

Ellen G. White Estate

ELLEN G. WHITE
IN
EUROPE
1885-1887

ELLEN G. WHITE

**Ellen G. White in
Europe 1885-1887**

D. A. Delafield

1975

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Overview

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About the Author

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

Further Links

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Foreword

Ellen G. White was personally involved in the beginnings and development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. This movement, now international in its dimensions, had its rise in the wake of the great Advent movement of the 1840's in which William Miller and his associate ministers played a principal role.

Instructed by God that she was to serve as his special messenger, she accepted the mission assigned to her, provided counsel and encouragement that proved to be of inestimable value to the "little flock" of Sabbathkeeping Adventists. With the work of Seventh-day Adventist developing in Europe in the late 1860's and in the 1870's it was quite natural that she should be invited to spend some time in the old world, traveling to the churches for meetings, attending and preaching at the conferences, and helping to build strength and endurance into the growing organization.

Responding to an earnest invitation from the brethren at the second European council held in Basel, [Basel is the preferred English spelling, though Basle is also used. Bale is French.] Switzerland, in 1884, Ellen White the following year journeyed to Europe and spent two full years laboring in eight countries where significant work was in progress. At the same time she continued her voluminous literary work at her apartment in the headquarters building in Basel. [6]

After being in Europe only a few months, she was led to remark again and again that she found in its various countries circumstances relating to the work of the church very similar to those that existed thirty-five or forty years earlier in the establishment of the work in North America. Her two years of labor, from late September, 1885, to August, 1887, resulted in building depth and strength wherever she worked and did much to bring about unity and good will among the believers.

As representatives of the White Estate have visited Europe from time to time, they have discerned a keen interest and curiosity about Ellen White's visit and a strong desire to have a good working

knowledge of the experiences and accomplishments of those two years. This culminated in a hearty affirmative response on the part of European publishing leaders and church administrators assembled at Jonkoping, Sweden, in 1971, to the suggestion that a historical study might be prepared that would bring those eventful days back to life again for all to enjoy. To accomplish this, arrangements were made with D. A. Delafield, an associate secretary of the White Estate, who visited the scenes of Ellen White's labors in Europe while on a year-long itinerary. In preparing the manuscript he was assisted by other members of the White Estate staff, particularly Ronald Graybill.

While traveling and working in Europe, Ellen White with some regularity kept a rather full diary, which is rich in information essential to such a historical work. Sometimes she reported to the church in America by way of articles in its two leading English papers, the *Review and Herald* and the *Signs of the Times*. Many of her sermons preached during the two years were reported stenographically, and copies in typewritten form are on file in the White Estate office. Then, there are her letters rich in biographical and human-interest reports, letters written to members of the family and to leading denominational workers, and the records also of her visions.

A prime source of materials is the long-out-of-print volume, *Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of The Seventh-day Adventists*, edited and published in Basel in 1886. Its sections on the history of the work in Europe to the time of publication, and others on Mrs. White's travels and presenting her addresses at the conferences she attended, have been most useful in the preparation of this manuscript.

The problem on the part of the author has been to confine the selection of materials to the space limitations of this book. No attempt is made to present a day-by-day chronicle of Ellen White's twenty-four months in Europe and her travels by boat, train, carriage, and on foot. But the main features of her ministry, represented at the major conferences, workers' meetings, and in the churches, are laced together with tracings of her journeys from country to country and church to church.

A number of important visions were given to Ellen White while on this mission, and those relating to the work in Europe are introduced.

It is the testimony of those who were close to her in labor during those two years and also associated with the work of the church in the years that followed, that her visit made a deep impression on the hearts and lives of the people. They came not only to esteem and respect her highly but to love her. They found in their hearts a ready response to the messages that God imparted to them for the growth and harmony of the church.

Significant counsels, whether presented orally or in writing, have been included, drawn from her sermons and manuscripts and diaries. Much of this material has never before been released until this book provided a natural outlet. In each case where there is a quotation, an original source reference is given. The student wishing to make inquiry about the sources that form the basis for unquoted material may do so, availing himself of this information incorporated in copies of the printer's manuscript. This information is available at the Ellen G. White Seventh-day Adventist research center, Europe, situated on the campus of Newbold College in Great Britain. Copies are also on deposit at the headquarters of the two European divisions, situated in St. Albans, England, and Berne, Switzerland, and of course at the offices of the White Estate at the general conference headquarters, and at Andrews University. [8]

While many of the excerpts have been drawn from the Ellen G. White diaries, the term *diary* is not used as the reference. For convenience in filing and reference, all the diaries have been copied from their original handwritten form into numbered, typewritten documents, most of which embody a period of her activities or are confined to a particular journey. Thus, instead of referring to "diary for October 8, 1885" the reference will be to "[Manuscript 25, 1885.](#)"

The various spellings of the names of European cities, towns, and people represent the opinions of European consultants.

An attempt has been made to present, as it were, a printed recording of Mrs. White's voice speaking in Europe to Europeans, communicating with the people of God in their homelands. Two goals were kept in mind in the preparation of this record. One, the building of a correct and much-needed historical source book of an important

period in the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Europe, thus gathering together into one framework the chronological story of Mrs. White's two years there. And, two, the telling in a limited way of the human-interest story of the personal experiences, hopes, triumphs, despairs, vicissitudes, and feelings of an altogether human person, presenting a readable account, hopefully leaving the reader with the feeling that he now knows Ellen G. White, the Lord's messenger. The narrative is simply told, and because the story is not spectacular it is more persuasive.

[9] It is worth noting that the publication of this book coincides approximately with the centennial of the arrival on the continent of Europe in 1874 of J. N. Andrews, the first seventh-day adventist missionary to be sent to a country outside North America.

Were Ellen White living she doubtless would rejoice in the appearance of this volume. Again and again she reminded us that the experiences of the early years must be recounted with reminders of God's special providences. In 1903, speaking of the literary tasks before her, she wrote of her hope to have part in the preparation of such a manuscript as it related to her work in Europe:

“I am going to make an effort to prepare a history of our stay and work in Europe. I shall get together the talks that I gave while there, and publish them with the historical sketch, most of which is in the book published some years ago on this subject. Then, sometime, I want to get out a history of my work in Australia.”—[Letter 150, 1903](#).

The publication of this volume of history will undoubtedly deepen the interest in the study of the century-old adventist witness in Europe, and inspire a strong faith to plan for larger evangelistic accomplishments in the days ahead.

Arthur L. White

Washington, D.C.

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Chapter 1—Chronology

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October 7-14	Denmark—Copenhagen	93-101
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October 16-29	Sweden—Stockholm, Kopparberg, Grythytted, Orebro	102-114
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October 30-November 16	Norway—Christiania, Drammen	115-126
November 16-19	En route Christiania, Norway, to Basel, Switzerland	127-129
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November 26-27	En route Basel, Switzerland, to Torre Pellice, Italy	134-135
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1886		
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1887		
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June 30-	England—London, Kettering	307-313
August 3	Holloway, Southampton, Isle of Wight, Wellingborough, Grimsby, Liverpool	
August 3-11	En route from Liverpool, England, to New York, U.S.A. Reached New York August 11, 1887	314-320

Chapter 2—A Historical Prologue

No volume devoted to the story of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Europe will overlook the far-reaching contribution made by the pioneer minister and editor John Nevins Andrews. With his headquarters in Switzerland, Elder Andrews labored from the autumn of 1874 till the autumn of 1883. The witness of Andrews in Europe marked the merging of two forces: first, the most earnest appeals from Sabbathkeeping Adventists residing in Switzerland for the assistance and cooperation of the General Conference in sending to them a minister; and second, the growing conviction on the part of church leaders that one of their number should be sent from the New World to the Old World to cooperate with the European brethren in developing a European constituency.

[18] Albert Vuilleumier, of Tramelan, Switzerland, one of the first fruits of Czechowski's labors, was in early contact with General Conference leaders in Battle Creek. In a letter written to "Dear Brothers in Christ," January 6, 1869, he lamented the fact that Czechowski "is almost always away," and he confided "we long for our organization, for the brethren to send some one on a mission to us who is filled with courage and faith, and who can endure all for the love of the truth and who will agree [harmonize] with us. We feel in need of the experience and directions of our brethren, and we therefore desire that a brother will come here and remain for some time ... in order to organize us, counsel us, strengthen us.... We stretch out our arms, our hearts, and we offer you our homes."

In addition to these thoughts of brotherhood and appeal, there were questions about the doctrine of the church and comments regarding the work of M. B. Czechowski and a new young worker, James Erzberger, who, the letter says, "studied at the Institute of St. Chrischona near Basel to become a missionary." Erzberger, the letter continued, "has now been baptized and is proclaiming the third angel's message in German Switzerland, and he is sustaining us. He is a true servant of the Lord and works well. Two sisters have also

been baptized, and we have the hope that this year some persons very much impressed will join the church. This is how the mission is making its way, slowly, but we are certain surely. The time is very solemn for us in the mission here.”

The reply to Vuilleumier’s letter came from Andrews himself, the president of the General Conference. His letter is dated April 12, 1869. He wrote with feeling:

“Our General Conference will probably meet about the last of May. We will give your letter serious attention at that time and do what we can to help you. Our laborers are comparatively few and the field in this country, now destitute of any help, is vast. Yet we deeply feel your appeal and will prayerfully consider what can be done. We mean that men who got out to labor as missionaries shall be men of piety and of sober judgment, and that zeal and caution shall be mingled in their characters.... The sending out of missionaries pertains to the General Conference. So great is our lack of laborers to fill the urgent demand that we know not what way to turn.”

A postscript to the letter is appended by James White, who indicates his full agreement with the statements of Brother Andrews, and says, “We love you and feel a deep interest in your prosperity. At a special meeting of the church yesterday Mrs. White appealed to the brethren in a most affecting manner in your behalf. Nearly all were in tears.... We shall not remain silent and inactive respecting you.”

[19]

The call for help from Switzerland in 1869 was repeated and emphasized through the instrumentality of James H. Erzberger, whom the Swiss Adventists dispatched to America to plead for a minister. He himself was ordained in America and returned to the Continent as the first Seventh-day Adventist minister to labor there.

The knowledge that there were little companies here and there in Europe who through the study of the Word had come to accept the Sabbath truth and the light that the Lord gave to Ellen White indicating the international outreach that must distinguish the church,

helped Adventists to sense their responsibility to evangelize the world field. The General Conference leaders pondered prayerfully their responsibilities to launch work overseas and the choice of someone to send to Europe in response to the call. One thing was certain: if a representative was to go from the United States he must be the best. And so it was that their eyes began to turn toward John Nevins Andrews.

Andrews had worked very closely with James White and with Ellen G. White in the earlier years of his ministry, and both of these leaders gave strong support to the proposal that he go to Europe. They followed the development of the European work with keen interest.

[20] The many letters Andrews wrote to the Whites, filed in the vault of the Ellen G. White Estate, indicate that the Whites were his close advisers, almost like parents. And he was bound to them by love and a deep loyalty. While the difference in age was not great, the differences in temperament were such that their associations became complementary. Andrews was mild, submissive, and fearful of making mistakes, but zealous and hard working. He had great intellectual strength and was an indefatigable student and researcher. He could see and understand the deep and wide meaning of truth and searched diligently to find it. The Whites reciprocated the confidence expressed by him, and they ever stood by his side to strengthen him by their mature judgment and robust and courageous traits of character.

A combination of useful knowledge and brain power, with faith in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy counsels, were big factors in Andrews' success, as it has been with other spiritual leaders of the Advent Movement from the earlier days of the message.

The repeated appeals from Europe for ministerial help and the sense of responsibility deepening in the hearts of church leaders led to the decision. Ellen White, at a later time, addressing our believers in Europe, declared: "We sent you the best man among us."

John Corliss wrote of the experience that highlighted Andrews' call:

"A camp meeting was appointed to convene a short distance west of Battle Creek, in the summer of 1874,

just prior to the departure of our first missionary to a foreign field, and Elder Andrews was present. When the expansion of the message was dwelt upon, and notice was given that he would soon leave for Europe, a change came over the meeting, and Elder Andrews, who had never before appeared so solemn, at once seemed altered in appearance. His face shone with such pronounced brightness that, as I saw him and heard his apparently inspired words of quiet contentment to be anywhere with the Lord, I thought of the story of Stephen," whose face was "as it had been the face of an angel."—*Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists*, vol. 2, p. 203.

This describes the spirit of the man whose pioneer labor in Europe ended in death two years before Mrs. White arrived on the scene.

Andrews, a widower, taking with him his children, Charles and Mary, sailed from Boston on September 15, 1874. His first assignment was to visit the new converts, assist in giving instruction, and organize the believers and companies that were springing up in Switzerland, Scandinavia, and other places.

He settled in Switzerland and began publishing in the French language, a language new to him and one he set about at once to learn. In time he was joined by A. C. and D. T. Bourdeau, French-Americans who lived in the State of Vermont. They had accepted the faith in 1857, and preached it vigorously in many towns and villages in New England and Canada. In an effort to strengthen their ministry they translated and printed several tracts in French.

[21]

God placed a burden of ministry to European immigrants in America upon others, and in time, tracts were published in German and Dutch. These were followed by literature in Danish and Norwegian. J. G. Matteson, a Dane, labored diligently and self-sacrificingly among the Danes and Norwegians in the United States, and he too was later to go to Europe to figure prominently in the early development of the work in the Scandinavian countries. But Andrews was first on the scene from America.

Chapter 3—Bound for Europe

Ellen White's first overseas trip

Port: Boston

Ship: S.S. *Cephalonia*

Passengers: Included Ellen G. White and her party

Time of Embarkation: August 7, 1885

Destination: Liverpool

The prospects of a European trip, including the Atlantic crossing by boat, caused Ellen White's heart to beat a little faster! The anticipation that one experiences when he is about to take his first journey to another country is nearly always a pleasurable sensation, and Mrs. White's reaction, though freighted with a sense of solemn responsibility, was no exception. Besides, a trip to Europe back in 1885—particularly with a departure from historic Boston harbor—was a privilege comparatively few Americans enjoyed.

Ever since she had been invited by church leaders in Europe to come to visit them, she had been thinking about it and praying that the Lord would lead her. And now it was all settled, and she was ready to sail from the shores of her native land.

[23] Her final day in America, Friday, August 7, was a busy one, with last-minute shopping and five or six letters to write. Then she headed for the harbor of the big port city where she boarded the Cunard Line's S.S. *Cephalonia*. The ship was not due to sail until the next day, but Mrs. White and her traveling companions wanted to get settled in their staterooms before the Sabbath began. They spent Friday night aboard ship.

With Mrs. White on this journey were her son William C. White, his wife, Mary Kelsey White, and their first child, vivacious little Ella, then three years old. Also in the party were Sara McEnterfer, Anna Rasmussen, Mrs. Bertha Stein, and two of A. C. Bourdeau's children, Arthur and Jesse. The two boys were traveling to Europe to join their father, who had been there since 1884.

Ellen White, sharing her stateroom on the *Cephalonia* with Sara, found it “large and commodious.” She confided in her diary: [While in Europe Mrs. White recorded her travel experiences in several diaries with mixed generality and detail. Her labors were so arduous it is a wonder she found time to produce any journal at all! During the seventy years of her public ministry she penned well over 100,000 pages, more than 25 million words. This was probably the most important phase of her life’s work. Few authors if any, religious or secular, ever wrote as much.] “The Lord seems very near and I feel peaceful and restful.”—[Manuscript 16a, 1885](#).

Mrs. White’s relaxed state of mind was the immediate result of being aboard ship at last and feeling settled. She now had a sense of direction. She knew with a certainty that God in His providence was leading her. a month earlier she wasn’t so sure that it was the Lord’s will for her to accept the invitation to labor in Europe. Here is the interesting story of divine providence.

The Invitation Comes From Europe

From May 28 to June 1, 1884, the second session of the European Missionary Council was held in Basel, Switzerland. George I. Butler, from America, presided. At this meeting, resolutions were adopted requesting the General Conference to ask Mrs. E. G. White and her son W. C. White, then residents in California, to visit the European missions. At the General Conference held in Battle Creek, Michigan, the following November, which they both attended, the request was acted upon.

The resolution read, in part:

“We express our earnest desire that Sr. White may visit Europe, that the cause here may share the benefits of her labors and of the precious light and instruction which the Lord so graciously grants us through His servant.”—[The Review and Herald, November 11, 1814](#), p. 713.

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Also, the services of her son W. C. White, then 30 years of age, were urgently requested. His experience as a publishing house

manager at the Pacific Press on the West Coast, in the eyes of church leaders, qualified him “to take charge of the finishing and furnishing” of the publishing house at Basel.

The *Review* account of the presentation of this request at the 1884 General Conference session in November states that following the reading of the formal invitation, Elders Butler and Haskell spoke of “the desirability of a visit to Europe in the near future by Sr. White and her son, Eld. W. C. White.” They “responded that they stood ready to go whenever God should indicate by unmistakable providences that such was their duty.”—*Ibid.*

Would It Be Presumptuous to Go?

But there were no “unmistakable providences” to point the way to the Old World; at least, there was no instruction by vision from the Lord. Mrs. White was left by a mysterious providence to find in her own soul the answer to the call. In her notes of travel that appeared in the *Review*, she said:

“Although I had prayed for months that the Lord would make my path so plain that I would know that I was making no mistake, still I was obliged to say that God hangs a mist before my eyes.”—*Ibid.*, [September 15, 1885](#).

At the time the call came, she was 57 years of age, and a widow for three years, much worn from her labors in writing *The Great Controversy*, volume 4, just published, and exceedingly weary from a heavy schedule of camp-meeting appointments during the summer of 1884. In this fatigued state of mind she had not been able to write much for months. Would it be presumptuous for her to attempt the journey across the American plains and on to Europe? She wondered about her duty. Was it God’s will for her to go?

