously totalitarian and non-Christian globe. The Anglo-Saxon Protestant can never expect to "hold the whole world in his hands." Indeed, he has even lost grip on America.

[111]   **Bibliographical Note**

For Ellen White, the American story, both politically and religiously, wove itself dramatically into the Adventist eschatology. Her comments on America—its past, present, and future—may be found fully expressed in her magnum opus, *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan;* see especially chapters 16 to the end. For her focus on American Sunday legislation, see "The Impending Conflict" in Testimonies for the Church 5:711-718.

Chapter 7—The Sunday Law Movement

Dennis Pettibone

Those who honor the Bible Sabbath will be denounced as enemies of law and order, as breaking down the moral restraints of society, causing anarchy and corruption, and calling down the judgments of God upon the earth.... Even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance.

—The Great Controversy, 592.

I wish to God we had more Methodist churches, and more Baptist churches, and more Catholic churches," Obion County attorney general J. R. Bond told the jury, "but in the name of God, I do not want any of these Advent churches, or Mormon churches."

Robert M. King, a new convert to Adventism, was being tried for plowing his cornfield on Sunday. Several months earlier, his Methodist neighbors—fearing that King's example would confuse their children as to which day really was the Sabbath—had demanded that he either quit keeping Saturday or move away from the Tennessee community in which he had lived all his life. If he did not start to observe Sunday, they threatened, he would be prosecuted.

Insisting on his right to observe God's law in accordance with his understanding of the Bible, King replied that being a poor man, he could not afford to forfeit one sixth of the time he needed to support his family.

King's non-Adventist neighbors had violated the law by hunting, fishing, and laboring on Sunday without being prosecuted. But when King had quietly gone out to cultivate a field of corn "so tall ... as to nearly hide him from sight," he had been promptly arrested. After paying $13 in fines and costs, he had again been indicted—this time on the grounds that his Sunday plowing had been a public nuisance.

The court had not allowed the defense to produce testimony that King had already paid a fine for working on June 23, 1889. Nor had it permitted the introduction of evidence that King was a member of an organization that observed the seventh-day Sabbath or that the prosecution had singled out Seventh-day Adventists for arrest while ignoring Sunday law violations by others—including at least one of the witnesses.

Even though his lawyer had not been allowed to use King's church membership as a defense, the prosecuting attorney was permitted to use it to arouse prejudice against the defendant. Deliberately confounding Adventism and Mormonism, Bond declared that "all those fellows" should be hanged. "Not satisfied with working on Sunday, and keeping half a dozen women," he raged, "they come down here and want to save us, and have us keep half a dozen women."

Although all the witnesses had conceded that the only way King's work had disturbed them was by offending their religious feelings, the jury found him guilty and fined him $75 and costs—a staggering amount for a man in his financial position.

Before the implementation of his sentence, King was once again arrested—this time for hoeing in a potato patch. Meanwhile, his wheat-cutting neighbors were unmolested. Refusing to pay both fines, King was jailed for 23 days before being released on a writ of habeas corpus.

From prison he wrote, "It seems strange to me that I have to lie in jail for working on Sunday, when I can look out from here on Sunday and see people at work close enough to [holler] at, and nothing [is] said about it. Last Sunday they hauled wood here to a brick kiln, four or five men working all day. But of course, they were not Adventists."

Having unsuccessfully appealed to the state supreme court, King took his case to a federal court. He was defended by former postmaster general Don M. Dickinson, who argued that King had been deprived of property without due process of law (because no Tennessee law made Sunday plowing a public nuisance) and equal protection of the laws (by being discriminated against because of his religious beliefs).

U. S. district judge E. S. Hammond was inclined to believe that King had been wrongfully convicted under a nonexistent law, but he said the federal courts were powerless to interfere. Denying Dickinson's contention that the Fourteenth Amendment of the U. S. Constitution limited the states in the same way as the First Amendment limited the federal government, he asserted that the Founding Fathers had left to the states the right, "if they chose, to establish a creed and a church."

[115]

King was not the first Adventist to be jailed for Sunday labor, nor was he the last. Between 1885 and 1896, more than 100 Seventh-day Adventists in the United States were prosecuted for working on Sunday. They paid $2,269.69 in fines and court costs, spent 1,438 days in jail, and served on chain gangs 455 days. A large share of these prosecutions took place in the Southern and border states—especially Tennessee and Arkansas.

Seventh-day Adventists living in the vicinity of Springville, Tennessee, were being arrested for Sunday law violations at least as early as 1879 and as late as 1892. The 1879 arrests, instigated by D. T. Clement, a Methodist minister, had not led to convictions, as the justice considered enforcing Sunday legislation upon Saturdaykeepers to be unconstitutional. However, W. H. Parker, another Springville SDA, was less fortunate six years later. Charged in 1885 with "maintaining a nuisance by working on Sunday," Parker was fined $20 and costs, although the maximum legal fine in Tennessee for Sunday law violations was $3. The higher fine was a result of the charge of "nuisance," despite the lack of evidence that he had disturbed anyone.

When the case was appealed, the Tennessee Supreme Court upheld the conviction, declaring that a succession of offenses against the Sunday law became an indictable nuisance even without evidence "that any person was disturbed thereby." "It is sufficient that the acts have been open to the observation of the public," the court said. "Their tendency is to corrupt public morals."

Parker refused to pay the fine and costs, which by then amounted to $69.81. He believed that paying the money would, in effect, be acknowledging the justice of the conviction. He chose instead to spend 280 days in jail. This decision cost him his life, because he died from malaria contracted in the filthy prison.

For digging potatoes and weeding onions, two other Springville
Adventists, James Stern and William Dortch, were convicted by a
justice who had "freely sold ... goods from his store on Sunday."
They also refused to pay their fines. Spurning a promise of release
if they ceased observing Saturday, they each spent about 60 days in
prison.

Adventists unsuccessfully attempted to secure a Saturdaykeep-
ers' exemption from the Tennessee Sunday law. Their opponents
considered it "awful" that SDAs were asking the right to violate the
Sabbath when God had commanded that it be kept holy.

Meanwhile, for the Springville Adventists, trouble was just be-
ginning. Proceeding on the assumption that Seventh-day Adventists
were automatically Sunday law violators, the Henry County attorney
general asked for the names of five SDA church members. The
five—all farmers—were indicted for nuisance even though, as C. P.
Bollman noted, four of them lived so far off the beaten track that
their work was unlikely to be observed "unless people went out of
their way to note it and be annoyed by it."

Lacking other witnesses, the attorney general compelled the
Adventists to testify against each other. Convicted, they also chose
to go to jail rather than pay their fines, fearing that if they paid
they would be continually rearrested until they had exhausted their
financial resources. The judge ordered the sheriff to sell as much of
their property as legally possible.

One of the men wrote from prison, "While I am writing to you, it
being Sunday, there is a trainload of workmen passing in the streets,
not 30 feet from the jail, going out to work, and they have done so
every Sunday since we have been here, and it apparently does not
disturb anyone. But if a poor Adventist takes his hoe out in his field
and labors on Sunday, it disturbs the people for miles around."

When the sheriff told the judge he thought the men were sincere,
the judge replied, "Let them educate their consciences by the laws
of Tennessee."

Someone in authority decided that jail was not good enough
for these men. In what must have been, in that time and place, a
calculated insult, three of the men were assigned to a chain gang with
three Blacks who had been convicted of shooting, drunkenness, and

fighting. Instructed to require the Adventists to work on Saturday, the sheriff refused.

The attorney general vowed that at the next court term he would have every man in the local Adventist church indicted. The prisoners had hardly returned to their homes before church members, their children, and their neighbors were summoned before the grand jury to tell about what Sunday work they had observed their fathers, mothers, sisters, and neighbors performing in their houses and fields on Sundays. As a result, 14 members of the little SDA congregation were indicted for nuisance.

The authorities planned to conduct the trial in much the same manner as the grand jury hearings. A father was called to testify against his sons. Boys—one of them only 10 years old—were summoned to testify against their fathers, and brothers were subpoenaed to testify against each other.

Baltimore University law professor James T. Ringgold volunteered to defend the Adventists, with the assistance of W. L. Carter, a local lawyer who had previously been a justice of the peace. The defense invited a former governor and a former senator to attend the trial. The presence of these distinguished visitors apparently moderated the conduct of the attorney general and the judge. Handicapped by the necessity of behaving in an acceptable manner before a judge who was trying to maintain the appearance of conducting a fair trial, the prosecuting attorney finally declared, "The state confesses a verdict of not guilty."

In 1885 Arkansas, ostensibly attempting to close Jewish-owned saloons on Sunday, had repealed its Sunday law exemption for "members of any religious society who observe as the Sabbath any other day." But once the exemption was repealed, law officers ignored the saloonkeepers and began arresting Adventist farmers.

After specifically asking, "Do you know of any Seventh-day Adventists who ever work on Sunday?" the Fayetteville grand jury issued a series of indictments that led to convictions. At least one Seventh Day Baptist and about 20 SDAs in several Arkansas counties paid fines, served time in jail, and had their goods placed on auction for such crimes as digging potatoes for dinner, planting potatoes two and a half miles from the nearest public road, making emergency wagon repairs (in order to be able to appear in court the next day),

[117]

hoeing in a garden, hunting squirrels in the mountains, making emergency repairs on a Methodist widow's house in the rain at no charge, clearing land, painting a church, and picking overripe peaches.

[118]	In many of the cases, the non-Adventist witnesses were themselves engaged in labor or business on the very day they saw an Adventist working, but the witnesses were not prosecuted.

State senator R. H. Crockett sponsored a bill to restore the exemption, with the stipulations that no store or saloon be operated on Sunday and that those exempted not "disturb any religious congregation." The bill passed in 1887, despite the opposition of the *Arkansas Methodist* and of Senator J. P. Copeland, who declared, "The Christian Sabbath should be observed as a day of worship; losing sight of this is to impede the progress of Christianity."

"The Christian people of Washington County" were not happy with the exemption's restoration. Annoyed by the Adventists' Sunday labor, they elected Senator J. N. Tillman on a pledge to have the exemption repealed. He introduced bills to that effect in 1889 and 1891, pleading that his constituents were "getting very tired" of Adventists and suggesting that if they were driven from the State "that would not be a serious loss." "We hope the General Assembly will not allow the plea of religious tolerance to prevent needed legislation," said the Arkansas Methodist. As both of Tillman's bills passed only one house of legislature, the exemption was saved.

Exemptions did not always prevent the arrest and even the conviction of Saturdaykeepers. One of the Arkansas Adventist convictions was for labor done before the exemption was repealed; another Arkansas SDA was fined after the exemption was restored.

Despite Missouri's exemption for Saturdaykeepers, two Adventists living in that state, William Fritz and Robert Gibb, were indicted and required to post bond for doing farmwork on Sunday. They were not convicted, but David Longnecker, a Saturdaykeeper in the exemption state of Illinois, was convicted of doing common labor on Sunday. Two Massachusetts Adventists were fined for working in a barn at the rear of their house on Sunday, despite the exemption in the Massachusetts Sunday law. Exemptions were also ignored when Adventists were arrested in Maine and Michigan.

When Samuel Mitchel, of Georgia, died on February 4, 1879, the Adventists blamed his death on the "unwholesome conditions" in the damp, "loathsome prison cell" to which he had been sentenced for plowing on Sunday. A decade later, Day Conklin, another Georgia Adventist, ran out of firewood on a cold March Sunday. Cutting just enough to keep his family from freezing resulted in a conviction for violating the Sunday law.

Although his lawyer paid his fine, Conklin heard that other indictments were to be made against him. Being extremely poor and not coveting the martyr's role, he decided to leave the state "as soon as the trial was over, leaving the corn standing in the field and other crops ungathered." The next Sunday one of the jurors that had convicted him and one of the witnesses that had testified against him both chopped wood.

A Maryland Adventist was jailed and fined for refusing to testify in court on Saturday. The judge said that according to Maryland law only Sunday should be observed as the Sabbath. A Methodist pastor who had lost several members to the SDA Church saw John Judefind, another Maryland Adventist, husking corn 250 yards from the road. The pastor swore out a warrant for Judefind's arrest. Although the fact that it was issued on Sunday should have invalidated the warrant, Judefind was convicted, and the state's supreme court upheld the conviction.

Seventh-day Adventists and Seventh Day Baptists living in Pennsylvania, Texas, California, and Rhode Island were hauled into court for Sunday law violations. Large numbers of Jews were also arrested for "Sabbathbreaking" in several states—especially New York.

Was it simply coincidental that this wave of Saturdaykeepers' arrests occurred simultaneously with an intensive campaign for the enactment of additional Sunday laws and the stricter enforcement of the Sunday legislation already on the books? Many opponents of Sunday legislation believed that it was no coincidence. As they perceived it, the Sunday law movement was conceived in bigotry and espoused principles that would inevitably result in the suppression of religious minorities.

On the other hand, supporters of the Sunday law movement frequently described it as a humanitarian enterprise undertaken on behalf of the overworked laborer. What was the truth? What were

the real motives and tendencies of the Sunday law movement? How did the organizations that led in this movement come about?

[120]   Early in 1863, the Civil War had not been going well for the North. Distressed over the terrible disaster his troops had suffered at Fredericksburg in December, General Ambrose Burnside had just stepped down as commander of the Army of the Potomac. Interpreting the Union defeats as a manifestation of divine wrath, clergymen representing 11 Protestant denominations met at Xenia, Ohio, on February 4, 1863, seeking ways to appease an angry God. This meeting led to the formation of the National Reform Association.

Why was God angry with the United States? According to this association's spokesmen, the reason was the failure of its government to acknowledge the Lordship of Jesus Christ and to enforce His moral law. Even after the war was over and the North had won, they retained their conviction that Jehovah was displeased with America. National Reformers continued to warn, for at least the next three decades, that divine judgment threatened the United States.

In 1881 Charles J. Guiteau, an unsuccessful applicant for a position of U. S. consul in France, shot President James Garfield. Association members described the assassination as "the hand of an angry God, smiting a guilty land for the dishonor done to His Son, and the despite shown to His law, in according them no authority in the government of the nation." In 1890 James M. Foster, a National Reform Association district secretary, declared that Jesus had a controversy with this nation. He predicted that the United States would "be broken in pieces" unless it terminated its "rebellion" and "bowed to the scepter of Jesus Christ."

National Reformers started the movement for a national Sunday law in 1879. They considered Sunday legislation to be essential because the Sabbath was a part of God's law. Passage of a *national* Sunday law would be especially important, they believed, because such legislation would mean "national recognition of divine sovereignty."

National Reform Association members were not alone, during the late nineteenth century, in fearing that divine wrath threatened this nation. To many Protestants, America seemed to be turning its back on God. Catholics, Jews, agnostics, and atheists were immigrating to the United States in record numbers. New denominations,

including the Mormons and the Seventh-day Adventists, were taking members away from the mainstream churches. In addition, traditional Protestantism felt threatened by modernism and secularism. These other Protestants, like the National Reformers, believed that the passage and enforcement of strict Sunday legislation was an important method of preventing divine judgment.

Besides the National Reform Association, the two most important national groups working for Sunday legislation were the National Woman's Christian Temperance Union and the American Sabbath Union. The WCTU, led by Frances Willard, a vice president of the NRA, declared its intention to lead the nation to acknowledge Jesus Christ as "sovereign King" and to make the Bible the basis of its laws.

At the suggestion of the NRA spokesman, the WCTU organized a Department of Sabbath Observance. This department promoted all types of Sunday laws—not just those dealing with Sunday liquor. For a three-month period in 1888 the WCTU made petitioning for a national Sunday law its prime task. Other temperance organizations, including the Prohibition Party and the National Law and Order League, also jumped on the Sunday law bandwagon.

The American Sabbath Union was the brainchild of Wilbur F. Crafts, a Presbyterian minister whose ideas were very similar to those of the National Reform Association. At his suggestion, representatives of the leading Protestant denominations met together to form an interdenominational organization dedicated to the promotion of Sunday legislation. A number of key people held leadership positions in both the National Reform Association and the American Sabbath Union.

One reason for stricter Sunday law enforcement, according to ASU spokesmen, was that it would improve church attendance. It was the state's duty, they said, to give "the churches ... a chance to draw people to church" by eliminating competition from the saloons, theaters, cigar stands, ice-cream stores, soda fountains, baseball games, excursions, and newspapers.

Prodded by the WCTU, the ASU, and the NRA, religious bodies began deluging Congress with petitions purporting to represent 14 million Americans who demanded passage of a national Sunday law. All but a handful of these petitions came from ministers, churches,

other ecclesiastical bodies, and religiously oriented temperance or-
ganizations. The chief petitioners, aside from the WCTU, were
[122]   Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregational groups. Most major
Protestant denominations participated in the petitioning.

In 1888, the WCTU-sponsored petitions led Senator H. W. Blair
to introduce a Senate bill outlawing nearly all secular work or recre-
ation on Sunday in areas exclusively subject to federal jurisdiction.
Railroads would be required to suspend operations on Sunday, and
the U. S. mail would grind to a halt for 24 hours each week.

When the Senate failed to act on his bill, Senator Blair gave it
a minor face-lift and reintroduced it. The only differences were a
change in title, substitution of the word "Sunday" for the expression
"Lord's day," and a partial exemption for those who worshiped on
other days.

When this bill also failed to become law, proponents of congres-
sional Sunday legislation concentrated their attention on the District
of Columbia. Even though the city of Washington already had a
Sunday ordinance, the WCTU prompted Congressman Breckenridge
to introduce general Sunday bills for the nation's capital in 1890 and
1892. The point was to get Congress on record as favoring Sunday
legislation so that a precedent could be set for the passage of more
extensive Sunday legislation later.

These bills, also unsuccessful, were followed by a bill even
narrower in focus: one to prevent in the District of Columbia the
sale or delivery of ice "on Sabbath day." This bill passed the House
but not the Senate.

Anticipating the Columbian Exposition to be held in Chicago
in 1893, the churches and the Sunday law organizations launched
an even more extensive petition campaign than that of 1888. Deter-
mined that the gates of the fair be closed on Sunday, they circulated
petitions that pledged a lifelong ballot box opposition to any member
of Congress who voted for any financial aid for the exposition that
was not conditional upon Sunday closing. After initially defeat-
ing the bill, congressmen, facing the prospect of having their votes
publicized when a roll call was demanded on a second vote, nearly
doubled the yea vote, and 12 fewer noted nay.

Both houses of Congress yielded to the churchgoers' wishes.
Sunday law proponents were ecstatic. "I have learned that we hold

the United States Senate in our hands," crowed H. H. George, a
National Reform lobbyist. "That the church has weight with great
political ... bodies has been demonstrated most effectively," agreed [123]
J. O. Sands, a United Presbyterian minister.

But the fair directors turned the Sunday law movement's victory
into defeat. Congress had been willing to enact the bill, but it made
no provision for its enforcement. Hence the fair directors made the
agreement, took the money, and opened the fair on Sunday anyway.

The reform movement was more successful in the courts and
on the state and local level. Judicial decisions frequently reflected
the arguments of the Sunday law advocates. Except for a quickly
overturned decision of the California Supreme Court, the courts of
this period were unanimous in declaring that Sunday legislation was
constitutional. In an opinion that seemed to borrow heavily from
National Reform literature, Justice David J. Brewer, speaking for the
U. S. Supreme Court, pointed to Sunday legislation as an evidence
that the United States was a Christian nation.

On the state and local level, Sunday law agitators concentrated
on three objectives—to secure the passage of new and stricter Sun-
day laws, to prevent the liberalization or repeal of existing Sunday
legislation, and to breathe new life into these laws by draconian
enforcement campaigns. They tried to eliminate all secular work
and recreation on the first day of the week.

From New England to California they obtained spasmodic en-
forcement campaigns that would make a big splash and then fade
away. They prodded officers of the law to arrest tenement-dwelling
children for playing baseball on a corner lot, a New Jersey man for
playing tennis on his front lawn, a wealthy New Yorker for fishing in
his private pond, a Staten Island youth for skating, and a Connecticut
resident for riding a bicycle on Sunday.

Ministers and religious periodicals applauded as the Pittsburgh
Law and Order League attempted to destroy the Sunday newspaper
by securing the arrest not only of publishers but of more than 100
newsboys, office personnel, and news agents.

The Sunday law agitators trained their most powerful artillery
on the Sunday sale of alcoholic beverages. To temperance-minded
Sundaykeepers, the Sunday saloon was doubly sinful: it sold the
devil's drink on the Lord's day. The Sunday theater was another

prime target of the Sunday law movement. Opposing a "secularized
Sabbath with Sunday saloons, theaters, games, excursions, museums,
and art galleries," W. W. Everts, pastor of Chicago's First Baptist
Church, said he would rather see the Sabbath abolished than to allow
it to become the means of hurrying people to destruction.

[124]

The only type of Sunday legislation to receive spontaneous
widespread labor support was that requiring the closing of stores
and barbershops. Although most Sunday workers received a rest
day on some other day of the week, some journeyman barbers and
retail clerks were required to work seven days a week. For workers
in these two occupational groups there was at least an element of
truth in the preachers' claim that without Sunday legislation the
wage earner would be condemned to the endless toil of a seven-day
workweek.

And yet even the agitation for closing the stores and barbershops
on Sunday was largely impelled by religious considerations. Con-
cerned with the exaltation of Sunday more than with the rights of the
workingman, preachers having a generally negative attitude toward
the labor movement professed to be labor's friend only to secure
union support for Sunday legislation. The *Western Christian Advo-
cate* editor admitted, "I have not as much interest in the laboring
man on the six days as I have on the Sabbath day."

Between 1879 and 1892 stricter and more punitive laws were
passed in Washington, Ohio, New Mexico, and Illinois, as well as
in several local communities. Connecticut and Texas passed laws
that were stricter in some respects and more lenient in others. Both
New York and Arkansas passed laws that were in some respects
more severe, then amended them to be more lenient. Massachusetts,
Vermont, and Missouri also relaxed their law altogether in 1883,
but Louisiana adopted one for the first time in 1886. Sunday law
advocates were able to prevent the liberalization of the Louisiana
and Pennsylvania statutes and the repeal of the Texas Sunday law.

Religious prejudice was strong in the Sunday law movement.
The leading individuals, organizations, and periodicals that pro-
moted Sunday legislation demonstrated a virulent opposition to
Mormonism, Catholicism, atheism, and agnosticism. Some Sun-
day law advocates also betrayed a strong dislike for Seventh-day
Adventists and Seventh Day Baptists.

Senator Henry Blair, author of the national Sunday bill of 1888, declared, "Only a homogeneous people can be great. No nation can exist with more than one religion." Predicting that the American people would "gradually expel from our geographical boundries" all non-Christian religions, Blair asserted, "No other religion than Christianity ... is consistent with the existence of human liberty and republican institutions." He said, "The people are questioning whether there be not some mistake in theories of religious liberty, which permits the inculcation of the most destructive errors in the name of toleration, and the spread of pestilence under the name of liberty."

Prejudice translated into action frequently becomes persecution, and Sunday laws—in the words of Seventh-day Adventist W. A. Colcord—offered a "most convenient means for one religionist's giving vent to his spite toward another with whom he does not agree." Sometimes persecution was deliberate, while at other times the simple fact that Sunday laws were being enforced could have made those who did not consider Sunday holy to feel that they were being persecuted.

Saturdaykeepers were not the only people who thought that they were suffering religious discrimination because of Sunday laws. Liberal Christians and agnostics belonging to the American Secular Union believed that they were being "singled out" for repeated arrest, and Buddhist businessmen complained about police attempts to enforce the Sunday laws in New York's Chinese district, asserting that they had as much right "to keep Buddhistic sacred days and do business on Sunday as other people [had] to keep Sunday and work on Buddhistic holy days."

However, complaints of religious persecution through Sunday law enforcement came most frequently from observers of the seventh day. Although some states exempted them from the penalties of the Sunday laws, others did not. Many leaders of the Sunday law movement clearly opposed such exemptions, while those favoring them frequently contended that these exemptions should be limited. They especially denounced any provision that would permit anyone to engage in business on Sunday.

The imprisonment of Daniel C. Waldo, a Seventh Day Baptist, for Sunday labor led state senator Horatio Gates Jones to introduce a

bill to partially exempt Saturdaykeepers from Pennsylvania's Sunday legislation. Bitterly opposed by Methodist and Presbyterian ministers and by the National Reform Association and the Philadelphia Sabbath Union, the Jones Religious Liberty Bill was defeated.

Frequently, Sunday law advocates claimed that granting an exemption would nullify the effect of legislation and make it difficult to enforce. "It would not do to make fish for a Jew and fowl for a Gentile," declared one Illinois legislator. Agreeing that the law should apply to everyone, David McAllister, a prominent Sunday law advocate, stated, "It is better that a few should suffer than that a whole nation should lose its Sabbath." "We want but one Sabbath in this country," said Byron Sunderland, another prominent Sunday law advocate. "We don't want any Judaizing here."

Referring to the Seventh-day Adventist Church as "a mildew and a blight," National Reformer J. M. Foster declared that Saturdaykeepers should be required to cease from common labor on Sunday "on the basis of the law of God." Fearing that an Adventist Sunday-law violator would escape conviction because he kept one day in seven, G. W. Robertson asked in the *American Christian Review,* "Who authorized any court to trifle with God's word in that way?"

Even though spokesmen for some Sabbath associations and related groups—hoping to temper the rabid opposition of Saturdaykeepers to Sunday legislation and to broaden their support—found it expedient at times to back at least a partial exemption for those worshiping on other days, their real lack of concern for the rights of Saturdaykeepers is illustrated by their reaction to the prosecutions in Arkansas and Tennessee. The leaders of the national Sunday law movement responded with either silence or criticism of the Adventists. Of all the prominent supporters of Sunday legislation, only the editor of the New York *Independent* spoke out in behalf of the Adventists.

Sunday laws were sometimes used as an instrument of personal revenge. The man who had David Longnecker arrested was angry with him because of another matter; when his anger cooled he agreed to drop the Sunday case. Daniel C. Waldo was imprisoned for Sunday labor at the instigation of a neighbor after Waldo complained to him that the neighbor's son had been bullying Waldo's boy.

A Springfield, Massachusetts, resident with a grudge against one of his neighbors had him arrested for hoeing in his garden on Sunday. Two weeks later the convicted neighbor retaliated by having his accuser arrested for Sunday work. A Battle Creek resident suggested repealing the Saturdaykeepers' exemption because he was unhappy over the way the local Adventists voted.

After a quarrel with saloonkeeper William Mace, another saloonkeeper, Michael McCarthy, reported his competitor to the authorities for violating the Sunday law.

The *American Sentinel,* the Seventh-day Adventist religious liberty magazine, claimed that in almost every Sunday law case, "a bad law was used as a means of venting petty spite, of getting even on some neighborhood quarrel, or of gratifying religious bigotry and intolerance." Observed Attorney Ringgold, "Just as informations for 'heresy' in olden times were most frequently the outcome of private animosity, so nearly every prosecution under our Sunday laws is the result of petty spite, meanness, and malice."

Many of the leaders of the Sunday law movement were palpably bigoted persons, and the movement's leadership acquiesced as other bigoted persons took advantage of the Sunday laws to enforce their intolerance. To those appalled by the relaxed Sunday observance practices of both the "old" German immigrants and the "new" immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe—arriving in record-breaking numbers during the 1880s—the Sunday law presented itself as a promising means of controlling the Sabbathbreaking newcomers. To those dismayed by the proselytizing success of the constantly growing New World sects, the Sunday law appeared to be a useful weapon for restraining one of those aggressive young religious organizations and for counteracting the example set by Saturdaykeepers. To those with personal grudges against their neighbors, the Sunday law provided a handy opportunity for revenge.

But by condoning the enforcement of Sunday laws against those observing the seventh day, the Sunday law agitators created a backlash. This backlash helped to abort their own dream of a homogeneous, evangelical, Protestant America with close ties between religion and government.

Rather than retreating in the face of persecution, the Seventh Day Baptists began to more aggressively assert the claims of the

seventh day and the evils of Sunday legislation, while the Seventh-day Adventists undertook the destruction of everything the National Reform Association and their Sabbath Union allies stood for. At [128] least partially in self-defense, they organized the National Religious Liberty Association and loudly publicized the prosecutions of their brethren, obtaining a great deal of sympathy from the secular press.

Not satisfied with simply defending themselves, they declared that they would violate the golden rule if they acquiesced in religious legislation not necessarily directed at them. Proclaiming the total separation of religion and government to be an important biblical and constitutional principle, they became the most aggressive opponents of *all* Sunday laws, with or without Saturdaykeepers' exemptions, and insistently opposed even religious legislation that would financially benefit their denomination. Forcing themselves to "the forefront of the struggle for strict separation of church and state," they participated heavily in the agitation and litigation that helped shape the modern American concept of the proper relation between religion and the government.

[129]

Bibliographical Note

Ellen White discusses Sunday legislation in *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan,* pp. 592, 603-610, 615, 616; Testimonies for the Church 5:137, 449-454, 464, 465, 711-718; Testimonies for the Church 9:230-238; and Selected Messages 3:383-402.

Chapter 8—The Crusade Against Alcohol

Jerome L. Clark

The advocates of temperance fail to do their whole duty unless they exert their influence by precept and example—by voice and pen and vote—in favor of prohibition and total abstinance.

—The Review and Herald, November 8, 1881, p. 290.

Writing to Thomas Jefferson in 1821, Boston scholar George Ticknor stated, "If the consumption of spiritous liquors should increase for 30 years to come at the rate it has for 30 years back we should be hardly better than a nation of sots."

Ticknor spoke the truth, for per capita consumption of alcohol from all sources had increased from three gallons in 1800 to nearly four gallons in 1830. One observer wrote that Americans were "certainly not so sober as the French or Germans, but perhaps about on a level with the Irish."

This alcohol consumption cut across social class, age, sex, and race. Although there were other nations that consumed as much alcohol, the United States was, in the words of historian W. H. Rorabaugh, an "alcoholic republic."

To a large degree, this pattern of heavy drinking produced the temperance movement. One of those upset by American drinking habits was Lyman Beecher. While pastoring a church in East Hampton, Long Island, he began the preparation of an outline of several sermons on intemperance. Other matters intervened, including a move to the Congregational church of Litchfield, Connecticut. One day in 1825 he was visiting the home of one of his leading parishioners. This man had been one of Beecher's first Litchfield converts, and his home had been the pastor's home when Beecher was on preaching tours in the vicinity. Now the convert was drunk!

The shock of the sight was so great that Beecher took out his East Hampton sermon outline and began filling it in. He was determined to preach against the evils of drink in the most powerful way he could. Beecher's six sermons on intemperance, preached in the fall of 1825 and published in early 1826, exerted a wide influence.

Also influential at the same time was the publication of Rev. Calvin Chapin's total abstinence sermons as 35 articles in the Connecticut *Observer*. These sermons, originally delivered at Rocky Hill and Wethersfield, Connecticut, proclaimed that "entire abstinence from ardent spirits is the only certain preventive of intemperance."

Soon after the preaching of these sermons, 16 prominent citizens of Boston, where an antiliquor campaign had been launched 15 years earlier, met in February 1826 to form the American Society for the Promotion of Temperance, popularly known as the American Temperance Society.

By 1835 there were 8,000 temperance societies operating in the United States. Most of them were branches of the American Society, which took the name American Temperance Union the following year. In 1837 this organization called for total abstinence from all alcoholic beverages. Local societies followed its lead and by 1839 had convinced 350,000 people to sign total abstinence pledges.

Total abstinence had not always been so popular among temperance folk. From the beginning of the organized movement in the 1780s, temperance advocates experienced divided opinions. Most of them were for partial abstinence, meaning abstention from strong intoxicants such as whiskey, gin, brandy, and rum—but not wine, beer, or cider. Only a few urged total abstinence from all alcoholic drinks.

The total abstinence cause gained strength in 1836 when Rev. Thomas Hunt began in Boston the formation of Cold Water Armies for boys and girls. He started these "armies" in the Sunday schools, and soon there were hundreds of them. There was no central organization, but the movement was enthusiastic and successful in popularizing its cause. Boys dressed in blue and girls in white marched in temperance parades, dispensed cold water to spectators along the way, freely distributed temperance tracts, and endeavored to persuade drinkers to sign the total abstinence pledge.

Total abstinence received a further boost in 1840 through the formation of the Washington Temperance Society. Six artisans— drinkers and gamblers—gathered one evening in Chase's Tavern in Baltimore. Two of them had attended a temperance lecture in a nearby hall the previous evening; these now engaged the group in discussing the lecturer's arguments. A few days later the men founded the Washington Temperance Society, probably so called because Parson Weems and other biographers had erroneously pictured George Washington as a teetotaler.

Inviting other problem drinkers to its meetings, the society offered testimonies of personal experiences by members who had been rescued from drinking. Thus was born the "experience meeting," which was to give dramatic impetus to the temperance crusade. Crowds gathered to hear the vivid and emotional stories. The Washingtonian movement spread like an epidemic across the Northeast, and even west of the Appalachians. John Hawkins, the movement's most effective speaker, converted thousands to total abstinence.

The most famous temperance orator of the 1840s, however, was John B. Gough, an Englishman who was sent to America in 1829 at the age of 12 to work as a bookbinder in New York City and earn money to bring over his parents and sister. But his father decided not to come in order to keep his pension, and John subsequently lost his job in 1833 as a result of a depression. The ensuing hardships killed his mother, and John turned to drink.

Moving to Newburyport, Massachusetts, in 1839, he set up a bookbinding shop and married Lucretia Fowler but continued drinking. His wife and child died while he was drunk; he became homeless and unemployed. He found himself a wretched alcoholic at the age of 25.

One October evening in 1842 he was staggering along a Worcester street when he was stopped by a stranger. "Mr. Gough, I believe?"

"Yes," replied John.

"You have been drinking today. Why do you not sign the pledge?" The stranger, Washingtonian Joel Stratten, then urged Gough to promise to attend a temperance meeting the following night in Worcester's lower town hall. John appeared, told of his terrible experiences with alcohol, and signed the pledge. He had an awful struggle but continued attending the Monday night meetings.

Five months later, and again in 1845, he relapsed from his abstinence, but after the second defection he never again violated his pledge.

When Gough told of being rescued from drink, his oratorical skill captivated his audience, and his confidence grew. He married May Whitcombe, a New England schoolteacher who helped convert him to Christianity, and in 1844 he joined the Mount Vernon Congregational Church of Boston. As E. Douglas Branch expressed it: "Then with his feet firmly set upon the Rock of Ages, with Mary Gough by his side, and with the accumulated sins of his past transformed into javelins for the battle, he was triply fortified to lead in the temperance war."

Gough spoke first to temperance groups in Massachusetts, but his fame soon spread to other areas. After delivering a speech at Broadway Tabernacle in New York, he became one of the most popular lecturers in the country, transforming temperance into entertainment.

Getting individuals to sign abstinence pledges was but one tactic in the temperance cause. Beginning in the state of Maine, temperance advocates increasingly emphasized the need for prohibition laws.

Although there had been some attempts in the 1830s to pass prohibition laws, a new push began when the Maine Temperance Union created a committee in 1845 to request the legislature to establish prohibition.

In June 1846 Neal Dow, chairman of the committee, and his associates presented prohibition petitions bearing a total of 40,000 signatures to the Maine legislature. A few days later the group appeared before the legislative committee on license laws. Standing before a 59-foot petition, Dow persuasively painted a vivid picture of the results of intemperance. The plan was partially successful, for after many amendments a bill was passed banning the sale of spirits and wine in small quantities. Unfortunately, it provided only minimal fines for violators, thus making enforcement extremely difficult.

After several unsuccessful attempts to obtain a stronger law, Dow in 1850 became president of the Maine Temperance Union. That fall, with the aide of a fraternal order, the Brotherhood of Temperance Watchmen, he helped defeat for reelection a number of anti-prohibi-

tionist legislators. To strengthen his cause, a year later he ran for and was elected mayor of Portland. He wrote another prohibition bill entitled "An Act for the Suppression of Drinking-houses and Tippling Shops." This bill forbade wholesalers and retailers to manufacture liquor or sell it as a beverage, but it permitted towns, through bonded agents, to sell liquor for "medicinal and mechanical purposes." Imported liquor, in harmony with a Supreme Court decision, was not banned.

Dow's bill increased fines and added a jail sentence of from three to six months for repeat violations. Any three voters suspecting someone of harboring liquor for illegal sale could obtain a search warrant and destroy any liquor proven to be illegal.

On May 26, 1851, Dow appeared before a legislative committee to urge passage of his bill. Within a week it had passed the legislature and was signed into law by the governor. Maine had become the first state to officially embrace total abstinence.

The Maine law made Neal Dow a national temperance figure, and he vigorously enforced the law in Portland. A wave of pro-temperance fever swept the country. Taking advantage of the situation, the American Temperance Union called a special convention at Saratoga Springs, New York. There, on August 20, 1851, more than 300 delegates from 17 states gave their enthusiastic endorsement to the Maine law and called for other states to follow. Local organizations flooded the land with hundreds of thousands of tracts favoring the Maine law. It was a heady time for the temperance cause; 13 more states, mostly in the Northeast and Midwest, jumped on the prohibition bandwagon by 1854.

Although having attained a large measure of success, the temperance forces were unable to get the prohibition laws effectively enforced. Furthermore, wet—as antiprohibitionists were called—forces were able to unite and secure repeal of prohibition in 9 of the 14 states. Meanwhile, many members of the American Temperance Union became apathetic to state prohibition as the slavery issue caught their attention. But their movement had some permanent effects. By 1840, per capita consumption of alcohol from all sources had fallen to two gallons—half the level of 1830—a level that would change little to our own day.

Once slavery was ended and the Civil War over, the temperance forces regrouped. In January 1867 in Detroit, Michigan, John Russell—later known as "Father of the Prohibition Party"—called a meeting to urge the formation of a state political party pledged to prohibition. But Illinois was the first state to organize a Prohibition party, and Ohio was the first state to have a Prohibition candidate for political office, Rev. Samuel Scott, a Methodist.

On September 1, 1869, nearly 500 from 19 states and the District of Columbia assembled in Farwell Hall, Chicago. Following a motion from John Russell, the assembly adopted the name National Prohibition Party. It then elected James Black, a railroad lawyer from Pennsylvania, as its first president, and called for state and national prohibition of the liquor traffic.

After nominating Black and Russell as presidential and vice presidential candidates in 1872, the Prohibition Party continued as a third party. It faithfully nominated candidates, but its vote was too small to affect the outcome of presidential elections. One exception might have been in 1884 when Prohibitionist General John P. St. John's 25,000 votes in New York state may well have drawn enough support away from Republican James G. Blaine to prevent him from winning the state and thereby the presidency.

Inability to win offices—although they did elect a congressman in 1914—did not bother the Prohibitionists, for that was not their goal. Rather, they sought to agitate the prohibition issue, hoping in time to influence one of the major parties.

Women were even more successful in drawing attention to temperance. Hillsboro and Washington Court House, Ohio, and Fredonia, New York, share the honors as birthplaces of the Woman's Temperance Crusade because of the labors of Dr. Dio Lewis, a lyceum lecturer and health reformer. He made three presentations in December of 1873: on the fourteenth in Fredonia, New York; on the seventeenth in Jamestown, New York; and on the twenty-third in Hillsboro, Ohio.

He told of the closing of a saloon in his hometown of Clarksville, New York, in 1813 when he was a boy. His father, Major Lewis, habitually got drunk, and his mother frequently pleaded with the tavernkeeper not to sell to her husband. Because Major Lewis did not stop drinking, Mrs. Lewis and her friends decided to see if they

could make some changes. Daily they entered the barroom as a group, placed Mrs. Lewis's Bible on the bar, offered a prayer, and petitioned the owner. He surrendered.

Dr. Lewis pleaded with the women in his audiences to follow his mother's example. They caught the inspiration, met in their churches, and then went to the saloons to pray and implore the saloonkeepers to close their stores. Frequently they gathered in the tavern for an all-day session, crocheting and taking down the names of the saloon's customers. [137]

Even though Fredonia was the first town in this movement, more prominence was given to the crusade in Hillsboro, Ohio, probably because of its leaders. The socially prominent Mrs. Eliza J. Trimble Thompson, later known as Mother Thompson, gathered the women into the Hillsboro Presbyterian Church, thereafter known as the Crusade Church. Marching to a saloon, the Hillsboro ladies sang "Give to the Winds Thy Fears," which was to become world-famous as the Crusade Hymn. Praying on the sawdust saloon floors, or in the snow outside when denied entry, the Hillsboro women caused most of the town's saloons to be closed.

From Hillsboro, Lewis took the crusade to Washington Court House and then to other Ohio towns. Although the crusaders closed down 250 saloons in 50 days, within a short time most of these had reopened under the same or new management. By the summer of 1874 most traces of the crusade's success had disappeared.

Yet that same summer, Methodist minister John H. Vincent and Ohio Sunday school teacher Lewis Miller were instrumental in planning a Sunday school workers' training course held in Fairpoint, later they held a course in Chautauqua, New York, not far from Fredonia. Attending were three women later to become famous in temperance history: Jane Fowler Willing, a faculty member at Illinois Wesleyan University; Emily Huntington Miller, an Evanston, Indiana, juvenile fiction writer; and Martha McClellan Brown, of Alliance, Ohio, a prominent figure in the Good Templars, one of the numerous temperance societies in existence.

At the Chautauqua meetings, when Dr. Vincent allowed space on his program for temperance sessions, Mrs. Willing and Mrs. Miller came forward as speakers and announced a meeting to consider plans for a national temperance society of women.

The following day 50 women met for prayer and a business session. These women authorized Mrs. Miller and Mrs. Willing to send out a circular letter asking the various women's temperance leagues to elect delegates to an organizing convention to meet in Cleveland, Ohio, the following November. The circular letter, known as the "Call," was enthusiastically received by the various women's temperance groups around the country, and new groups were organized with the initial responsibility of electing delegates for the Cleveland meeting.

[138]

The first convention of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union opened on November 18, 1874, at the Second Presbyterian Church in Cleveland, Ohio. More than 130 women, many of them previously active in the United States Sanitary Commission of the Civil War, and the Woman's Crusade, attended the meeting.

They issued a Declaration of Principles, written by Frances E. Willard, stating: "I hereby solemnly promise, God helping me, to abstain from all distilled, fermented and malt liquors, including wine, beer, and cider, and to employ all proper means to discourage the use of and traffic in the same.

"To confirm and enforce the rationale of this pledge, we declare our purpose to educate the young; to form a better public sentiment; to reform, so far as possible, by religious, ethical, and scientific means, the drinking classes."

Mrs. Annie Wittenmyer, already prominent in a number of voluntary social service organizations, served as the WCTU's first president, from 1874 to 1879. Under her administration, 23 states organized as auxiliaries to the national WCTU, and a national paper, *Woman's Temperance Union Reform* (now known as the *Union Signal*), was established.

Elected WCTU president in 1879, Frances Willard held the office for the next 19 years. Following a "Do-Everything Policy," she campaigned for prohibition amendments in state constitutions, supported the women's suffrage movement and labor unions, advocated vegetarianism, opposed tobacco use, called for the creation of kindergartens, and on Sundays even sent ladies to the local jails to take bouquets with Bible texts attached for the prisoners. She also raised money to build the WTCU Temple and construct a national Temperance Hospital in Chicago.

In all these activities Miss Willard urged woman power, which properly led, would guard the home from evil. She created the motto "For God and Home and Native Land" and structured the necessary departments—nearly 40 in number—within the WTCU [139] to foster the reforms that she deemed paramount. The organization was especially effective on the local level, where women would set up fair booths, obtain temperance resolutions from meetings of professional groups, and circulate prohibition petitions.

But more than any other group, it was the Anti-Saloon League that brought about national prohibition. The Oberlin Temperance Alliance was formed in Ohio in 1874. Three years later it began a campaign for a college town local option law that would give the towns the right to prohibit the sale of alcoholic beverages within their boundaries.

Adoption of the Metcalf Local Option Bill by the state of Ohio in 1882 led to an 1887 meeting of the Alliance at which the group agreed to conduct a crusade for a statewide local option law for all townships. Rev. Howard H. Russell of Berea, Ohio, was hired to lobby for this law. With headquarters at Columbus, he devoted full time to the work, aided by a number of pastors (his own pulpit was occupied by another minister). The result was the formation of a Local Option League. Petitions were circulated throughout the state, and in 1888 the Beatty Township Local Option Bill became law.

The success of the local option bill convinced Russell that the time was ripe for the formation of a statewide organization of churches and temperance societies. Reporting in 1888 to the Oberlin Temperance Alliance, Russell recommended such a plan and during the next few years continued to carry his message to Ohio audiences.

Finally, in 1893, the Oberlin Temperance Alliance agreed to finance a state organization, called the Ohio Anti-Saloon League. The Ohio league inspired similar antisaloon leagues in other states. In early 1895 the District of Columbia's league asked Ohio to join in a convention to organize a national association.

The convention met in 1895, organizing the Anti-Saloon League of America. Its goal was clear: "The Saloon Must Go!" read its motto.

Elsewhere the league explained, "We feel, as an organization, that we can well turn over to the churches, the schools, the temper-

ance organizations, the consciences, and common sense of men, the final removal of the drink habit by means of instruction and moral suasion, if we can only eradicate the open saloon. It is the saloon that is the chief source of crime.... The Anti-Saloon League believes, as an organization, that if we get rid of the saloons, we could trust time, and education, and the spread of morality and religions to discourage and remove whatever private use of liquor as a beverage there may be."

[140]

The main agent in doing the League's work was the church—the league believed that pastors should be in the forefront of the fight to mobilize public opinion against the saloons. In addition, the league's agitation department used literature (40 tons a month was being produced by 1912), public meetings, and music to arouse public opinion. Through its legislative work it supported dry candidates and opposed wet ones, keeping voters informed of legislators' voting records. It was effective, too. In 1904, for instance, the league took justifiable credit for the defeat of an Ohio governor who had supported weakening the local option law.

But despite the league's successes, including the banning of alcohol from the United States Navy, saloons continued to multiply. In 1913, therefore, the league changed tactics, calling for national prohibition. Soon it was allied with both the WCTU and the Prohibition Party in a new National Temperance Council.

The time was propitious. With the outbreak of war in 1914, and the growth of anti-German prejudice, beer—brewed largely by Germans—grew in disfavor. Food shortages justified restrictions of distilled beverages, which used grains. Temperance, nationalism, and wartime needs thereby came together in support of the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which forbade "the manufacture, sale, or transportation" of alcoholic beverages within the United States and its territories.

The amendment was proposed by Congress in 1917 and ratified by the states two years later. At midnight, January 16-17, 1920, the amendment took effect, fulfilling the hopes of more than a half century of temperance activity. Prohibition was the law of the land.

Bibliographical Note

Virtually all of Ellen G. White's comments regarding temperance have been collected in *Temperance as Set Forth in the Writings of Ellen G. White* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1949). Because the compilation is composed of short excerpts, organized by topics, it is best used as a guide to the original documents.

Chapter 9—Health and Health Care

Rennie B. Schoepflin

To make plain natural law, and urge the obedience of it, is the work that accompanies the third angel's message to prepare a people for the coming of the Lord.
—Testimonies for the Church 3:161.

The health and health care of early twentieth-century Americans bore little resemblance to that of antebellum years. Life expectancy had increased 20 years, and infant mortality rates had dropped by a third. Scientific medicine had solved numerous problems of therapeutic confusion by dramatically unifying medical theory and practice. Hospitals no longer served a merely custodial function, treating only the poor; they now provided the increasingly technological setting necessary for the medical treatment of all classes.

Personal habits of hygiene and diet had changed. Americans—the better classes, at least—bathed regularly, consumed a more balanced diet, and recognized the importance of functional clothing and adequate exercise. A public health movement had lobbied successfully for purified water supplies, new sewer systems, and keeping America's streets cleared of garbage and filth. Seven decades of continued change have done little to efface the basic patterns of approach toward sickness and health that evolved during the last decades of the nineteenth century.

In the early nineteenth century, American patients and physicians shared a common understanding of health and sickness that contrasts sharply with that of most Americans today. Viruses, bacteria, and antibiotics were foreign to their model for the maintenance and restoration of health.

Before the last third of the nineteenth century, physicians knew of
and used but few specific agents for the treatment of disease. Among those few agents, limes had cured and prevented scurvy since the

mid-eighteenth century, and inoculation had provided a reasonably sound if less than perfect prevention for smallpox since the 1700s. Physicians had prescribed digitalis for various heart ailments since the early 1800s and indiscriminately had used quinine for various fevers in the 1820s (although cinchona bark, which contains quinine, had been used much earlier). Aside from these medications, physicians recognized few correlations between specific diseases and specific cures.

Instead, the common view pictured health as a state of balanced interaction between the environment and the body's inherited constitution. Unfortunately, changes in weather, in disease makeup, and the trauma of the body's growth and development (particularly puberty and old age) continually forced the body into states of imbalance—disease—that it struggled to correct. Patients and physicians believed that recovery followed nature-ordained pathways and that fever, diarrhea, vomiting, and other symptoms signaled the body's progress toward that recovery. Physicians intervened in the body's struggle by trying externally to regulate the body's fluids and secretions through bleeding, purging, vomiting, and sweating.

Until late in the nineteenth century, physicians were dependent upon their senses in making a diagnosis. They carefully studied the tongue, the pulse, and the nature and extent of the body's secretions for any hints as to the course of the disease. For treatment they drew upon the time-honored therapies of their predecessors. Using lancets, scarificators, and cups, most physicians, often called regulars or allopaths, bled their patients. They purged liberally with calomel, vomited with ipecac, and sweated with Dover's powder, to name only a few of the standard powders, extracts, and tinctures in their armamentaria.

Although today we might attribute many of the "cures" to the self-limiting nature of most diseases, sometimes the administration of drugs coincided with the patient's recuperation, further confirming the efficacy of the ancient model.

Under the far-reaching influence of the Philadelphia physician and teacher Benjamin Rush, a radical "heroic therapy" that built upon this ancient model of health, and advocated the energetic intervention of the physician in the natural disease process, engulfed allopathic medicine during the 1840s.

[145]

Especially concerned with the "violent morbid action" of a group of diseases called "fevers," Rush copiously bled his patients to relax the vascular tension that he believed primarily responsible for them. The control of this body fluid, Rush claimed, held an important key to the physician's successful intervention. Under his influence a generation of physicians set out to bleed Americans to health, often supplementing the work of their lances with doses of a powerful purgative, calomel.

Sociologist William Rothstein has illustrated the popularity of heroic therapy among regular physicians by noting that before 1850 almost two thirds of the patients at the Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston with acute lobar pneumonia were routinely bled and "almost every case was vomited and purged." Rothstein further notes, however, that physicians' practices began to change by mid-century, as evidenced by their bleeding of less than one third of the patients during the 1850s and their almost complete rejection of heroic therapy after 1860.

This does not mean that all heroic measures died out. Heavy doses of calomel remained a favorite remedy for many regular physicians, as witnessed by the uproar over the attempt by the United States surgeon general, William A. Hammond, to remove it from the Army supply table in 1863.