Her “faith was severely tested.” She longed for human comfort and guidance, and she said:

[25]

“My courage was gone, and I longed for human help, one who had a firm hold from above, and whose faith would stimulate mine. By day and by night my

prayers ascended to heaven that I might know the will of God, and have perfect submission to it. Still my way was not made clear; I had no special evidence that I was in the path of duty, or that my prayers had been heard.”—*Ibid.*

Until the time of his untimely death in 1881, Mrs. White’s husband, James, had been available to encourage and counsel her when faced with big decisions, but now he was gone and she was alone save for her two sons, particularly Willie, whose wise and understanding counsels braced her for the work ahead. About this time he visited her at her home in Healdsburg and spoke words of courage and faith.

“The Judgment of the General Conference”

“He bade me look to the past, when, under the most forbidding circumstances, I had moved out in faith according to the best light I had, and the Lord had strengthened and supported. I did so, and decided to act on the judgment of the General Conference, and start to the journey, trusting in God.”—*Ibid.*

Responding positively to Willie’s encouragement, Sister White packed her trunk and journeyed with him to Oakland. Sabbath afternoon, July 11, 1885, she spoke in the Oakland church. Later she said:

“The Lord helped me. My mind was clear and tongue and utterance were given me.... I decided then that I could cross the plains once more, making twenty-four times that I had gone back and forth on this long journey from East to West and West to East.”—[Manuscript 16, 1885](#).

The following Monday she boarded the cars and headed in the direction of her first overseas appointment. Then she declared:

[26] “When I had taken my seat on the cars, the assurance came that I was moving in accordance with the will of God.”—[The Review and Herald, September 15, 1885](#).

That Monday evening on the train she sensed that God’s hand was removing the mist from her eyes. The station was “a place of great confusion, and I had not been able to bear anything of the kind for months. But it did not trouble me now. The sweet peace that God alone can give was imparted. to me, and like a wearied child, I found rest in Jesus.”—*Ibid.*

Later, in connection with Ellen White’s call to labor in Australia in 1891, she passed through a similar confusing experience that tried her faith. Other church workers received and answered calls to labor in distant lands. They had to pray for a knowledge of God’s will. They also had to respect the fact that God leads His servants through the regular channels of the organization. God has a church on earth, which He has instituted. The church has chosen leaders, conference officials and committees, empowered by God to act on behalf of His church. When Ellen White received the call to Europe and to Australia she was left to respond just as any other worker. And like other servants of God, she must herself step forward in faith. She declared:

“I here learned over again the lesson I have had to learn so many times, that I must lean wholly upon God, whatever my perplexity. He will never leave nor forsake those who commit their ways unto Him. We must not depend on human strength or wisdom, but make Him our counselor and guide in all things.”—*Ibid.*

And so it was that Ellen White found rest and peace as she boarded the ship in Boston harbor. She had the knowledge that she was moving in the direction Divine Providence had marked out for her. Writing in the book *The Desire of Ages* after she arrived in Australia in 1891, she said:

“The Lord will teach us our duty just as willingly as He will teach somebody else.... Those who decide to do

nothing in any line that will displease God, will know, after presenting their case before Him, just what course to pursue.”—Page 668.

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Ready to Sail!

Sabbath morning, with the *Cephalonia* still docked in Boston harbor, the White party were to have a last visit with friends, Elder D. A. Robinson and Brother Edward Stillman, who came aboard to say good-by. Mrs. White had already been up writing a few final letters. She delivered these to the two men to be posted, and said farewell.

The first day was pleasant, and she began to turn her attention to the task before her:

“I feel my heart drawn out in prayer to God for a fitness for the great work before me. I am of good courage and should accident or harm or death come to me here I have made my peace with God. All is well.... I want during this ten days’ passage to be brought more close to Jesus.”—[Manuscript 16a, 1885](#).

This prayer wish was the sum of her life’s purpose. Later she wrote—and it can be seen that she was writing from experience—“Only the work accomplished with much prayer, and sanctified by the merit of Christ, will in the end prove to have been efficient for good.”—[The Desire of Ages, 362](#).

That Sunday evening, after viewing a beautiful sunset with her friends, she went into the dining room to attend an Episcopalian service. She felt that the Scripture passages read were “very appropriate,” and said that “the hymns sung were excellent in sentiment.”

Storm at Sea!

“Monday was uneventful. But on Tuesday, August 11, the weather changed. She wrote with what seemed to be a note of anticipation:

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“The sea is boisterous. The waves rise high in green and blue and white spray, mingle and dash with force against the porthole.... The boat rocks fearfully and every timber seems to be strained and shocked. There are but few upon deck. The deck is wet. Chairs are tied with ropes. Ropes are stretched from point to point that those who walk on deck may take hold of the ropes to keep from falling. There is indeed a heavy roll. I cannot lie on the sofa. Trunks are rolling about in the staterooms. Satchels are dancing hither and thither...I am glad to climb up into my berth and lie still. Can rest but little. I have precious seasons of silent prayer. The Lord Jesus seems very near to me. I am so thankful that I can trust in my Saviour at all times.”—[Manuscript 16a, 1885](#).

The storm was followed by two days of comparative calm and fog, accompanied by the eerie notes of the fog horn, which in her diary she described as “bellowing out its warning signal that vibrates through every nerve of the body.”

And now, as always, she was back to her writing—seven pages on Thursday, ten pages on Friday, ten pages the next Monday. [While in Europe Mrs. White recorded her travel experiences in several diaries with mixed generality and detail. Her labors were so arduous it is a wonder she found time to produce any journal at all! During the seventy years of her public ministry she penned well over 100,000 pages, more than 25 million words. This was probably the most important phase of her life’s work. Few authors if any, religious or secular, ever wrote as much.] She wrote to her son Edson and to her twin sister Elizabeth. She struck off five pages for *The Sabbath School Worker*. With regularity she wrote in her diary, too, recording events aboard the *Cephalonia* and her meditations about them.

“I thought of those upon the boat who had no faith in God, no hope in Jesus Christ, the world’s Redeemer. In sunshine where no danger threatens all is hilarity and full of amusement. But when the vessel is driven by fierce winds and tossed, when peril comes, when life is

hanging in the balance, the appetite for amusement is at (an) end....

“Amid the rough waters and the storm and the fog, I felt that Jesus was never nearer to me, never more precious. My faith reposed in God, however dark the surroundings. The faith of the believer is like the ship’s compass, the ship may be struggling, with the waves and by the tempest, tossed by the ever restless sea, yet the compass keeps its position, doing its work, maintaining its level amid plunging and tossing, pointing to the pole. I felt that my soul could stay upon God whatever comes, calm waves or boisterous.”—[Manuscript 17, 1885](#).

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Ellen White also found her mind drawn out again and again to the story of Noah and his faith while sailing aboard the storm-tossed ark. Her familiarity with the Scriptures made it natural for her to draw parallels between her own experiences and those of Bible characters.

Finally, on the evening of August 18, the *Cephalonia* docked at Liverpool. The crossing had taken ten days—all of them packed with interest to the diminutive traveler whose unfailing curiosity and sensitivity to her environment made life a source of endless interest. But she was not a tourist who had come to see the sights. She had earnest work to do for God.

Two years later—less two weeks and a day—on August 3, she would begin her homeward journey from the same port, with her busy European adventure a matter of history.

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Chapter 4—Expanding Mission Perspective

How the visions helped

The story this book tells will be put in better perspective if we pause briefly to consider some of the steps God took to lead Seventh-day Adventists to a sense of their full responsibilities. Ellen White, as she crossed the Atlantic, must have pondered some of these.

How the Visions Gave Guidance

As fast as the early Advent believers could grasp a concept of the task before them, God had through the visions pointed the way to a world mission. Ellen White traced this back to her first vision in December, 1844. Again in the vision at Dorchester, Massachusetts, in November, 1848, she was instructed to tell James White to start a paper, and “from this small beginning it was shown to me to be like streams of light that went clear round the world.”—[Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 125](#).

Then, three years before J. N. Andrews left the shores of America to sail for Europe, the Lord’s messages had marked out a work of world dimensions:

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“December 10, 1871, I was shown that God would accomplish a great work through the truth, if devoted, self-sacrificing men would give themselves unreservedly to the work of presenting it to those in darkness.... Angels of God are moving on the hearts and consciences of the people of other nations, and honest souls are troubled as they witness the signs of the times in the unsettled state of the nations. The inquiry arises in their hearts, What will be the end of all these things?”—[Ibid., 203](#).

Again in the vision of April 1, 1874, the angel instructed her:

“Never lose sight of the fact that the message you are bearing is a world—wide message.... Your light ... must be placed on a candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in God’s house—the world. You must take broader views of the work than you have taken.”—[Testimonies for the Church 7:35, 36](#).

A little later James White would say that statements like these from the Spirit of Prophecy troubled the early believers. They could not understand how, with limited time and their few numbers and small resources, they could possibly encompass the earth.

Arthur W. Spalding, Seventh-day Adventist historian, referred to the “young church” that “understood little more of its destiny and its career than babes of earth.”

“They said that it must be that this gospel is to be preached to all the world *in token*. Here in America we meet representatives of every race and every nation. How good the Lord is to bring to our hand Jew and Gentile, Anglo-Saxon, Teuton, Latin, Slav, Indian, Negro, Mongolian! We may reach them here, and so fulfill the terms.”—*Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists*, vol. 2, p. 193.

By “terms” they meant the requirements of the gospel commission. They reasoned that if the third angel’s message were preached throughout the United States, it would thus have been preached to all the world!

The World Concept of Missions

So in the providence of God, the concept of an international church gradually developed upon the Adventist consciousness, and J. N. Andrews was dispatched to Europe.

When Andrews arrived in Switzerland in October, 1874, clearly Providence had already prepared the way for his coming and for the extension of the Advent message on the continent of Europe. B. L. Whitney, who was sent to Europe in 1883 and who served as head

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of the Swiss Conference, wrote of neutral Switzerland as the natural place to locate the headquarters of the work.

“In this free republic Switzerland, so centrally situated, and so admirably adapted, by its political relations, to become a center for the great work among these various nationalities, the Central European Mission was to be established. With three tongues, the French, the German, and the Italian, as its national languages, with no sectional barrier of prejudice to stand between it and the surrounding nations which were to be united with it in the common brotherhood of truth, no other locality could have been selected so well adapted for this work as the one which, it would seem, Providence had thus prepared for it.”—*Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists*, 14.

Europeans Begin the Work in Europe

But the work of Seventh-day Adventist had its beginnings in Europe years prior to Andrews' appearance there. James Erzberger and Albert Vuilleumier, both Swiss, were preaching the Adventist message before the arrival of the American pioneer minister. The humble instrument of their conversion was M. B. Czechowski, a Pole by birth and once a Catholic priest, but now an Adventist.

The arrival of Andrews was significant because it launched a long period of fruitful, cooperative effort on the part of Adventist from both continents.

[33] America dispatched some of her giants to fight the battles of Europe in the early days of the message. Andrews had once been a General Conference president and also editor of the *Review*. The year before Mrs. White's arrival in Basel, Switzerland, in 1885, George I. Butler, then the General Conference president, attended the European Council and spent some time at the headquarters of the Swiss Conference in Basel. He gave his best efforts to prepare the way for Mrs. White's visit. He offered practical counsel on church organization and helped plan the building of the first denominational institution in Europe, the publishing house in Basel,

Imprimerie Polyglotte. Stephen Haskell and J. N. Loughborough had also preceded Mrs. White. Their biggest contribution was their energetic evangelistic work in Great Britain. And now on the scene appeared the best-known Seventh-day Adventist in the world—Ellen G. White. Butler remained in Europe only for a short time. Mrs. White's stay was to stretch out for two full years.

And the local believers welcomed the newcomers, their labors, and their financial support. This workable Heaven-inspired arrangement gave vitality and strength to the infant church laboring in an old, old world where religious customs and social mores were deeply entrenched in the life-style of the people.

The work of Europe began about three decades prior to the visit of Ellen White in 1885. These thirty years were marked by much the same search for truth, the same spirit of evangelism and passion for souls, and the same sacrifice and poverty as were present in the United States during the earliest years of church work there.

Qualified to Offer Counsel

Ellen White, as one of the original founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, along with James White and Joseph Bates, had participated in the earliest experiences of the denomination. She had passed through the period of growth and expansion that followed the pioneer days. She was therefore prepared to offer guidance and to stimulate courage, faith, and unity among the brethren and sisters during her two years in the European countries. When she arrived she knew something about the problems that faced the work at that time—problems of establishing and financing institutions, locating places where workers might live, selecting sites for evangelistic services, and promoting effective co-operation among evangelistic laborers.

Indeed, Mrs. White was, strictly speaking, the only pioneer of the church still available for such guidance. Her husband had died in 1881 and Bates in 1872. J. N. Loughborough, S. N. Haskell, and G. I. Butler, who labored for short periods in Europe either as established workers or as visiting ministers, did not have the same background of experience.

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But above all, the unique gift of prophecy bestowed on Mrs. White made her visit an event of importance to the European Adventist and to the development of the Seventh-day Adventist witness in Europe.

The brethren were expectant. And as she disembarked from the S.S. *Cephalonia* in Liverpool that August day they were eager to hear her messages. Certain it was that with the light she had received from God she would stress the rapid expansion of the message that was destined to reach the whole world!

Chapter 5—The Reception in England

[35]

A busy two weeks of meetings

When the S.S. *Cephalonia* pulled up to the pier at Liverpool, Ellen White was ready to go to work. And the reception at the dock brought courage to her, for there waiting to meet the White party were M. C. Wilcox, editor of the *Present Truth*, the British missionary journal that he had launched the year before, and two other workers, among whom were George R. Drew and William O’Neil.

They were taken to the home of Brother Drew for the night, and all united in a season of prayer and thanksgiving for God’s protecting care. Ellen White’s health was better than when she left America, and she stated, “To me this was abundant evidence that I was in the path of duty” (*Ibid.*, 162). It brought great encouragement to her.

Drew worked as a “ship missionary” in Liverpool, and when Ellen White learned from him that Liverpool had 300,000 inhabitants and there were only two denominational workers attempting to reach the people, she was distressed! “What can those do to let rays of light shine in this great city?” she asked with a troubled heart, “I am filled with pain... when I consider the few workers and so much to be done. There will have to be help sent to this city.”—[Letter 22, 1885](#).

The First Missionary an Englishman

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The first tangible “help” for Britain had come from Switzerland. According to *Historical Sketches* [*Historical sketches of the foreign missions of the Seventh-day Adventists* was printed in basel, Switzerland, in 1886. The volume records the earliest SDA mission activities in Europe and Australia. Included in a section of practical addresses delivered by Ellen White at the third European council in basel with an account of her travel experience during the last five months of 1885.]

“The first Seventh-day Adventist missionary to visit England was Bro. William Ings, who reached Southampton from Basel, Switzerland, on May 23, 1878.

“Bro. Ings remained at first two weeks, when he returned again to the Continent. He reported much interest, and people hungering for the truth. He soon returned to England, and resumed work in the land of his birth. At the end of sixteen weeks he reports ten keeping the Sabbath.... He and his wife remained in England until the beginning of the year 1882. Much of his time was spent in ship work, and thousands of pages of publications on present truth in various languages were sent by him to all parts of the world....But Bro. Ings’ labors were not confined to ship work. In Southampton and surrounding towns and villages he presented the truth faithfully as opportunity offered, going from house to house, obtaining subscriptions for periodicals, talking and praying with the people.”—Page 81.

The same year that Ings began his work in England the General Conference sent J. N. Loughborough across the Atlantic. He arrived seven months after Ings came to the country. Loughborough plunged into evangelistic work in Southampton and its suburbs within a week after his arrival. He preached in a newly purchased tent sixty feet in diameter. Six hundred attended the first service. Meetings ran from May 18 to August 17, and thirty persons signed “The Covenant” to keep God’s holy commandments and to wait for the Lord from heaven. [The commandments of God, including the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, had been held in reverence by some in great Britain from as far back as Columba’s day in the sixth century. And a thousand years later, in the sixteenth century, martyrs had died in England for observing the true Sabbath. (See *Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists*, 79, 80).

And concerning the Second Advent doctrine “According to Mourant Brock ... 700 clergymen of the Church of England were raising the cry, the Lord is at hand” while Miller was preaching the Advent message in America in the early 1840’s (*Ibid.*). But in the

late 1870's the doctrine of the Sabbath and the Second Advent were not commonly known either in England or on the Continent.]

No baptism was conducted until February 8, 1880, when Loughborough immersed six persons—he did not believe in rushing his candidates into the church! By July 2, 1881, twenty-nine had taken their baptismal vows. Credit was partially due to the excellent Bible work done by Maud Sisley, who had returned to her homeland from America.

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Pioneer S. N. Haskell also visited Britain and labored on the Continent in 1882. He encouraged the workers and urged the beginning of a publishing enterprise in England. Other ministers followed with brief visits. J. H. Durland and M. C. Wilcox, however, were missionaries in Britain attached to the work there.

Foundations Deep and Solid

The needs of the field were staggering, and Ellen White saw clearly that only a beginning had been made. She was eager that the foundation be laid deep and solid. In 1879, while still in America, she wrote:

“I was shown in vision many things connected with the cause of God. The state of things in the church ... and the work of God in Europe and England, ... and in other new fields, was presented before me. There is the greatest need of the work in new fields starting right, bearing the impress of the divine. Many in these new fields will be in danger of accepting the truth or assenting to it, who have not a genuine conversion of heart. When tested by storm and tempest, it will be found that their house is not built upon a rock but upon sliding sand. Practical godliness must be possessed by the minister and developed in his daily life and character. His discourses should not be exclusively theoretical.”—[Testimonies for the Church 4:321](#).

Such counsels explain the thorough work J. N. Loughborough did for his converts and S. N. Haskell's emphasis on a strong

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literature ministry. For years both men had been closely associated with Ellen White in labor. They highly valued her counsel.