But heroic therapy did decline during the middle third of the century as physicians, especially younger physicians, slowly moderated their treatments by reducing the dosages of drugs and using bleedings only sparingly and mildly. Heroic therapy had always had its critics. In 1835 Jacob Bigelow, professor of materia medica at the Harvard Medical School, presented an address entitled "Self-limited Diseases," in which he argued that certain diseases would not respond to a physician's intervention and must be allowed to run their course under the care of nature's own healing power.

Many physicians subscribed to this "nature-trusting heresy," began to evaluate their former methods of treatment critically, and rejected heroic therapy. During the 1850s Edinburgh physician John
[146]   Hughes Bennett further shook the heroic model by challenging the theoretical basis of bloodletting, thereby intensifying the need for some new therapeutic model.

Probably the most influential critics of heroic therapy, however, came from outside the ranks of the regular physicians. Homeopathic, Thomsonian, hydropathic, and other sectarian physicans touted their own theories of disease origin and cure and hurled abuse at their competitors. Sometimes the cures they offered the public tasted, smelled, or felt good, and regular physicians only had their own dubious authority to convince patients that the rigors of heroic treatment yielded better results. What could Americans who rejected the severe purgings and bleedings of the regular or allopathic physicians expect from the so-called sectarian or irregular physicians?

Many medical sects, almost too numerous to count, offered relief to the sick of nineteenth-century America. There were animal magnetizers, phrenomagnetizers, "rubbers," clairvoyant physicians, faith healers, eclectics, and physiomedicals, to name only a handful. Furthermore, an enticing array of advertisements and testimonials lured Americans to patent medicines and quack devices and exploited their belief that every person could be an expert, even on matters of health. Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound provided women the perfect panacea for all female complaints, and "voltaic belts" restored the "vital power" frittered away by middle-aged men.

We give here a close look at three important sects—Thomsonianism, homeopathy, and hydropathy—to illustrate sectarian medicine's diversity of doctrine and appeal.

Samuel Thomson, New Hampshire farmer, turned his knowledge of folk and Indian herbal remedies into a successful healing career. Under the belief that all disease was caused by cold, Thomson steamed, puked, and peppered his patients to increase the body's natural heat. Relying heavily on *lobelia* (a powerful emetic), herbal purges, and a rejection of bleeding, Thomson's system appealed to a long tradition of self-help, botanical medicine in America.

By the 1830s Thomson's agents, often called "botanics" or "steamers," had spread throughout America selling "family rights" to his system, which included membership in Thomson's society and a copy of his *New Guide to Health*. By 1840 Thomson estimated that 3 million persons had adopted his system and eagerly diagnosed, prescribed for, and cured themselves. Although Thomsonians used many severe remedies, the naturalness of his herbs,

[147]

the handiness of self-medication, and the one-time fee of $20 made botanical medicine an attractive alternative to regular therapy.

Through its purported success with the cholera epidemic from 1848 to 1852, a new medical sect, homeopathy, gained prominence and respectability in America. Whereas uneducated agents sold Thomsonianism primarily to poor clients on the frontier, educated homeopathic physicians catered to a wealthy, urban clientele and thereby represented a much greater threat to the prestige and financial well-being of regular physicians.

Samuel Christian Hahnemann, Vienna-trained German physician, invented the twin doctrines of homeopathy in the 1790s. His doctrine of similars stated that medicine that produced the symptoms of a disease in a healthy person could cure that disease. His second law declared that the smaller the dose of medicine, the stronger its effectiveness.

Homeopathy first reached America in 1825; by 1861 it had attracted nearly 2,500 practitioners through the active conversion of regular physicians and the graduation of homeopaths from educational institutions such as their medical college in Cleveland, Ohio.

Regular physicians, feeling the financial and philosophical pressures of physicians who denounced the theoretical and empirical bases of heroic therapy, retaliated by deriding the "foolish" doctrines of homeopathy and purging their organizational ranks of homeopaths. In response, some eager homeopaths turned to the sale of domestic homeopathic kits to spread their doctrines among all classes of Americans. Containing small vials of homeopathic remedies and checklists of symptoms, these kits allowed families to diagnose and painlessly dose themselves with the highly diluted homeopathic medicines. They thus avoided costly visits to a physician and the unpleasant treatments of heroic therapy. The rapid proliferation of these kits effectively propagated homeopathic doctrines, to the somewhat subdued delight of organized homeopathic physicians, who had agreed with the regulars that such competition could only hurt the prestige of their profession.

Whereas Thomsonians and homeopaths moderated the use of drugs, hydropaths eschewed the use of all drugs and appealed instead to the natural remedies of water, sunlight, fresh air, exercise, and good food. Primarily through the work of Joel Shew and Rus-

[148]

sell T. Trall, two regular physicians, and Mary Gove Nichols, a prominent health reformer, Americans reveled in a water-cure craze from the early 1840s until the onset of the Civil War. Through the therapeutic use of an astounding array of baths, soaks, packs, and douches, Americans sought to wash away their diseases. Leaders of the movement established numerous water-cure establishments, but as with homeopathy and Thomsonianism, domestic use held the greatest potential for advancement.

Hydropaths further enhanced the spread of their ideas by forging links in the 1850s with the amorphous health reform movement, whose members advocated, according to historian Regina Markell Morantz, the "prevention of disease through the teaching of the laws of physiology and hygiene."

A reform spirit quickened Americans during the decades before the Civil War and led them to demand changes in areas as diverse as dress, work, prison, education, and health. Health reform first caught the attention of Americans when its key crusader, Sylvester Graham, prescribed his regimen of coarse vegetarian food, cold baths, and vigorous exercise to prevent contracting the feared cholera during the epidemic of 1832.

Women often assumed prominent positions of leadership in nineteenth-century reform movements; the crucial role that health reformers gave to wives and mothers in the education and supervision of proper health principles proved their movement no exception. Diet, water, and women linked health reform to hydropathy, which could boast that in an age of few women physicians, roughly one fifth of its professional practitioners were female. Ellen Gould White, cofounder of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and Mary Gove Nichols both actively sought reform in dress, diet, and morals while practicing hydropathy.

No clear-cut measure of efficacy, no generally accepted therapy, guided the sick through the morass of competing healers. Left to their own wits, Americans chose as best they could, often accepting the testimony of friends and drawing upon their own experiences of trial and error. Persuaded by criticisms of heroic therapy and badgered by their competition, some physicians fell into a therapeutic nihilism that denied the efficacy of all therapies, but few physicians, [149]

confronted by importunate patients, could afford the luxury of such cynicism.

Regular physicians cast about for some unifying theory that could restore order to their discipline and lead to a resurgence in the status of their profession. Alcohol became one of the most widely used medications in the middle of the nineteenth century, as physicians experimented with a general therapy of tonics and stimulants that sought to build up, sustain, and stimulate the body.

Quinine became the fever panacea of the 1870s and 1880s, and analgesics, especially opium, relieved pain but unleashed the horror of addiction. Finally, two discoveries gave physicians the means to establish unambiguously their power in an important area of medical practice—anesthesia and germ theory.

Successful surgery requires a knowledge of anatomy, the skills to control bleeding and pain, and an understanding of the cause and prevention of infection. Antebellum American physicians understood anatomy and could control hemorrhage, and by the end of the Civil War had acquired a surgical skill equal to their European colleagues, but the inability of physicians to control pain consistently and to prevent infection limited the further development of surgery.

As early as the 1840s the anesthetic properties of nitrous oxide and chloroform became known to physicians, but their rapid and widespread use did not decrease the mortality rates of surgical patients or safely extend the surgeon's knife into the abdomen, thorax, or cranium. Not only did physicians inadequately understand the safe use of anesthesia; they still could not cope with postoperative infections and only dimly correlated such infections with hospitals.

In 1865 the British surgeon Joseph Lister read Louis Pasteur's work on spontaneous generation and concluded that infection spread to wounds by airborne germs. Choosing the highly toxic carbolic acid as their first antiseptic, Lister and his colleagues achieved partial success in the prevention of sepsis, but on account of improper use of the acid, or because of a rejection of germ theory, many physicians initially ignored antiseptic procedures.

Gradually physicians became more convinced of the validity of germ theory and recognized that germs transmitted by hand or instrument presented a greater hazard than airborne contaminants. Steam and dry-heat sterilization soon replaced carbolic acid, and

finally asepsis rather than antisepsis became the goal of surgeons. By the 1880s and 1890s regular, homeopathic, and eclectic surgeons had adopted the new procedures and unified surgical practice under its new scientific ideals.

The bacteriological discoveries that led to the successes of aseptic surgery offered the hope that all medical therapeutics could be transformed. In 1876 the German physician Robert Koch isolated the anthrax bacillus; with the use of improved staining techniques and greater microscopic magnifications, bacteriologists isolated a plethora of other disease-causing organisms during the 1880s and 1890s. Unfortunately, these discoveries had little effect on medical practice until the 1890s, when scientists isolated antibodies for specific bacilli and produced antitoxin for general use by physicians.

Initially, physicians cautiously evaluated the bacteriological theories and discoveries, but soon they adopted the revolutionary therapeutics that correlated specific medications to specific diseases. The sectarian fragmentation that had characterized nineteenth-century medicine gave way to a unified scientific medicine, which absorbed those aspects of sectarianism that proved their efficacy in the laboratory or clinic, such as hydrotherapy, massage, and nutrition.

The new changes carried their liabilities as well, however, as physicians increasingly attended to their patients' diseases in the laboratory and neglected the wholistic nature of human health. New twentieth-century medical sects such as naturopathy, osteopathy, chiropractic, and Christian Science replaced those of the nineteenth century and provided alternative treatments for large numbers of Americans. These new sectarians often attracted patients who had become disillusioned with the ineffective or inattentive care of the "scientific physician."

Although scientific medicine unified medical theory and therapeutics to an extent that medicine had not enjoyed in decades, it would be far from the truth to say that it provided the solution for all of America's health problems. More than just medical theory and physician practice influence a people's health. Institutions, which today provide a major setting for health delivery, changed dramatically during the nineteenth century and illustrated the influence of a nation's social and political ideals on health. Through the establishment of mental asylums, hospitals, and dispensaries, Americans

institutionalized health care, significantly altering the way in which patients interacted with physicians, and providing a setting in which nurses could professionalize and numerous allied health professions multiply.

In the early 1870s America possessed fewer than 200 hospitals, about a third of which served the mentally ill, but by 1925 that number had ballooned to more than 6,000. What caused this rapid proliferation in the number of hospitals? Actually, there were two distinct periods of rapid growth. Instead of placing the insane in prison or letting them run loose to threaten society, most states and some cities in the 1830s and 1840s built hospitals to care for and treat the mentally ill. Historian David J. Rotham has argued that this rapid growth reflected the communities' desire "to compensate for public disorder" and "to demonstrate the correct rules of social organization."

No doubt the establishment of asylums did lead to a form of social control, but results are not always the same as motives. Physicians and reformers also believed that the insane could be *cured* through the use of a new therapy, moral treatment, which assumed that the stresses and strains of normal life caused insanity, and that the mentally ill could be cured by removing them from the community and placing them in an isolated environment with an ordered regimen. In addition, general attitudes of humanity and benevolence, which animated all antebellum reform movements, supplemented the motives of control and cure in the expansion of mental hospitals.

Most citizens of present-day industrialized nations identify the hospital as the institution for treatment of their acute medical and surgical needs, but in mid-nineteenth-century America most physicians treated the sick at home. Hospitals maintained social stability and contributed to community prosperity by providing free medical care for the poor, the old, and the transient. Anyone who could afford proper medical care avoided the hospital, which offered no treatment not available in the home but did offer the added danger of sepsis, known as "hospitalism."

During the 1870s, however, the public image of hospitals began to change, as reformers cleansed them of their filth and disease. This initiated a second period of hospital growth. Often motivated

by the belief that filth caused disease, followers of the "miasma"

theory, such as Florence Nightingale, cleaned up hospitals and professionalized nursing to better care for the sick and maintain a clean environment. Those persuaded by the new "germ" theory also recognized a need for sanitation, and they joined the battle to free the hospital of filth and infection.

By the 1890s the physicians' use of anesthesia and their acceptance of aseptic surgery made the hospital as safe as the home for surgical procedures. Although the causal relation remains questionable, there began a rise in the number of hospital surgeries during the early years of the twentieth century and a parallel increase in patronage by middle-class and well-to-do patients. Important demographic changes in industrial America further contributed to this wider use and multiplication of hospitals. Americans no longer found it easy, with changed working and living conditions, to attend the sick in their homes, and with improved transportation, mobile citizens increased their chances of becoming ill while away from home.

Although hospitals are the most visible medical institutions in America today, dispensaries, first established by philanthropists in urban America near the end of the eighteenth century, grew to provide the most important source of medical care for mid-nineteenth-century America's urban poor. They also were a major source of clinical experience for young physicians. Many urban communities established a dispensary under the operation of a single apothecary or house physician. This person carefully applied his meager budget to the common ills of the neighborhood and formed the community's major line of defense against epidemic diseases through his administration of vaccination.

Dispensary workers did not just push pills, however, but believed themselves responsible for the poor of society. They recognized, however dimly, a connection between their lack of food and clothing and their poor health. Thus dispensaries reflected not only America's fear of disease but its benevolent intentions toward its resident and immigrant poor.

Dispensaries also served the educational needs of physicians. From the first third of the nineteenth century until their replacement by hospital internships and residency programs in the first decades of the twentieth century, dispensaries provided an important source

[153] of clinical training for physicians and an opportunity for young physicians to form important contacts with prospective patients and influential senior physicians.

Medical historians have long noted that, along with developments in medical theory and practice, the American people began to live longer throughout the nineteenth century. Although the data remain fragmentary prior to 1900, they still suggest a steady increase in life expectancy continuing well into the twentieth century. In 1830 the life expectancy at birth for both sexes was about 35 years; by 1915 it had climbed to 54.5 years; today it stands near 75 years.

Infant mortality rates dramatically symbolize the improving health of Americans. Infant mortality hovered near 150 infant deaths per 1,000 live births from 1865 to 1895, plummeted to nearly 100 deaths per 1,000 live births by 1915, and continued its precipitous decline to about 20 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1970. Unfortunately, not everyone partook equally of these increased years of life. Women and Whites consistently live longer than men and non-Whites.

Although historians' recognition of increased longevity has been fairly universal, their explanations for that increase have not. To physician-historians filled with apostolic zeal for their science of medicine, the reasons are clear. Medical diagnosis and treatment became unified under the banner of science and enabled fearless doctors to dramatically cure diseases with their "magic bullets."

But this view fails to recognize that life expectancies increased while the "fearless doctors" puked, purged, and bled their patients. The view also disregards the fact that scientific medicine had only limited effects on infectious diseases, which were the leading causes of death in the nineteenth century, until the advent of the sulphonamides and antibiotics in the 1930s and 1940s. Recognizing the limits of medical therapeutics as an explanation, a growing number of historians have gathered a persuasive body of evidence to support their belief that changes in personal hygiene, including diet, cleanliness, and dress, and the development of a public health movement contributed significantly to Americans' improved health and increased longevity.

Antebellum American dietary habits differed greatly from those of today. Believing that all foods contain the important requirement

for health—universal aliment—Americans bolted huge quantities of food and only introduced variety into their diet to please the palate. Farmers, who usually produced their own food, consumed notoriously rich diets of meats and desserts and avoided fruits and vegetables. Of course, the diet of city dwellers reflected directly their ability to purchase food, with the kitchens of the rich opulently arrayed and the sideboards of the poor woefully lacking. Corn and pork formed the staples of the rural diet, whereas urban populations probably consumed more bread and beef. Potatoes, turnips, cabbage, and later tomatoes completed the basic American diet.

Americans had been called to dietary reform ever since the 1830s, when Sylvester Graham began to advocate his vegetarian regimen as the cure for the sickness and immorality of society. But three mid-century technological innovations made widespread dietary reforms possible by increasing the distribution and year-round availability of perishable and seasonal foods. Nathaniel Wyeth's invention of the ice cutter dramatically reduced the cost of refrigeration. When refrigeration was applied to the transportation of regional foods by rail, Americans suddenly enjoyed an enticing variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. The takeoff of the canning industry in the 1860s furthered the access of Americans to year-round variety by providing a cheap and safe way to preserve perishable foods.

As Americans learned basic principles of nutrition and increased the variety of their diet, their resistance to infectious diseases increased and the incidence of deficiency diseases declined.

Changes in bathing habits and dress contributed further to the health of Americans by dramatically improving their cleanliness. Although bathing did not become fairly regular among middle-class Americans until midcentury, the invention of convenient bathtubs and showers around 1800 greatly eased its difficulties. The insistence of Graham and the hydropaths during the middle third of the century on the health benefits of daily or weekly baths further encouraged many Americans to bathe regularly, but before 1850 many still followed the advice of physicians who judged winter bathing unsafe. Undoubtedly, aside from any perceived health benefits or dangers that accrued to regular bathers, many soon found their improved body odor sufficient motivation to continue the practice.

Few men or women who trudged behind a plow or wielded

an axe to carve a living from the rich but hostile frontier fretted over the changing styles of American dress. They settled for warm, practical clothing that lasted and could be easily cared for. The poor, whether in city or country, made do with whatever they had; but the middle and upper classes of large cities and rural villages used fashion to define sex roles and advertise social standing. Men's styles supported the Victorian ideal of masculinity by emphasizing strength, serious-mindedness, and aggressive activity. Women's fashion drew attention to the frivolity, inactivity, and submissiveness valued by admirers of femininity. The ostentatious frills, ribbons, embroidery, and fine fabrics of the well-dressed woman, which obviously required the care of servants, advertised the wealth of the family and conspicuously announced their membership in the leisure class.

Women, more than men, even endured ill health by following the dictates of fashion. They acquiesed to costumes that restricted movement, weighed nearly 15 pounds, and dragged in the dirt and filth of the street. The popular practice of corseting, which accentuated the sexuality of the female shape and attracted the admiration of men, deformed the bodies and debilitated the health of women throughout the nineteenth century.

Angered by the social and intellectual restrictions implicit in women's fashions, and fearful for women's health and moral purity, feminists and health reformers of the 1850s campaigned for a warm, healthy, and practical costume. Some women chose to wear the reform dress, which included a short overskirt that hung loosely from the shoulders over a pair of pajamalike trousers. But they suffered public humiliation and ridicule, and within a few years most sacrificed the practice lest it by association weaken their other reform efforts.

By the 1880s and 1890s the reformers' broader efforts bore fruit, as reforms in education and women's suffrage greatly expanded social and economic opportunities for women. Under the demands of new job opportunities and the stimulus of the sports movement, which encouraged women to engage in vigorous physical activity such as bicycling, women's clothing became plainer and more practical.

But transforming individual living habits was insufficient. During the last half of the nineteenth century, American urban centers underwent tremendous changes. They sprawled over ever wider [156] chunks of the landscape as population, industry, and commerce exploded. This rapid growth multiplied the public health problems of the cities, for the expansion often went unchecked by planning or regulation.

Medical historian Judith Walzer Leavitt has aptly described the health problems of urban life with its "crowded, dark, unventilated housing, unpaved streets mired in horse manure and littered with refuse, inadequate or nonexistent water supplies, privy vaults that remained unemptied from one year to the next, stagnant pools of water, ill-functioning open sewers, and an overwhelming stench."

The problems of public health reached critical levels when large waves of immigrants flooded American cities during the later decades of the nineteenth century. Huddled into high-rise tenements that absentee landowners felt no financial motivation to improve or maintain, tenants slept on bare floors, breathed stagnant air, consumed unpreserved food and unsanitary water and milk, and used inadequate public privies.

Many middle- and upper-class Americans recognized these problems and felt a moral obligation to improve public health. On the basis of their belief in miasma theory, which linked filth and disease, they advocated and supported efforts to clean up streets, water, and food and to maintain a healthy urban environment.

Colonel George E. Waring, a dynamic popularizer and propagandizer of miasmatic theory and public sanitation, may have done more than any other person to shape American attitudes toward public health during the last half of the nineteenth century. The devastating yellow fever epidemic that struck Memphis, Tennessee, in 1878, killing 5,000 persons unable or foolish enough not to flee the city, forced public officials to find ways to avoid similar tragedies. Colonel Waring argued that quarantine had failed in Memphis because the real source of the disease, "sewer gas," permeated the city. City officials soon approved his plan for a complete sewer system for Memphis.

Similar projects rapidly sprang up across the country as cities sought to prevent epidemic diseases. Waring's influence extended to

street cleaning and garbage collection during his tenure from 1895 to 1898 as commissioner of street cleaning for New York City. Many [157] of the programs and techniques he developed endured beyond his administration and provided an example of clean streets for other communities.

Nonmedical professionals, such as engineers and plumbers, continued to contribute to public health by designing and installing municipal water supplies. Although Philadelphia opened its system in 1801, it was 1842 before New York had recognized the benefits and established its own access to fresh water. Not until the 1850s and 1860s did Chicagoans solve the drainage problems of their location and ensure uncontaminated drinking water from Lake Michigan.

During the last third of the nineteenth century, Americans increasingly mandated a strong governmental role in the establishment and maintenance of public health. Citizens established municipal and state health departments and boards of health. These agencies enforced public health guidelines; inspected schools, hospitals, and food handlers; and quarantined and vaccinated against infectious diseases. Often critics decried these activities as invasions of private rights, but each agency in its turn survived such attacks and proved its benefit to the general welfare.

At the turn of the century, public health underwent a change of emphasis as its reforms shifted from a primary concern for sanitation to the control of the infectious agents of disease. The sanitarians had convinced Americans of the need to clean up their country, but the public health movement now focused on germs rather than miasma as the unseen source of disease. Most reformers had accepted the germ theory of disease, and their confidence in scientific medicine led them to concentrate their efforts in the laboratory rather than the general environment. Not until recent decades have Americans' concerns about a polluted environment returned public health efforts to sanitation.

America's engagement in two world wars taught many surgical lessons and hastened the development of antibiotics. No longer do infectious diseases pose the greatest threat to Americans' health; the new challenges of heart disease, cancer, and cerebrovascular diseases have replaced them. We watch expectantly to see if the methods of scientific medicine, the roles of medical institutions, and

the pressures of public health reform that proved their power at the [158] turn of the century will meet the health needs of a new age.

Bibliographical Note [159]

For easily accessible sources of Ellen G. White's early discussion of health matters, see the first 34 pages of *An Appeal to Mothers* (1864), reproduced as Appendix C of A *Critique of Prophetess of Health* (Washington, D.C.: Ellen G. White Estate, 1976), pp. 100-108; White's articles on health contained within the pamphlet series Health, or How to Live (1865), included as the appendix "Disease and Its Causes," in *Selected Messages From the Writings of Ellen G. White,* book 2, pp. 409-479; and miscellaneous testimonies contained in the multivolume *Testimonies for the Church.* Selected later discussions appeared in *The Ministry of Healing* (1905) and in numerous compilations published after White's death, for example, *Counsels on Health* (1923), *Medical Ministry* (1932), and *Counsels on Diet and Foods* (1938).

Chapter 10—The Transformation of Education

George R. Knight

*True education means more than the pursual of a certain course
of study. It means more than a preparation for the life
that now is. It has to do with the whole being, and with
the whole period of existence possible to man. It is the
harmonious development of the physical, the mental, and
the spiritual powers. It prepares the student for the joy
of service in this world and for the higher joy of wider
service in the world to come.*

—Education, 13.

Education, then, beyond all other devices of human origin, is
the great equalizer of the conditions of men, the balance wheel of
the social machinery.... It gives each man the independence and
the means by which he can resist the selfishness of other men. It
does better than to disarm the poor of their hostility towards the
rich: it prevents being poor.... If this education should be universal
and complete, it would do more than all things else to obliterate
factitious distinctions in society."

Thus wrote Horace Mann in 1848, near the end of his 12-year
battle to provide the foundations for quality public elementary ed-
ucation in Massachusetts. He expressed a faith in the power of
education that had grown out of eighteenth-century French thought
regarding the intrinsic goodness of human nature. If people were
good by nature, then they and the entire world could be transformed
through universal education.

This optimistic view of education provided a mainspring for the
educational revival that took place in New England in the 1830s
and 1840s. Political factors, such as the expanding male suffrage
and the election of Andrew Jackson in 1828 (variously viewed as
the "triumph of the mob" or the "emergence of democracy"), also

added urgency to the need to upgrade American education. After all, if every male had the right to vote, then he should be somewhat literate.

Coupled with these factors was the problem of an increasing stream of foreigners who needed to be Americanized and the fact that traditional modes of apprenticeship education in the workplace, in the home, and on the farm had begun to break down under the impact of increasing industrialization and urbanization.

Mann and his associates in other states (especially in New England and the Midwest) fought hard to improve existing educational standards and conditions in the three decades prior to the Civil War. They had a difficult battle on every front. For one thing, there were relatively few public schools before 1830. The rich sent their children to private elementary schools or had them tutored, while the poor often had "charity schools," along with the social stigma implied in the name, as their only option.

One of the most popular institutional arrangements for the education of the masses was the monitorial school, in which one teacher instructed a number of older students, who, in turn, would each teach a group of younger pupils. By this method a solitary schoolmaster could instruct hundreds of students. Large schools had up to 1,000 students under one teacher. The low cost was a major attraction of this type of schooling. One of its founders claimed that monitorial education could be carried out for one dollar per student per year.

All types of public, and most private, schools suffered from a lack of quality. Instruction was largely by rote memorization; students were packed into rooms that did not have proper ventilation, desks, or lighting; teachers were poorly qualified and often hired for their physical ability to control students rather than their ability to teach; and instructional materials were primitive at best.