But returning now to Drew, in whose home she was staying. He was an Englishman, like Ings, and was born in Christchurch, Hampshire, in 1835. As a young man he had gone to sea and spent fifteen years as a sailor. Once, while in the port of San Francisco, he heard J. N. Loughborough preach and had accepted the Advent message. Then he returned to England in 1882 and engaged in his "ship missionary work," distributing free literature and selling books and magazines to passengers and crews in port cities.

Drew had worked first in Hull, and then in Liverpool. He was to continue to labor in Britain for the rest of his life. William O'Neil, who also met the White party at the boat, was with Drew in Liverpool to gain experience for work he planned to do later in London. The two men visited hundreds of ships along the twelve miles of docks in Liverpool and Birkenhead. In the first quarter of 1884 Drew visited 680 ships. He is credited with having converted the Finnish sea captain A. F. Lundquist, who introduced the Advent message to Finland.

Grimsby—Headquarters Town

The morning after Mrs. White's arrival she and her party, accompanied by M. C. Wilcox, took the train for Grimsby, where the mission and publishing work had been headquartered since 1884.

Arriving at the mission office at 72 Heneage Street, Ellen White met Alfred Mason and his wife, Inez, Evangelist Sands H. Lane and his wife, Parmelia, and Jennie Thayer. All of these were Americans who had come to help with the British Mission. [Mason had come to England from woodland, California, to help particularly with the business management of the mission. He was also an experienced typographer and was able to give practical help in printing *Present truth*. He would later serve as treasurer for the review and herald publishing association in America, and in 1913 he was called to elmshaven, St. Helena, California, to supervise Ellen White's little farm, remaining in her employ until her death in 1915. Sands lane was a native of michigan and a successful preacher. Later he became president of several conferences in the united states. He was conducting a tent meeting in riseley when Mrs. White arrived in

England. Jennie Thayer had been in the country since 1882, when she had come over to help loughborough in southampton. She was setting type and reading proof for *Present truth* At that time, but when M. C. Wilcox returned to America in 1886 she took over the editorship. Later she would launch the *Atlantic Union Gleaner* (1902), an American paper, and serve as its editor for eight years.]

According to W. C. White, Grimsby was a place of 30,000 inhabitants, and “the greatest fishing port in England.” “A strange place,” he observed, “from which to issue our paper, nevertheless there have been over 9,000 copies sent out monthly’ (W.C. White letter, September 18, 1885). [40]

Mrs. White remembered Grimsby as “a very large place,” but not large enough to be “called a city because it had no grand cathedral” (Letter 22, 1885). But here she began her public speaking endeavors, which were to take her before many audiences, large and small, in eight countries of Europe.

Friday afternoon a drenching rain threatened to cut down the attendance considerably, but 170 braved the elements to hear Ellen White lecture on “Christian Temperance,” one of her favorite subjects. At the close of her address she was greeted with enthusiastic applause!

The next morning at half past ten she met with the little church in Grimsby to deliver her first Sabbath sermon. About thirty-five were present, including ten who had come in from Hull and Ulceby. A. A. John [Adelbert Allen John came to great Britain with his wife, Ellen, in 1882 and had labored most of the time in Grimsby and towns nearby. He was the founder of the Grimsby church. Later he returned to America and became a physician, and later still served in Mexico as a medical missionary.] was there from Wales, where he had been witnessing since early summer.

In the sermon that Sabbath morning the messenger of the Lord shared some experiences from the pioneer days of the cause. She told of the sacrifices that were made, and spoke of the responsibility that fell on each member to make further sacrifices to carry the “present truth” to others. Then she went on to assure the little church that the time would come when many would embrace the truth in the United Kingdom. [41]

“Many of them were bathed in tears,” that Sabbath morning, she wrote in her diary. After the service she was introduced to each member of the congregation, and those from Hull and Ulceby begged her to come to their towns to speak, also.

In the afternoon the Sabbath school was held. Ellen White spoke thirty minutes, and others followed in a “social,” or testimony meeting. As she listened to the new believers recount their stirring experiences she said she “could not but think how similar is the experience of all true followers of Christ. There is but ‘one Lord, one faith, one baptism.’”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 162. The church in England was one with the church in her own homeland—in trials and sacrifices.

Sunday morning she spoke again, this time on the text [Revelation 3:15](#), “I know thy works.” That evening, August 23, the Town Hall, largest auditorium in the city, had been secured for a public meeting.

An estimated 1,200 people had gathered, filling every seat and standing up lining the walls. The “Grimsby United Temperance Prize Choir” had volunteered to provide music. This fifty-voice choir, which had taken second prize at the London Crystal Palace competition the year before, sang seven numbers, three at the beginning, two at the close, and two following the benediction.

It was an appreciative audience that listened as Ellen White spoke to them on God’s love as shown in nature. She was drawn out toward her audience in the spirit of the true evangelist. She said later:

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“As I reflected that not until the last great day would I again meet all there assembled, I tried to present the precious things of God in such a way as to draw their minds from earth to heaven. But I could only warn and entreat, and hold up Jesus as the center of attraction, and a heaven of bliss as the eternal reward of the over-comer.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 162, 163.

Jesus Christ was the central figure in all of Mrs. White’s preaching at home and abroad. She could say:

“Jesus Christ is everything to us—the first, the last, the best in everything. Jesus Christ, His Spirit, His character, colors everything; it is the warp and the woof, the very texture of our entire being.”—[Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers](#), 389.

The address was published the following Friday in the *Grimsby News*.

Fruitful Work in Ulceby

After spending most of Monday, August 24, in writing, Ellen White took the train ten miles to Ulceby, to visit there the little church raised up by A. A. John. Her labors were fruitful. One woman who had been convinced of the truth, but who was still undecided there, determined to obey all the commandments of God.

Before the meeting Mrs. White visited a short time with a baker, Edward Armstrong, and his family of nine children. [Four sons became sda ministers. a grandson, W. W. Armstrong, was for eight years president of the british union conference. Earlier he served as a missionary in east africa. a daughter, dorothy, became the wife of H. W. Lowe, for long years prominent in the british work and later secretary of the biblical research committee of the general conference.] Armstrong told her how his wife had been a Sabbathkeeper for some time, but he had hesitated, fearing that to accept the Sabbath would cut off his livelihood. He supplied an English lord's family in Ulceby with bread, and this helped him secure most of his business in the town. Finally, he decided he would keep the Sabbath come what may. He announced his decision to the lord's mother, promising to bring her bread late on Friday and early on Sunday, but she refused, paid him up, and discharged him, declaring they must have fresh bread each day and that she would order it from Grimsby. a week later though she called him back to ask him if he had given up his foolish ideas. Satisfied that he had not, she told him she would take his bread anyway, because the bread they got from Grimsby was always sour.

This experience drove home to Ellen White the serious difficulty many people in Britain faced when they accepted the Sabbath, and it aroused her sincere sympathy.

“It is very difficult for poor people to keep the Sabbath,” she wrote to her friend Dr. Gibbs. “It is not luxuries that they lose for they have not these; but it is the bare bread that sustains life that they lose. Many believe but have no kind of a show of getting the simplest food to sustain life.” “But,” she wrote, “God’s eye is upon His conscientious, faithful children in England and He will make a way for them to keep all His commandments.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 163.

After spending the night with the Short family in Ulceby, and an “English style” breakfast of “porridge, bread and sauce, and cake,” she took the nine o’clock train back to Grimsby.

A Large Meeting in Riseley

The next day she was off again, this time for Riseley, a little town near Wellingborough, where Pastors Lane and Durland had been holding a tent meeting for two months. It is a rainy and foggy day, but she found 400 gathered to hear her speak—300 filling the seats and 100 standing around the edges.

She was encouraged by the response. The people “listened as if spellbound” she wrote. “They seemed to drink in every word. After the meeting closed, all who could ... shook my hand heartily saying, ‘God bless you for the words you have spoken.... May the Lord long preserve you.’”—[Letter 11, 1885](#).

The Visit to London and Southampton

[44] Mrs. White had also taken a cold, and when she went to London [See [Life Sketches of Ellen G. White](#), 384; [Selected Messages 2:358](#); [Testimonies for the Church 6:25, 26](#); and [Evangelism](#), 415, 416 for her observations about Britain’s capital city.] the next day she was sick all the way. What new adventure lay before her in that great city?

W. C. White had gone ahead to meet Henry Kellogg, and these two met her when she arrived. Henry Kellogg, no relation to Dr.

John Harvey Kellogg, was an Adventist businessman who previously managed the Review and Herald Publishing House. He had come to Europe in 1885 to help establish the publishing house in Basel, to purchase equipment, and to assist the publishing work in Britain and Scandinavia.

Arriving in London about noon, August 27, Ellen White took a brief walk in London, but soon had to retire to her hotel. The next day, Friday, she and her companions met W. M. Jones, pastor of the Seventh Day Baptist church in London and editor of the *Sabbath Memorial*. Jones led the White party on a two-hour tour of the famous British Museum. Of the visit she observed: “We could not have viewed much without the guidance and information given us from Elder Jones.”—[Manuscript 16a, 1885](#).

Following the visit to the famous museum, the party left by train for Southampton. That night, in a private home, she spoke to the church members for forty minutes and the next day, Sabbath, she spoke twice.

Sunday morning her cold was worse, but she joined others in a little sight-seeing, visiting the ruins of some old Roman buildings and walls. The scenery and ride fascinated Mrs. White, but she returned home with her head throbbing. “Every nerve in my body seemed to be quivering,” she wrote ([Letter 22, 1885](#)). She was slated to speak that night, but could hardly utter a word. Brother Durland had rented a large hall and put out extensive advertising, but everyone was fearful that the meeting would have to be canceled. W. C. White reported:

“We spent much of the afternoon in prayer, and trusting that the Lord would help her as in times past, Mother consented to go to the hall and try to speak. There were about 600 assembled in the hall, and when mother began in a hoarse voice, to address them two or three left the hall. But in less than five minutes her voice cleared, and she spoke an hour, with more force than at any other meeting in England.”—W. C. White letter, September 18, 1885.

Soul-Burden for London

Early Monday morning they were back in London. Here she spent two days and two nights in writing. Her most important project was to write out her sermon of Sunday night, which she had promised to the Southampton newspaper, the *Hampshire Independent*. Her last night in London was a restless one.

“I could not lay off the burden I felt for the souls in England. I was pleading with the Lord to arouse His people that the missionary spirit might burn in the hearts of those who were now at ease in Zion; and that the warning message might be given to these great cities. There are five million people in London and one hundred workers would not be too many to try to reflect light on this great city. Who will come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty? Who will go without the camp bearing the reproach?”—[Letter 22, 1885](#).

In a dream given to her years before, she was shown the dying cities of the world desperately in need of light “One of dignity and authority” spoke to her saying:

“Never lose sight of the fact that the message you are bearing is a world-wide message. It is to be given to all cities, to all villages; it is to be proclaimed in the highways and the byways. You are not to localize the proclamation of the message.”—[Testimonies for the Church 7:34-36](#).

On to the Continent

The journey from London to Dover by train took several hours, but Ellen White enjoyed the fresh green countryside, noting what a contrast it made to the “dry, brown fields of a rainless California autumn.”

The channel crossing was rough enough to produce considerable seasickness. But she was not sick at all herself. At Calais, France, after an hour-and-a-half crossing, they met Brother Brown, a local

literature evangelist, who supplied them with a welcome basket of pears, grapes, peaches, and nuts.

Bound for Basel, W. C. White tried to get a sleeping car for his mother, but the eleven dollars extra charge discouraged that idea. [46] The Whites—mother and son—were frugal in their use of the Lord’s money. Fortunately, however, they were able to get a through car.

At six o’clock the next morning, September 3, they reached Basel, Switzerland, where she was to make her headquarters for two eventful years. Soon after her arrival she wrote:

“Here we are in Europe at last. We have come through safely and have had a pleasant journey—no accident or harm has come to any of us.”—[Letter 22, 1885](#).

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Chapter 6—Headquarters in Basel

Organizing the gospel army

Basel is situated in northern Switzerland, near the German and French borders. Like Zurich and Berne, the city is German-speaking. The country is not so mountainous as central Switzerland. This historic city, so strategically located, had been selected as the headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist work in Central Europe. Here the first institution of the church on the Continent was established. And now the announcement was out for the Third European Council to be held here, preceded by a four-day meeting of the Swiss Conference. Ellen White had hastened across the Atlantic to attend these meetings.

At the Basel railway station to meet her was B. L. Whitney, who had come to Europe in 1883 to take over the leadership from J. N. Andrews. [The hard-working Andrews passed away in the midst of his labors in the year 1883 at the age of 54. He is buried in Basel. He literally gave his life for the newly developing cause in Europe. His influence was broad. J. N. Loughborough, who helped to pioneer the work in England, was converted under Andrews's preaching in Rochester, New York in 1852.] Young Charles M. Andrews, J. N.'s son, and one of the Vuilleumier brothers were also at the station.

[48] After a hack ride to the newly completed headquarters building and publishing house, there were more greetings from old friends. A. C. Bourdeau was there, having arrived the year before. The aging mother of J. N. Andrews, Sarah L. Andrews, was also on hand to welcome the newcomers. Martha Bourdeau, [Martha Bourdeau was an interesting figure, tying together three prominent families. She was born Martha A. Butler, younger sister of George I. Butler. She was first married to William Andrews, brother of J. N. Andrews. They had three children, among whom was Edith Andrews who would soon die of tuberculosis. Finally, after Bourdeau came to Europe in 1884, Martha, now a widow, married him, and they labored together

in Italy.] A. C.'s wife, was there too, along with Bertha Stein and Anna Rasmussen. The last two had crossed the Atlantic with Ellen White, but had gone directly to Basel instead of remaining with her in Britain.

“I Have Seen This Place Before”

The publishing house building that Ellen White would make her home for the next two years was situated on the corner of Weiherweg and Rudolphstrasse, and cost, with its machinery, more than \$30,000. She was much pleased with the building. And it was not unfamiliar to her even before her arrival in Basel. The story is told in *Life Sketches*:

“When Mrs. White and her party reached the publishing house, Elder [B. L.] Whitney said, ‘Look at our meeting hall before going upstairs.’ It was a fine room on the first floor, well lighted and well furnished. Mrs. White looked searchingly at all features of the place, and then said: ‘It is a good meeting-hall. I feel that I have seen this place before.’

“Not long after this, those parts of the building occupied by the printing business were visited. When the pressroom was reached, the press was running, and Mrs. White said: ‘I have seen this press before. This room looks very familiar to me.’ Soon the two young men who were working in the pressroom came forward, and were introduced to the visitors. Mrs. White shook hands with them, and then inquired, ‘Where is the other one?’

“‘What other one?’ Elder Whitney asked.

“‘There is an older man here,’ Mrs. White replied, ‘and I have a message for him.’ “Elder Whitney explained that the foreman of the pressroom was in the city on business.”—Pages 282,283.

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Ten years before, after a vision given to her on January 3, 1875, Mrs. White related to a large audience in the Battle Creek church that she had seen presses running in many countries printing periodicals, tracts, and books on present truth.

“At this point in her narrative, James White had interrupted her, asking if she could name some of these countries. She said she could not, because they had not been named to her, ‘except one; I remember the angel said Australia.’ But she stated that although she could not name the countries, she would recognize the places should she ever see them, because the picture was very distinct in her mind.

“In the pressroom of the new publishing house at Basel she recognized one of these places. a few months after this, during her visit to Norway, she recognized in the pressroom of the Christiania publishing house another of these places; and six years later, during her visit to Australia, she saw, in the *Bible Echo* Office in Melbourne, still another pressroom where she recognized the place and the presses as among those she had seen in the vision at Battle Creek, January 3, 1875.”—*Ibid.*

What courage it must have brought to Elder Whitney and the Basel pressmen when she recounted her vision. They were doing the very work that God wanted them to do.

A year after the vision, in an editorial in the *Review* entitled “Preaching by Steam,” James White challenged the believers with these stirring words:

“The advancing cause in Europe demands that there should be an Office of publication in Switzerland, as suggested in a recent report from our worthy missionary, Elder J. N. Andrews. We highly approve the measure.... Little has been accomplished in our own country without the press. The cause moved very slowly on this continent until we began publishing in good earnest. The work in Europe will amount to but little until our brethren there commence preaching by steam....

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“We have three men of ability in Europe who are devoted to the cause of God, and we expect more will be raised up there to stand in defense of the truth. Mrs.

White joins us in the pledge to give \$1,000 for the mission and press in Europe before the close of 1876, and we shall expect that those of our brethren who have more than a humble competency will join us with a liberal hand in this important work. By the grace of God we will have a Publishing House in Basel, the central point for Switzerland, Germany and France.”—March 30, 1876.

But the European press did not open its doors until 1885, just prior to Ellen White’s arrival in September. Until then all the work was done by commercial printers. Andrews’ first effort at publishing in Switzerland was in the form of tracts, first prepared by printers in Neuchatel, and later in Basel.

He began to publish *Les Signes des Temps* in July, 1876, and again a commercial shop did the printing. Andrews carried on his work with considerable success. The year of his death there were 6,000 subscribers.

The Swiss press in Basel, built at great effort and sacrifice, was followed shortly by new presses in Norway, England, and Australia. By the time of the General Conference of 1901, there were 20 publishing houses in different parts of the world—“preaching by steam!” Today there are half a hundred, preparing literature in more than 200 languages.

Life in the Headquarters Building

After Elder Whitney introduced Ellen White to the publishing house workers, they stepped into the hydraulic lift and ascended to the third floor, where she was temporarily made at home in the Whitneys’ apartment. The entire third floor of the building was devoted to family apartments, as was part of the second floor.

The fact that all the workers lived, as well as worked, in the same big publishing building no doubt contributed to some of the internal troubles experienced at headquarters, and certainly must have aggravated the problem faced by the management in seeking to maintain proper decorum between young ladies and young men in the establishment.

It is not known exactly in which apartment Ellen White and the W. C. White family finally settled, but it was on the third floor and doubtless on the front (south side) of the building. From their windows they could look out on a large government park or parade ground where school children played and soldiers drilled.