As if these problems were not enough, sanitary conditions were deplorable. The problem can be illuminated by the plea of one schoolmarm for the installation of outdoor privies. She was advised by her school board that "there were plenty of trees in the yard to get behind." Her suggestion that the single well-dipper be replaced with more hygienic individual cups was denied as being "undemocratic." No wonder Mann's contemporaries could complain of "schoolhouses being not only dangerous to the health of the children but as being

actually a cause of death to some of them."

Against such abuses Mann and his fellow reformers fought with great vigor. They sought to reform every aspect of the schools. At the top of their list was the need to provide more healthful facilities and an accurate knowledge of physiology and hygiene.

The reforms of Mann and his colleagues were not acceptable to everyone. The Roman Catholic Church, in particular, took exception to public elementary education. The public schools, while generally prohibiting the teaching of denominational doctrines, did include a great deal of "Christian" material in their curricula. This "Christian" material, however, was actually those Protestant teachings that were held in common by the country's leading denominations. There is no doubt that the public schools were one of the forces that Protestants were using in what Robert Handy has called their "strategy for a Christian America."

Catholics in the 1830s and 1840s took exception to the use of Protestant hymns, prayers, and the King James Version of the Bible in the education of their children. Refusing to send their children to such institutions, they first sought to gain public monies for the support of Catholic "public" elementary education. Failing in this, they began to establish a parochial system of elementary schools that would operate on a parallel basis with the public schools. Thus they established a precedent for other denominations that were out of harmony with public school philosophy.

Unlike elementary education, the higher levels of education were not issues of popular concern in the antebellum period. Student enrollment in both secondary school and college was quite small, made up nearly exclusively of young people from the wealthier classes. Secondary education was conducted largely in private academies. The first public high school had opened in Boston in 1821, but the high school would not become the standard form of secondary education until the last decades of the nineteenth century. The best of the colleges in the period before the Civil War were also private, even though most states had established fledgling institutions of higher learning. Furthermore, most colleges were church-related.

The academic fare at both secondary and collegiate institutions was the classical languages (Greek and Latin), classical literature, higher mathematics, morals, religion, and a smattering of natural

philosophy. All students took the prescribed course of studies; there were virtually no electives. Most secondary schools and colleges were small boarding institutions that consciously maintained a family-like communal existence, the teachers acting in loco parentis (in place of the parent).

That all were not happy with the curricular status quo is indicated by the need for the vigorous defense of the classical curriculum by the faculty and trustees of Yale in 1828. For nearly a half century their influential report largely quieted those critics who opposed the retention of the "dead" languages and proposed vocational and practical studies. "The two great points to be gained in intellectual culture," claimed the report, "are the *discipline* and the *furniture* of the mind; expanding its powers and storing it with knowledge." It was forcefully argued that these objects were best accomplished by the traditional curriculum. The practical subjects, while good in themselves, were not the business of the college.

Despite the pervasive influence of the Yale Report in buttressing the traditional curriculum, some institutions went their own way. In 1831, for example, the Society for Promoting Manual Labor in Literary Institutions was formed, with Theodore D. Weld as its general agent. It was the conviction of the founders of the society "that a reform in our seminaries of learning was greatly needed, both for the preservation of health and for giving energy to the character by habits of vigorous and useful exercise."

One of the most influential schools in the movement for manual labor in literary institutions was Oberlin College in northeastern Ohio. Oberlin's founder wrote in 1833 that "the system of education in this Institute will provide for the *body and heart* as well as the *intellects;* for it aims at the best education of the *whole man.*"

Part of the Oberlin reform thrust was to destroy the monopolistic hold of the classics on the curriculum. The *First Annual Report* of Oberlin in 1834 noted that "the Collegiate Department will afford as extensive and thorough a course of instruction as other colleges; varying from some, by substituting Hebrew and the sacred classics for the most objectionable pagan authors."

By 1835 the *Ohio Observer* reported that President Mahan was proclaiming that the heathen classics were "better adapted to educate heathen ... than Christians. He believed the mind could be disci-

plined as well by the study of Hebrew and Greek Scriptures.... He would fill their minds with truth, facts, practical, available knowledge." Some of the Oberlinites even went so far as to sponsor a burning of the classics—an occasion that brought a flood of abuse from the academic world.

A corollary to the position of the Oberlin reformers on the classics was their desire to uplift the Bible. They voiced this concern when they claimed that "the poetry of God's inspired prophets is better for the *heart,* and at least as good for the head, as that of the pagans.... If we honored the Bible—if we put into its mold the youth committed to us—we must cast Homer, and his fellows, into the shade." It was their desire to "make the Bible a textbook in all the departments of education."

More radical than Oberlin's attack on the classics was its emphasis on the physical and practical side of education. The school's *First Annual Report* claimed that the manual labor department "is considered *indispensable* to a complete education." Several reasons were given to buttress this assertion. First, manual labor was designed "to preserve the student's health." Thus students of both sexes were required to labor several hours daily. Second, "there being an intimate sympathy between soul and body, their labor promotes ... clear and strong thought with a happy moral temperament."

Third, the manual labor system offered financial advantages. "For while taking that exercise necessary to health, a considerable portion of the student's expense may be defrayed." Fourth, the program aided "in forming habits of industry and economy." Last, the system provided an acquaintance with the common things of daily life. "In a word, it meets the wants of man as a *compound* being, and prevents the common and amazing waste of money, time, health and life."

Beyond manual labor, in the Oberlin Covenant of 1833 the founders agreed to eat only plain and wholesome food and renounce smoking and all strong drink, "even tea and coffee." Physiology was made a required course; John J. Shipherd, Oberlin's founder, considered "Biblical Instruction, and Physiology, including Manual Labor," the most important departments of the school. "If these departments wane, the life current will flow out, and the *heart* of Oberlin die."

[166]

By the early 1840s most Oberlinites were following the health teachings of Sylvester Graham, who advocated a vegetarian diet, the avoidance of rich foods, abstinence from stimulants, the use of whole-grain foods, plain cooking, regular exercise in the open air, adequate sleep in well-ventilated rooms, frequent bathing, and abstinence from eating between meals.

Oberlin, with its emphasis on the whole man in his physical, mental, and spiritual aspects, stood for total educational reform within the context of evangelical Christianity. Unfortunately, from the perspective of those who advocated educational reform, Oberlin (along with many of its sister institutions) did not persevere in the path of reform. By the late 1860s its reforming ideals and practices had fallen by the wayside, and Oberlin had become a respectable academic institution with an early heritage of radical reform. John Barnard, a specialist in Oberlin history, noted that by 1865 Oberlin "more closely conformed to the academic, moral, and social patterns that prevailed in other American colleges."

In summary, by 1860 the public elementary school system had been established in most states, being especially strong in the North and Midwest; the Roman Catholic Church had launched a parallel system of elementary schools for its constituents; secondary and higher education was still mostly private and was still following the traditional curriculum; and major attempts at educational reform at the higher levels had been attempted, but had largely failed. Momentous changes, however, were on the horizon.

In the first half of the nineteenth century the population of the United States was largely Protestant, rural, agricultural, and of British, Northern European, or Western European origin. This would all change in the decades following the Civil War. The country itself became involved in an ever-escalating process of urbanization and industrialization, while immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe radically shifted the social and religious balance of the nation. The new immigration added large Roman Catholic and Jewish segments to the population. These newcomers had value systems and lifestyles that threatened many Americans of older stock. These [167] changes would all affect education.

Equally important for education were developments in the intellectual world. Such movements as the rise of science, Darwinism,

and higher biblical criticism had an impact on both church-related and public education.

The most revolutionary educational transformations in post-Civil War America took place at the collegiate level. Most of the changes were a result of the expanding field of knowledge, especially in the areas of science and its stepchild, technology. The coming battle was heralded by British philosopher Herbert Spencer, who had challenged the educational world in 1854 with its most provocative question: "What Knowledge Is of Most Worth?" To Spencer this was the question of questions. "Before there can be a rational *curriculum*," he penned, "we must settle which things it most concerns us to know; ... we must determine the relative value of knowledges." For Spencer the answer was obvious—"science" was the most valuable knowledge for every field of human endeavor.

Others, however, did not agree with him. The curricular battle covering the last half of the nineteenth century found varying answers to Spencer's all-important question. Some held that the classics were the knowledge of most value, while others suggested vocational knowledge. Christian writers, of course, often suggested that a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ was the most essential knowledge.

In the long run, it was Spencer's answer and its variants that captured the bulk of the field. No matter what position one took on the issue of the most essential knowledge, all of education had to make room for the burgeoning sciences, both pure and applied.

The teaching of science in colleges was not completely new. It had been taught in courses in natural philosophy since 1727 at Harvard and had gradually found its way into other schools. Nowhere, however, was it dignified as a course of study for which a degree could be offered. This all changed in 1851 when Harvard granted the first Bachelor of Science degree to graduates from its recently established Lawrence Scientific School. Yale followed suit in 1852 with a Bachelor of Philosophy degree.

[168]   These degrees, based on a three-year rather than a four-year program, had been invented to protect the classical Bachelor of Arts degree from dilution and contamination. In the early years the scientific students were considered second-class citizens, too backward to aspire to the only worthy degree. Their status at Yale is

indicated by the fact that scientific students were not permitted to sit with regular academic students in chapel.

This situation rapidly changed. Under the leadership of Harvard's Charles Eliot and Cornell's Andrew White the old classical curriculum was shattered as the newer subjects—including science, technology, engineering, agriculture, social science, the modern languages, and a host of practical and professional offerings—invaded the older colleges and the rising universities. Frederick Rudolph, a leading historian of American higher education, has referred to the period from 1875 to 1914 as one of curricular "disarray." By World War I the classics and the classical languages had been unseated from their dominant position. The mentality of the 1828 Yale Report defending the classics had given way to a shifting intellectual and industrial order.

A great boost to the teaching of the applied sciences came with the passage of the Morrill Federal Land Grant Act in 1862. This law provided 30,000 acres of public land for each congressman to endow a college in each state "to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts," in addition to classical and scientific studies, "in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life."

Further federal acts in 1890, 1905, and 1907 provided continuing funds for the same purpose. Some states used their land-grant funds to found separate "A&M" (Agriculture and Mechanical) colleges, while other states used the money to add agricultural and practical schools to their state universities.

The very fact that the federal government provided these monies for higher education eventually changed the shape of American collegiate and university education. This transformation, of course, was not immediate. After all, it was difficult to convince a nineteenth-century farmer's son to go to college so that he could study farming. A college education had been seen by such young men as an escape from the physical work of the farm. If farmers were "hicks" and "hayseeds" in the eyes of the "better" classes, why would anyone want to go to college to become a better hick?

It should be recognized that many of the early attempts at practical education were not too exalted. Daniel Boorstin has pointed out

[169]

that some of the early land-grant institutions "were hardly more than a few experienced farmers or mechanics talking to the neighborhood boys."

Slowly but surely, however, the last quarter of the nineteenth century saw the advance of the practical subjects in higher education. The classical languages found a progressively smaller place in the curriculum. Even the rigidity of the lofty Bachelor of Arts degree gave way to the elective system that allowed students to select all sorts of newfangled subjects.

Related to the rise of utilitarian subjects in colleges was the development of the American university, with its professional schools and its research emphasis. The last quarter of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth saw the preparation of professionals for such fields as medicine, law, and teaching shift from apprentice-ship training and specialized institutions to the rapidly expanding universities. This change in the locus of professional preparation was part of a general movement toward raising standards for entrance into practice. Eventually, regional and professional accrediting associations would step in to further the standard-raising process, but this was not a practice in the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. The first effective effort to raise professional standards through accrediting procedures was the American Medical Association's use of Abraham Flexner's Carnegie Foundation-sponsored report, "Medical Education in the United States and Canada," in 1910. Flexner's pivotal report eventually led to the closing of more than half the medical schools in the United States. Subsequent to this success, other accrediting agencies developed increasing power in the second and third decades of the twentieth century.

The ideal of the university as a research institution to generate new knowledge, rather than a teaching institution to pass on previously discovered knowledge, also arose in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. This ideal was imported from Germany, where the tendency toward advanced and detailed investigation of both scientific phenomena in laboratories and historical study in libraries [170] and archives reached its peak between 1860 and 1880. Young American scholars, studying abroad for advanced degrees, returned from Germany enamored with this ideal.

The first American university to epitomize the German research model was Johns Hopkins University, which was founded in Baltimore in 1876. Johns Hopkins was soon followed by other newly established research universities such as Clark and Chicago, and by established institutions like Harvard and the University of Michigan, which added the research ideal to existing programs. The laboratory, the lecture, and the seminar became the instructional formats at these schools.

The new directions of the university not only affected its curriculum but also created new models for the faculty. The professor in a traditional American college was a fatherlike figure who served as a kind of a spiritual guide through a four-year series of courses that he, as a generalist, had largely mastered. President James McCosh, of Princeton, could write in the 1860s that "religion should burn in the hearts, and shine ... from the faces of the teachers: and it should have a living power in our meetings for worship, and should sanctify the air of the rooms in which the students reside. And in regard to religious truth, there will be no uncertain sound uttered within these walls."

By way of contrast to the traditional college teacher, who served in loco parentis, the new brand of professor was to be a specialist who was hired for his knowledge rather than for his ability to communicate with students. A Ph.D. as a proof of research ability became the accepted standard for entry into a faculty. Once appointed, he was expected to do original research and publish the results if he desired to remain on the payroll.

While the specialist faculty ideal made its first impact on graduate and professional schools, it gradually affected undergraduate teaching as more and more Ph.D's were granted and as undergraduate education increasingly came to be seen as specialized preparation for graduate work. The problems raised by the conflict between the old professorial ideal and the new were pointed out by President William Rainey Harper, of the University of Chicago, in 1900. He complained that "it is difficult ... to find men who are strong intellectually and at the same time possessed by a distinct and aggressive interest in Christian work."

Not all sectors of the public were enthusiastic about the new intellectual trends and the new directions in higher education. One such [171]

group was the premillennial fundamentalists who began the Bible institute and missionary college movement. These evangelicals eschewed academic degrees and those types of academic achievements that might open prospective workers to corruption from the Darwinism, higher biblical criticism, and "apostate scholarship" tainted with unbelief that were beginning to dominate much of higher education—even in Christian institutions.

The first Bible institute was Nyack Missionary College, founded in New York as the Missionary Training College for Home and Foreign Missionaries and Evangelists in 1883. Since 1880 its founder had been pressing for a "missionary training college, to prepare persons who may not be able to take a full scholastic course for missionary service." His idea was that the church could "dispense with full technical preparation" of these workers if they possessed "other qualifications for humble usefulness."

In a similar vein, James H. Brookes pressed for a school that would train Christian workers for mission service "who have neither means nor time to attend college and seminary.... They would receive more instruction out of the Scripture in one month at such a school, than in three years at most of the theological institutions."

Dwight L. Moody, the founder of America's second Bible institute, was much of the same mind. "I believe," remarked Moody in 1886, "we have got to have gapmen—men to stand between the laity and the ministers; men who are trained to do city mission work." Part of the ideal of the Bible institutes was to use the "Bible as a textbook."

It was the graduates of these institutes who helped provide the recruits for what Ernest R. Sandeen has called "the greatest demonstration of missionary interest ever known in the United States." The 1890s was a decade of America's greatest expansion of foreign mission outreach. One of the main stimulants of that interest was the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, which had grown out of an appeal made by Moody in 1886 for college students to devote their lives to mission service. The movement's motto was "The Evangelization of the World in This Generation." The missionary colleges and Bible institutes developed alongside this great push for foreign and city missions with the goal of preaching the gospel to all the world so that Christ might come.

[172]

In the last decades of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth centuries, secondary education was passing through the same curricular turmoils as higher education. In post-Civil War America the public high school came into its own as the foremost type of secondary education. The spread of the high school's influence was aided immeasurably by the decision of the Michigan courts regarding the Kalamazoo school district in 1874. The Kalamazoo decision established the legal right of school districts to collect taxes for the support of public secondary schools. This decision, which had national implications, paved the way for the high school gradually to become a democratic institution available to all children, rather than being an elitist institution in line with the historic function of secondary education. Many Americans eventually viewed the high school as a social tool to aid the elementary school in the Americanization of the "hordes of foreigners" that were invading the nation's cities.

The democratization of secondary education—along with urbanization, industrialization, and the curriculum changes in higher education—set the stage for a battle between the classics and the practical and vocational subjects that paralleled the struggle taking place in the colleges. The 1880s saw a widespread movement for introducing manual training and vocational education into the public schools. Manual training, noted D. C. Gilman, not only improved physical health but also "increased mental vigor." Furthermore, it was widely depicted as developing character, perseverance, self-respect, self-reliance, and habits of order, accuracy, and neatness.

The diminishing power of the classics was publicly displayed by the influential report of the Committee of Ten regarding the secondary curriculum. The committee, chaired by Harvard's President Eliot, pointed to new directions for secondary education when it proclaimed that "the preparation of a few pupils for college or scientific school should in the ordinary secondary school be the incidental, and not the principal object." Then, in a historymaking pronouncement, the report declared that there were good arguments "to make all the main subjects taught in the secondary schools of equal rank for the purposes of admission to college or scientific school." This recommendation was the death knell for the stranglehold of the classics on the secondary curriculum. By 1900 the public high school was

[173]

well on its way to becoming a school for all the people, rather than an institution for the college-bound.

The elementary schools were also being affected by the same forces that were breaking down the traditional curriculum in high schools and colleges in post-Civil War America. Francis Wayland Parker became the acknowledged leader of the new elementary pedagogy. As superintendent of schools in Quincy, Massachusetts, he set programs in motion that totally fractured the conventional formalism of elementary education with its "old, stiff, and unnatural order."

In place of silence and stillness, Parker recommended active "work with all the whispering and noise compatible with the best results." He emphasized practical knowledge in the curriculum. For example, he made geography the "study of the earth as the home of man." Thus he held that it was more important in such study for a child to grasp the significant features of his surrounding neighborhood than it was for him to know the location of Anatolia. Memorization, the primary instructional technique of the old education, should be kept at a minimum. In the study of language, Parker held that it was more important to be able to communicate what one had seen, heard, and felt in one's native tongue than to be able to mindlessly rattle off the various cases of nouns or the moods of verbs. Parker also introduced the arts and crafts into his schools, brought nature study into the laboratory, and bolstered such study with trips into field and forest.

For these educational heresies Parker was brought to trial before the Massachusetts Board of Education in 1879 at the insistence of his detractors. His pupils at Quincy were given a special examination to see if they were up to par with students in districts following the traditional curriculum. To the shock and discomfort of the traditionalists, Parker's charges could read, write, spell, and figure with accuracy and confidence. They also came through the ordeal with high marks in history and geography. In fact, they performed in a manner superior to that of the rest of the Bay State pupils except in the area of mental arithmetic.

[174]   By the turn of the century John Dewey had joined Parker in his campaign to revolutionize elementary instruction. Their ideas and educational experiments eventually led to the total transformation of American elementary education.

Along with the new teaching methods came advances in the training of professional teachers and school administrators. The last decades of the nineteenth century saw the rise of independent colleges to train teachers and the development of departments and schools of education in existing universities and colleges. In these institutions and departments the theories of Pestalozzi, Herbart, and the rising science of psychology found a platform from which they aided the transformation of classroom practice.

The end result of these changes was that by 1915 the American educational world was nearly unrecognizable from that of the 1820s. Schooling had changed more in those nine decades than it had during all previous recorded history. Elementary schooling had become well-nigh universal, its teaching methods and instructional materials had been made more effective, its treatment of students humanized, and its teachers professionalized.

Secondary schooling, a rare commodity in the 1820s, was also well on its way to becoming available to all American youth. The elitist classical curriculum of the academy and Latin grammar school had been largely transformed into the broad curriculum of what was to become the comprehensive high school—a school that purported to serve the needs of every young person.

The small family-like college had metamorphosed into a myriad of institutional formats. Whereas American higher education once had the single function of developing gentlemen who had a basic cultural knowledge of the Greek and Roman heritage, by 1915 it performed such varying functions as providing original research, training professionals and technicians in a large number of fields, and developing a cultured populace. In virtually all institutions of higher learning the old classical curriculum had been shattered.

In short, education at all levels had been practicalized and democratized. By 1915 a public educational system extending from the kindergarten to the graduate school had been provided for America's youth.

Beyond public education were those educational systems that [175] had been developed by religious bodies—a natural outcome in a nation seeking to separate church and state. The most influential of these religious schools were those operated by the Roman Catholic Church, which had found their genesis as a parallel system to pub-

lic education in the stormy religious conflicts of the 1840s. In
many ways Roman Catholic education provided a model for those
Protestant denominations that were also out of harmony with the
philosophy of the public schools.

Bibliographical Note

Ellen White's primary publication on the topic of education is
the book *Education.* Many of her articles and unpublished writings
on the topic have been published in *Counsels to Parents, Teachers,
and Students* and *Fundamentals of Christian Education.* In 1968 her
most significant statements on education in the nine volumes of *Testimonies for the Church* were published as *Counsels on Education.*

Chapter 11—Amusing the Masses

Benjamin McArthur

There is a distinction between recreation and amusement. Recreation, when true to its name, re-creation, tends to strengthen and build up.... Amusement, on the other hand, is sought for the sake of pleasure and is often carried to excess; it absorbs the energies that are required for useful work and thus proves a hindrance to life's true success.

—Education, 207.

America underwent the most fundamental changes of its history in the last half of the nineteenth century. Growth was the order of the day. The nation expanded to fill a continent, aided by a railroad system that linked Atlantic with Pacific. Population figures bounded upward, surpassing 50 million in 1880. Urban centers grew at a tremendous rate, owing in part to the massive European immigration. Moreover, American business and industry had entered its epic phase of expansion, with industrial output multiplying many times over. Taken together, these changes of scale added up to changes of kind: America was being transformed from a predominantly rural and agrarian nation to an urban and industrial one.

Not surprisingly, many who had come of age in an earlier period found these changes disturbing. For Ellen White (as for many others) one of the developments of greatest concern was the new prominence of commercial amusements in American life.

Popular amusements—theatricals, circus shows, sporting activities, and a host of other entertainment pursuits—were not new, of course, to the later nineteenth century. In various forms they had been enjoyed for centuries. But in the decade following the Civil War these amusements took on a new dimension, becoming a part of American life to a degree not seen before.

The reasons for the entertainment explosion are readily understood. Commercial amusements were, first and foremost, a result of urbanization. In rural societies people depended on themselves and their neighbors for recreation. Hunting, fishing, shooting matches, and horse races were favorite pastimes that were clearly related to skills of everyday life. Community gatherings for husking bees, house and barn raisings, and country fairs provided opportunity for music, dancing, drinking, and gossip. Rural entertainments were strongly rooted in the patterns of agricultural work and society from which they flowed.

The city, by contrast, encouraged a strict separation of its recreations from the other aspects of life. One might say that economic specialization (which is at the heart of urban life) led to a similar specialization in the realm of entertainment. City dwellers, rather than organizing their own entertainments, began looking to others to provide entertainment for them. Actors, black-faced minstrels, circus performers, vaudevillians, and athletes constituted an ever-larger group of entertainment specialists, not to mention the army of theater owners, managers, and promoters behind the scenes. The amusement industry became big business.

City life encouraged amusements in other ways. The repetitive yet intensive nature of office and factory work demanded a release through pleasure-seeking in free hours. Following the dull routine of a week's labor, workers needed the stimulation of a baseball game or melodrama or sideshow at Coney Island. And the workweek, though long by today's standard, was shortening for most urban Americans, from roughly 70 hours a week in the 1850s to about 60 by the end of the 1880s.

Furthermore, the Saturday half-holiday and Labor Day vacation offered leisure previously known only on Sundays. And for the prosperous middle class, the summer vacation became a popular institution in the years after the Civil War. In short, urban life provided both the opportunity and the incentive for amusements.

Late nineteenth-century American society offered a great many leisure activities, but space permits discussion of only a handful. We will examine several types of theatricals, (melodramas, vaudeville, and minstrel shows), the circus, and professional and college athletics. A brief look will also be taken at other amusements on which

Ellen White comments directly, such as bicycling and the disreputable environment of pool halls, bowling alleys, dance halls, and saloons.

On the stage of America's theaters one could see a wide range of offerings. The most respectable of all theatricals were the legitimate stage plays, particularly those classics of English drama by Shakespeare, Sheridan, or Goldsmith. Though Shakespeare was popular (usually in abridged form), the favorite of theatergoers were the action-packed melodramas, which flew off the pens of nineteenth-century dramatists in seemingly endless numbers. These plays were predictable in plot and structure (much like today's television dramas), differing from one another only in the novel gimmicks upon which the plot turned. Each play had a hero and heroine, a villain, an ingenue and her young sweetheart, some ethnic or otherwise laughable characters for comic relief, and utility players to round out the cast.

In the world of melodrama, virtue triumphed over vice. Distinctions of right and wrong, good and bad, were clearly drawn. There was no question regarding the nobility or wickedness of each character. Melodrama intended not to present its viewers with moral dilemmas but rather to reaffirm the widely shared Victorian standards of morality.

The most popular American melodrama was undoubtedly the stage adaptation of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* First produced in 1852, its greatest popularity actually came after the Civil War, when theatrical companies devoted exclusively to playing it toured the nation. *Uncle Tom's Cabin* exemplified the extreme sentimentality that formed the core of melodrama's appeal. This polemic against slavery was filled with family separations, unjust cruelty, and tearful death scenes. It played upon the emotions of its audience, piling crisis upon crisis until at last offering catharsis in its climactic scene. Slavery may have been dead, but it long continued to exert a strong tug on the country's heartstrings.

As the years rolled on, the *Uncle Tom* shows had to elaborate on the plot to hold their audiences. Shows sometimes had two Uncle Toms, Simon Legrees, and Little Evas, hoping to double the public's pleasure. Some shows also devised elaborate stage mechanisms whereby at the death scene of Little Eva she would be lifted up into

the stage heavens accompanied by surrounding angels.

The years 1850 to 1920 are often considered the golden age of the American theater. Acting companies formed in New York City, then set out on tour of the country, traveling by train from city to town, playing to both large audiences in elegant theaters and small audiences in humble meeting halls. Some of the great names of the stage performed during these years. Edwin Booth (elder brother of John Wilkes Booth) was perhaps the finest tragedian ever to cross an American stage, most notable for his performance of Hamlet. Even more beloved was Joseph Jefferson III, who spent most of his career portraying Rip Van Winkle. Among the star actresses, Mary Anderson stood out, noted for her beauty and refined manner. Her career as a Shakespearean performer ended voluntarily upon her marriage. John Drew, Ethel Barrymore, Maude Adams, and William Gillette were just a few of the other stars that the public hungrily flocked to see.

Actors and actresses suffered under the stigma of their profession. They were thought to be an emotional, highly charged group of individuals. A life of pretending to be someone else was said to breed instability and a tendency for alcohol.

Moreover, the stage and its inhabitants had long been associated with immorality. The incidence of divorce and remarriage was high among actors in an age when such things were rare. Their reputation for the risqué was aided by the tendency of later nineteenth-century plays to portray romantic love more candidly and to deal with issues such as divorce. It was all very tame by modern standards, but to contemporaries such language and action indicated licentiousness. Consequently, respectable citizens generally did not keep company with actors.

But if they would not associate with them in private, the public loved to watch them onstage. As the 1800s drew to a close the Puritan legacy of hostility to the theater waned. Conservative Christians aside, most Americans had shed their aversions and embraced theatrical entertainments. Drama's growing respectability was aided by purging prostitutes from the galleries; through much of the century prostitutes had found the theater a convenient place to ply their trade. The theater's newfound decency encouraged proper middle-class women to patronize it.

[181]

In addition to plays, theaters sometimes hosted minstrel shows. The minstrel show was a genuine American contribution to the entertainment world—White men who darkened their faces and assumed the stereotyped behavior of Blacks. Minstrelsy appeared in the 1830s, shaped by Thomas Rice's popular "Jim Crow" dance; it emerged in the 1840s and 1850s as the hottest show on stage. E. P. Christy's Christy Minstrels, Dan Emmett's Virginia Minstrels, and the Ethiopian Serenaders were among the leading troupes, but there were scores of companies touring the nation. The Civil War and the ending of slavery scarcely reduced the demand for blackfaced entertainment; in the 1870s and 1880s the biggest companies ever assembled, such as Haverly's United Mastadon Minstrels, traveled the circuit. A number of these later minstrel companies were composed of genuine Blacks, who found applause and relative wealth through self-deprecating humor.

The minstrel show was fast-paced and composed of both comedy and music. Though later shows varied the format, in its purest form minstrelsy had a well-defined order. The five or so performers, in resplendent costume, sat on chairs facing the audience. The interlocutor, with his hilariously stilted language, served as leader and emcee, while the two end men, Mr. Tambo and Mr. Bones, poked fun at his pomposity and recited outrageous puns. After a spell of this dialogue came a stump speech by one of the performers, a nonsensical discourse full of malaprops.

In addition to talk, music filled the show. Both sentimental and comic songs were performed. Some of America's most beloved tunes were written originally for minstrel shows, including James B. Bland's "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny," Dan Emmett's "Dixie," and Stephen Foster's familiar melodies.

The minstrel show generally maintained an air of propriety, avoiding the coarseness that could be found in other entertainments. It composed a bit of genuine Americana, and has influenced subsequent entertainment forms. Yet for all of that, it must be recognized that minstrelsy was based on an insidious caricature of Black culture. Its humor was a measure of the racism present in American life.

Another theatrical form, one which began in the 1870s and remained popular through the 1920s, was vaudeville. Vaudeville emerged from the less respectable variety and burlesque shows of

earlier years. Theater owner and vaudeville pioneer Tony Pastor recognized that if he staged a more refined entertainment he could attract families and thus enlarge his audience. His prediction proved true; his theater rapidly became a center of family entertainment.

Imitators in New York and other cities followed his lead, and by the 1890s a network of vaudeville circuits covered the country. New York had 31 vaudeville houses in 1910, and Chicago had 30, testifying to its enormous popularity. Palatial theaters were constructed, utilizing rich draperies and gilded trim, to heighten the fantasies of patrons.

The hallmark of vaudeville entertainment was its variety. Animal acts, acrobats, jugglers, comedy teams, short sketches, balladeers, minstrels, bicycle riders, and roller skaters—almost anything one could imagine—were seen on vaudeville stages. Shrewd stage managers arranged the nine-act bill so that audience interest was maintained and built to a climax right before the final act.

The secret of vaudeville's huge financial success was its continuous format, that is, a show was staged continuously from midday until night, going through a complete show several times. This allowed patrons to come and go at leisure, perhaps fitting an hour's diversion into an otherwise busy afternoon of shopping or work. The modest admission discouraged few.

The fast-paced vaudeville show reflected the similarly fast-paced nature of city life. The audience, many of whom were recent arrivals in the city, unconsciously learned from the performers how one should dress, speak, and, in general, relate to urban life. Vaudeville, then, had a significant educative function, indicating that amusements were moving beyond being simple diversions to becoming an important influence on the American public.

A cousin to these theatrical entertainments was the circus. The modern circus evolved out of the combination of several amusements that had existed for centuries: menageries (displays of wild and exotic animals), equestrian performers, acrobats, and jugglers. By the late eighteenth century, some of these itinerant groups had merged, and with the addition of clowns, freaks, and sideshows, the circus as we know it had been born.

[183]

The golden age of the circus dates to the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when some 40 circuses toured the country, led

by the giants, P. T. Barnum's Greatest Show on Earth and James A. Bailey's London Circus. Barnum's circus was a mammoth affair, requiring 60 railroad cars to move it and employing an army of roustabouts to set up and take down the show. The administrative skill in running this detailed operation was so great that United States military officials came to study it in hopes of duplicating its efficiency.

Like some other amusements, the circus suffered an image problem caused by the pickpockets and thieves who mingled among circus patrons, the frequent fights between circus workers and customers, and the generally low repute in which circus folk were held by society. But as with the theatricals, circus promoters made a vigorous effort to clean up their shows and make them family entertainment.

Few events could match the excitement of the circus's visit to town. Its arrival was announced by a parade down Main Street, a display to whet the appetite of every child and parent. Those lured under a big top were rarely disappointed. Viewers were dazzled by the profusion of entertainments going on simultaneously in the three rings: lion tamers, trained horses, death-defying acrobats, capering clowns, and always the elephants, whose simple presence was a never-ending fascination.

Outside the main tent, patrons could frequent the exotic sideshows, visit the candy and lemonade concessions, and absorb the carnival atmosphere. More than any other amusement of the day, the circus enveloped the patron in an atmosphere of the fantastic and the remote. In our day of television and motion picture, the exotic has become everyday, but to nineteenth-century Americans the circus provided visual experiences of things unknown to them.

Along with the theater and circus, Americans developed a taste for sports. Of course, certain sports had long been popular, but beginning around midcentury, America underwent a sports revolution that grew into the national obsession we know today.

The sporting scene became notable both for its variety and for its thorough organization, which was a marked departure from the informality of earlier games. Professional baseball and college football, in particular, gave evidence of the new importance of athletic contests in national life.

[184]

The origins of American baseball are shrouded. The legend of Abner Doubleday's invention of the game is clearly overblown; more probably, the sport evolved out of several earlier English children's games. At any rate, our form of baseball emerged in the mid-1840s, when Alexander Cartwright organized an amateur team and laid down the playing rules. In the 1850s and 1860s, leagues were formed, and amateur clubs traveled a circuit of towns to compete with one another. Though it had begun as a gentleman's game, baseball became a favorite pastime of the Union Army during the Civil War and was thus democratized. The game captured the heart of the American male and soon became proclaimed the national pastime.

But with the growth of the game and the increasing pressure to win came the practice of hiring skilled players, and professionalism crept into the formerly amateur game. In 1869 the Cincinnati Red Stockings became the first fully salaried baseball team. Their amazing success (they compiled a 50-0-1 record in 1870) encouraged other teams to follow their lead. Yet professionalism brought its own problems. Betting flourished as an unsavory sidelight to the game, to the point where gamblers were said to control the players. Moreover, brawls between spectators and players occurred. And Sunday competition provoked the opposition of the nation's religious element. Baseball came under a cloud.

The National League, established in 1876, set out to polish baseball's tarnished image. It banned betting on club grounds, provided police protection during the games, and ended Sunday matches. The league also brought administrative order to what had been a chaotic situation. Baseball entered a new era of prosperity and public favor. Large ballparks in cities such as Boston, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York accommodated thousands; those who could not attend read accounts of the game in the newspaper sports pages. The modern age of mass spectator sports had begun, heralding a phenomenon that would rival the great games of Rome.

Though professionalism came to dominate baseball, amateur sports by no means declined. In fact, it was in the last few decades of the century that belief in the positive effects of amateur athletics reached its peak. For a number of years many observers had warned that Americans were getting soft, becoming, in the words of

one writer, "a pale, pasty-faced, narrow-chested, spindle-shanked, dwarfed race." To check this decline, a gospel of physical fitness began to be preached, and Americans responded by participating in team and individual activities.

In no place did the rise of amateur sports have as great an impact as in American colleges. The traditionally sedentary habits of college students gave way to energetic athleticism, as gymnasiums altered campus landscapes and physical education joined the academic program. Intercollegiate competition in sports such as softball, baseball, and rowing became focal points of student life. Advocates of college sport noted a general improvement in student health, a lessened consumption of tobacco and alcohol, and a reduction of student rowdyism, which they attributed to the athletic interest.

No sport better symbolized the new spirit of competitive play on the campus than football. College football appeared in the early 1870s on various Eastern campuses. Early games contained elements of both soccer and rugby, but in the 1880s Walter Camp, the father of American football, systematized the rules and gave the game its characteristic form. Ivy league schools such as Yale, Princeton, Penn, and Harvard dominated the game, challenged only by the Midwestern teams of Michigan and Chicago.

Besides devising the rules, Yale coach Walter Camp provided football with its code of sportsmanship. Camp's ideal described the gentleman amateur who played vigorously but cleanly, who strove to win but stayed within the rules, who was courteous to rivals and applauded their good play, who played not for money but for personal satisfaction.

Yet Camp's elevated philosophy of amateur sport often seemed to be missing from the reality of college football. Football became a huge spectator sport in its own right, and with it came a heightened emphasis on winning. A spirit of professionalism crept into the game, as teams sought out the best players, and coaches ran athletes through long training sessions. By the 1890s the game had provoked many critics to decry the "win at all cost" attitude, the hiring of athletes for supposedly amateur contests, and the tremendous influence that the athletic programs exerted in the colleges.

Most of all, football came under attack for its brutality. The [186]

style of play in the early days depended upon massed strength; plays such as the "flying wedge" threw players at one another without benefit of padding or headgear. The very future of the game was in question after a number of deaths occurred. President Theodore Roosevelt, though a defender of the sport, demanded that changes be made to make the game safer. Reformers, led again by Camp, preserved college football by outlawing massed plays, introducing the forward pass, giving referees greater authority to control the play, and enforcing rules against professionalism. The dangers of football were not totally removed, however, and criticism continued.

The rough-and-tumble world of competitive sports may have drawn the most attention, but a quieter revolution in sports was also under way, one that involved a far greater number of people. The increase in leisure and the new emphasis on outdoor activities resulted in the blossoming of participatory sports in the last half of the nineteenth century. Lawn tennis, golf, archery, ice and roller skating, croquet, and bicycling captured the public's imagination. The rise of cycling, in particular, deserves a closer look.

Bicycling first became popular in the later 1870s and 1880s. That it caught on at all is surprising, considering the inherent dangers of the high-wheeled cycle and the treacherous roads it ran on. In the early 1890s, however, changes in bicycle design made the vehicle safer. The new "safety cycle," with its equal-sized wheels, pneumatic tires, and improved brakes, encouraged reluctant cyclists to try their luck. Moreover, the cycling industry instituted a massive promotional campaign extolling the adventure of riding. Just as important, the price of the bicycles came down from the lofty $125 of earlier models to a more affordable $35 or $50.

The result was a cycling craze that peaked between 1893 and 1896. Ridership increased from an estimated 150,000 in 1890 to 4 million in 1896. Bicycle makers multiplied, yet demand continued to outstrip production. The passion for cycling crossed social lines, as members of "society" took up riding, and prominent literary and public figures took their turn astride the two-wheeler. Women eagerly adopted cycling as a respectable form of exercise at a time when their opportunities for physical recreation were limited.

[187]   The bicycle became the subject of poetry, fiction, and song, and the popular press carried articles by physicians, who advocated

riding as an antidote to a sedentary lifestyle. The social aspect of cycling was important. Most riders belonged to local clubs that sponsored outings in the nearby countryside. The sight of a score or more of riders, all attired in the cap and breeches of their club, going through their drills, became a common one during these years. There was even a national cycling organization, the League of American Wheelmen, which successfully lobbied for better roads.

Though intense, the cycle craze was short-lived. By the later 1890s sales had fallen off, and national interest in cycling declined. The public had discovered a new vehicle, one with four wheels instead of two, and though the fascination with the bicycle had been temporary, the love affair with the horseless buggy proved enduring.

The amusements described thus far—theatricals, circuses, sports—all attained a general respectability. But mention should also be made of the underworld of entertainment, those places of amusements that most respectable persons shunned. These included dance halls, pool halls, dime museums, bowling alleys, concert saloons, and beer gardens. Such places proliferated in the cities of the late nineteenth century, and their presence led many Americans to speak out against the evils of city life.

Some dance halls and concert saloons were comparatively reputable, but many were fronts for prostitution and gambling. Stories abounded of young men and women lured into lives of vice in these establishments. The billiard rooms and bowling alleys, it was said, were strictly male resort hangouts for petty criminals and teenage gangs. By reputation, most were associated with gambling, liquor, smoking, and profane language.

If the dime museums generally lacked the sordid associations of the other places, they nevertheless exuded a seediness all their own. These museums promised patrons the bizarre and the spectacular. Freaks, both animal and human, were the favorite attractions: Siamese twins, tattooed ladies, sword swallowers, contortionists, and snake charmers were among them. Medical dime museums offered glass jars with misshapen or diseased anatomical parts, and wax human figures with hideous deformities. Horrified patrons would then be confronted by a lecture offering spurious medical advice and expensive bottles of patent medicine that they would be duped into [188] buying. The dime museums gradually disappeared in the twentieth

century, but their exhibits became standard features of carnivals and amusement parks.

In the world of sports, horse racing and boxing were widely followed, yet both had earned unsavory reputations. Horse racing had long been the sport of kings, and there remained a high interest among America's monied aristocracy in the sport. But the growing influence of gamblers on racing cast a cloud over it.

Boxing found even less favor in the public eye. The wantonness of the sport, particularly in the early days when the bare-knuckled combatants pounded each other until one could not rise, violated the sensibilities of most civilized people. Moreover, prize fighting was dominated by gamblers and other social outcasts. In many places, state and local authorities banned boxing matches; consequently, contests had to be held in out-of-the-way places.

The rise of John L. Sullivan, the great Irish-American pugilist, in the 1880s, gave boxing a widespread public following it had not known before. "The Boston Strong Boy" became the greatest sports hero of the age, yet it was not until his successor, Gentleman Jim Corbett, introduced the Marquis of Queensberry Rules that boxing began to shed its blatant brutality.

It is apparent from this brief survey that as the nineteenth century neared its end, Americans had a range of entertainments to choose from and that they liberally indulged in many of them. It should not be thought, however, that the older suspicions of amusements had completely disappeared. In fact, it was just as leisure increased and commercial entertainments proliferated that the debate over their propriety heightened. Thus, to close out this chapter we must look at the way in which America's moral guardians responded to their growth.

The dominant response to most amusements was one of disap-proval. This negative reaction sprang from two related sources: the strain of religious disapproval that warned against the allurements of immoral entertainments, and a more widespread middle-class concern that leisure pursuits detracted from the serious business of work and production. The Victorian age exalted the work ethic, and for the spokesmen of American culture—ministers, authors, editors—the increase of leisure posed a challenge to the discipline needed to build a nation.

[189]

Yet as the nineteenth century neared its end, with cities burgeoning and people relentlessly seeking a release from drudgery, cultural and religious leaders began to admit that modern life required recreation. In moderation, leisure could be beneficial, Americans were now told. The question then became Which entertainments were fit and which were not?

Two general qualities marked the unfit amusements: professionalism and commercialism. Professionalism meant that paid performers, be they actors or athletes, entertained a passive audience. This trend toward "spectatoritis," as one commentator labeled it, was thought to degrade the national character. Rampant commercialism also undermined the public's moral fiber in that promoters appealed to the lowest common denominator in their quest for maximum profits.

Since most theatricals embodied both of these traits, they clearly remained outside the pale of the eyes of religious leaders. In fact, the Methodist and Baptist denominations, in 1877 and 1889, respectively, passed formal declarations against theater attendance. Moreover, the increasing frequency of Sabbath (Sunday) recreation aroused other objections. Sabbatarian organizations battled against Sunday baseball, theatricals, museum openings, and even picnicking. Consequently, although acknowledging the value of entertainment, cultural leaders were dismayed by most amusements and felt they must be reformed.

At the heart of the reformers' program was their concept of the term *recreation*. They took its literal meaning, "re-creation," as signifying leisure's true purpose: the renewal of one's strength for further work. Recreation was valuable not for its own sake but only as it enabled one to take up anew the task of service to God and man. Accordingly, acceptable amusements would be those that built up body and mind, not those that merely entertained.

In practical terms this belief took several forms. It meant encouraging participation in active sports, so that qualities of sportsmanship and teamwork could be developed. It also meant cultivating an appreciation for fine literature, lectures, recitals, and museums—diversions that uplifted. [190]

Even drama could be beneficial if amateur groups performed plays of merit. The promotion of these activities was undertaken by

several organizations of the day. YMCA and YWCA organizations opened recreation centers in inner cities as wholesome alternatives to street corners and pool halls; settlement houses (such as Jane Addams' Hull House in Chicago) provided social clubs for inhabitants of the most congested neighborhoods; playground associations inspired city governments to construct networks of playgrounds where children enjoyed supervised play; philanthropic bodies such as the Russell Sage Foundation spent thousands of dollars surveying the amusement situation and offering suggestions for improvement. These groups did much to expand the opportunities for recreation in American cities. But the "amusement problem," as it was then termed, refused to go away.

In summary, American society was getting its first heady taste of the spiritous amusements, yet still feeling the pricks of conscience about their enjoyment. There was, perhaps, a certain inevitability about the development of commercial entertainments. A population squeezed together in cities and caught up in a round of intensive work sought stimulation in its leisure hours, which the aforementioned amusements provided. Yet there was widespread misgiving about the character of such entertainment and its impact on the public, a concern that continues today.

Bibliographical Note

The major Ellen White statement on the topics of sports and entertainment is found in the chapter "Recreation" of the book Education, 207-213. Here she distinguishes between recreation and amusement, a distinction that forms the basis for all of her other statements. In this passage she defines the nature and value of true recreation and points out the shortcomings of sports such as football and boxing. Another significant statement is in chapter 80 of *The Adventist Home,* "What Shall We Play?" (pp. 498-505). Again she contrasts the dangers of amusements such as horse racing and football with positive activities such as family outings. Her major statements on the theater, circus, and parties are in *Testimonies,* volume 8 (pp. 51, 52, 66), set in the context of the Battle Creek cycling craze, and volume 4 (pp. 652, 653). Ellen White, of course, touched

[191]

on many of these topics numerous times. The index to her writings gives a complete listing.

Chapter 12—Literature for the Nation

Delmer Davis

Love stories, frivolous and exciting tales, and even that class of books called religious novels—books in which the author attaches to his story a moral lesson—are a curse to the readers. Religious sentiments may be woven all through a storybook, but, in most cases, Satan is but clothed in angel-robes, the more effectively to deceive and allure. None are so confirmed in right principles, none so secure from temptation, that they are safe in reading these stories.

—Messages to Young People, 272.

In 1820, Sydney Smith, a critic in Great Britain for the Edinburgh *Review,* delivered a now much-quoted opinion concerning American culture and literature: "In the four quarters of the globe, who reads an American book?" Although the pronouncement angered contemporary Americans and was, indeed, somewhat inaccurate, given the long and proud history of literacy and printing in the United States, there was a kernel of truth in Smith's remark. America had not yet produced a single book that could be accurately categorized as great literary art.

What Smith did not realize, however, was that already an epoch-making shift in American literary accomplishment had begun. Only a few months after Smith's negative evaluation, the same Edinburgh *Review* printed a favorable notice regarding Washington Irving's *The Sketch Book.* Between the publication of this important work and the end of World War I, nearly 100 years later, most of the important American authors lived and wrote, producing a legacy of art that still makes up the main body of content in most representative high school and college courses in American literature. Indeed, as the twentieth century draws to a close, it seems doubtful if American

writers of the modern period, in spite of their numbers and their vari- [194]
ety, will ever be judged as effective as their remarkable predecessors
of the nineteenth century.

In the first rank of American writers of the nineteenth cen-
tury stand Edgar Allan Poe, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David
Thoreau, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Walt Whitman,
Emily Dickinson, Mark Twain, and Henry James—authors who have
achieved justifiable fame both in this country and abroad. Even the
second rank of nineteenth-century American writers includes such
reputable artists as Henry Adams, William Cullen Bryant, James
Fenimore Cooper, Stephen Crane, Oliver Wendell Holmes, William
Dean Howells, Washington Irving, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow,
James Russell Lowell, Frank Norris, and John Greenleaf Whittier.

Finally, almost at the midpoint of this remarkable century, within
five years, some of the greatest American classics were published:
Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850); Emerson's *Representa-
tive Men* (1850); Melville's *Moby Dick* (1851); Thoreau's *Walden*
(1854); and Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (1855).

Nineteenth-century American literature can best be discussed in
terms of two dominant artistic tendencies—romanticism and realism.
The first of these artistic labels can be safely applied to American
culture up through the Civil War. Writers of the romantic movement
in America imitated European ideals, philosophical trends, and artis-
tic forms, but in the best writers there was a unique American flavor
added to the European brew. Perhaps the single most important
unifying trait American romantic writers shared was an emphasis
upon the imagination as man's supreme guide to fulfillment and
truth. For these writers the imagination was not a mere vehicle of
escape or fantasy but instead a sure guide to the eternal realities that,
most romantics agreed, resided in a world beyond and behind the
surface material distractions of everyday existence. The earlier eigh-
teenth-century emphasis on scientific rationalism seemed a bankrupt
means of discovering truth, since clearly many problems of mankind
were yet unsolved.

Along with the emphasis on imagination came, of course, a
similar reliance on emotion and personal expression of unique and
individual feelings and perceptions. As a middle-class movement,
moreover, romanticism took seriously the values of the common [195]

man, flaunted the standards of aristocratic conservatism in social ideas and artistic forms, found peculiar fascination with the mysterious and the strange, and carried on a love affair with medievalism and orientalism.

Inevitably, many romantic writers rejected traditional Christianity. In place of man as fallen and a universe blighted by evil, the important romantic writers (Hawthorne and Melville were exceptions) tended to see humanity as basically good in an evolving universe where the only constant was motion and change—movement toward ever-greater fulfillment and perfection. Among American authors, this changing universe received particular emphasis, as witnessed by the prominence of nature in their choices of subject matter and resource materials. As Emerson noted in his "The American Scholar" (1837): "The first in time and the first in importance of the influences upon the mind is that of nature. Every day, the sun; and, after the sunset, Night and her stars. Ever the winds blow; ever the grass grows."

Although, of course, to most romantics, nature included much more than mere scenery or wilderness, one cannot ignore the central significance of the outdoors to American writers of the nineteenth century as a dominating metaphor for personal and cosmic meaning in such works as *Walden, Leaves of Grass, Moby Dick,* and *Huckleberry Finn.* The peculiar American emphasis on nature in nineteenth-century art was doubtless partially the result of the ever-present immediacy of wilderness in American life, given the key factor of a frontier, always in existence, even if always changing its locality, throughout the century.

Within the romantic period of American literature, probably the single most influential group of serious writers and artists congregated in the Boston and Concord area of Massachusetts in the 1830s and 1840s—the so-called transcendentalists. These intellectuals linked together many of the romantic emphases into a body of shared premises and beliefs. Led by Ralph Waldo Emerson, the transcendentalists preached and wrote ideals that eventually came to dominate the goals, if not the practices, of educated American culture by the end of the century—the sanctity of individuality and self-reliance; the dignity of human labor; the mystical beauties and resources of nature; the horrors of materialism; the need of social

and intellectual reform in education and race relations and in the relative place of women in society.

One thing that Edgar Allan Poe found objectionable about transcendentalism (as well as about traditional Christianity) was didactic moralism—the willingness to make art a teacher. Heavily influenced by their religious heritage, the American public and most American writers were uncomfortable unless art instructed. Poe was uncharacteristic, then, in his theories of art, which elevated beauty as the supreme goal of poetry and devalued truth, grudgingly accepting it as an appropriate goal in imaginative and rational prose. Poe's attacks on the transcendentalists and on the moralistic Longfellow are a matter of critical record. As for Emerson, he responded by labeling Poe as "the jingle man," so empty did he find Poe's poetry of anything but sound and melody.