The building itself, built of stone, was 46 feet by 76 feet. In the subbasement were the furnace and two gas engines to produce power for the presses above. The next level, the basement or ground floor, was only partially below ground level, allowing light to enter through the windows. Here was located the pressroom and bindery, storage room for paper, stereotype foundry, and one room divided into small cellars for the individual families that lived in the building. The right, or east, half of the first floor was occupied by the meeting hall that would seat 300; the other half contained the business office and the folding and mailing rooms.

The second floor housed the composing room, and areas for the editors, translators, and proofreaders. The front and a portion of the east side of this floor was reserved for family apartments.

As mentioned, the third floor was entirely reserved for apartments. Above this was the attic room that was lighted by the center “observatory” and was used for storage.

On Friday night Ellen White addressed about fifty in the meeting hall on the first floor. Her address was interpreted into both French and German. Of this she commented: “This way of speaking was rather embarrassing at first; but this soon wore away, and to me it has proved far less taxing than I anticipated.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 183.](#)

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Reflections on Historic Basel

Ellen White spent the first of the next week, September 7 and 8, writing about her journey to Basel for publication in the *Review and Herald*, and preparing for the European Council meeting. Her thoughts also turned back to Reformation times in Switzerland, about which she had written two years before in her popular book *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4 (*The Great Controversy*). But while in Switzerland, she wrote:

“The city of Basel was an important place to the Protestant reformers. Switzerland was one of the first countries of Europe to catch the light of morning, and to announce the rise of the Reformation. And Basel was one of those points on which the light of day concentrated its rays, and whence they radiated over the surrounding country. It was not, however, until years of waiting and conflict had passed that the Reformation was fully established here.”—*Ibid.*, 169, 170.

She was shown that the literature of the Reformation period was important to the success of the Lord’s work at that time.

“Being the seat of a university, Basel was the favorite resort of scholars. It also had many printing-offices. Here Zwingli received his early education; here Erasmus published the New Testament which he had translated from the original Greek into Latin; here Frobenius, the celebrated printer, published the writings of Luther, and in a short time spread them in France, Spain, Italy, and England; and here, too, John Foxe spent a portion of his exile in getting some of his books through the press.... While here he issued the first installment of the ‘Book of Martyrs.’”—*Ibid.*, 171.

Then Mrs. White’s mind turned to the modern church with its present opportunities to print and publish God’s last message.

“In the providence of God, our publishing house is located on this sacred spot [Basel]. We could not wish for a more favorable location for the publication of truth in the different languages. Switzerland being a small republic, that which comes from here is not looked upon with the suspicion that it would arouse if passing from one to another of the large rival powers. Three languages are spoken here,—the French, the German, and the Italian; therefore it is a favorable place for issuing publications in these languages.”—*Ibid.*

The Gospel Army

Being an evangelist at heart, she looked to the future of Seventh-day Adventist witnessing in Europe and represented it under the figure of a well-trained army.

“The grassy common in front of the office, of which we have spoken, is reserved by the Swiss government for military drill. Here, day after day, at certain seasons of the year, we see the soldiers training, so that they may be ready, when needed, to engage in actual service. As we have watched the progress of the drill, and from time to time noted the thoroughness manifest in every department, the query has arisen, Why should there not be in Basel a large army of Christian soldiers drilling for actual service in the battles to be fought in the different countries of Europe against tradition, superstition, and error? Why should those who are preparing to fight the battle for Prince Immanuel be less earnest, less painstaking, less thorough, in their preparation for the spiritual warfare?”—*Ibid.*

And the preparation of soldiers for spiritual warfare meant Christian education—church-sponsored schools to which the volunteers for service might come to prepare for “battle” on the vast frontiers of Europe—“to go forth as missionaries,” she said. Then she added, “And also that those of our brethren who have children may have a place to send them where they will not be obliged to attend school on the Sabbath.”—*Ibid.*, 172.

This Sabbath-and-school-attendance dilemma was to be a really painful problem in some countries of Europe. God has worked many miracles for His obedient children as time has shown, but this has often been in the crucible of testing and faithfulness!

[55] Here let us pause to see how the basic organizational structure of Seventh-day Adventist work in Europe came into being. This insight into the laying of the foundations forms the basis for understanding the structure that developed in conferences, publishing houses, schools, and medical institutions.

The First and Second European Conferences

In 1882 the first European Missionary Council was held in Basel, September 14-17. This meeting helped develop a unity and cohesiveness among the messengers of God laboring in the three distinct fields—Great Britain, Scandinavia, and Switzerland. The accomplishments of that conference are reported in *Historical Sketches*:

“This being the first meeting of the kind, it was made more an occasion of consultation and comparison of the labors of the past than of recommendation for future plans of work. a permanent organization was formed by the adoption of a constitution. Of this organization Elder J. N. Andrews was chosen chairman; Elder A. A. John, secretary, and Charles M. Andrews, treasurer. While the question of the relation of this organization to the various parts of the work in Europe was referred to the General Conference for its recommendation, the practical benefits gained from this first assembly were so evident that the meeting recommended such convocations to be held at least annually, from that time forward.”—Page 109.

Because of J. N. Andrews’ extreme feebleness and subsequent death, the Second European Council planned for October, 1883, was postponed. This second meeting was rescheduled for Basel, May 28-June 1, 1884, and coincided with the close of G. I. Butler’s visit to the three European missions. The representation from the fields was much larger this time, with delegates present from Italy and Romania, as well.

The 1884 Council adopted certain recommendations, which included an official name, “The European Council of Seventh-day Adventist Missions,” and the appointment of a general executive committee of three, composed of brethren selected from the three different missions. This brought the best judgment of all the missionaries to bear upon the work to be done, and helped all to feel responsible for the advancement of the common cause. [56]

It should be noticed that this arrangement did not create a “division” or “union” superstructure, or call for a staff of new workers, or

a new budget. It simply gathered together the chairmen of the local missions into a three-man committee to oversee the general work in Europe. Thus the General Conference could deal directly with this committee on all matters of importance to the growing work, and Europe would have a voice to speak for it at General Conference sessions.

The emphasis upon representation from each field in order “to unite the work” in Europe reflected the strong and essential features of the denomination’s representative form of church administration. Though this happy idea of full representation grew to fuller fruition at the General Conference session in Battle Creek in 1901, the general idea was recognized and apparent in the earliest development of the work in Europe.

From the earliest days of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, even before the organization of the General Conference in 1863, the Spirit of Prophecy messages had been heard calling for order and orderly procedures in developing a sound church government. (See [Early Writings, 97](#)).

And now we see in Europe the instrument whom God had used, on hand to facilitate the efficient development of a strong evangelistic and institutional witness on the Continent.

Ellen White was to be present at the Third European Missionary Council in Basel, and her speeches and counsels were to exert a strong influence on church organization in Europe and the rapid spread of God’s truth.

Chapter 7—The Swiss Conference of 1885

[57]

One of the first in Europe

On Thursday, September 10, workers and church members began arriving in Basel for the Swiss Conference meeting, which was to begin that evening. Ellen White's old friend Daniel T. Bourdeau arrived with a number of French believers. She greeted them cordially and had a pleasant interview with Bourdeau and his little family.

There were his wife, Marion; his daughter, Patience, now an energetic teen-ager of 15; and Augustin, just 10 years old. Ellen White had known the Bourdeau family from the earliest days when their home at Bourdeauville, in northern Vermont, had been an important Adventist outpost.

Daniel's brother, A. C. Bourdeau, had accepted the third angel's message first, and Daniel thought at the time that he was crazy to observe Saturday instead of Sunday. Proud of his Biblical scholarship gained at a Baptist seminary in Canada, Daniel had set out to prove from the Scriptures that his brother was wrong. In the process, of course, he discovered quite the opposite, and he was forced to admit that the Biblical arguments favored the seventh-day Sabbath, but even so, he still felt he could not accept Mrs. White's visions as authentic. Then came a significant meeting at Buck's Bridge, New York, in 1857. Daniel was there, and during the meeting Ellen White was taken off in open vision. The physical phenomena characterizing her early visions, among which was breathlessness (see [Daniel 10:17, 18](#)), were apparent on this occasion.

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James White, who was present, invited those who had doubts to come forward and see for themselves. He explained that Mrs. White, while in vision, was completely oblivious to everything around her, and gave opportunity for anyone present to examine her. This was Bourdeau's chance. Gaining permission from Elder White, and in a spirit of reverence and decorum, he resorted to an unusual procedure

after satisfying himself that there were no outward signs of breathing. As he testified later:

“I ... took my hand and placed it over her mouth, pinching her nostrils between my thumb and forefinger, so that it was impossible for her to exhale or inhale air, even if she had desired to do so. I held her thus with my hand about ten minutes, long enough for her to suffocate under ordinary circumstances; she was not in the least affected by this ordeal.”—Statement of D. T. Bourdeau, February 4, 1891, quoted in J. N. Loughborough, *The Great Second Advent Movement*, p. 210.

Bourdeau confessed that after this experience [The first physical phenomena associated with Ellen White’s open visions during the forty years of her ministry constituted convincing evidence to many of her contemporaries that her visions were genuine and not a hoax or a trick of the devil. But neither Mrs. White nor her contemporaries who believed she was a true messenger of God held that these extraordinary manifestations were fundamental tests of her validity as a prophet. They were evidences among other evidences. Since Satan could presumably counterfeit the physical phenomena, there would have to be more basic tests. These tests are defined in the following scriptures: [Matthew 7:15-20](#); [Isaiah 8:20](#); [Jeremiah 28:9](#); [1 John 4:1](#), 2. Careful students agree that Mrs. White’s life and work measured up to these biblical standards] he was never again inclined to doubt the divine origin of Mrs. White’s visions. During the European Council soon to follow, Bourdeau’s confidence would be put to a severe test, but it would not be shaken. And it never was.

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Mrs. White Attends Swiss Conference

The second annual meeting of the Swiss Conference opened that night. This conference was one of the first officially organized in Europe. It had been formed the year before at a general meeting in Bienne. There ministers had gathered from France, Italy, Germany, and Romania, as well as Switzerland, and though the conference was called “Swiss,” it actually included the churches in all these

countries. One hundred and twenty-five delegates had been present for the organizing meeting in Bienne, but when Mrs. White rose to address the 1885 session on Friday, she was surprised and delighted to see nearly 200 believers before her. “A more intelligent, noble-looking company is seldom seen,” she reported to *Review* readers. “Although gathered from different nations, we were brought near to God and to one another by our eyes being fixed upon the one object, Jesus Christ.”—[The Review and Herald, November 3, 1885](#).

The interest among the delegates was keen as they listened for the first time to the Lord’s messenger. Her first address was a heart-warming and inspiring one: “I have been deeply interested this morning in listening to the reports of labor from the various fields,” she began. Then she reminisced a little, observing how similar these reports sounded to the ones she had heard when the work was just beginning in America. She was sure that the workers in Europe felt as they had in America when new converts accepted the message: “One soul who embraced the truth was regarded of more value than mountains of gold. We wept and rejoiced, and could scarcely sleep.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 147](#).

Then, alluding to the report made of the work in Italy by A. C. Bourdeau earlier in the meeting, she said:

“The Piedmont valleys have been spoken of. From the light that I have had, there are, all through these valleys, precious souls who will receive the truth. I have no personal knowledge of these places; but they were presented to me as being in some way connected with God’s work of the past.”—*Ibid.*

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Then she went on to assure the representatives of other countries in Europe that “there is a great work yet to be accomplished in all the fields from which we have heard reports” (*Ibid.*).

Proper Methods of Labor

Mrs. White next addressed herself to the question of proper methods. She stressed the importance of personal visitation in the

homes of the people. The minister must be alert to any sign of interest and conviction aroused by his preaching, and he must move immediately to work personally with the people: “Many a precious soul balances for a time,” Ellen White said, “and then takes his position on the side of error, because he does not have this personal effort at the right time” ([Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 148). She suggested that workers may have to reside where the people need help most: “They ought to come close to the people, sit with them at their tables and lodge in their humble homes.”—*Ibid.* If this meant the workers had to take their families to undesirable places, then they would simply have to remember that Jesus, laboring in Palestine, did not always remain in the most desirable surroundings.

But she didn’t single out the ministers as the only heralds of the message. She knew that there were hardworking mothers and day laborers who had a work to do for God, as well. “Brethren and sisters, you who tarry by the stuff at home, there is something for you to do. The work of saving souls is not to be done by the ministers alone. Every one who has been converted will seek to bring others to a knowledge of the truth. Commence to work for those in your own homes and neighborhoods.... You can also send up your petitions for the laborers in the different fields. God will hear your prayers.”—*Ibid.* Mrs. White’s counsel represented more than mere sermonizing. As a mother with four sons, she had always labored faithfully to win to Christ those close to her and her neighbors, as well. Her soul-winning contracts with people in Europe both in and out of the church were frequent and fruitful, as we shall see.

Meetings on the Sabbath Day

Sabbath morning, as Mrs. White looked out her window, she could see the carriages lurching and struggling over the muddy street as the people gathered. Then she went down for the church service in the new chapel. “May the Lord meet with us” was her burden ([Manuscript 16a, 1885](#)).

D. T. Bourdeau gave the sermon in French, while his brother translated it into English for the benefit of the Americans and British present.

In the afternoon Ellen White spoke again. Warming to her subject, she preached with great clarity, and when she made her appeal the response was overwhelming. One hundred fervent testimonies were borne. “All expressed that they were impressed and benefited by the discourse given. Certainly this people seem to be in earnest to be helped, willing to receive my testimony.”—*Ibid.*

From the light Sister White had received from the Lord, testimony services were not to be neglected in Seventh-day Adventist churches, for they opened great reservoirs of strength and mutual encouragement to the church family.

The social meeting also had practical value as a school to teach the believers self-expression and the use of the voice in witnessing. In new congregations in Europe, and later in Australia, Mrs. White would introduce this type of testimony service.

“Although the social meeting is a new thing, yet they are learning in the school of Christ, and are overcoming fear and trembling. We keep before them the fact that the social meeting will be the best meeting in which they may be trained and educated to be witnesses for Christ.”—[Manuscript 32, 1894](#).

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On Sunday morning it was time for the newly formed Swiss Tract Society to have its meeting. With the large dimensions of the work before them, they felt helpless, for they had only one German colporteur, and very few more in the other countries. W. C. White stepped forward to speak. Although only 31 years old, he was an experienced publishing leader, having been the manager of the Pacific Press. He knew about operating the publishing business with only a few literature evangelists in the field. He told of the beginnings of colporteur work begun only a few years before in America, and how a number of experimental programs were tried before the best methods of work emerged. And his encouraging counsels registered. Before the conference was over, he and Sands Lane, of Britain, had organized a good-sized class of would-be colporteurs, and eight decided to devote themselves to the work.

Practical Character of Ellen White's Addresses

On the same day, Mrs. White had a practical address for the missionary workers. She opened her talk by telling of Nathanael's skepticism when he first heard of Jesus:

“Here is a lesson for all our ministers, colporteurs, and missionary workers. When you meet those, who, like Nathanael, are prejudiced against the truth, do not urge your peculiar views too strongly. Talk with them at first of subjects upon which you can agree. Bow with them in prayer, and in humble faith present your petitions at the throne of grace. Both you and they will be brought into a closer connection with heaven, prejudice will be weakened, and it will be easier to reach the heart.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 149.](#)

Again she stressed the importance of personal work, saying the work of the third angel's message must be accomplished largely by persevering, individual effort; by visiting the people in their homes.

[63] But then she returned to a favorite theme:

“Present the truth as it is in Jesus; not for the sake of contention, not for the love of argument, but with meekness and fear.... That which makes the truth so objectionable to many is that it is not presented in the spirit of Christ.”—[Ibid., 150.](#)

This love would accomplish far more than the strongest arguments, she said. Then she gave some counsel on how to deal with the most difficult cases. She said that even if people slam the door in the missionary's face, he should not give up. This was the time for the “silent messengers of truth,” the printed page, to bear their testimony.

A Work for Young and Old

She knew that there were immense difficulties to be faced, but there was a work for all ages to accomplish:

“Success does not depend so much upon age or circumstances in life as upon the real love that one has for others. Look at John Bunyan enclosed by prison walls.... He is not idle. The love for souls continues to burn within him, and from his dark prison-house there springs a light which shines to all parts of the civilized world. His book, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, written under these trying circumstances, portrays the Christian life so accurately, and presents the love of Christ in such an attractive light, that hundreds and thousands have been converted through its instrumentality.”—*Ibid.*, 151.

What she said next encouraged those with Lutheran backgrounds:

“Again, behold Luther in his Wartburg prison, translating the Bible, which was sent forth as a torch of light, and which his countrymen seized and carried from land to land to separate from the religion of Christ the superstitions and errors.”—*Ibid.*

She appealed then to the young men to devote themselves to the service of Christ, and closed with a challenge:

“I am thankful to see so large a number present at this meeting. But shall not your numbers be more than doubled during the coming year? Let each answer for himself what he will do.”—*Ibid.*, 153.

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That afternoon she spoke again. As before, the audience was divided into national groups; Elder D. T. Bourdeau translated into French, Erzberger into German, and Elder Oyen into Danish-Norwegian. This was a pleasurable experience for Mrs. White, as the translation process gave her more time to reflect on what she was saying, and to rest her voice.

There was also a surprise move—a “new experience for many of our brethren in Europe” as Ellen White described it. At the close of her discourse, she called “for all who desired to be Christians, and all who felt that they had not a living connection with God, to come

forward,” declaring that “we would unite our prayers with theirs for the pardon of sin, and for grace to resist temptation” ([The Review and Herald, November 3, 1885](#)).

The work was of God. The people responded willingly. She reported, “It seemed that the entire congregation were on their feet, and the best they could do was to be seated, and all seek the Lord together.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 173](#).

After this appeal, 115 people, many of them weeping all the while, bore their heartfelt testimonies to their desire for a genuine experience in the things of God.