Other than Emerson, Henry David Thoreau was perhaps the most artistically successful transcendentalist, and his work *Walden* is, at its deepest level, a compelling statement of transcendental idealism. Most important American writers of the nineteenth century were affected by transcendental ideas and reacted either positively, as in the cases of Whitman or Dickinson, or somewhat negatively, as in the cases of Poe, Hawthorne, Melville, James, and Twain.

Hawthorne and Melville shared more fundamental objections to transcendentalism. Both authors were attracted to the idealism and the nature-centered ecstasies of the transcendental way, but neither writer could accept the ease with which transcendentalism (at least in its earliest phases) tended to explain away evil. To the transcendentalists, what seemed evil was, in reality, good—or, alternatively, the absence of good. In story after story as well as in all of his full-length novels, Hawthorne examined the problem of personal evil and its psychological effects. His characteristic "dark" tone is, indeed, a result of his compulsion to posit a world where evil is apparent and often ruinous to the human heart. His greatest work, *The Scarlet Letter,* is a memorable analysis of guilt, far less concerned with the adultery mirrored in the title than with the effects of secrecy, pride, and revenge on human relationships and the human spirit. Likewise, Melville's *Moby Dick* traced the ambiguous relationship of apparent good and malevolent evil in a [197]

complex universe, with the whaling ship a microcosm of humanity's voyage in search of meaning.

Toward the end of the twentieth century, with the perspective of time to establish artistic worth, it is all too easy to give a false picture of nineteenth-century American literature and its influence on the contemporary audience. Telling the story of the great romantic writers is perhaps most valuable in establishing the seriousness of art and the continuous nature of America's rich literary heritage, but the then-contemporary audience was immediately more affected by popular culture and best-selling authors little remembered today. As has often been the case, these nineteenth-century best-selling authors were often soon forgotten, while more serious authors with lasting artistic pretentions often failed to be appreciated by the immediate audience.

Among the leading American romantic writers, for example, even Emerson was influential, first, only among the few, rather than among the many, with mediocre book sales in the 1830s and 1840s. Only as he became respectable and conservative (that is, when society caught up to his once-radical ideas) did his sales increase in the 1850s, 1860s, and 1870s, partly the result of his tireless and remunerative lecturing throughout most of the United States.

Of the other great American romantics, Edgar Allan Poe, though widely reprinted in newspapers and magazines, never enjoyed best-selling status in his lifetime and ever was poverty-stricken; Herman Melville, after encouraging sales of his early travel fiction, turned philosophical and obscure and lost his audience in the 1850s, resulting in his being a forgotten figure for the last three decades of his life (only to be rediscovered in the twentieth century). Nathaniel Hawthorne finally achieved a wide readership with *The Scarlet Letter* and *The House of the Seven Gables,* but never was able to survive adequately on his writing income alone and, thus, was rather constantly employed as a civil servant.

Henry David Thoreau was almost unknown outside of transcendental circles during his lifetime. Indeed, when his *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* had been out one year, in 1850, only 219 volumes had been sold, causing his publisher to send Thoreau [198] the unsold books. This event resulted in Thoreau's famous remark:

"I have now a library of nearly 900 volumes, over 700 of which I wrote myself."

Walt Whitman continuously reformed and reissued his innovative and somewhat shocking *Leaves of Grass* after the 1855 edition, but he lost money on most of the editions until his very old age. And Emily Dickinson, as most readers know, was the least known of all her contemporary artists, publishing only seven poems during her lifetime, all anonymously, with no edition of her poems appearing until after her death.

Instead, the writers of immediate fame and wide audience in nineteenth-century America were individuals whose names today are almost unknown—people like Fanny Forrester, Fanny Fern, Marion Harland, Mary Jane Holmes, Laura Jean Libbey, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth, and Susan Warner. All these writers shared two aspects: they were practitioners of fiction, and they were women. Both aspects deserve some elaboration.

As far as popular American culture is concerned, the nineteenth century might well be best remembered as the age when fiction became morally and aesthetically acceptable and dominated book sales. At the end of the eighteenth century, even though foreign novels had been widely sold in this country for 50 years, many critics were still condemning fiction because they believed that such reading degraded morals and weakened the intellect. According to typical comments of the times, the reading of fiction "pollutes the imaginations" and gives youth "false ideas of life." Moreover, "it renders the ordinary affairs of life insipid." An article entitled "Novel Reading a Cause of Female Depravity" was issued in America several times around the turn of the nineteenth century, and in 1803 the main commencement oration at Harvard was an attack against "the dangers of fiction."

As a result of such criticism, the first half of the nineteenth century saw writers of fiction caught in a dilemma—how to please the growing insatiable appetites for fiction in the reading audience while yet elevating a much-criticized form to moral and aesthetic respectability. The route that many American writers chose was one that was already reaping handsome rewards in Western Europe: claim that fiction was indeed truth (the story had actually happened) [199]

and/or moralize and instruct the audience so that the story could be justified as a teaching vehicle.

When one examines the history of the modern English novel, one is little surprised that many of the popular fiction writers of the nineteenth century in America were women. In the eighteenth century, Samuel Richardson had been perhaps the most accomplished and successful creator of fiction for a largely feminine audience. Richardson is often credited with establishing the general pattern for the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century popular novel—plots revolving around everyday womanly concerns such as manners, fashions, romantic emotions, and marriage. The subject matter of fiction, then, was something women knew much about, and the fact that fiction was widely considered a second-rate art form made the sexist male artists of that former generation quite willing to allow female authors to meet the public's demands.

Women writers and men writing for women tended to follow Richardson's formulas for success rather closely for well over 100 years—fair-haired maidens beset by romantic male seducers, with the novels ending either in marriage (if the heroine had managed in virtuously taming the male) or in death (if the heroine had foolishly given into the seducer's villainous attentions prior to marriage). In either case the plot patterns gave themselves to inevitable moralizing—lesson books for the young women readers on how to or how not to conduct one's love life.

Included in the novels was a heavy dose of sentiment—reveling in the emotions of the main characters with minute descriptions of how each individual felt during the crisis points of the story. These emotional trips were extremely crucial to the popularity and eventual moral acceptability of the novel during the romantic period. As one historian of the popular book observes: "Sentimentalism was a grand thing; it allowed you to philander with your feelings and yet preserve a clear conscience, for, though it heightened the emotions, it had a moral purpose, such as the preservation of female virtue."

Today, historians of popular American fiction prior to the Civil War have accurately labeled the period as the era of the sentimental novel. During this time American novelists managed to compete successfully with pirated European works (a lack of international copyright laws made it difficult for any American author to be pub-

lished, since foreign works could be printed without any royalties to their authors) and to pander to the tastes of a vast number of readers—again, most of them women—in novels, periodical fiction, and those large, yearly, expensively decorated annuals, the gift books.

Women preferred popular fiction to other literary forms because women were central to the stories and were generally portrayed as moral influences, the backbone of the family, given to Christian faith and courage—attributes that in these narratives usually result in material rewards of nice homes and middle-class security.

Statistics reveal the influence of such reading on nineteenth-century American women. James D. Hart in *The Popular Book: A History of America's Literary Taste* traces the development of fictional success:

"In 1835 when publishers divided their stock into 16 categories, 64 new novels and tales were issued, while poetry, history, and biography together numbered only 61 new works. Nearly half of these novels were by Americans, about as many as had appeared in the decade from 1810 to 1820. From 1820 to 1830 Americans issued 109 different fictional works of their own and then, with the period of the novel firmly established, they more than tripled this number from 1830 to 1840. From 1840 to 1850 they really hit their stride and issued almost 1,000 different novels and tales. With the growth of the middle-class reading public, the book business had become big business. Only $2.5 million worth of books were manufactured in this country in 1820; by 1850 the value of book publications was set at $12.5 million."

It is estimated that all of Hawthorne's novels written during the 1850s, and Melville's three novels of the same period, together with Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* and Emerson's *Representative Men,* sold fewer copies in this decade, 1850-1860, than did just one popular sentimental novel by a woman, such as Susan Warner's *The Wide, Wide World* or Maria S. Cummins' *The Lamplighter,* a book that sold 40,000 copies in eight weeks.

Women writing for women or men writing for women, then, became the central success formula for most American fiction prior to the Civil War and, indeed, long after. Many male authors continued to scorn the novel for this very reason, showing, of course, their prejudice against women as well as their lack of artistic foresight. [201]

Those male writers who insisted on trying to accomplish serious artistic purposes in fiction were torn by consciences that continued to belittle their own attempts and that rued the success of their female counterparts. Hawthorne's angry outburst in the early 1850s is well known: "America is now wholly given over to a ... mob of scribbling women, and I should have no chance of success while the public taste is occupied with their trash—and should be ashamed of myself if I did."

For the most part, the sentimental domestic novel steered clear of social issues and politics. In doing so, however, as Ann B. Douglas has noted, the sentimental novelists did not abdicate total responsibility for society. Instead, the novelists' compulsive concern with the family and domesticity can be seen as in a sense putting their narratives at the core of American social experience. Indeed, according to Douglas, sentimental novelists marched under the banner of moralistic religion, and in many cases these writers were daughters or wives of ministers, encouraged by these mentors to sanctify the audience through the pages of fiction, since the pulpit was losing some of its clout.

This alliance of the religious establishment with the world of fiction resulted inevitably in the social and moral acceptability of novel reading. As John Waller has pointed out, even such a conservative group as the Methodists, who railed against fiction in their religious publications early in the nineteenth century, had accepted the novel as a worthwhile artistic and moral force by the last part of the same century.

In the 1850s one extraordinary novel managed to combine the sentimental formula and expected didactic moralism with a plot that centered on an inflammatory social issue—slavery. The novel was *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* The author, Harriet Beecher Stowe, daughter of one minister, sister to three, and wife to another, rapidly became one of the most influential women of her time. Mrs. Stowe's novel was a clever blend of then-prevalent racial stereotypes, including a Yankee villain and paternalistic and kind slaveowners, to say nothing of noble Blacks.

The book sold 305,000 copies in one year, what one authority suggests would have been equivalent to a 3 million-copy best-seller in 1947. It was extremely popular in Europe and was widely trans-

lated. Against Mrs. Stowe's wishes, the book was dramatized almost immediately, eventually turning into the most popular American play of its time, with "Tom shows" appearing continuously all over America for more than another half century.

The literary weaknesses of the book are all too obvious to later generations—sentimentalism, melodrama, and preachy moralism—but these faults are the faults of almost all popular fiction before the Civil War. What is clear, however, is that this book had an important effect on immediate political events—one of the few books in American history to create an immediate widespread impact on national affairs. When President Lincoln met Mrs. Stowe during the Civil War, he asked, "Is this the litttle woman whose book made such a great war?"

What was true in the case of popular fiction was true also for popular poetry during the nineteenth century—that is, those poets whom we regard today as most accomplished were not the popular favorites of the then-contemporary audience. Poe, Emerson, Whitman, and Dickinson had comparatively few readers in their own times, albeit those readers were often highly influential and discerning. The popular audience readily acknowledged that poetry was a more sophisticated art form and more difficult to read than fiction. Inevitably, it was also less read and was less popular, even though readily accessible to the audience, since newspapers and periodicals used poetry for "filler," often reprinting poems without the author's permission.

The most popular poets shared certain traits with the popular novelists of the times—tendencies towards sentimentality, moralism, didactic religiosity, and home-centeredness. Because their sales were more limited, however, few poets commanded the audience of the highly successful writers of fiction. Among the exceptions was Mrs. Lydia H. Sigourney, who produced some 65 volumes of verse and prose. Her poetry has been characterized as teaching "generalized ethical lessons, praising sobriety, patience, honesty, submissiveness, and other bourgeois virtues."

Better known today than Mrs. Sigourney and certainly more respected in his own lifetime, even if less popular, was Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. Longfellow was unquestionably the most influential American poet during the nineteenth century, here and [203]

abroad. It is interesting to note that Longfellow's most popular poems were those that conformed most to the sentimental fictional formula of his day—narratives (but in verse) that included plenty of melodrama, emotional release, and moralizing, such as *The Song of Hiawatha, Evangeline,* and *The Courtship of Miles Standish.* His more artistically pretentious works, such as *The Golden Legend,* were not popular successes.

Longfellow's fellow New Englanders, Oliver Wendell Holmes, John Greenleaf Whittier, and James Russell Lowell, also serious poets, achieved considerable popular appeal in their own times. Whittier's *"Snow-Bound,"* a poem of family, with sentimental appeal, won a large audience just after the Civil War.

The orgy of emotionalism and sentimentalism in both popular and serious American art during the romantic period was bound to run its course eventually. The reaction that set in is today commonly called the period of realism in American letters. As with the earlier American romantics, realists in this country were heavily influenced by European examples. These American artists experimented with "scientific" approaches to writing.

The chief American theorist of realism, William Dean Howells, for years the influential editor of the *Atlantic Monthly,* characterized realism as "nothing more and nothing less than the truthful treatment of material." "Truthful" to Howells and his fellow realists, however, meant true to observational experience. Life became to the writer what the laboratory was to the scientist. Careful observation and record-keeping could result in truth or in "real" life on the fictional page. The goal was objectivity, honesty, openness, and elimination of personal bias.

In fiction these tendencies resulted in an emphasis on common, but complex and mixed-motived, characters; on plots that resembled life sequences; and on a lack of didactic moralizing, letting the story speak for itself and erasing the sense of the author's manipulation. Realists also tended to be more frank and less judgmental about sex, crime, and violence in their works.

It is easy to see that realism in many ways seemed to be the exact reverse of popular sentimental fiction. It is no wonder that readers, long comfortable with formula sentimentality, found the new realism mundane or repulsive. Most of the "pure" realists

of the nineteenth century never achieved a wide audience in their own lifetimes. William Dean Howells and Henry James always had publishers for their works, but neither writer could survive merely on incomes from realistic fiction. Their works were too sophisticated, too lacking in the expected plots and emotions of romantic feeling, too empty of lesson preaching, for the general audience.

The case of Stephen Crane and Maggie: A *Girl of the Streets* is here instructive. In the 1890s Crane, a realist (some would say naturalist), had difficulty finding a publisher for his first novel. The reason was that the story—a frank and grisly portrayal of Bowery life and seduction into prostitution—failed to moralize explicitly about the central character, Maggie, and her weakness in falling prey to temptation.

Today readers can clearly see the plot is implicitly moral in that Maggie ends her own life as a result of her sin, death still being the only escape outside of marriage from seduction in the American novel. Contemporary publishers, however, were horrified by Crane's refusal to do what scores of women authors had done for decades when they wrote stories of women seduced—that is, the publishers missed the explicit preaching of lessons. Comparatively devoid of didacticism, *Maggie: A Girl of the Streets* saw official publication only after Crane's *Red Badge of Courage* became something of a success.

The only American artist who successfully tied popular romance with realistic tendencies and artistic greatness and gained a wide readership was Mark Twain. Twain, who was a master of playing all sides at once, is perhaps the foremost American example of an immediately popular writer whose artistic reputation has continuously increased as the decades have passed. Like Shakespeare, he was able to appeal both to the then-present audience as well as to artistic posterity. However, as discerning readers readily admit, Twain's books often attack sentimentalism while at the same time being sentimental. The satire of popular sentimental tastes in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is priceless, but the plot solution is as hopelessly romantic and implausible as the worst examples from then-contemporary women writers, although some would say that Twain did this intentionally in order to enrich the satire.

Twain's rejection of traditional Christianity, and indeed, all religions, was somewhat typical of the realistic writers of the times.

Many would be more circumspect than he (although even Twain disallowed publication of what he considered to be his most radical views), but most shared, to some extent, Twain's view of a mechanistic universe, determined by chance, biology, and chemistry, devoid of divinity, and somewhat accidental in its direction.

The realists could not accept the mystical certainties of the romantic authors or their optimistic evaluation of man's capacity for good. On the other hand, it was just as difficult for them to accept the Christian explanation of man's fall into sin. To the realist, evolutionary science seemed to posit a world of continuous progression, although as a result of the bloody battles that only the fittest could survive. The evolutionist's world was without a personal Creator and contrary to the biblical record, a record most people read as being mythical and poetic, lacking scientific validation.

While realists such as Henry James and William Dean Howells, together with their younger friends, such as Stephen Crane, Frank Norris, and Jack London, attempted to reform American fiction along more serious, less sentimental lines during the 1880s, 1890s, and early 1900s, truly popular American fiction was still being produced in the sentimental vein, although somewhat modified from the pre-Civil War era.

Oddly enough, even while Howells trumpeted realism in the pages of the *Atlantic Monthly,* romance writing reached its zenith in American letters. In this period, however, it was the historical and religious romance that carried the day—sentiment carried back into the stories of the legendary and religious past by such authors as Francis Marion Crawford *(Don Orsino,* 1892) and Lew Wallace (*Ben Hur,* 1880). Wallace mixed sentiment, the past, and religion into a highly successful formula whereby there was something for every reader—excitement, romance, quasi-historical fact, and faith. Such novels widened the novel-reading public to include large numbers of men.

But in truth, men and boys had already been a part of the novel-reading public for years, especially with the success of the dime novels. This genre, first issued in this country at the beginning of the Civil War, established a tradition of inexpensive adventure

and romance stories, easily available, directed primarily at the male audience.

Today, the label "dime novel" carries with it connotations of the cheap in every way—financially and artistically, as well as morally. In truth, however, a dime was worth considerably more in the last half of the nineteenth century than today. What the dime novel represented was an innovative publishing measure, paperback short fiction issued outside of the traditional periodical and book format. The dime novel traded heavily on Western themes (Buffalo Bill, Deadwood Dick) and on crime stories (Cap Collier), but in reality, in spite of its reputation and its being almost universally criticized by religious and artistic authorities, the dime novel was never more immoral than its female sentimental novel counterpart. Both types of fiction adhered to strict, Sunday school morality in the disposal of good and evil characters. According to one critic, "if heroes swore, it was 'by the horns of Gabriel,' for profane oaths never sullied the lips that knew neither liquor nor tobacco. If a man gambled, one knew instantly he was a scoundrel.... Death frequently threatened the heroines, but never a fate worse than death." The dime novel saw its end when the electronic media replaced the written words with even more captivating images, and, perhaps, more equivocal morality.

American readers read more than just American authors during the nineteenth century. It would be misleading to ignore the large audience in this country for European literature. In almost every case, however, the popular writers from abroad, even when serious artists, were those who best met the American taste for sentiment, romance, adventure, and didactic moralism—writers such as Charles Dickens, Sir Walter Scott, Robert Louis Stevenson, Rudyard Kipling, Alexandre Dumas, and Victor Hugo.

It should also be remembered that American tastes in literature and reading were largely without formal educational molding throughout a large portion of the nineteenth century. The study of the ancient languages centered on the classics of Homer, Virgil, Cicero, and Horace, but often failed to emphasize anything but linguistic competence. As far as English literature is concerned, even the most prestigious universities were reluctant to instruct students about artists of their own native tongue until the last quarter of the

nineteenth century. Until then, the formal study of English or American literature was included only as a tool to improve writing or grammatical competence.

[207] In 1876 Harvard appointed its first full-time professor of English, but American writers were not treated in separate college or university literature courses with any regularity until after 1900. Given this lack of formal educational recognition for serious literature in the native tongue, popular sentimental literature continued to dominate public tastes through the early part of the twentieth century.

By World War I, however, the realistic reaction against sentimentality and romance would affect large portions of the American reading public. Writers such as Theodore Dreiser, Edith Wharton, Sinclair Lewis, Willa Cather, and F. Scott Fitzgerald found a large and ready audience. Even poetry would undergo a revolution, with Whitman, at last widely read, becoming a profound stylistic influence on poets such as Carl Sandburg, William Carlos Williams, Amy Lowell, and Ezra Pound.

But in spite of widespread acceptance of realistic premises in our own time and of the influence of complex, mind-boggling poets, one cannot help being aware that certain nineteenth-century American literary forces are still very much alive today, whether in the sentimental pages of Harlequin romances or the steamy escapism of video soap operas. Even the artistic sublimities of the transcendentalists' views of nature find a modern echo in the ecological mysticism of environmentalists of today. Finally, the greatest of the American writers from the past century will continue to live in their works of art that focus our attention on the glories of nature, the ambiguities of good and evil, the complexities of man and his relationship to society, and the questions of man's origin and destiny.

[208]   **Bibliographical Note**

Ellen White's most significant discussions of fiction, mostly concerning the popular fiction of the day, appear in Messages to Young People, 271-274 and Messages to Young People, 279-282, and Fundamentals of Christian Education, 92-94 and Fundamentals of Christian Education, 162-166.

Chapter 13—Ideas and Society

Gary Land

Too often the minds of students are occupied with men's theories and speculations, falsely called science and philosophy. They need to be brought into close contact with nature. Let them learn that creation and Christianity have one God. Let them be taught to see the harmony of the natural with the spiritual.

—Christ's Object Lessons, 25.

Reflecting in 1879 upon the impact of the Civil War, novelist Henry James wrote that it "marks an era in the history of the American mind." In that experience Americans "had eaten of the tree of knowledge" and found the world "a more complicated place than it had hitherto seemed, the future more treacherous, success more difficult."

There is considerable truth in James's words, for Americans seem to have moved from a buoyant and even sentimental optimism prior to 1860 to an outlook that, although still basically optimistic, contained a hardness and grimness not previously apparent. The Civil War with its death and destruction was not the only source of this change in mood and ideas, but it probably played a fundamental role, making it possible for certain ideas to be accepted that earlier would have been rejected.

Americans of the antebellum period had reason to be optimistic. The War of 1812 had apparently made them a permanent member of the family of nations and had provided an authentic hero in the person of Andrew Jackson. The nation was rapidly expanding its borders; between 1816 and 1859, 15 new states entered the Union, extending its territory to such far-flung regions as Texas, California, and Oregon, and the population more than doubled. Accompanying this expansion, Americans threw their energies into building

highways, canals, and railways so that both goods and people could move with increased speed.

The technological improvements evidenced in such things as steamboats and railroads extended to the telegraph and printing press and such domestic items as ice coolers, mosquito nets, sliding tables, and patent ink stands. The material basis of life was improving, even for the masses. "Give but a passing glance at the fat volumes of patent office reports," wrote Walt Whitman, "and bless your star that fate has cast your lot in the year of our Lord 1857."

These social and technological developments gave support to widespread belief in the idea of progress, but this faith in the future drew upon other sources as well. Even before settlement began, many Europeans regarded America as an earthly paradise, helping create a myth that continued to influence American thinking in the nineteenth century. The Revolutionary War era had bequeathed a faith in equality and natural rights that by the 1830s expressed itself in the much lauded "common man." And since the beginning of the nineteenth century, a Christian revival had been under way, pushing Calvinistic predestinarianism aside and teaching that perfection was not only possible but expected.

In the years after his victory at New Orleans, Andrew Jackson came to symbolize many of these currents of thought. A frontiersman who was close to nature, Jackson represented American superiority to an overcivilized Europe. A man of iron, he revealed that Americans could accomplish great things through determination and will. And as God's instrument, Jackson proved that the Lord presided over American destiny. The description may not have been accurate, but in making Jackson a hero Americans created a figure embodying their deepest desires.

On a more sophisticated level, George Bancroft was saying much the same thing in his 10-volume *History of the United States,* which began publication in 1834. Blending both philosophical and popular ideas, Bancroft presented America as God's chosen nation to lead all men toward fulfillment of man's potential. "In America," he wrote, "the influences of time were molded by the creative force of reason, sentiment, and nature; its political edifice rose in lovely proportions, as if to the melodies of the lyre. Peacefully and without crime, humanity was to make for itself a new existence."

[211]

With such sentiments in the ascendancy it is not surprising that numerous reform movements arose, seeking to help America fulfill its destiny. As Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote to the Englishman Thomas Carlyle: "We are all a little wild here with numberless projects of social reform. Not a reading man but has a draft of a new community in his waistcoat pocket."

These reformers were basically of two types: those who worked within existing social institutions, and those who attempted to establish new social systems. Those among the first group pursued a variety of causes. The American Society for the Promotion of Temperance, later named the American Temperance Union, appeared in 1826. The American Peace Society took form in 1828. During the next decade Sylvester Graham, William A. Alcott, and others brought health reform into the spotlight. In 1830 William Lloyd Garrison announced the beginning of the abolitionist movement to end slavery. Eleven years later Dorothea Dix started her investigation of the treatment of the insane in Massachusetts. And in the same state, Horace Mann was meanwhile advocating the expansion of public education.

Whereas these individuals accepted the basic structure of existing society, others wanted to scrap that structure in favor of something new. Religion was particularly important in some of these ventures. Their inspiration came perhaps from the Shakers and German pietistic groups that had established communities in the latter part of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The most famous of those appearing in the 1830s were Joseph Smith's Latter-day Saints (Mormons), who developed a patriarchal organization and eventually practiced polygamy, and John Humphrey Noyes's Oneida Community in New York, which attempted to extend to the institution of marriage the principle of holding all things in common.

The secular attempts to establish utopian communities were not nearly as successful as the religious efforts. Robert Dale Owen's New Harmony in Indiana began in 1825 but lasted only three years. More than 50 Fourierist communities, inspired by the ideas of the French writer Charles Fourier, took form in the 1840s, but by the next decade all had disappeared. Fanny Wright's attempt at Nashoba, Tennessee, to break down racial prejudice through miscegenation, [212]

and Josiah Warren's anarchist villages in Ohio and Long Island were similarly short-lived.

Nearly all of these reformers assumed that man's nature was basically good. With the decline of the Calvinistic emphasis upon man's sinfulness, the optimistic view of man gained widespread currency. On the popular level this opinion, often the product of either ministerial or feminine writings, expressed itself in terms that we now call "sentimental." Describing the works of a popular lady novelist, a reviewer stated that her characters "are distinguished for the union of purity, sweetness, and admirable sense—the quaint archness of their conversation has an irresistible charm ... and although often placed in incredible situations they display a naturalness and beauty of conduct which never fails to touch the moral sensibilities." The key words here are "purity," "charm," "sweetness," "beauty," and "moral sensibilities," terms that are more concerned with emotional effect than intellectual content.