In her *Review* article reporting the experience, Ellen White described the genuineness of this revival meeting in Basel. She testified to the similarity of the work of God’s Spirit among His children everywhere. “The Holy Spirit operates the same the world over. When it is received into the heart, the whole character is changed.... Old habits and customs and national pride and prejudice are broken down.... [And this resulted in] unity of thought and action.”—[The Review and Herald, November 3, 1885](#).

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Close of the Conference

Finally, on Monday, the Swiss Conference drew to a close. Mrs. White gave one final address on unity and Christian courtesy, and when she finished there was another “first” for the new chapel in Basel—a baptism conducted in the new baptistry. Fourteen persons went forward in faith, and Ellen White said, “God grant that none of these may ever forget their baptismal vows.”

As she told the story in the church paper she appealed to Adventists everywhere:

“Will those who have recently taken the cross of Christ, both here and in America, continue to climb the ladder of progress?”—*Ibid.*

Chapter 8—The Third European Missionary Council

[66]

A miniature general conference

Tuesday, the very next day after the Swiss Conference closed, an even more important meeting opened in Basel: the Third European Council of Seventh-day Adventist Missions, September 15-29. W. C. White described the session as a miniature General Conference. It proved to be the most memorable and effective gathering of workers in the early years of the church in Europe. No other council compared with it in importance, for it set a mold upon the work for years to come.

Thirty-one representatives from Europe were present as official delegates, joining the three from America. The employees of the publishing house and a number of Swiss believers attended, as well.

The opening day dawned balmy and beautiful, and Mrs. White was up at five, writing. After breakfast she still had several hours before the opening meeting, so she took her first buggy ride since reaching Basel, crossing the Rhine into nearby Germany. She returned feeling refreshed.

At eleven, the delegates gathered in the publishing house chapel to begin their deliberations. Mrs. White sat quietly by as they selected their working committees and began to lay plans. The schedule shaped up quickly. The committee on the order of meetings, of which W. C. White was a member, the next morning reported a proposal that a Biblical institute be held in conjunction with the council.

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J. G. Matteson was chosen to conduct the Bible class at nine each morning, and S. H. Lane, J. Erzberger, and A. C. Bourdeau were designated to teach the workers how to give Bible studies. a canvassers' class at one-thirty and an English class at four-thirty rounded out the institute schedule. All this was in addition to the business sessions of the council and the devotional exercises slated

for the early-morning meetings. No time was wasted; the delegates might be charged with intemperance, but not with indolence! Meetings began at five-thirty in the morning and lasted as late as nine at night.

In addition to her participation in the deliberations of the council, Mrs. White spoke at the early-morning prayer and testimony meeting each day. It was reported later that “the morning talks of Sister White were one of the specially interesting features of this annual convocation, and were the means of imparting much precious instruction concerning the practical work of those who were here convened.”—*Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists*, 118.

She began her series of practical devotional talks Wednesday morning with an appeal for ministers to have an individual experience with God and to manifest love and forbearance for one another. a machine may be ever so perfect in its parts, she pointed out, but there would be friction and wear in its movements unless it was properly oiled: “So with us. It is necessary to have the oil of grace in our hearts, in order to prevent the friction that may arise between us and those for whom we labor.”—*Ibid.*, 119. Before the council ended there would be a manifest need for this oil of grace, and there would be opportunity for it to be freely applied!

Reports from the Missions

[68] In the early part of the council the workers stepped forward one by one to report the progress of the work in their areas. J. G. Matteson led off with his report of the work in Scandinavia, He had been working in Copenhagen since April and had succeeded in raising a church of eleven members. There were 258 Sabbathkeepers in Denmark by this time, 279 in Sweden, and about 160 in Norway. Matteson reported that in all of Scandinavia there were seven ministers, seven men with licenses to preach, eight colporteurs, and 18 churches.

England’s Sabbathkeepers were organized into four churches. Two hundred and twenty-four believers were scattered throughout Switzerland, Germany, France, Romania, and Italy. In addition,

there were 39 Sabbathkeepers in churches not connected with the conference.

France and Corsica claimed 35 believers. Two small churches in Italy, at Naples and Torre Pellice, accounted for 25 members. There were 14 believers in Pitesti, Romania, [Sda doctrine was first preached in Romania by M. B. Czechowski in the winter of 1868-1869. Aslan was a convert of Czechowski. Bourdeau organized the church at Pitesti. This church was soon scattered by persecution, not long after the second European council in 1884.] where Thomas G. Aslan followed A. C. Bourdeau in the work.

The editors were also proud of their missionary and health journals. In all, nine different periodicals were in publication in Central Europe, Scandinavia, and England. But there was still a crying need for more books in the languages of Europe, especially Spirit of Prophecy volumes so that colporteurs could offer more to the hungry people than a few tracts and magazine subscriptions. One of the earliest actions of the council was to establish a permanent committee to recommend books for translation and publication.

Presenting the Truth in Love

In her second devotional talk on Thursday, Mrs. White returned to a theme she had developed during the Swiss Conference, the necessity of presenting the truth in love. She pointed to Paul's example. When he labored for the Jews, he did not first make prominent the important aspects of Christ's life and death. He began with the Old Testament Scriptures, showing his hearers that the promise of a Saviour was predicted, and then he presented the fact that the Saviour had already come. "This was the 'guile' with which Paul caught souls," she remarked. [69]

“When you are laboring in a place where souls are just beginning to get the scales from their eyes, and to see men as trees walking, be very careful not to present the truth in such a way as to arouse prejudice, and to close the door of the heart to the truth. Agree with the people on every point where you can consistently do so.

Let them see that you love their souls, and want to be in harmony with them so far as possible.”—[Ibid.](#), 122.

Then she added, with a touch of sadness,

“Oh that I could impress upon all the necessity of laboring in the spirit of Jesus; for I have been shown that souls here in Europe have been turned away from the truth because of a lack of tact and skill in presenting it.”—*Ibid.*

In the latter part of her Thursday morning address she dealt with a specific problem:

“Do not encourage a class who center their religion in dress.... Talk of the love and humility of Jesus; but do not encourage the brethren and sisters to engage in picking flaws in the dress or appearance of one another. Some take delight of this work.”—*Ibid.*

She concluded frankly:

“There are few of my brethren and sisters who maintain the plainness of dress as I do. My writings are pointed on this subject; [See *Testimony Treasures*, Vol. 1, pp. 592-600; article titled “simplicity in dress.” (Found also in [Testimonies for the Church 4:628-648.](#))] but I do not carry it in the front. It is not to be made of greater importance than the solemn, testing truths for this time.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 123.

Question-and-Answer Periods

[70] The council was nearing the time when it would turn its attention from reports of the past to plans for the future. W. C. White suggested that it might be well to give some time to such “practical questions as the brethren might wish information upon.” Answers would be given to the questions submitted, and there would be

opportunity for discussion. Accordingly, a “Question Box” was set up.

The time had come when differences of opinion would be aired and discussed, and when Ellen White rose at 5:00 A.M. Friday to prepare for her devotional talk she said she “felt urged by the Spirit of God” to keep before the workers the necessity of being teachable. Her message, based on [James 3:13-18](#), was another call for unity.

“None should feel that it is of no special importance whether they are in union with their brethren or not; for those who do not learn to live in harmony here will never be united in heaven....

“Even though you think you are right, you are not to urge your individual ideas to the front, so that they will cause discord.... Let Christ appear. Do not cherish a spirit of independence which will lead you to feel that if your brethren do not agree with you they must be wrong. The opinions of your brethren are just as precious to them as yours are to you. Christ in you will unite you to Christ in them, and there will be a sweet spirit of union.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 124-126.

Pioneers are always an independent breed of men. They have to make their own decisions and often they have to press forward with no one to guide and counsel them. Thus it was especially hard for many of the early workers in Europe to adjust to the fact that the church was emerging from the pioneer stage and was now developing into an organized entity with some strength. Now there was need for cooperation and coordination. So the Spirit of God guided in the giving of just the messages that were needed at that time.

Meanwhile, Ellen White had a much more mundane problem—a tooth that needed filling! Dr. Vincenzo Guerini, an affable Italian dentist and convert, was at the council from Naples. So Mrs. White visited him. She described the doctor as “a refined gentleman.... He is fully in the truth. a man of excellent spirit.”—[Letter 23, 1885](#), p. 2. He was also a skillful practitioner.

Finally the first Sabbath of the session arrived to break the busy routine. D. T. Bourdeau spoke Sabbath morning at the worship service, with Sister White occupying the pulpit in the afternoon. Her address must have brought real help to the people: “The heavenly angels were in our midst,” she explained. “I was blessed in speaking, the people blessed in hearing.”—*Ibid.*, p. 3.

Response to Sister White’s Testimonies

In the inspiring testimony meeting that followed, her efforts to promote unity among the brethren began to bear fruit. For some time Antoine Biglia had been confining all his labors to the city of Naples, Italy, much to the distress of the conference leaders. He was dependent on the conference for his salary, but he had carried on his work in his own independent way. Now he rose, and with deep feeling made his confession:

“I have heard and read about the mission of Sister White, but now I have seen and handled this matter myself. I acknowledge that the power of God has come to my heart through her testimony. I receive it as from God. I humble myself before God. God’s voice in reproof of my sins has come to me through Sister White.”—*Ibid.*

Thereafter Biglia agreed to work as the conference directed, and before the European Council was over, an action was taken encouraging him to enlarge the scope of his ministry beyond the confines of Naples.

When the testimony meeting closed they had been together in meeting for four hours. “Many with tears say this is the best meeting that they ever experienced,” Mrs. White wrote to G. I. Butler, the General Conference president.

[72] Mrs. White did not attend these meetings as a mere casual observer or halfhearted participant. Her whole heart and mind were wrapped up in the issues of the hour. She was lying awake night after night, praying, pleading with God for the help that was needed. And the Lord answered her earnest prayers.

The Question Box was yielding some inquiries that would test the wisdom of the leaders. And at the Sunday morning meeting

the discussion opened with, “Can tents be used to advantage in Europe and Britain?” Earlier in the day A. A. John had reported his open-air meetings in Wales, which seemed to be successful, and he had spoken against tent meetings. But Mrs. White objected to open-air meetings, first because they put too great a tax upon the minister’s vocal organs, and second because they made it too difficult to maintain the order and dignity that a religious meeting required. Then, too, the contact with the people would often be brief and superficial in an open-air meeting. It was not that they should never be held, but there were better ways to preach the message. The best way of all was for the minister to go into the homes of the people, “opening to them the Scriptures around the fireside; making plain essential points of present truth.... The Bible talks, the humble, earnest prayer with the family, accomplish a greater work than the most powerful discourses... without this personal effort.”—*Ibid.*

Value of Tent Meetings in Europe

She also said that from the light given her she knew that tent meetings could be used to advantage in Europe. The next day the council voted to purchase tents for England, Sweden, Switzerland, and France.

On Monday morning Ellen White’s devotional talk again reflected her burden that the workers learn to cooperate with one another. She began by pointing out how Jesus sent His disciples out to proclaim the gospel two by two.

“Our Saviour understood what ones to associate together. He did not connect with the mild, beloved John one of the same temperament; but He connected with him the ardent, impulsive Peter.... Thus, the defects in one were partially covered by the virtues in the other.”—*Ibid.*, 126.

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Then, shifting her emphasis slightly, Mrs. White proceeded to stress the importance of perseverance in the work. God wanted workers who would be completely absorbed in His will, who would not allow anything to distract them from their calling.:

“A soul is of more value than all the world; and to let things of a temporal nature come in between us and the work of saving souls is displeasing to the God of heaven.”—[Ibid.](#), 127.

She challenged the delegates with these words:

“There is a great work to be done in Europe. It may seem to move slowly and hard at first; but God will work mightily through you if you will only make an entire surrender to Him. Much of the time you will have to walk by faith, not by feeling.”—[Ibid.](#), 128, 129.

Pressing Financial Needs in Basel

In the council meeting at ten-thirty that morning, Mrs. White listened intently to the discussions and recommendations. As attention began to focus on the pressing lack of funds, she could not refrain from sharing some of her own pioneer experiences. She recalled how her husband, James White, nearly crippled with rheumatism, cut cordwood for 24 cents a cord to make enough money to attend the first Sabbath conference in Connecticut.

[74] He could not even sleep at night because the pain in his wrists was so great. She told how she had fainted to the floor with a sick child in her arms for want of simple food to eat. Then, after recounting several similar experiences, she recalled how only a few years before, when J. N. Andrews was just getting started with the mission in Europe, he had run out of funds. Mrs. White had taken a new silk dress that she had just received as a gift from a friend, and sold it for \$50, forwarding the money to the hard-pressed Andrews. Then she spoke with feeling about the immediate needs of the Basel publishing house:

“Our treasury now is, I might say, about empty. In many places we have had very close financial pressure. a night or two ago I dreamed that I was pleading with God. I awoke myself pleading with God, presenting before Him our empty treasury, pleading with Him to send means to advance His own cause and work. I

propose, brethren and sisters, that we present our empty treasury to God in living faith and ask Him to supply our needs.”—[Manuscript 14, 1885](#).

Willie White, writing to the General Conference president the next day, was doing his best to make sure that their needs were known in Battle Creek, as well as in heaven!

“There is about \$5,000 yet to pay on the building,” he moaned. “Bro. Whitney wrote you a statement of what would be needed, which you did not appear to understand, and answered by congratulating him that he did not need any more. Then he wrote trying to explain that there was \$5,000 needed at once, and has just received the comforting reply that if he needed more money, to send for it, and you would try to raise it. We were dumbfounded, we are on the verge of bankruptcy, and what can we say to make the facts understood?—W. C. White letter to G. I. Butler, September 22, 1885.

At last the prayers and pleas of the European workers were answered. By October 6, the \$5,000 had arrived.

Each day during the council, Mrs. White was not only writing in her diary but she was adding to a long letter to G. I. Butler. That afternoon, as she was writing, there was a knock at the door. It was Albert Vuilleumier. [Albert’s son, Jean, who began his career as typesetter, translator, and later editor at the basel publishing house in 1883, contributed a lifetime of service to the cause in Europe and America. Even today the name *Vuilleumier* is well known among the French and Swiss Adventists in Europe.] The Swiss Conference had recommended that he be ordained, but he felt he should wait another year. Together he and Mrs. White talked about his experience, dating back to the time when he had accepted the message under Czechowski’s preaching in 1867 and had become a charter member and elder of the first European Seventh-day Adventist church at Tramelan.

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Vuilleumier asked also about presenting the Advent message in new fields. Should the Sabbath be introduced first? Mrs. White reviewed with him the counsel she had given earlier about beginning with practical godliness, devotion, and piety—subjects about which all Christians could agree. She must also have given him courage

to accept ordination, because on the last evening of the council the brethren laid their hands upon him, setting him apart for the ministry.

On Tuesday morning, September 22, Ellen White gave one of her warmest and most inspiring talks on the subject of faith and trust in God. It was really a personal testimony:

“I feel so thankful this morning that we can commit the keeping of our souls to God as unto a faithful Creator. Sometimes the enemy presses me the hardest with his temptations and darkness when I am about to speak to the people. I have such a sense of weakness that it seems like an impossibility to stand before the congregation. But if I should give up to my feelings, and say that I could not speak, the enemy would gain the victory. I dare not do this. I move right forward, take my place in the desk, and say ‘Jesus, I hang my helpless soul on Thee; Thou will not suffer me to be brought to confusion,’ and the Lord gives me the victory....

“Oh that I could impress upon all the importance of exercising faith moment by moment, and hour by hour!... If we believe in God, we are armed with the righteousness of Christ; we have taken hold of His strength.... We want to talk with our Saviour as though He were right by our side.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 130-133.](#)

Length of Conference Extended

[76] As she closed her talk and the people began to give their testimonies, many said they could now understand better why they had not advanced more rapidly in their Christian experience. Then some began to urge that the meetings be extended a week. “They said the lessons they were having from Sister White were of great value to them; that they were gaining much knowledge by the Bible studies and the instruction given upon the work of colporteurs.”—[Letter 23, 1885.](#) So the council voted to continue another week with the rich spiritual feast and the valuable practical instruction. This final week

would be one of trial and testing for some of the ministers present, as we shall see.

“How to Meet Temptations” was Ellen White’s subject at the Wednesday morning devotional service. “Presumption is a most common temptation,” she pointed out, and those who profess to be Christ’s followers too often “plunge without thought into temptations from which it would require a miracle to bring them forth unsullied. Meditation and prayer would have preserved them from these temptations by leading them to shun the critical, dangerous position in which they placed themselves.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 133.

But no matter how cautious one is, temptations will come.

The tempted Christian has the privilege of linking his strength with the strength of God: “It is our privilege in our great weakness to take hold of the strength of the Mighty One. If we think to meet and overcome the enemy in our own strength, we shall be disappointed.”—[Ibid.](#), 134.

It is essential to “make daily advancement in the work of character-building.” But God’s servant warned that this would be no easy task: “When we try to separate from us our sinful habits, it may at times seem that we are tearing ourselves all to pieces; but this is the very work that we must do if we would grow up into the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus.”—[Ibid.](#), 134, 135.

Finally, temptation can be resisted only by those who exercise faith. “Cling to Christ and His merits,” God’s servant urged, and “He will fulfill to us all He has promised.”—[Ibid.](#), 135.

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Decisions of the council were becoming more specific now. It was voted that A. C. Bourdeau should go to Torre Pellice, Italy; and that young Charles Andrews should be sent to Battle Creek to learn the printing business more thoroughly. a request was sent to the General Conference that a successful German laborer be sent to Europe, and not long afterward, L. R. Conradi would come. Nominations were made and accepted for various officers and committees.

A number of the foregoing decisions had grown out of a consultation meeting in Ellen White’s room earlier in the day. But one crucial item that had come up in that smaller meeting did not reach the conference floor.