On a more sophisticated level, the belief in the goodness of man found its chief expression in the transcendentalist movement, an American manifestation of Romanticism. At heart a religious quest, transcendentalism sought to break away from the cold intellectualism of Unitarian theology, the dominant belief among New England thinkers, and replace it with a new union of mind and spirit. In 1836 Ralph Waldo Emerson, Bronson Alcott, and a few others began meeting together, believing that in the writings of the English Romantics Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Thomas Carlyle "there was a promise in the air of a new era of intellectual life." They attracted other individuals to their circle and in 1840 began publishing *The Dial,* a magazine that continued until 1844. Although involving relatively few people, transcendentalism was probably the most creative intellectual movement in America during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Emerson became the movement's chief spokesman. He believed that every individual had within him a divine spark that needed only to be fanned in order for man to achieve greatness. God, or the "Oversoul," pervaded nature; nature was thereby a symbol of the Divine Being and the means by which man came to recognize his own divinity. As Emerson put it: "Standing on the bare ground—my head bathed in the blythe air, and uplifted into infinite space, all mean

[213]

egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or parcel of God."

Not surprisingly, Emerson called for self-reliance (the title of one of his essays) on the part of both the individual and the nation. "We will walk on our own feet; we will work with our own hands; we will speak our own minds.... A nation of men will for the first time exist because each believes himself inspired by the Divine Soul which also inspires all men."

Despite its pervasiveness in antebellum American culture, not everyone shared this optimism. The expansion of territory, economic activity, and technological invention brought with it social dislocation as people moved from place to place, the economy cycled in boom and bust, and the noisy, smoky machine intruded into the pastoral landscape. The continuing problem of slavery was separating the nation into two societies. And the influence of Calvinistic Puritanism, with its dark view of reality, had not completely departed from the scene.

On the surface, the bumptious followers of Andrew Jackson might seem the perfect examples of American optimism. But their speeches and newspapers reveal a considerable anxiety about the direction that American life was taking, and a nostalgic look backward to a virtuous early republic. Jackson himself reviled the "Monster," the Bank of the United States, which he believed to be corrupting American virtue.

Writing about the laboring classes, the journalist Orestes Brownson (who would eventually become a Roman Catholic) said in 1840: "The man who employs them, and for whom they are toiling as so many slaves, is one of our city nabobs, reveling in luxury; or he is a member of our legislature, enacting laws to put money in his own pocket; or he is a member of Congress, contending for a high tariff to tax the poor for the benefit of the rich; or in these times he is shedding crocodile tears over the deplorable condition of the poor laborer while he docks his wages 25 percent, building miniature log cabins, shouting Harrison and 'hard cider.' And this man too would fain pass for a Christian and a republican. He shouts for liberty, stickles for equality, and is horrified at a Southern planter who keeps slaves."

Such language was rather different from that of the fervent advocates of contemporary progress.

This anxiety also appeared in the emergence of anti-Catholicism during the 1830s and 1840s. Increasing numbers of Catholic immigrants, particularly after the Irish potato famine, disturbed many Protestant Americans. Samuel F. B. Morse, later to invent the telegraph, published his *Foreign Conspiracy Against the Liberties of the United States* in 1834. In this tract he argued that the Holy Alliance (Russia, Austria, and Prussia) was working through the pope, the Jesuits, and the Catholic hierarchy to subvert democracy by promoting Catholic immigration to America.

Books such as Maria Monk's *Awful Disclosures of the Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal* reached even larger numbers of readers and, although *Awful Disclosures* was revealed as fraudulent, confirmed their worst suspicions and fears regarding the nature of Catholicism. By the 1850s anti-Catholicism had broadened into a general nativist or anti-immigrant movement that gained considerable if temporary political force through the American or Know-Nothing party.

The philosophy of progress was rejected on a deeper level by two major American writers, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville. Although no longer a believer, Hawthorne could not escape much of the puritan outlook. In novels such as *The Scarlet Letter* and *The House of the Seven Gables* he brooded over the consequences of sin, and in his story "The Celestial Railroad" he satirized the philosophy of progress, suggesting that it is only an illusion that will lead to destruction.

Melville reacted even more strongly against the Emersonian view of reality. Evil and malice are essential facts of the universe, he believed, and they must be faced. And face them he did in *Moby Dick* and *Pierre* and other novels, but he was never able to wrest those facts into an understandable whole. "Ay Pierre ...," he wrote, "for thee, thy sacred father is no more a saint; all brightness hath gone from thy hills, and all peace from thy plains; and now, now, for the first time, Pierre, Truth rolls a black billow through thy soul! Ah, miserable thou, to whom Truth, in her first tides, bears nothing but wrecks!"

This skeptical view of the doctrine of progress also appeared widely, if in different form, in the South. For the most part, South-

erners were not participating in the development of industries or cities, and they felt threatened by Northern attacks on their "peculiar institution" of slavery. They responded by defending the agricultural way of life in general and the slave system in particular. In doing so they revealed a deep-seated pessimism about man and society.

[215]

The defense of slavery revolved around three principal arguments. The most important was religious, namely that slavery did not violate the letter of either the Old or New Testaments. A leading exponent of this view, Thornton Stringfellow, argued that God had sanctioned slavery in the patriarchal age, that God had included it in His "National Constitution," and that Jesus had recognized its legality and regulated its duties.

A second argument was scientific, that Negroes constituted a separate and inferior race. As put forward by Josiah Nott and Samuel Cartwright, this argument drew from the theory of diverse origins of man held by many American scientists at the time, but because of its contradiction of the Bible it did not gain wide acceptance in the South. A third major argument, that there was no acceptable way of getting rid of the institution, revealed the basic conservatism of Southern culture. As Thomas R. Dew said: "The relations of society, generated by the *lapse of ages,* cannot be altered in a *day.*"

The most extreme defense of slavery came from the pen of George Fitzhugh, a Virginia lawyer and planter. In his works *Sociology for the South; or the Failure of Free Society* and *Cannibals All! or, Slaves Without Masters* he attacked the idea of progress, belief in the goodness of man, and natural rights—in short, the values upon which Northern society was based. Free society, he believed, was heading for disaster. In contrast, Southern society, which he described as a kind of patriarchal socialism, offered a model for Northerners. Slavery was not a necessary evil; rather, it was a positive good. "The world will only fall back on domestic slavery when all other social forms have failed and been exhausted," he urged. "That hour may not be far off."

Although some Southerners criticized Fitzhugh for his concession to socialism, the general response was enthusiastic, for he had abandoned defense for offense. He had also revealed the fundamental differences between the values of Southern society and those of America at large.

As the 1850s advanced, anxiety increased over the inability of the nation to resolve the crisis of slavery. When war broke out in 1861, the abolitionists interpreted it as a punishment from God and believed, along with other optimists, that a purer nation would emerge from the cataclysm. A more pessimistic view also developed, represented by Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.—wounded three times in battle—which discarded humanitarian causes, replacing them with an emphasis on technical efficiency, order, and strength. By the war's end the latter attitude had become dominant, affecting even such seemingly incurable optimists as Emerson, who now began talking about the need for authority and discipline.

Such a change of mood probably helped prepare many Americans for Darwinism, the dominant intellectual influence of the post-bellum period. The theory of evolution had been in the air for most of the nineteenth century, but (apart from scientific papers by Charles Darwin and his fellow Englishman, Alfred Russell Wallace) until Darwin published his *Origin of Species* in 1859, no one had offered an acceptable explanation of the evolutionary process. In that book Darwin made two essential points: that evolution is the law of life and that it develops by means of natural selection or, as another writer put it, survival of the fittest. In 1871 Darwin, in *Descent of Man,* extended the evolutionary process to humanity.

Although some individuals found it necessary to abandon all religious faith, the response to Darwinism among both scientists and nonscientists fell into three basic patterns. One group, found largely among Presbyterians, Baptists, and the smaller sects, rejected evolution outright. Charles Hodge, leader of the conservative Princeton Theology (after Princeton Theological Seminary) asked, What is Darwinism? in 1874 and answered, "It is atheism." Although many Americans agreed with Hodge, no organized opposition to Darwinism arose in nineteenth-century America.

Most intellectuals adopted evolutionary theory in some form, and the more liberal denominations, including the Unitarians and Congregationalists, found it acceptable. But belief in evolution was not necessarily agreement with the Darwinian version. A large group rejected the theory of natural selection, and some opposed applying evolution to man. The president of Princeton University, James McCosh, argued that the power of God must be invoked

to fully explain the development of the natural order. Somewhat [217] similarly, Henry Ward Beecher, one of the most famous preachers of the day, described evolution as "the history of the divine process in the building of this world."

A third group accepted Darwin's theory but argued that it did not contradict religion. Asa Gray, a professor of natural history at Harvard, became the chief exponent of this view. When he published a review of *Origin of Species* in 1860, he declared that the struggle for existence is undeniable. At the same time, however, he also argued that order in the natural realm presupposed a mind behind it.

Over the next several years Gray became Darwin's main sponsor in the United States, seeking to obtain a fair hearing for the Englishman's ideas and to convince Americans that natural selection was compatible with belief in God. In 1880 he spelled out his ideas in detail. In his book *Natural Science and Religion,* Gray extended evolution to include man, something he had previously resisted, and suggested that natural selection was the Creator's way of working. This Harvard scientist probably did more than anyone else to make evolution acceptable to educated Americans.

The evolutionary view had an impact far beyond the fields of biology and religion. The philosophy of social Darwinism, drawn from the English philosopher Herbert Spencer, is a good case in point. Spencer—even before Darwin published *Origin of Species*— found natural selection, or "survival of the fittest" as he called it, the essential element of evolution and put it forward as the latest discovery in the realm of natural law. According to him, when evolution is interpreted in social terms, it teaches that there should be no interference by government with the social process—no state aid to the poor, no public sanitary supervision, in short, no government activity except for defense and protection of the right of every man to do as he pleases.

Spencer's ideas gained a considerable following among intellectuals in the United States, where Yale professor William Graham Sumner emerged as Spencer's chief disciple. In his many essays on the subject of social Darwinism, Sumner opposed any attempt by government to improve the condition of the working classes. Social progress depended upon a completely free situation in which "courage, enterprise, good training, intelligence, and perseverance"

would come out on top. Aid to the poor would simply perpetuate the existence of those who had already shown their inferiority, and thereby hold back social advance.

But the social Darwinism of Spencer and Sumner was not the only means of applying Darwinism to society. An obscure government worker, Lester Frank Ward, published *Dynamic Sociology* in 1883, a book that gained considerable influence by the late 1890s. He criticized social Darwinism for failing to recognize that once mind developed in the evolutionary process, the human creature was no longer completely subject to natural selection. Man was now a dynamic rather than a passive creature. His task was to observe the laws of nature, appropriate them, and direct them. Ward believed that social reality was pliable and could be manipulated by man. He therefore called for government by social scientists who would study society and determine how best to unlock its creative energy.

The essential element in Ward's evolutionary understanding of society was relativism, the lack of absolutes. This relativism also appeared in such disciplines as law and economics but was especially apparent in the new fields of sociology and anthropology.

When he was not advocating social Darwinism, William Graham Sumner was also pioneering the study of values within an evolutionary framework. *Folkways,* published in 1907, portrayed man's mores as rooted ultimately in ways of doing things, developed by trial and error, which have proved expedient over the course of centuries. All ethical systems are therefore relative to time and place.

Lewis Henry Morgan outlined a similar evolutionary development in his book *In Ancient Society,* which appeared in 1877. In this work he showed how human institutions had moved through the stages of savagery, barbarism, and civilization. Everything from government to family to property relations had followed this process. No particular institutional form was absolute.

The philosophical implications of this new view of things appeared perhaps most fully in the thought of William James. Trained as a medical doctor, James first concentrated his attention on the emerging field of psychology. In his pioneering textbook, *Principles of Psychology,* James criticized both the materialists who regarded the mind as simply the product of physical properties such as body chemistry, and those who saw it as something spiritual or supernatu-

ral. Instead, he described the mind as the biological function of the brain just as digestion is the biological function of the stomach. He went on to argue that the mind is active and purposeful, rather than simply a passive receptor. As he described it, out of the total "stream of consciousness"—i.e., the thoughts, feelings, and impressions that are in constant flux—the mind selects those things in which it is interested. In short, freedom is a basic attribute of human thinking.

There was much else of import for psychology in James's book, but his general view of the mind held the seeds for the philosophy of pragmatism that he developed during the 1890s and early twentieth century. Drawing upon an argument of the American philosopher and mathematician Charles Peirce, namely that the meaning of ideas lies in their practical consequences, James addressed the question of truth.

For nearly all previous philosophers, truth had been an absolute to be discovered. James, however, argued that truth was dynamic, not static. The truth of an idea, according to him, depended upon its concrete results when put into action. "The truth of an idea is not a stagnant property inherent in it," he said. "Truth *happens* to an idea. It *becomes* true, is *made* true by events. Its verity *is* in fact an event, a process; the process namely of its verifying itself, its *verification.* Its validity is the process of its valid-*ation.*"

This view of truth meant that all truths are tentative and provisional. James's goal was to make room for religious concepts in a world increasingly ruled by a crude scientific determinism. If, for example, the idea of God helped an individual best explain and cope with the world he faced, then the idea of God was true. If at some later time, though, the idea of God was no longer helpful to that individual, then it was no longer true and should be discarded.

In making room for all beliefs as long as they were useful both intellectually and practically, James also removed from them any claim to absoluteness. Reality, as he described it, was an "open universe" in which everything was constantly changing, growing, and developing. Pragmatism offered a concept of truth and a philosophical method that corresponded with an evolutionary universe.

While evolution and its implications largely dominated formal thought, on a more popular level it was the development of an industrial-urban society that caught attention. Most Americans probably

greeted these social-economic changes with enthusiasm. *Popular Science,* a magazine addressed to the more educated members of American society, both praised and explained the rapid technological advances.

More people, however, were interested in the wealth that the new technology, among other things, produced. Materialism, a staple of American society throughout most of its history, became even more pronounced. Whereas for the intellectuals social Darwinism justified the new economic order, the success myth appealed to a wider audience, including the businessmen themselves. Best-selling books carried titles such as *Pushing to the Front* and *The Poor Boy and the Merchant Prince.* Baptist minister Russell Conwell gave his "Acres of Diamonds" speech some 6,000 times, exhorting his audiences to "Get rich, get rich! But get money honestly, or it will be a withering curse." And countless children read at least a few of Horatio Alger's more than 100 books chronicling the lives of fictional poor boys who through pluck and luck made their way to financial respectability.

In the main, it was a middle-class audience that consumed these retellings of the myth of success; for them the myth kept alive the optimism of the antebellum years, but it was an optimism tinged with anxiety, as the frequent references to the temptations of mammon attest.

This anxiety appeared more prominently among some members of the upper-middle class who strongly objected to the social changes taking place. A political movement known as "liberal Republican-ism" emerged in the late 1860s, which sought to rid government of the "spoils system" and its accompanying corruption. They finally succeeded in gaining adoption of the Civil Service Act of 1883, which placed some limitations on the power of political parties to hand out government jobs to their friends.

The Liberal Republicans (who eventually became Democrats) held a laissez-faire attitude toward business. Consequently, although they disliked much about American enterprise, they were not in-clined to attempt any reforms in that arena. Other critics stepped forward, however, who also appealed to an upper-middle-class au-dience. Henry Demarest Lloyd, for instance, examined the history of Standard Oil in *Wealth Against Commonwealth* (1894), conclud-

ing that industrial monopolies were destroying liberty. In contrast to laissez-faire views, he believed that the public interest must replace individual interest through government ownership of the major industries.

Critics such as Lloyd were individual voices indicating that all was not well with American society, but they were not yet part of a general reform movement. They did not reach the working class, the one most affected by an industrializing America, and the middle class was too busy reaping the financial benefits of economic change. The first major wave of reform came from outside their purview, from the rural areas of the South and Midwest.

The farmers had felt increasingly threatened by the growing industries and cities. One sign of this attitude was the frequent appearance in agricultural publications of poems describing cities as abodes of poverty, crime, intemperance, and secularism, among other things, in contrast to the practical, natural life of the countryside. When depression struck the farmlands in the late 1880s, brought on by a combination of bad weather, foreign competition, and the changing economic structure of agriculture, the farmers arose in protest. The air rang with accusations of conspiracy—one Populist tract appeared with the title *Seven Financial Conspiracies Which Have Enslaved the American People.*

Nominating a presidential candidate in 1892, the Populists proposed such measures as the graduated income tax, public ownership of railroads, and the secret ballot. Their movement died away when prosperity returned in the late 1890s, but Populism left a legacy of ideas soon to be picked up by another reform movement.

The 1890s, though, were a difficult time for many Americans, even outside the agricultural sector. A general depression hit the country in 1893. Labor strife intensified. Immigration from Southern and Eastern Europe was increasing rapidly. The "gay nineties" were not so gay.

The responses were varied. Anti-Catholicism again reared its head. The American Protective Association, formed in 1887, by the 1890s was emphasizing the subservience of Catholics to a foreign potentate; anti-Semitism also appeared. Historian Frederick Jackson Turner attracted considerable attention in 1893 when he argued that the frontier, which the census bureau had just declared closed, had

nurtured American democracy. His argument implied that the problems of the present were but a foretaste of the struggles the country would endure as it sought, now that the frontier was gone, a new basis for freedom. Brooks Adams, descendant of two presidents, wrote *The Law of Civilization and Decay* (1895), while his brother Henry was theorizing that the second law of thermodynamics indicated that history was moving toward the extinction of life.

Most Americans probably did not experience such pessimism as appeared in these movements and writings, but a degree of anxiety does seem to have swept the land in the late 1880s and 1890s. One historian goes so far as to assert that the United States went through a "psychic crisis" during this period. The major manifestation of this crisis was a renewed emphasis on the American mission, or "manifest destiny," as it has been called. From the founding of the first American colonies the concept that America had a special purpose in the world had been a common idea. With the exception of the Mexican War of the 1840s, most of those who talked and wrote about the American mission had emphasized that America was to be an example to the world. During the 1880s, however, people began speaking of the need to export American civilization elsewhere.

This new version of the American mission resulted from several influences: social Darwinism, a cult of Anglo-Saxon superiority that was gaining considerable popularity, Protestant mission work, the example of European imperialism, and the sense—because of the social and political turmoil of the period—that the nation had reached a turning point in its history. Many voices arose saying that America must expand beyond North America. Protestant minister Josiah Strong argued in his 1885 book *Our Country* that the Anglo-Saxon was "divinely commissioned to be, in a peculiar sense, his brother's keeper." Such a mission required a navy and overseas bases, said Alfred T. Mahan in *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History* (1890).

These men were giving voice to ideas that reached fruition in the acquisition of Hawaii in 1898 and the Spanish-American War of the same year. As Americans debated the propriety of taking over such islands as Puerto Rico and the Philippines, for there were those who opposed this imperialism, Senator Albert Beveridge justified the American mission abroad in the strongest possible terms:

"Wonderfully has God guided us. Yonder at Bunker Hill and [223]
Yorktown His providence was above us. At New Orleans and on
ensanguined seas His hand sustained us. Abraham Lincoln was His
minister and His was the altar of freedom the Nation's soldiers set
up on a hundred battlefields. His power directed Dewey in the East
and delivered the Spanish fleet into our hands, as He delivered the
elder Armada into the hands of our English sires two centuries ago.
The American people cannot use a dishonest medium of exchange;
it is ours to set the world its example of right and honor. We cannot
fly from our world duties; it is ours to execute the purpose of a fate
that has driven us to be greater than our small intentions. We cannot
retreat from any soil where Providence has unfurled our banner; it is
ours to save that soil for liberty and civilization."

Beveridge's speech came after American military victories
helped reinvigorate national confidence, something also aided by
the return of prosperity in 1898. In any case, the sense of national
purpose that appeared in this speech characterized the Progressive
movement that arose soon after the war. Much of the anxiety that
had emerged during the previous two decades remained, but it was
muted, secondary to an overwhelming sense that now was the time
to fulfill the destiny assigned by God. As Theodore Roosevelt told
a cheering convention in 1912: "We stand at Armageddon, and we
battle for the Lord."

The Progressives, a term used to describe those reformers who
became active around the turn of the century at all levels of govern-
ment, drew upon many of the ideas that had caught hold in intellec-
tual circles, as well as programs put forward by the Populists. The
evolutionary view of reality taught them that because nothing was
fixed or absolute, society could be changed through human effort.
Pragmatism, especially as developed by John Dewey, showed how
ideas were primarily instruments to bring about social change, to
be judged by their effectiveness in achieving one's goals. From
Lester Frank Ward they learned that experts, who studied social
problems objectively, were indispensable to the efficient operation
of government.

Political theorist Herbert Croly pulled these various strands of
thought together in his *Promise of American Life* (1909), where he
argued for comprehensive national planning that would include sup-

port for strong labor unions and regulation of business. Croly's ideas were similar to those of Roosevelt's New Nationalism, promoted in 1912.

Woodrow Wilson, although agreeing with Croly and Roosevelt on many items, favored breaking up big businesses or, as he described it, regulating competition rather than monopoly. By 1914, however, Wilson had turned in a New Nationalist direction.

Meanwhile, Progressives were at work attempting to improve American democracy by introducing the secret ballot, establishing new forms of urban government such as the city-manager system, and creating local, state, and national regulatory agencies.

It was a heady time for the reformers, but the coming of World War I interrupted their work. Wilson, in typically progressive fashion, made the war a conflict "to end all wars." But experience did not bear him out. As one of the reformers, Frederick Howe, said about the Paris Peace Conference: "We were amateurs, amateurs seeking to right the world by moralistic appeals; we had fought as religious crusaders, and, like Joshua, had expected the old world to fall at a trumpet blast. Our emotions were honest, the sacrifice genuine, wholehearted, but Europe only smiled at our naïveté." It seemed that once again Americans were having to learn the lessons supposedly taught by the Civil War.

These years, from approximately 1830 to 1919, reveal an America struggling to reconcile its optimism and sense of divine election with the anxiety and pessimism produced by sectional conflict and social change. Prior to the Civil War, optimism was dominant; afterward, a darker view of reality prevailed. Although belief in progress still held the allegiance of most Americans in the later nineteenth century, they tended now to interpret it in terms of struggle and mastery. Except for the interlude of Progressivism—and even that held elements of the newer view—American thinkers and the American public at large were increasingly coming to view the world as a complicated place.

Bibliographical Note

Apart from her rejection of evolution (Spiritual Gifts 3:90-96, and Education, 128-130), Ellen G. White did not give much specific

attention to the ideas discussed in this chapter. On certain key issues she moved in a quite different direction from that of contemporary thinkers. For instance, she regarded man's nature as fallen (The Ministry of Healing, 428) and needing transformation that could only come through Christ (Steps to Christ, 68, 69). Moral standards (Testimonies for the Church 5:329) and truth (Testimonies for the Church 2:490) were changeless. Although these references are extremely limited and selective, she clearly rejected the relativistic tendencies of modern thought.

Chapter 14—The Australian 1890s

Alwyn Fraser

God calls upon us to push the triumphs of the cross in Australia. New fields are opening. For want of workers and money the work has been hindered, but it must be hindered no longer. Of all countries, Australia most resembles America. All classes of people are there. And the warning message has not been presented and rejected.

—*Testimonies for the Church 6:26*.

On December 8, 1891, Ellen White, accompanied by her son William and three literary assistants, arrived in Sydney, the capital of New South Wales. Eight days later the group left on a journey of about 600 miles for Melbourne, the capital of the southern colony of Victoria. There she lived until she returned to Sydney in March 1894. Mrs. White would stay in Sydney and then at Sunnyside, her home near Avondale College, some 80 miles north of Sydney, until she returned to the United States on August 29, 1900. She was thus in Australia almost nine years.

During that period Ellen White experienced an extremely severe economic depression that affected particularly the states of New South Wales and Victoria (where the Whites lived), which she described at length to a friend in the United States. She also witnessed the successful attempt to weld the separate colonies into a nation, the Commonwealth of Australia, and the problems that arose with the effort to include in the federal constitution the principle that Australia was a Christian nation.

Although Mrs. White was, of course, primarily concerned with the missionary outreach of the church and the growth of its various publishing, health, and education agencies, her letters and other writings during this decade reveal that she was well aware of the secular

and religious movements that were part of this most formative period in Australia's development.

Three years before the Whites arrived, while the colonies appeared to be riding high on a long wave of unprecedented prosperity, the first 100 years of British settlement was celebrated. Among the many distinguished overseas visitors who came to join in the centenary festivities was the earl of Carnarvon. Upon his return to England he treated the readers of the *Fortnightly Review* to a delightful and detailed description of the country and its people, stressing its "extraordinary prosperity".

The Sydney *Morning Herald* of January 26, 1888, the country's actual birthday, took pride in the fact that the present "free and prosperous community," with its undoubted "material progress," had outgrown "its origin and completely effaced the traces of it." Such fulsome praise was music to the ears of Sir Henry Parkes, the affable premier of New South Wales, the oldest colony. No one, of course, could know that in a few short years such prosperity would give way to deep depression.

The country had, indeed, made remarkable progress in all areas of life since the first governor, a retired navy captain named Arthur Phillip, formally took possession of the continent on behalf of the British government. He had brought with him in the First Fleet of settlers the entire population of about 1,000 people, consisting mostly of unwanted convicts that the government of George III had sentenced to be transported from England, accompanied by their guards from the Marines.

It was not a promising start, and though Phillip did assure his superiors in England that "this country will hereafter prove a most valuable acquisition to Great Britain," he must have wondered at times whether they would win the battle for survival. But the first settlement did survive. Exploration opened up fertile plains for raising sheep; more free settlers arrived as Britain ended the transportation of convicts to eastern Australia; and the discovery of gold continued to attract people from overseas, so that other settlements were established by the mid-nineteenth century and began to prosper.

The 30 years before 1890 were boom years, financed largely by funds from overseas. British investors, in particular, saw that considerable profits could be made from the rapidly rising demand

for houses, factories, farms, and railways. During these years population doubled as new arrivals, mostly from Britain and Ireland, poured into the colonies under government-assisted immigration schemes. The hardworking Chinese, though, were not so welcome, for they were too numerous and it was thought that their willingness to work for lower wages would undermine the living standards of the Australian worker and his family.

[229]

By the 1890s, Australia's population of 4 million had spread out into six separate states or colonies—New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania, Queensland, Western Australia, and South Australia (which included what later became Northern Territory)—each being responsible for conducting its own domestic affairs in its own separately elected parliament.

At the same time, in spite of their sometimes intense rivalries, colonial politicians were realizing the need for a national government to deal with such matters as defense, international trade policy, and foreign relations. During the 1890s this nationalist movement strengthened, and shortly before the Whites returned to America, the British government passed a bill establishing a federal parliament to govern the new Commonwealth of Australia.

When the Whites arrived in Melbourne at the close of 1891, the building mania that had gripped the city for the past decade had subsided. The architectural face of "marvelous Melbourne," as the prosperous city had become known, had been greatly altered as new government buildings and taller office blocks, complete with the revolutionary American elevator, replaced the vacant lots and smaller buildings of an earlier age. New suburbs appeared almost overnight to meet the demand for homes for workers who were being employed in the city or in the increasing number of factories that were being established. Money for construction and purchase was readily available from the new and thriving building societies, land banks, and mortgage companies that had persuaded citizens of all wealth levels to invest their savings with the promise of large rewards.

But the boom was self-limiting. As land prices fell and the demand for homes slowed, many of the newly formed finance companies that had overextended themselves in frantic speculation went bankrupt. Many wage earners and retired people who had invested

their savings lost everything. The collapse of the building boom was, unfortunately, followed by the news that British investors who had recently lost heavily in Argentina were no longer willing to lend money overseas, even to Australian governments and companies. [230]

Now the situation was serious, because the expansion of the 1880s had depended to a large extent on money borrowed from Britain. The result was that public works programs, which had employed many men building railways, had to be sharply reduced; more building societies and land companies began to fail; and the number of businessmen filing for bankruptcy rapidly rose. Many who could not face public embarrassment committed suicide; more than one body was dragged from Melbourne's Yarra River.

As unemployment worsened and consumer spending dropped, more businesses went under. The eastern states of Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland were most severely affected by this economic downturn. When building societies and land banks by the score suspended operations, many never to reopen, thousands of investors, most of whom were ordinary working-class people, lost the bulk of their savings.

Worse was yet to come, however. In 1893, as the drying up of capital from Britain caused the commercial banks to fail, panic set in. Thousands of depositors in Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane flocked to withdraw their savings. Not all were successful, and this created hardship for many people. Two thirds of Australia's 28 commercial banks were involved in this enormous bank crash. People who had invested in these seemingly sound banks and building societies were shocked by their sudden collapse.

Shock turned to anger as numerous scandals surfaced involving respected businessmen, public servants, and members of parliament who embodied the Victorian concept of virtue—good family men, teetotalers, regular churchgoers and supporters of charity. Caught up in the speculative mania, these bankers and builders with whom the public had entrusted their money were found guilty of fraud, embezzlement, misuse of trust funds, and other crooked dealings. Very little of this money was ever recovered.

James Mirams, who started numerous financial institutions, was among those who served prison terms while vehemently protesting their innocence of any wrongdoing. His close friend James Munro,

the Victorian premier from 1890 to 1892, who had helped Mirams establish the Premier Permanent Building Association, one of the largest of Melbourne's many building societies, fled the country to take up a hastily arranged appointment in London.

[231]

The depression affected all the eastern states, though Victoria and Melbourne especially were most severely hit. Unemployment rose sharply, while the savings of even the most thrifty were soon used up. Those who were buying houses and farms frequently lost everything when they could not meet their payments.

"In this country I have found destitution and poverty everywhere," Ellen White wrote in 1895, "and had I not means to relieve the distressed, to clothe the naked, to take the youth who are too poor to help themselves and place them in schools, and to help the churches in building houses of worship, we should have left the field long ago; for it would be useless to attempt to do anything, hampered on every side." She proceeded to tell how she had given $1,000 to help some students gain an education, and a further $2,000 to help other distressed individuals.

The full picture of this very severe depression may never be known. Contemporary newspapers carried heartrending stories of the misery produced by economic hardship. Some men, driven to despair by their financial problems, sought a solution by shooting their families and then committing suicide. A Melbourne clergyman told how a grasping landlord had taken furniture and clothing from an unemployed tenant's house while he was out looking for work, leaving him and his five children with absolutely nothing.

Fortunately, few followed the example of Mary Newsome, who, after her unemployed husband had left her, gave birth to a new baby. Already mother of three small children, she sought to solve the problem of an extra mouth to feed by burning her infant. Those with small children, who were able to find work, placed them with "baby farmers" who promised to feed and care for the little ones for a fee. Not all were dishonest, but the public was so outraged by reports of babies' bodies being found that when one baby farmer, a Mrs. Knorr, was found guilty of murdering several children, there was little opposition to carrying out the death sentence.

Since their menfolk could not find work, women frequently resorted to prostitution. Precise figures are not available, but there

seem to have been about 10,000 prostitutes making a living in Melbourne's streets and brothels during the depression years of the 1890s.

How to deal with the widespread misery caused by the depression was both a pressing and a major task. Within the various state governments there were many who were extremely sympathetic, from a humanitarian viewpoint, to the plight of the unemployed and their destitute families. Some members favored a public works program, but all that was accomplished was the establishment of a labor bureau, which had limited success because only about one third of those who registered received work.

Unfortunately, most of the jobs were available in rural areas, not the urban areas where the majority of the unemployed and their families lived. Colonial governments were reluctant to provide direct financial help because they did not consider it to be the state's responsibility to spend money to alleviate social and economic distress.

Private charities, operated by churches and benevolent societies, were very willing to help the distressed, though the many calls for aid usually exceeded their meager resources. They too had been affected by the depression, which had reduced private donations at the very time they were most needed. Some local businesses were able to provide limited supplies of bread, meat, and vegetables for hungry families. In Melbourne the most destitute were given a small sack of food each day and were able to obtain an evening meal and shelter for the night at such places as the Salvation Army refuges, Dr. Singleton's Night Shelter for Women, and the Gordon Institute for Boys. Attending a compulsory worship service was probably a small price to pay for such a luxury, for there were many who had to spend a cold night on park benches and in the public gardens.

Those who suffered most were the children. A government report issued in 1891 told of 10,000 children in Melbourne alone who were neglected and homeless and had to devote all their attention to supporting themselves.

Even the workers themselves, acting as a group, could do little to change their situation. They could organize demonstrations and hold mass meetings, but these did not produce jobs or money for food. A popular form of protest was the torchlight procession, in which men

were joined by women with babies in their arms to dramatize their plight. The clergy were particularly angered one Sunday evening in 1893 when some 300 workers marched through Melbourne streets bearing a cross to which was nailed a workman in effigy. A plaque above him read: "Humanity crucified."

Such forms of protest failed to produce action; frequently they led to violent confrontations with the police, especially when the church services of the more well-to-do citizens were interrupted by the marchers. Some clergy, together with their employed and well-fed flocks, expressed little sympathy for the unemployed, since they regarded their plight as a judgment from a God who was punishing the workers for neglecting Him while spending most of their leisure time drinking and gambling.

During the latter part of the depression, Ellen White lived in Sydney. That city, although not as badly affected as Melbourne, was by no means immune from unemployment and hardship. Here, too, the needy received most help from private charity. Numerous church members benefited from Mrs. White's generosity, even though her own living expenses were "much heavier in this country than in America." She frequently visited a needy family of nine who lived 12 miles away at Castle Hill and who had recently become Adventists. The father was an unemployed stone mason who had borrowed from the bank to build his house and establish a citrus orchard. He lived in "daily expectation of receiving a summons either to repay the money loaned him or to lose all that he has."

The Whites themselves were affected by the depression. "Our faith has been tested and tried," Ellen White wrote in her diary. "Families were continually coming to me and telling me that they had no money to buy bread, but what could I do? I could not pay my own workers any wages, and our grocery bills were accumulating. For three or four months my workers could not be paid, but they were willing to suffer inconvenience. I received from Battle Creek $600. This would barely set me straight with my creditors, but some of them were willing to wait."

Depression was not the only topic of public interest in the eastern Australian states during the early 1890s. These years witnessed a number of bitter clashes between capital and labor as the rapidly growing trade unions began to assert themselves. The earliest unions

in Australia were craft unions, formed in the 1840s and 1850s by workers in the building, printing, and metalworking trades. Locally organized, they fought to secure such benefits as an eight-hour [234] workday, higher wages, and improved conditions of work.

By the 1890s a marked change had come over the labor movement. New socialist ideas were coming into the country and were being circulated in working class papers such as the Brisbane *Worker* and William Lane's *Boomerang*. Questions were being raised about the unequal distribution of wealth and the need for social services.

The unions themselves were becoming more organized to harness this working class discontent, as a result of the drive and vision of leaders such as William Spence. Born in Scotland in 1846 of staunch Presbyterian parents, Spence came to the Victorian gold fields when he was 7 years old. Two years later he was working as a miner. He emerged as a leader in 1878 after successfully organizing his first strike.

During the 1880s Spence amalgamated unions in the shearing and mining industries and began to advocate a new union philosophy. With larger organizations, he argued, labor unions could have more success in bargaining with what he referred to as "tyrannical employers." His organizational abilities produced huge gains in membership. In two years the Amalgamated Shearers' Union grew to 16,000 members; the first six months of 1890 saw the number of workers that the New South Wales Trades and Labour Council represented increase from 20,000 to 35,000.

But with increasing strength came increasing militancy as union leaders tried to force employers to agree to the "closed shop" principle of hiring union labor only in their industry. Employers watched this development with alarm, and, in response, formed their own organizations, such as the Steamship Owners' Association and the Pastoralists' Union, to protect freedom of contract. At the dawn of the nineties these two forces—a stronger and more militant trade union organization, and a growing employer unity—appeared to be on a collision course.

Trouble broke out initially in the shearing industry. At the beginning of the 1890 shearing season, Queensland graziers, under union pressure, agreed to have wool shorn by union labor only and not to employ cheaper Chinese labor on their stations. Spurred on by

this success, Spence aimed to force New South Wales and Victorian graziers also to adopt the closed shop.

[235]

But his militant proposal for union solidarity "to draw such a cordon of unionism around the Australian continent as will effectively prevent a bale of wool leaving unless shorn by union shearers" infuriated the graziers. Now it was the employers' turn to unite; both transport and stevedoring companies agreed to support the pastoralists by handling all wool.

In August 1890 the struggle widened when trouble broke out in the shipping industry. A strike by maritime officers, who were joined by several other shipping unions, the Wharflabourers Union, as well as shearers, road transport workers, and coal miners, led to what was called the Maritime Strike, the largest and most bitter industrial dispute Australia had experienced.

Although the unions would ultimately lose this trial of strength, which lasted for three months and involved some 50,000 men, they would not go down without a struggle. There were some ugly scenes that embittered relations between capital and labor throughout the nineties and beyond. In November 1890 nonunion workers were hauling wool, under guard, down George Street, Sydney, to the wharves at Circular Quay, where it was to be loaded for export. About 10,000 men, members of the Trolley and Draymen's Union, and their sympathizers, lined the route, frequently heckling the nonunion workers with cries of "Scab!"

Although the protest had been noisy, there was no violence until the wool had almost reached its destination. Some onlookers then began to hurl stones; when a constable was injured the authorities felt that it was time for action. The riot act was read, and 300 police, who had been assembled to keep order, joined the mounted troopers and quickly dispersed the demonstrators.

Shortly after the Sydney protest, when a mass rally of unionists was held in Flinders Park, Melbourne, the Victorian government called in the troops as a precautionary measure. Colonel Pride's words to his men to "fire low and lay them out ... so that the duty will not again have to be performed," shows how seriously the authorities viewed the situation. The rally, fortunately, was orderly.

The next year, a potentially explosive situation occurred in Queensland when the Pastoralists' Union determined to defeat the

Shearers' Union by refusing to accept closed-shop shearing. The shearers decided to accept the challenge and to fight back, literally, by forming a number of armed camps. One group even erected a [236] blue flag, which symbolized an earlier confrontation between gold miners and the Victorian government at the famous Eureka Stockade in the 1850s. Nonunion workers, many of whom had been brought in from Melbourne, were threatened and had to be given police protection, which further antagonized the strikers.

The premier, Samuel Griffith, warned that there "appeared grave danger that the freedom of men to pursue their lawful avocations under the protection of the law would be seriously impaired" if the situation continued. Finally, the government sent in troops to break up these armed groups at the shearers' camps. Eleven strike leaders were arrested, tried, and subsequently sentenced to three years in prison for conspiracy and intimidating nonunion workers.

While this ended the confrontation, the strikers were more than ever convinced, particularly by what they regarded as vindictive sentences handed down to the leaders of the strike, that the government was siding with the wealthy employers in a class war to oppose the working man.

These strikes did not come at an opportune time for labor. Some leaders, like William Spence, had not wanted a large strike because they knew how inadequate the strike funds were. Sydney union authorities faced the strange situation of trying to dissuade many of their members from supporting the Maritime Strike.

Perhaps the strongest argument against striking at this time was the state of the economy. As the depression grew more serious and unemployment rose, it became more difficult to persuade men to leave their jobs and strike. That is one reason why the strikes that did occur in 1892 and 1894, involving miners and shearers in New South Wales and Queensland, were short-lived and unsuccessful. There were plenty of unemployed, nonunionist strikebreakers who were glad to occupy the vacant positions.

Union leaders were, of course, disappointed. William Lane, a radical socialist who had played a leading role in organizing the Queensland labor movement, decided that he could not successfully achieve his goals in Australia. An advocate of an Australian republic, Lane aimed at the "nationalization of all sources of wealth and

of all means of producing and exchanging wealth." He became disillusioned with the failure of the Maritime and Shearers strikes and with the steadily worsening depression.

[237]

In 1892 Lane negotiated with the government of Paraguay in South America for a large tract of land where he proposed to establish his socialist utopia. The next year he sailed from Sydney in his own vessel, *Royal Tar,* with 220 settlers who had paid $60 per family. On board was a small library of Adventist publications including *The Great Controversy, Thoughts on Daniel and Revelation,* and *Bible Readings,* which the church's ship missionary had persuaded the captain to accept.

But the communal settlement suffered from numerous internal problems. Lane proved to be a dictator, and when he claimed to be receiving instructions by supernatural revelation, many of his followers returned to Australia in disgust. By the end of the decade only a few settlers remained in Paraguay. Lane himself settled in New Zealand, where he wrote for the *New Zealand Herald* and strangely trod a conservative, rather than a radical, political path.

More moderate labor leaders decided that the time had come to effectively reshape society by becoming involved in politics rather than through industrial action. This idea, originally put forward in the eighties, had understandably received little mass support in that prosperous decade. But in the nineties, life was harder. Bitter strikes and worsening unemployment caused more people to favor a political solution to their problems. Thus the 1890s saw the appearance of Labour Parties in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, and the election of their candidates to these parliaments. Now the workers would have a voice in colonial parliaments; perhaps the government would assist the workers rather than the employers.

The social bitterness and economic losses produced by the strikes of the 1890s moved some colonial politicians to try to prevent a repetition. Acts were passed in New South Wales (1892), South Australia (1894), and Victoria (1896) to set up tribunals to determine wages and conditions of work, and conciliation councils to settle disputes before a strike occurred. In the long run, therefore, this period of industrial unrest did actually benefit the worker, because

[238]　governments began to recognize that they had a clear responsibility

to prevent disputes from producing such hostility and deep divisions in society.

Any picture of Australian life in the 1890s, and particularly of the movement for the establishment of an Australian nation, would be incomplete without some reference to the Sydney *Bulletin.* Before the 1880s, most of the literature that Australians read was imported from England. In January 1880 all this changed. The founding of the *Bulletin* by John F. Archibald, who was its editor until 1903, has rightly been called "the most important single happening in Australian literary history in the last century."

With "Australia for the Australians" as its motto, the paper became an extremely influential supporter of federation. It could be found not only in the clubs and hotels of the cities but also in the huts of scattered rural workers, where it was known as "the bushman's bible." Although the *Bulletin* did not neglect city life, it devoted most of its attention to life in the sparsely settled Australian outback.

Two well-known figures in Australian literature of the time were Henry Lawson and Andrew Barton Paterson, both of whom wrote about such typically Australian rural workers as drovers, shearers, miners, bullock drivers, and their families. Lawson grew up in the gold fields of western New South Wales and was quite familiar with the hardship of country life, which he delightfully portrayed in "A Day on a Selection." Another short story, "The Drover's Wife," revealed the courage of women in the outback as they tried to cope with the problems of raising a family and dealing with drought and floods, bushfires and sickness, and five- foot-long deadly black snakes while their husbands were away for months at a time.

Paterson, who first wrote under the penname "Banjo," the name of his father's racehorse, was a master of the bush ballad. Although he practiced law in Sydney, Paterson, who had been born in western New South Wales, frequently returned to the outback he knew and loved so well. In such folk ballads as "Clancy of the Overflow" and "The Man from Snowy River," he told of Australian country life, using Australian characters and Australian language. In an era of growing nationalism his work was enthusiastically received.

"Banjo" Paterson's best-known ballad is "Waltzing Matilda." It tells the story of a swagman (an itinerant bush worker) who, camping by a billabong (a pond or small river), steals a jumbuck (a sheep)

that passes by, and stuffs it into his tucker-bag (food bag). As he struggles with it, the squatter (sheep station owner) comes by with troops, who demand its return. To avoid arrest, the swagman jumps into the billabong.

"You'll never catch me alive!" said he;

And his ghost may be heard as you pass by that billabong,

"You'll come a-waltzing matilda with me."

"Waltzing Matilda" (a matilda is the swagman's bundle of possessions; to waltz matilda is to travel with one's belongings wrapped in a blanket, known as a swag, and slung over the shoulder), now set to music, is today one of the most recognizable Australian songs.

The 1890s also saw important political gains made by women. Australia and New Zealand were among the first Western countries to reform election procedures. The first secret ballot was held in the colony of Victoria in 1856, some 15 years before it was introduced into England. But it was in the field of women's voting rights that the Australian colonies led the way. As early as 1861 women in South Australia who owned property were allowed to vote in local municipal elections. In 1894, following New Zealand's earlier lead, South Australia became the first colonial government to grant women the right to vote at all elections and also to stand as candidates for parliament. In 1899 Western Australia followed her neighbor's lead. Several more decades would elapse before women in Britain and the United States were granted the same rights.

An anomaly arose, however, when the Australian Commonwealth Constitution of 1901 allowed only those women who had state voting rights to vote in federal elections. To eliminate this clear case of discrimination, the Electoral Act of 1902 permitted all adult women to vote in elections of the federal level. This act put pressure on the remaining state governments to allow women to vote in their elections. By the end of the decade all states had complied.

The campaign to secure women's voting rights in Australia was vastly different from that in Britain and the United States. In those countries, women were in the forefront of a battle that lasted for many years. Although they staged the customary marches and demonstrations, women, particularly in England, also sought to draw attention to their cause by engaging in a variety of such sensational

[240]

acts as chaining themselves to railings, engaging in hunger strikes, and literally assaulting both police and politicians.

This type of militancy was absent from the Australian scene, though this does not mean that women were inactive. There were those like Rose Scott, a prominent social worker in New South Wales, well known for her humanitarian work with women and children, who were deeply involved in the Franchise Leagues that were established in most states.

Unlike in the mother country, the colonial franchise movement received extensive, though not always unanimous, support from men in public office, such as Dr. Stirling, a professor of anatomy at Adelaide University, who sat in the South Australian parliament. In 1890 the New South Wales parliament would probably have passed Sir Henry Parkes' bill granting the vote to women, had it not been for other unrelated issues that caused its failure. Astute political leaders such as Charles Kingston, of South Australia, and John Forrest, of Western Australia, supported the campaign for women's suffrage because they saw distinct political advantage in capturing the female vote.

Women in Britain and the United States must have envied the gains that their southern sisters secured with comparatively little effort. Securing the vote, however, was one thing; getting elected to parliament was quite another. It was not until 1921, when Edith Cowan took her seat in the Western Australian parliament, that a woman was elected to such a position.

Undoubtedly, the most important political development in the 1890s was the movement to unite the Australian colonies into a nation. Half a century earlier, a forward-looking colonial secretary, Earl Grey, had suggested that the colonies would do well to cooperate in matters of common interest. But this proposal and others made in the next four decades excited little enthusiasm among the colonists or their leaders.

No compelling reason had yet emerged to persuade the colonies to bury their numerous jealousies and rivalries. They continued to argue over everything from railway gauge to tariff policy. Even during the 1880s, German and French interest in nearby Pacific islands and the threat of increased non-White immigration stirred only the politicians rather than the public on the need to unite for

greater strength. A decade later, however, a combination of economic depression and industrial strife persuaded cynical politicians and unenthusiastic citizens that they should move toward a national government.

By the middle of the decade, the state of the economy enabled proposals for a uniform tariff policy and national control over banking, bankruptcy laws, and public borrowing, to receive greater public support. A key conference was the second federal convention, held in 1897 at Adelaide. To this convention each state would send 10 delegates, who were to be chosen by the people rather than by the politicians. The task of the convention was to present to the people a constitution bill on which they would vote.

Among the politicians in attendance was Edmond Barton, from New South Wales, a foremost supporter of federation who later was to become the country's first prime minister. Barton played a major role in drafting the constitution bill, which provided for a federal government of two houses—a House of Representatives and a Senate—and described the powers that this government would take over from the states.

During the discussion about federation, one of the issues that was hotly debated was the place religion was to play in the new government. Some church leaders, such as the Catholic Cardinal Moran, became deeply involved. Moran's name appeared on the ballot in March, 1897, to choose 10 delegates to the second federal convention. It was significant that he supported the insertion of a statement in the preamble of the constitution bill that "religion is the basis of our Australian Commonwealth."

Although Moran was defeated in the elections and withdrew from politics, there were others, Catholic and Protestant alike, who were prepared to campaign actively for the inclusion of religion in the constitution. This "recognition" clause, as it came to be called because it would have the constitution state that Australia "recognized that God is the supreme ruler of the world, and the ultimate source of all law and authority in nations," stirred up considerable controversy; both supporters and opponents circulated petitions.

In spite of strong support from Catholic and Protestant churches and from both newspapers and politicians, the "recognition" clause [242] was defeated. Among the religious groups who took the lead in this

opposition was the Seventh-day Adventist Church, led by Willard A. Colcord, an American who had witnessed A. T. Jones' earlier struggle for religious liberty in the United States.

Colcord and the Whites clearly understood that such a "recognition" clause could jeopardize freedom to worship on Sabbath. Only a few years earlier Adventists had been in trouble with the authorities who were trying to enforce Sunday legislation. Under the heading "Seventh-day Adventists in the Stocks" the *Bible Echo,* the church's religious liberty magazine, told the story of how two brothers, William and Henry Firth, were convicted of working on Sunday in their orchard at Kellyville, near Sydney. The Firths refused to pay the five shillings fine and chose to spend two hours in the stocks as punishment. Their decision embarrassed the authorities, who could not find any stocks at that time.

Three months later, Robert Shannon was arrested as he was mixing mortar while building a house in the Sydney suburb of Leichhardt. Shannon tried to prove that he was wrongfully arrested because the law mentioned the Lord's day according to the Bible. The magistrate would not be drawn into a theological argument, however, and dismissed the case on a legal technicality—again, the authorities could not find any stocks!

The defeat of the "recognition" clause was largely a result of the strong leadership of Henry Bournes Higgins, a Victorian barrister who had corresponded with Colcord and was well aware of the religious liberty problems Adventists had faced in the United States in the wake of a similar recognition movement. Higgins was also responsible for clause 116 in the present constitution, which states: "The Commonwealth shall not make any law for establishing any religion, or for imposing any religious observance, or for prohibiting the free exercise of any religion, and no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust under the Commonwealth."

It was a triumph for Higgins and "the little squad of Seventh-day Adventists," as one Protestant opposition group referred to the church, who were determined to keep church and state separate.

By 1900 the constitution bill had been approved by popular vote in all the colonies and by the British Parliament. It was a proud moment for all Australians when on January 1, 1901, in Sydney's

Centennial Park, Edmond Barton was sworn in as the new country's prime minister by the earl of Hopetoun, representing Britain's Queen Victoria. That same day, the Sydney *Morning Herald* echoed the optimism that all shared: "We have within our borders, in our but partly discovered and expoited natural resources, all the material guarantees for prosperity and greatness. We enter a new year and the new century a united Australian nation."

Bibliographical Note

Excerpts from Ellen G. White's writings concerning Australia appear in Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 331-378. She extensively discusses her goals for the Avondale school in Testimonies for the Church 6:181-192, and Fundamentals of Christian Education, 310-327. Evangelism, 425-428 and Evangelism, 582-584, reports on Seventh-day Adventist evangelistic work in Australia.