A Controversial Problem Arises

With Ellen White, the Bourdeau brothers, their wives, Elder and Mrs. Whitney, and Henry Kellogg present, D. T. Bourdeau presented the idea that France and Italy should become a separate conference, breaking away from the Swiss Conference. How Bourdeau could hope to form a viable conference organization with less than a total of 50 members is not clear, but he argued that each one of the national groups was jealous and independent and therefore would resent being a part of the Swiss Conference. Mrs. White suggested that this was a strong reason why each group should learn to blend with other nationalities.

“I told Brother Daniel that this would not be in accordance with God’s will.... The truth is one. It will take people from France and Italy, and mingling them with other elements, soften and refine them through the truth.”—[Letter 23, 1885](#).

[78] Mrs. White tried to help Bourdeau see that with the cause still in its infancy in these countries, his proposition would only bring weakness. But Bourdeau took offense. He began to repeat stories of abuses he felt he had suffered years before in Battle Creek and later when he was working under J. N. Andrews in Europe. As he became more and more excited, Mrs. White sensed that she could not support such a spirit with her presence. And she rose and left the room. “I will not give sanction to such a spirit,” she explained in her diary.

The next morning, her devotional talk elaborated the general principles she had been trying to get across to D. T. Bourdeau. She did not specifically mention him, however. In fact, she tried to broaden the application:

“Some who have entered these missionary fields have said, ‘You do not understand the French people; you do not understand the Germans. They have to be met in just such a way.’ But, I inquire, does not God understand them? Is it not He who gives His servants a

message for the people?”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 136.

She used the illustration of the Jewish Temple. Its stones were quarried out of the mountains, but when they were brought together they formed a perfect building. Then, with great candor, she said:

“Let no one think that there need not be a stroke placed upon him. There is no person, no nation, that is perfect in every habit and thought. One must learn of another. Therefore God wants the different nationalities to mingle together, to be one in judgment, one in purpose. Then the union that there is in Christ will be exemplified.”—[Ibid.](#), 137.

Mrs. White confessed that she was almost afraid to come to Europe because she had heard so much about the peculiarities of the various nationalities. But then she realized that God could bring people where they would receive the truth. She urged:

“Look to Jesus, brethren; copy His manners and spirit, and you will have no trouble in reaching these different classes. We have not six patterns to follow, nor five. We have only one, and that is Christ Jesus. If the Italian brethren, the French brethren, and the German brethren try to be like Him, they will plant their feet upon the same foundation of truth; the same spirit that dwells in one, will dwell in the other,—Christ in them, the hope of glory. I warn you, brethren and sisters, not to build up a wall of partition between different nationalities. On the contrary, seek to break it down wherever it exists....

“As workers together for God, brethren and sisters, lean heavily upon the arm of the Mighty One. Labor for unity, labor for love, and you may become a power in the world.”—[Ibid.](#), 137, 138.

An Unwise Interruption

The counsel Sister White gave was kind, it was practical, and there were no doubt many present to whom the straightforward message had personal application. But D. T. Bourdeau was offended. He jumped to his feet, claiming that the sermon had been directed at him personally. Then he proceeded to try to vindicate himself. Had he remained silent, many of the people at the council would probably have been none the wiser about the whole affair.

“I had, during the meeting, spoken upon general principles,” Mrs. White explained to G. I. Butler. “Now I had overturned his imaginary castle that he was building, and he acted as though he had received his death blow.”—[Letter 23, 1885](#).

The council continued, but Bourdeau did not attend the meetings. He began to pack his belongings in order to leave the next morning—for where? He probably didn’t know himself. He was an unhappy man.

Meanwhile Thursday’s council proceeded with fresh questions before the session, e.g. “Why do the Italian and Romanian papers receive so few subscribers?” and “How shall we reach the traveling public in England?” The question of Adventist schools and Christian education for Adventist young people was also discussed. Since public school was compulsory six days a week in Switzerland, several Adventists had been fined for keeping their children home on the Sabbath day, and some had even been imprisoned. It was voted [80] to prepare a petition to the proper government authorities, as well as to form a committee to organize a church school at Basel.

But Ellen White’s diary is filled at this point with her concern for Daniel Bourdeau. How could she reach him and help him? She went to the morning meeting on Friday with a heavy heart. “My soul seemed in an agony as I prayed to God for Him to work. I knew our case was urgent.”—*Ibid.* Her study was on the subject of the book of life. Doubtless she was praying that Bourdeau’s case in the judgment would be settled on the credit side of the ledger. But when Daniel Bourdeau did not show up at the meeting she was worried. She wrote in her diary that Daniel had been “taking counsel with Daniel and the adversary of souls.”

Well, the meeting was profitable, and many benefited from her appeal:

“Oh that the power of God may rest upon us before we separate for our homes and fields of labor! Oh that we may consider the importance of improving every day that we may have a good record in heaven!...

“When our hearts are all aglow with the love for Jesus and the souls for whom He died, success will attend our labors. My heart cries out after the living God. I want a closer connection with Him. I want to realize His strengthening power, that I may do more effective work in His cause.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 139-140.](#)

Mrs. White returned to her room with the burden of prayer heavy upon her heart. She pleaded with God for Daniel, and she felt urged to speak to him again. As she paced the floor of her room in great “agony of mind” she kept saying to herself, “I cannot talk with him; I cannot meet his defiant, stubborn spirit.” But she knew she must, so she sent for him and his wife, Marion, to come to her room along with his brother, A. C. Bourdeau, and Elders Whitney, Lane, and White.

Mrs. White began to talk directly to Daniel. He interrupted, saying he would rather see her alone because of the things he had suffered from his brethren in the past. Mrs. White asked him courteously to be silent, and as he quieted, she gave him “such a message as I wish never to speak again to mortal man” ([Letter 23, 1885](#)). Here was the messenger of God engaged in her most difficult task.

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She saw his experience as a life-and-death struggle. He was indeed a tempted and tried soul, but she could not conscientiously forbear to warn him of his danger. He had complained that Ellen White “hit” him with her sermon on Thursday morning, but she reminded him that he had stood where he could be hit easily:

“The arrows of the Almighty must wound you so sorely that you will feel that you need a physician. ‘I

have torn,' saith God,' and I will heal; I have smitten and I will bind you up.' When you come, meek and lowly, then Jesus will pardon your transgressions. I charge you not to leave this house till the power of the enemy is broken."—[Letter 23, 1885](#).

When she concluded her soul-burdened appeal, all of the workers knelt in prayer.

"My soul was drawn out in an agony for Daniel Bourdeau. He prayed for himself rather faintly. I prayed again and again, with strong crying and tears.... Brother A. C. and Marion [Daniel's wife] prayed with great brokenness of spirit. a terrible struggle was going on with Daniel. He did not fully surrender, but his face looked as though soul and body was rent asunder. He made concessions but had not yet yielded."—*Ibid.*

A Victory Meeting

The Sabbath was drawing on now, and a special meeting limited to ministers was planned for Friday evening, September 25. Bourdeau was not the only worker with difficulties. Three of the workers from Britain seemed to be cold and distant in their relationship with the council members. Seventeen ministers and their wives were present. Mrs. White was afraid that D. T. Bourdeau would not come, but he was there.

[82] There was no formal sermon. God's servant opened with a simple heartfelt prayer. Then she told everyone frankly that the object of the meeting was to seek the Lord for His blessing. Albert Vuilleumier prayed; so did Elder Matteson. Then Daniel Bourdeau himself prayed. "He began to break and confess," Mrs. White wrote later, and finally "wrenched himself from the shackles of Satan, and surrendered his will to the Lord" (*Ibid.*; and [Manuscript 20, 1885](#)). Others followed, praying with broken hearts and with confessions, uttered in tears. These included the workers from Britain.

"Light, precious light, was breaking in," Mrs. White exclaimed. "My peace was like a river; Jesus was very near to me."—[Letter 23, 1885](#).

Earlier in the week, she had told in one of her sermons how, in the early days of the message, when disagreements arose between brethren, a day of fasting and prayer had been set aside. Now it was time to follow the practice again, and the next day, Sabbath, was reserved for this purpose.

Mrs. White slept little that night, and she was up early in the morning for a season of prayer. Although she hardly felt able, she made her way to the ministers' meeting at six o'clock. Again Bourdeau prayed and testified. "He made a more full surrender to God and was coming to the light."—[Manuscript 24, 1885](#).

A Vision in the Night Season

Then Ellen White presented a sobering vision God had given her the night before:

"A book was opened before me with the record of the past year's labor of the workmen, just as God viewed it. As I traced down the record, there stood every defect. With some, many hours spent in visiting and talking, occupied with unimportant matters, were registered as idle....

"There was instruction given by the One whose hands held the records and whose eyes were tracing every feature.... His words were, You cannot trust in your own human ability or wisdom. You must have union of effort, union of faith; and you must counsel together. Not one of you is sufficient to be a leader. God will work for His people if they will give Him a chance.—*Ibid.*

In the afternoon meeting, Ellen White had special messages of encouragement the Lord had given her for two of the ministers' wives. She had not expected to speak on this topic at all, but God had planned for her and for them. "The Lord led my mind into a channel unexpected to myself, but from the testimonies borne after the meeting, I think it was just what the people needed."—[Manuscript 20, 1885](#).

The next day, after a morning ministers' meeting, a significant action was taken by the council:

“Resolved, That we express our continued confidence in the gift of prophecy, which God has mercifully placed among His remnant people, and that we will endeavor to show our true appreciation of the same by practically carrying out its instruction.”—[The Review and Herald, November 3, 1885](#).

In order to enable others to benefit from some of the counsel she had given at the session, it was also voted to prepare a book containing sketches of the Seventh-day Adventist missions, as well as the sermons of Mrs. White at the council. [This resulted in *Historical sketches of the foreign missions of Seventh-day Adventists*, Published within a few months, and often quoted from in this volume].

She was thrilled with the progress she had seen during the meetings.

“Elder Erzberger has come nobly to the work, humbling himself and confessing his backsliding. Elder Matteson is a transformed man. The peace of Christ is revealed in his countenance. He speaks of gaining precious victories over self.... Brother Daniel Bourdeau is a converted man. The Lord has wrought for him.... Brother Albert Vuilleumier spoke with deep feeling.... Well, all the testimonies were good.”—[Manuscript 24, 1885](#).

No doubt the ordination service for Albert Vuilleumier Monday night, the last evening of the session, gave all the ministers an opportunity to renew their vows to the Lord. D. T. Bourdeau offered one of the prayers. His trials were not over, but he had gained a decisive victory.

[84] Mrs. White spoke once more, on Tuesday morning at the final meeting of the council, and then, on Wednesday, she recorded in her diary, “Our meetings are ended. Our brethren are returning to their homes. We part with tender feelings.:—*Ibid.*”

D. T. Bourdeau's Printed Testimony

The proceedings of the council were fully reported in the *Review*, as well as in the Adventist papers in Europe, but D. T. Bourdeau added a special report of his own. In the light of his experience in Basel, the article has an even greater significance.

“The labors of Sr. White and her son, Elder W. C. White, were highly appreciated at this general gathering....

“How interesting and wonderful it was to hear Sr. White correctly delineate the peculiarities of different fields she had seen only as the Lord had shown them to her, and show how they should be met; to hear her describe case after case of persons she had never seen with her natural vision, and either point out their errors or show important relations they sustained to the cause, and how they should connect with it to better serve its interests!

“As I had a fair chance to test the matter, having been on the ground, and knowing that no one had informed Sr. White of these things, while serving as an interpreter, I could not help exclaiming, ‘It is enough. I want no further evidence of its genuineness.’”

Then Bourdeau gave some even more intimate reasons for his confidence, reasons tied in with his own personal experience:

“Not only does this gift reprove sin without dissimulation and partiality, as did Nathan when he said to David, ‘Thou art the man’; but it deals in words of encouragement to help those reprovved to overcome, and to inspire hope, faith, and courage to the desponding. It not only probes the wound, but it also pours in the oil, binds the wound, and hastens the process of restoration.... It identifies itself with those for whom it labors, bearing their burdens in earnest, persevering prayer, forgetful of self and ease.... It brings with it supernatural discernment.... It brings with it the miraculous, without

which, religion were a formal, heartless, lifeless, human affair....

“To us this.... is a sure indication that God is about to work mightily through His Spirit and people.”—[The Review and Herald, November 10, 1885.](#)

Chapter 9—Among The Youth In Basel

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Labors of love

“We part with tender feelings,” Ellen White said of the farewells on Wednesday after the Third European Council ([Manuscript 24, 1885](#)). Some workers lingered on a few days, and on Friday she had a visit with George Drew about how to begin work in London. She wrote:

“After much prayer, it is thought best to have select colporteurs to commence labor in that field in a quiet way and see what can be done with our publications.... If the chosen and accepted will pattern after Christ’s example to instruct the people in all humility and kindly interest, the blessing of the Lord will be given.... The large cities can be entered if you will watch unto prayer. When rough speeches are made, be not offended. Consider that you have a soul-saving message and that you can only obtain victories by walking humbly with the Lord Jesus.”—*Ibid.*

Serious work was not begun in London until much later, but Ellen White ever showed her concern for the salvation of souls in the large cities. Whether in London or in Basel the Lord’s messenger was always alert to give help where it was needed. Both young and old were the objects of her concern.

In time a score or more of the youth came to work at the printing house in Basel. Morning classes were held from six-thirty to seven-thirty to give them a chance to study the Bible, history, and English. Sometimes these were devotional meetings. Mrs. White took a leading part in these meetings, and she seemed never to weary in her efforts to encourage the youth to fit themselves for efficient service in the cause of Christ, to improve their opportunities, and to be diligent in work and study. She told them it had been shown her that

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if they were faithful, God would use them to carry the truth to many people near and afar off; that if they kept near the Lord they would become mighty in His work; and that some of them would be called to positions of large responsibility.

In succeeding years many bore witness to the remarkable fulfillment of this prediction. One of these young men held the presidency of the Latin Union Conference for several terms; another, the presidency of the Swiss Conference; another was superintendent of the Levant Union Mission. Others were preachers, editors, teachers, and managers of large publishing interests

The Sickness of Edith Andrews

The week following the European Council was a sorrowful time for Ellen White in several ways. First, she had a “painful operation” on her teeth Friday morning. The pain lasted over the Sabbath, October 3, and by Sunday morning she was suffering severely but hot fomentations brought some relief. Her own health problems were over-shadowed, however, by those of Edith Andrews, a niece of J. N. Andrews, and the oldest daughter of Martha Andrews Bourdeau. Edith had come to Europe with her uncle in May, 1879, just after J. N. Andrews’ young daughter, Mary, had died of tuberculosis. [J. N. Andrews took up residence in Europe in 1874. He returned to the United States to attend two General Conference sessions in Battle Creek—in November, 1878, and April, 1879. He set sail again for Europe on May 29, 1879, with his niece, Edith, and a Miss Anna Oyen. a few months later his daughter, Mary, died of tuberculosis in Battle Creek, at the age of 17 years. (*Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists*, 33)]

[88] The disease had taken J. N. Andrews in 1883, and now the vivacious 22-year-old Edith was showing its effect. Ellen White wrote in her diary during the European Council: “The condition of Edith Andrews is a grief to us all. She seems to be failing in health. What shall be done in her case?”—*Manuscript 16a*, 1885.

When the council had decided to send A. C. Bourdeau and Edith’s mother, Martha, to Torre Pellice, Italy, it was suggested that Edith go along for her health’s sake, but she wanted to stay and work or, if she had to, go to America.

Edith was quiet a leader among the young people in the publishing house, but her example was not always the best. W. C. White sized up the situation: “Her influence in the office is not the best. It is to center her affections on a choice few, and care but little for the rest of the world.” The influence of Edith’s “clique” was not good in a situation where so many people, young and old, had to live and work together day after day.

Counselor in the Sickroom

During the council Ellen White began to talk to Edith about her spiritual health: “In the afternoon [Wednesday, September 23] had a long, plain, pointed talk with Edith Andrews. She seemed to have some sense of her condition. We prayed together. I feel deep pity for this child.” [Ellen White herself as a teen-age “child” suffered with tuberculosis. Her brother Robert was a victim ([Spiritual Gifts 2:174](#)), and in those distant days it was known as “consumption,” a progressive wasting away of the body, with little hope of survival. a number of pioneer workers died from tuberculosis, E.G., T. Ralph ([Ibid.](#), 2:91, 92). James White’s brother, Nathanael, and sister, Anna, were casualties ([Ibid.](#), 2:195; [Life Sketches of Ellen G. White](#), 147). The gifted poetess, Annie Smith, succumbed to the dread disease at the age of 27 ([The Review and Herald](#), August 21, 1885). James white had it but recovered ([Testimonies for the Church 1:96](#)). Doubtless Ellen White could feel deeply with young Edith Andrews over her affliction.]—[Manuscript 16a](#), 1885.

On Sabbath, October 3, Edith sought out Ellen White, and the two had another long talk about Edith’s religious experience. After seeing both her cousin and uncle wasted by tuberculosis, Edith no doubt sensed what was ahead, and wanted to make sure she was ready to go and that she had made everything right.

Then followed two months of suffering for young Edith. During those two months Mrs. White visited the Scandinavian countries and Italy. When she returned to Basel in December, Edith appealed to her for assurances that the Lord had accepted her. Tenderly the Lord’s servant spoke with the dying girl, pointing out that God had pledged to pardon every transgression if we would only return to Him with true repentance.

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“I believe, Edith, that you have done this, and wherein you are too feeble to do the work as thoroughly as if you were well, Jesus’ precious mercy and merits supplies the deficiencies on the part of His repenting, humble ones.”—[Letter 26, 1885](#).

Then she quoted from [Exodus 34:6, 7](#): “The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.”

She asked Edith:

“Will you, my dear child, believe Him? What sins can be too great for Him to pardon? Every soul is precious in His sight. He is merciful, infinitely more willing to pardon than condemn. He is gracious. He is touched with the feelings of your infirmities.”—[Letter 25, 1885](#).

Sister White continued, telling of the great love of Jesus, reminding the ailing young woman how He saved Peter when he was sinking in doubt. Tears came to Edith’s eyes and ran down her feverish cheeks. “I believe He accepts me,” she said, “I believe He loves me and I all undeserving, have His peace.”

On Sabbath, December 19, the messenger of the Lord spoke twice, and that night she recorded in her diary, “I am impressed that this is the last Sabbath Edith will ever see.”—[Manuscript 30, 1885](#).

Finally, on Thursday, December 24, at 5:30 A.M. the converted girl fell asleep. Blessed sleep! Sister White was confident about her salvation. “She has fallen asleep in Jesus.”—[Letter 72, 1886](#).

On Christmas Day Mrs. White wrote in her diary:

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“There is a great solemnity upon my mind. Edith is dead in the house. Her record is in the books of heaven, unchangeable. What a solemn thought is life, and how we live that life! We have evidence that Edith’s life is not what it might have been, but her last days were days of penitence, repentance, and confession. We have

reason to believe that the pitying Redeemer accepted Edith.”—[Manuscript 30, 1885](#).

On the twenty-sixth Mrs. White had a bad day. Under the painful stress of Edith’s death her mind turned back to the time only a few years before when James White, her husband of 35 years, [James White died August 6, 1881, in the Battle Creek Sanitarium. He lies buried next to his wife who fell asleep July 16, 1915—34 years later. They rest until the happy morning of resurrection in the White family plot in Oak Hill Cemetery, Battle Creek, Michigan, where all four of their sons are resting. James White’s parents are also resting there. Elder White was born on August 4, 1821, in Palmyra, Maine. He reported in his *Life Incidents*, Page 9, that his father was descended from one of the pilgrims who came on the ship *Mayflower* and landed on plymouth rock in December, 1620. James’s mother was a granddaughter of Dr. Samuel Shepard, an eminent baptist minister of New England. White was the fifth of nine children, and one of the three founders of the Seventh-day Adventists Church. He served as president of the general conference for an aggregate of ten years: May 17, 1865, to May 14, 1867; May 18, 1869, to December 29, 1871; August 13, 1874, to October 11, 1880. (See *The sda Encyclopedia*, p. 1419.)] was snatched away from her by a sudden attack of malaria, then before that to the death of her firstborn, Henry, at the age of 16, and her baby boy, Herbert, at three months (see [Manuscript 30, 1885](#)).

But sorrow does not last forever, and on Sunday, she walked in the fresh snow and felt “much refreshed.” “It is not clear,” she wrote, “but the sun is trying to struggle through the mist and fog.” So she, like everyone else, had her good days and her bad days—struggling as all mortals do in a world full of sunshine and shadow.

Then she said cheerily in a note about her granddaughter, “Ella has a fine time trying to snowball her mother and grandmother.”—*Ibid.*

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Chapter 10—The Visit to Denmark

A dream come true in Copenhagen

The delegates to the European Council were delighted to have Ellen White in their midst, and they were genuinely eager to have her visit their respective countries, meet the believers, and bring her testimony to the churches. It is understandable then that one action taken near the close of the council was in the form of an invitation. It reads:

“Resolved, that we express our gratitude to God for the labors and counsels of Sr. E.G. White and her son, Eld. W. C. White, at these meetings; that we invite them to visit Scandinavia, Great Britain, and other fields, and to remain sufficiently long in Europe to do the work Providence has assigned them.”—Minutes of Third European Council, published in [The Review and Herald, November 3, 1885](#).

Her response to this invitation was positive, but she did not feel prepared to leave at once. She had spoken many times during the council, held numerous interviews, and done considerable writing. She needed time for rest and rejuvenation.

During this week her thoughts turned to the question of the termination of the European journey. How long should she remain? Would she be on the Continent in June of the following summer when conferences would be held in Scandinavia? She wrote:

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“The safest course was to visit the leading churches in Scandinavia at the earliest opportunity.... It seemed unwise to postpone until another summer this part of the work which we had made the long journey from America to accomplish.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 174](#).

So it was on Tuesday, October 6, at 9:30 P.M. she was ready to go, and took a hack across the Rhine to Klein Basel (Little Basel) where she and her traveling companions boarded a train and headed north through Germany on her way to visit the mission in Denmark. [See [The Great Controversy, 240-242](#), for Ellen White's inspiring account of the monk tausen, "the reformer of Denmark," and his influence as a student of Martin Luther in leading the Danes into the reformed faith.] In years past she had seen in vision the condition of some of the churches in Scandinavia and many indications had come to her from the Lord that Denmark, Norway, and Sweden "were promising fields for labor." "A great work," she wrote, "lay before the missionaries in this field" (*Ibid.*).

Across Germany by Rail

So, with Willie and Sara, along with a young lady from Norway, Cecile Dahl, whom Mrs. White had succeeded in leading to the Saviour, and who would now serve as her translator, she began her six-week tour. By daylight the next morning, Wednesday, they had reached Frankfurt, Germany.

Here she was particularly interested in the religious history of the town. Here Martin Luther on his journey to the Diet of Worms in 1521 had taken ill and remained to rest awhile. From this city he had sent a courageous message to Spalatin, secretary to Frederick of Saxony in Worms:

"I am arrived here ... though Satan sought to stop me in my way by sickness. From Eisenach to this place I have been suffering, and I am at this moment in a worse condition than ever. I find that Charles has issued an edict to terrify me, but Christ lives and we shall enter Worms in spite of all the counsels of hell, and all the powers of the air."—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 175](#).

The dwelling occupied by the Reformer is still known as Luther House. [93]

About seven that night the party reached Hamburg. Here they had a mile's walk from one station to another, plus a two-hour wait.

But the waiting room was thick with tobacco smoke, so Mrs. White was fortunate to find a chair in the entrance lobby while the rest of the travelers remained in the open air standing on the platform.

The Arrival in Copenhagen

Three more travel hours brought them at midnight to Kiel, on the Baltic Sea. Soon they were at rest in assigned staterooms of a little steamer, bound for Korsor, a port city on the west side of the large Danish island of Sjaelland. Then came another train ride across to Copenhagen on the east coast of the island. The traveling party arrived Friday morning at 10:00 A.M.

They were met at the Copenhagen station by John G. Matteson and Knud Brorsen. The two men had been working there since spring, and in spite of difficulties, had started a church of about twenty members.

Matteson took his guests by hack to Oster Farimagsgade 49 (now No. 73), and then to the Matteson's apartment on the sixth floor. There were no lifts to speed the ascent. But once Ellen White got settled, she was very much impressed with the view she had from her "sky parlor" ([Manuscript 25, 1885](#)). "It is closer to heaven up here," Europeans often say of their high apartments.

"The view from our windows was very fine. Just across the street were beautiful grounds which had the appearance of an extensive park or garden. We were somewhat surprised to learn that it was a cemetery. [Holmen's Churchyard.]... Evergreen hedges separated the inclosures, and choice flowers and shrubs were scattered everywhere."—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 179](#).

[94] Looking off toward the sea, she saw the windmills, and to the
 [95] right of that the golden dome of Alexander Newsky's Russian Orthodox church. Not far away she discovered the Kommune Hospital. She was surprised to learn the sick were "provided with everything—room, food, bedding—for thirty cents per day." And then she commented, "This is one of Copenhagen's blessings, especially for

the poorer class, who must suffer with want of proper care and conveniences if it were not for this merciful provision.”—[Manuscript 25, 1885](#). The Danes are rightly proud of their medical system and the provisions that are made for the care of the citizens, especially the poor.

On Thursday, after meeting a dental appointment, she returned to her room by way of a beautiful artificial lake, the charm of which took away some of the pain of the dentist’s chair. She commented on the fine sturdy buildings of Copenhagen and its “large grand blocks” which reminded her of Oakland and San Francisco, California.

Small but Attentive Crowds

On Friday night, October 9, she spoke for the first time to the infant church in Copenhagen. Believers from nearby companies had come in, swelling the “crowd” to about 35.

The meeting hall was close to Matteson’s apartment. “We ... turn the corner of the block, then pass under an arch into a court and begin to ascend until we mount four pairs of stairs into the hall.”—*Ibid.* It was a small, cold, and damp place for a meeting, and Ellen White shivered while her tortured teeth rattled, but she did not hold back her message. She addressed her eager audience, composed of “intelligent, noble looking men and women—Danes.” She spoke on the parable of the fig tree.

“We are grateful that a few in Copenhagen have accepted the truth of God. Missionaries are needed to spread the light of truth in these great cities, and the children of God—those whom He calls the light of the world—ought to be doing all they can in this direction. You will meet with discouragements, you will have opposition. The enemy will whisper,

What can these few poor people do in this great city?
But if you walk in the light, you can every one be light-bearers, [In her early childhood, the well-known adventist author and youth leader Matilda Erickson Andross, born in Denmark, heard the Seventh-day Adventist message preached by J. G. Matteson in the meetings held in

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her childhood home. Shortly thereafter she emigrated to the United States and received a liberal education. In 1907 with the organization of the young people's missionary volunteer department, she was called to be first secretary under the chairmanship of M. E. Kern. She wrote a number of helpful books. In 1920 she married E. E. Andross, general conference executive, and shortly became a missionary to Inter-America, as he led the new division. Here, then, was one devoted one among many who became a successful "light-bearer" for Jesus Christ.] to the world."—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 181.](#)

The youth present were stirred when she challenged them to enlist in the service of Christ:

“Young men should be instructed that they may labor in these cities. They may never be able to present the truth from the desk, but they could go from house to house, and point the people to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

“The dust and rubbish of error have buried the precious jewels of truth; but the Lord's workers can uncover these treasures, so that many will look upon them with delight and awe.”—*Ibid.*

Faithful Seed Sowing

In a fervent manner she addressed the handful of people who had come to hear her. Here in the congregation she saw the seed of a harvest that would grow and ripen in future years. The Christian life too was like seed planted but growing to rich fruition day by day. She said to the small congregation:

“While we are to seek earnestly for perfection of character, we must remember that sanctification is not the work of a moment, but of a lifetime. Said Paul, ‘I die daily.’ Day by day the work of overcoming must

go forward. Every day we are to resist temptation, and gain the victory over selfishness in all its forms. Day by day we should cherish love and humility, and cultivate in ourselves all those excellencies of character which will please God and fit us for the blessed society of heaven.”—*Ibid.*

Sabbath morning she spoke again, from [John 15:1-8](#), “Brother Matteson acting as interpreter.” As she preached about the true vine and its branches she “was strengthened and blessed; my infirmities were forgotten in the interest I felt for precious souls. The dear Saviour seemed very near, and the Holy Spirit rested upon the assembly” ([Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 182). [97]

In a social meeting that followed:

“One brother said that when he listened to the sermon impressing upon them the necessity of purity and perfection of character, he felt that he could not be saved; that his case was hopeless. But when it was stated that sanctification was not the work of a moment, but of a lifetime, he was encouraged, and determined that day by day he would pray and watch, and search the Scriptures; he would be an overcomer, gaining an experience daily, until he should become strong and be able to be a blessing to others.”—*Ibid.*, 183.

The people were grateful that Mrs. White had come to help them. They had read her books and her articles in their paper, and had thus received most precious light and a great blessing. The messages from her pen that had been translated into their language had opened to them the Scriptures, and had made the truth so plain that they could not resist it.

“A high standard had been presented for them to reach, and this had led them to read the Bible, to search their hearts, to pray more, to have greater love for Jesus, and to seek more earnestly to save souls.”—*Ibid.*, 182, 183.

Scenes “Presented Before Me”

A larger hall was secured, a basement in a public building with seats for a hundred people, and Sunday night Ellen White spoke again, and on succeeding evenings as the crowds grew, some had to stand. The Spirit of the Lord came upon her, and she took a deep mysterious interest in this particular crowd of people. We understand better when we learned that—

[98] “There were some in the audience who seemed deeply interested, persons of talent whose countenances I remembered, for *they had been presented before me.*” — *Ibid.*, 183. (Italics supplied.)

This expression, “presented before me,” was used frequently by the Lord’s messenger to represent God’s disclosure of people and events revealed to her in certain visions. Not infrequently she would observe these persons in peculiar situations needing special help. These disclosures might happen years before she saw them with her physical eyes. She wrote about this phenomenon:

“At times I am carried far ahead into the future and shown what is to take place. Then again I am shown things as they have occurred in the past. After I come out of vision I do not at once remember all that I have seen, and the matter is not so clear before me until I write, then the scene rises before me as was presented in vision, and I can write with freedom. Sometimes the things which I have seen are hid from me after I come out of vision, and I cannot call them to mind until I am brought before a company where that vision applies, then the things which I have seen come to my mind with force. I am just as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in relating or writing a vision, as in having the vision. It is impossible for me to call up things which have been shown me unless the Lord brings them before me at the time that He is pleased to have me relate or write them.”—*Spiritual Gifts 2:292, 293.*

With these persons directly before her, it is little wonder that in the night meetings in Copenhagen. Ellen White spoke so earnestly! It seemed that she knew the people and spoke to them as a friend seeking to hold them back from some catastrophe. “I felt the peril of souls,” she confessed, “that some would decide from that time to obey the truth, or would refuse the cross, and reject the offers of mercy.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 183, 184.

Need for Better Meeting Places

While in Copenhagen she was led by the Lord to speak to the ministers frankly about the sacredness of the work given to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. She referred to the meager halls that had been secured for the meetings while she was there. She said: [99]

“I am far from being convinced that these small and obscure halls were the best places that could be secured, or that in this great city of three hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants the message should be given in a basement room that will accommodate but two hundred and this but half seated, so that a large part of the congregation have to stand. When God sends our brethren help, they should make earnest effort, even at some expense to bring the light before the people.”—[Ibid.](#), 184.

Later, in Orebro, Sweden, a similar circumstance developed when the public meetings where Mrs. White was to speak were held in a private dwelling. It is true, the brethren had limited financial resources, but the character of the royal message from the King of the universe to His earthly subjects deserved good auditoriums or halls whether in Copenhagen or Orebro or for that matter any city or town on earth!

At the Wax Museum

In the midst of her busy preaching schedule Sister White did take time occasionally to relax and to do other things. She visited

the new wax museum in this beautiful city, opened for the first time to the public in August. She wrote:

“Brother Matteson, Willie, Sara, and I walk to the large and beautiful building of the Panopticon. Here are the great men of the kingdom in wax life-like figures. They appear exactly as if alive.... It seemed difficult to think that these were not living, breathing human beings before us. The expression of the eye and the countenance seemed so perfectly natural.”—[Manuscript 25, 1885](#).

[100] While she was impressed by the Panopticon and by the magnificence of the city with its broad streets and lovely gardens, she could not conceal her concern for the soul of Copenhagen, that sinful, fun-loving city. “Pleasure, amusement, dancing and card playing, gambling, beer drinking and deplorable ignorance which always follow in the train of Christless indulgence, are flooding the city.”—*Ibid.* How she longed to turn the tide in favor of the gospel!

The Case of the German Tutor

The night before she left Denmark she visited with a woman who acted as a German tutor for a Danish nobleman. The lady had accepted the Sabbath truth only recently, but when Elder Matteson and the other workers had gone to Basel, her friends and the priests confused her with their specious arguments, and she was ready to give it up.

Now this sister had come to see Ellen White and have a good talk. She told her how unworthy she felt even to sit and talk with her. Her life, she said, had been one round of “drinking, frolicking, and amusement” ([Manuscript 26, 1885](#)). Ellen White asked her whether she was satisfied with her past experience. “No,” she replied honestly. “And are you really happy?” “No,” she said again firmly.

The servant of God talked to her earnestly, telling her that Jesus expected her to use her talents to His glory in building up God’s kingdom.

“But I have so little talent,” she remarked.

“And that little talent,” Ellen White questioned, “you will wrap in a napkin [serviette] and hide it in the world?” If she could use her education and influence to serve the titled people of the earth like the Danish nobleman, she could use it just as well for the Saviour, Jesus Christ.

“I was thankful for the privilege of this interview,” she wrote in her diary, “and I have great desire that special labor shall be given to this unsatisfied, perplexed soul.”—*Ibid.*

Here, then, is a fleeting glance of Ellen White, the soul winner who sensed her own inadequacies, but who had submitted her life and her humble talents to Christ as a youth to be used in any way his providence should indicate.

Late the next morning, Thursday, October 15, Ellen White and her traveling companions boarded a little steamer bound across the narrow strait for Malmo, Sweden. It was a beautiful day. As was her custom, she eagerly sought for historical information about the charming new town. She noted that it was a part of Denmark during Reformation times, and was one of the first of Denmark’s cities to declare for the Protestant Reformation.

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Chapter 11—Visiting Churches in Sweden

Land of the child preachers

At Malmo, Ellen White, along with Willie, Sara, and Elder Matteson, boarded the train and after an all-night journey reached Stockholm. There that Friday morning to welcome the party to a busy time in Sweden was C. Norlin, a dedicated colporteur who took them to his new apartment at Westmannagaten 34. Ellen White developed a great respect for these self-sacrificing literature evangelists who she said were “poor but very excellent people.” Norlin went on foot from place to place carrying Swedish books printed in America. The profits were extremely small on these little volumes, since the production costs in America were high, and the shipping costs further trimmed his meager earnings. On some books Norlin made as little as three cents.

Fortunately, at the General Conference session later in the year, the SDA Publishing Association voted to furnish publications to foreign missions at the cost of production. W. C. White, who attended the session, probably helped to influence the decision.

[103] The Norlins had just moved into a new brick apartment house, and plasterers and carpenters had not yet finished their work. As Mrs. White struggled up the four flights of stone stairs and into one of the rooms she discovered that the plaster was still wet. “We felt that we were surrounded by ice,” she lamented. Perhaps they might go to a hotel, but since neither she nor Sara could speak any Swedish, that might cause more problems than it would solve.

Just at the time when she was wondering where she could stay, Sister L. P. Johanneson came to invite them to her home. This woman, who had spent some years in America, not only could speak English but had a cozy little home at 15 Perlmetergaten on a hill in the suburbs of the city. Her husband, a salesman, had not yet accepted the Sabbath, but he believed it and was not opposed to the Seventh-day Adventists. The couple were very kind and attentive to

Ellen White's and Sara's needs. The two Americans were taken to a third-floor parlor that had been reserved for them, and were pleased to find it dry and well heated.

"We were pleasantly surprised to find the table very much the same as at our Sanitarium at Battle Creek," Mrs. White wrote. "The dishes were simple and healthful, and prepared with a skill and nicety that made them inviting and palatable."—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 190.](#)

Then her missionary spirit was stirred as she wrote:

"There is a great need of a more general knowledge of the science of healthful cookery. There is a wide field of usefulness open to intelligent, experienced cooks in teaching young ladies how to prepare plain, simple food in a palatable and healthful manner."—*Ibid.*

There were other aspects of life in this lovely Swedish home that impressed Ellen White:

"The Scandinavian children seem remarkably quiet and well trained. Wherever we went, they came forward, one by one, and shook hands with us, the girls making a curtsy, and the boys a low bow. Sister Johanneson's four children, from the girl of eight down to the three-year-old boy, welcomed us in this manner when we came; and whenever they met us, morning, noon, or evening, the greeting was repeated. At another place where we visited, even the little girl of two and a half years went through the ceremony with credit.

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"Mr. Johanneson was training his children in singing, and we enjoyed the music of their little voices blending together in sacred songs."—*Ibid.*

The Historical Climate of Stockholm

The American travelers were fascinated by the beauty of Stockholm, as well as its rich historical atmosphere. The Swedish city had been called the "Venice of the North" but it reminded Ellen White of

San Francisco, the well-known Pacific Coast city near her home at Healdsburg, California. She wrote of Stockholm's charm as follows:

“Its situation, upon islands, on a plain, and on rocky hills surrounded by water and islands in every direction, is exceedingly picturesque. There are few cities in Europe whose general aspect is more attractive than that of this northern capital.”—[Ibid.](#), 191.

Seventh-day Adventist work in Stockholm had been pioneered by Olof Johnson and C. Norlin. Johnson was converted by Matteson in Oslo, and then had returned with Norlin to his native Sweden to share what he had learned.

In the fall of 1884 Elder Matteson himself came to Stockholm. He found the city primarily committed to the Lutheran faith, but also exhibiting a large degree of religious diversity and interest, with Separatists, Baptists, and the Salvation Army all fairly strong. Matteson and Johnson held several series of meetings, and by the time Ellen White reached the city a Seventh-day Adventist church of about 90 members was thriving.

Elevating the Standard of Piety

She spoke on Friday evening, October 16, to a full hall on the True Vine of [John 15](#). Matteson interpreted for her into Swedish, though he was more comfortable translating into Danish.

[105] He had noted a strong antinomian element among the people of Stockholm and, after listening to God's servant preach, he suggested to her that she should speak less of “duty” and more in regard to “the love of Jesus.”

“But I wish to speak as the Spirit of the Lord shall impress me,” she wrote in her diary. “The Lord knows best what this people needs.” And when she preached the next morning in church on [Isaiah 58](#), she “did not round the corners at all” ([Manuscript 26, 1885](#)).

“My work is to elevate the standard of piety and true Christian life, and urge the people to put away their sins and be sanctified through the truth. I tried to impress

them with the necessity of strictly observing the Sabbath according to the commandment.”—*Ibid.*

Even though Matteson sincerely believed this was the wrong approach, the people responded warmly to Ellen White’s message. There was a “precious social meeting” after the sermon, during which many expressed their desire to keep the Sabbath more carefully and confessed that they had gained a new sense of the “offensive character of sin” (*Ibid.*).

Sunday she spoke again to a hall so crowded with people that one woman fainted. All through this stay in Stockholm she continued to suffer from the cold, foggy weather. She was sometimes afraid she would permanently damage her lungs, but she said, “My prayer day by day is, Keep me, my Saviour, and permit not that I shall leave this country before my work is done” (*Ibid.*).

There was yet another sermon on Monday about the second coming of Christ. That night it snowed, and Sister White observed how the four Johanneson children, aged 8 down to 3, were happily getting out their sleds, “full of joy” at the prospects of good snow and a happy time sledding! Did Mrs. White wish that she were young again? The joys of childhood were pleasant to her, and she counseled parents to make happy homes for their children:

“Youth cannot be made as sedate and grave as old age, the child as sober as the sire. While sinful amusements are condemned, as they should be, let parents, teachers, and guardians of youth provide in their stead innocent pleasures which will not taint or corrupt the morals. Do not bind down the young to rigid rules and restraints that will lead them to feel themselves oppressed and to break over and rush into paths of folly and destruction. With a firm, kind, considerate hand hold the lines of government, guiding and controlling their minds and purposes, yet so gently, so wisely, so lovingly, that they will still know that you have their best good in view.”—[The Adventist Home, 498](#).

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Indications of Reformation History

While in Stockholm, Ellen White was again alert for indications of Reformation history. She knew of the valiant exploits of Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, in the early seventeenth century, when he hurled his small but powerful armies against the Roman Catholic emperor Ferdinand and his massive forces.

“In the full tide of success, Gustavus fell; but his people, true to the purpose for which his blood was shed, continued the struggle, until a peace was won which delivered all Northern Europe from the papal yoke.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 193.](#)

Ellen White doubtless visited the tomb where Gustavus’ body lay, for she wrote:

“In the old Riddarholms church at Stockholm the body of Gustavus is entombed. The following inscription is placed near his resting-place: ‘He undertook difficult things; he loved piety; he conquered his enemies, extended his kingdom, exalted the Swedes, and delivered the oppressed; and he triumphed in death.’”—*Ibid.*

In her writing of Reformation history for *The Great Controversy* at Basel in the months that followed, she called to mind these events linked to the places she visited.

[107] In writing *The Great Controversy* she also described religious revivals in Sweden in connection with the worldwide Advent proclamation of the early 1840’s. (See [The Great Controversy, 365-368.](#)) The information she gained on the scene while she was in Sweden provided more historical details. She explained:

“The message was brought to this country from England. In the province of Orebro it began to be proclaimed in the year 1843, by several laymen, called ‘rofare.’ These preached with great earnestness that the

hour of God's Judgment had come, and a wide-spread interest was aroused among the people. In the fall of the same year, two young men were moved to give the warning. The people assembled in great numbers to listen to their preaching, and the meetings were continued both day and night, sometimes in a private house, and sometimes in the woods.... The priest of the State Church made several attempts to stop the preaching, and to lull the people to sleep again; but without avail. Finally the police were ordered to arrest them, and for six weeks they searched for them in the woods, but in vain.

“Through the efforts of the priest they were finally arrested and imprisoned.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 202-204.](#)

These young men left behind them an account of the tortures and indignities that they suffered, including merciless beatings and incarceration in an insane asylum, but they escaped with their lives. They continued preaching after the king issued an order that they should not be molested.

When asked by the governor by what authority they were sent to preach, they replied, “[Joel 2](#) and [Revelation 14:6-8.](#)” They testified simply, “The Spirit of God came upon us with such power that we could not resist it.” For almost a year they continued their proclamation of the Advent message.

“From that time they continued to labor undisturbed. About the middle of the year 1844, however, the power which they had before possessed left them. The truths they had presented appeared as clear and forcible as ever; but the warning having been given, the special manifestation of God's Spirit which had been bestowed to aid its proclamation ceased.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 205.](#)

Phenomena of the Child Preachers

For more than a year between the autumn of 1842 and the winter of 1843 another spiritual miracle took place—the ministry of the child preachers. Mrs. White writes of this:

“In many places where the power of the clergy was exercised to prevent the preaching of the Advent truth, the Lord was pleased to send the message through little children [some only 6-8 years old]. As they were under age, the law of the State could not restrain them, and they were permitted to speak freely and unmolested. Thus the warning of the soon-coming Judgment was given to the people.”—*Ibid.*

After recounting the experience of the child preachers, Ellen White commented:

“Years ago, the work of the first message in these countries was presented before me, and I was shown circumstances similar to those related above. It was God’s will that the tidings of the Saviour’s coming should be given in Sweden, and when the voices of His servants were silenced, He put His Spirit upon the children, that the work might be accomplished.”—*Ibid.*, 206.

So history records these miraculous events in Sweden for later generations to recall, lest the Adventists forget or deny the mighty power of God at work in the Advent proclamation of the 1840’s and the significance of the judgment that began in the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary October 22, 1844.

On Wednesday, after a stay of five days, Ellen White and those who traveled with her left Stockholm. Her hosts, the Johannesons, drove her to the station in a hack, [A coach or carriage let out for hire.] and many Stockholm Adventists were there to say good-by.

[109] “I felt my heart knit with these dear friends in love,” she wrote with affection, “and I was so very sorry that most of them could not understand me, neither could I understand them, except through an interpreter.”—*Manuscript 26, 1885.*

Next Stop: Grythytted

Her destination was Grythytted, Sweden, but to get there they had to change trains three times and stay overnight along the way. The first change came that afternoon. During the two-hour delay, she and Willie took a long walk in the cool, bracing air. Then in the evening they came to Kopparberg. Here they remained until midnight Thursday.

Mrs. White was alert and observant of the charming Swedish people and their colorful way of life. She noted the large copper and iron mines, the red and green dwellings. She even described the quaint sod roofs:

“They prepare them by putting birch bark on the roof and then turf over that, which makes the house warm and free from dampness. The grass grows on this turf, keeping it fresh and alive, and sometimes flowers are planted in the turf. The appearance is rather nice.”—*Ibid.*

The next morning she partook of a genuine Swedish smorgasbord in the hotel dining room. It was all new to her, and she was duly impressed. “There is no stinginess manifested. There is a most liberal supply placed before you and you can eat plentifully of any and every dish for 40 cents each.”—*Ibid.*

Elder Matteson was traveling with Ellen White’s party, and on Thursday she spent some time in conversation with him on theological questions he brought to her mind. God gave much light to Ellen White on doctrinal themes that is reflected in her articles and books. (See her book *The Faith I Live By*.)

At midnight on Thursday, October 22, they boarded the train for Grythytted. This town, about 150 miles northwest of Stockholm, was the site of the oldest Seventh-day Adventist church in Sweden. J. P. Rosquist came to this place in April, 1880, after some interest had been aroused by Adventist literature. By August he was able to organize a church of 47 members. Fierce opposition by the pastor of the State church resulted in the arrest of Rosquist and his imprisonment in Orebro.

When Ellen White reached the town she was met by a Brother C. G. Hedin and his wife. Hedin was a painter who had lived a life of dissipation that had brought him to poverty, but when he heard the Advent message and accepted it his whole life changed. His business fortunes improved with his life and character. He had even served as president of the fledgling Swedish Conference in 1883. Now he was employing several men. He expressed his gratitude to Christ and the message that saved him, by reserving two rooms of his two-story house exclusively for visiting ministers, much as the Israelitish widow did for the itinerant Elisha.

Reaching the Hedin home, Ellen White was escorted to one of these comfortable rooms. The weather was clear and cold, and in the morning a fire was kindled. She described the unique Swedish stove. “The surface looks like porcelain, white as milk and highly polished. These reach to the top of the room and a fire is made in them as in a fireplace.”—[Manuscript 26, 1885](#).

The breakfast was another new experience for the visitor:

“There was a round table with a cloth upon it and a flower pot in the center, and bread, a quarter of uncut cheese, hot milk, and fried cakes, which constituted our breakfast.... We were invited to come to the table, all standing. a blessing was asked and then we stood around the table, took something in our hands, and walked about, talking and eating. Plates were then brought in and we put our food upon the plates....

“After the meal is finished the guests shake hands with the landlord and landlady, thanking them for the food.”—*Ibid.*

[111] There were meetings on Friday night and Sabbath morning of this weekend. Her text for the Sabbath message was [Colossians 1:9-11](#). Well over 100 people attended these services.

Ellen White’s room in the Hedin house was furnished with a convenient writing desk, and as usual she spent part of her time working on manuscripts and letters. She made some additions to her sermons given at the European Council in Basel. Then she forwarded them to Mary K. White with instruction that Mary should copy

them and mail them on to the president of the General Conference, George I. Butler, to be read to the delegates at the upcoming General Conference session at Battle Creek.

When she addressed the church Sunday afternoon, she gave a special message for the believers about the time of trial and persecution that still awaited those who, like Rosquist, would hold fast to the truth of God.

“The most bitter and cruel persecution always comes from those who have the form of religion without the spirit and power of godliness,” she told them. “There is nothing at which religious prejudice will hesitate.” But she reassured the believers by adding, “Angels are watching the development of character, and are weighing moral worth. They are bidden to place a mark upon those who are loyal to God’s commandments; such will have special help from God to endure the test and proving of the time of trouble.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 196](#).

The cold weather (25 degrees below freezing), [In Europe centigrade thermometers are used, not fahrenheit as in the United States. Zero centigrade is 32 degrees fahrenheit, or freezing. One hundred degrees centigrade is 212 degrees fahrenheit, or the boiling point of water.] the strain of travel, and the many meetings were almost too much for Ellen White. She returned to her room Sunday evening unable to sit up or eat, but by Monday, she was better, and able to attend a special dinner at the home of a gracious sister named Ekman. This woman’s husband was a merchant, but not an Adventist. Again there was a full-scale Swedish smorgasbord. [112]

On Tuesday, October 27, Ellen White and her party left by train for Orebro. They arrived in a rainstorm! To make it worse, there was no carriage waiting for them. The weary travelers had to walk more than half a mile in the rain to the home where they were to stay. When they arrived, Mrs. White was experiencing sharp pains in her heart. [Ellen White had to fight her infirmities constantly, weak lungs and a weak heart. But her mind was clear and strong and her spirit indomitable. At one time she explained to elder loughborough that, like the Apostle Paul, she had a “thorn in the flesh”—A weak heart that frequently troubled her ([The General Conference Bulletin, January 29, 1893](#)).] It was an hour of trial for her.

Then a carriage was obtained to whisk her away, heart pains and all, to the meeting hall. When she walked into the place where the people had gathered she was deeply distressed. It was a suite of three rooms in a private house. The largest room would hold a hundred people on its backless benches, the other two about 20 each. But there was a full crowd on both Wednesday and Thursday nights. For this she was grateful, but her mind reverted to the Copenhagen experience where she had likewise been distressed by the lack of a representative meeting hall.

A Significant Dream

Wednesday night a dream was given to her. In this dream she was talking with Elder Matteson. “How far would a light send its rays if it were placed under a bushel?” she asked him.

“No farther than the compass of the bushel,” was the answer.

“How far would it shine if put under a bed?” she asked.

“It would not illuminate the room,” Matteson answered; “it would be too low and too obscure.”

[113] “Then, ... place your light on a candlestick, and it will give light to all that are in the house. Your ideas need to be enlarged and elevated. The people have lost an opportunity to obtain light that God desired them to have.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 200](#).

But in spite of cramped quarters, the people appreciated Ellen White’s visit: “The Lord helped me to speak,” she recounted, “and hearts were reached, I know, by the starting tears, and the look of interest on many faces.”—*Ibid*.

Before leaving Orebro, the party visited an old castle, and on their way to the station on Friday, they stopped at the jail where Rosquist had been imprisoned for preaching the Advent message in Grythytted.

Orebro and the Petri (Paterson) Brothers

While in Orebro, Ellen White was reminded also of Swedish history in Reformation times. She wrote:

“Orebro was the home of two of the leaders in the Swedish Reformation, Olaf and Lawrence Paterson. They were the sons of a blacksmith, but received a liberal education, studying for several years at the University of Wittenberg, under Luther and Melancthon, where they received the doctrines of the reformed faith. The elder of the two brothers is said to have been in the crowd before the door of the church at Wittenberg when Luther nailed his theses to it. Both were eminent for their learning and piety, and for the zeal and courage with which they advocated their faith. They are said to have resembled the great reformers of Germany. Like Melancthon, Lawrence, the younger, was learned, thoughtful, and calm, while Olaf by his powerful eloquence aroused the people. For this reason he was often violently assailed by the mob. The Catholic priests stirred up the prejudices of the ignorant and superstitious people, so that upon several occasions the reformer barely escaped with his life.

“These reformers were, however, favored and powerfully assisted by the king.”—*Ibid.*, 201.

Under the influence of these godly men the monarch received the Reformed faith. (See [The Great Controversy](#), 241-244.) Olaf became preacher in the cathedral in Stockholm; Lawrence, professor of theology in the University at Upsala. The two brothers translated the Bible into Swedish, giving to the people of that country for the first time the Word of God in their native tongue. [114]

While in Orebro, Ellen White visited a little park where a monument is erected to the memory of these two brave men. The only text on the inscription is [Daniel 12:3](#): “And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.”

This text describes not only the Paterson brothers but the Adventist reformers also who sought to bring to a fullness the great Reformation so nobly begun in the sixteenth century.

[115] **Chapter 12—Norwegian Adventists Welcome Mrs. White**

Large public meetings in Christiania

Mrs. White's major assignment in Scandinavia now loomed before her—a little more than two busy weeks in Norway. Sweden had more Adventists at this time, but Norway could claim the only Adventist institution in the Northland, the publishing house in Christiania, [Actually Oslo was the original name for the city founded in the middle of the eleventh century. In 1624 the old city was completely destroyed by fire, and the reigning king of Denmark and Norway, Christian IV, ordered it rebuilt and renamed after him. On January 1, 1925, the Norwegians reassumed the city's original name "for historical and patriotic" reasons.] as well as the largest single congregation—120 members in the headquarters church.

Observant of the features of the country, Mrs. White wrote of its characteristics and its hospitable people:

“It is hard to realize that in Christiania we are as far north as the southern point of Greenland and Alaska. The winters here are not severe. But the days at this season are very short. The sun rises as late as half past nine, and sets about three.

“In the summer, of course, the days are correspondingly long. At midsummer it is so light all night that one can see to read print. Children are often playing in the streets till midnight. At the North Cape the sun does not set from May 15 to July 29.

[116] “Norway has about two million inhabitants; the people are remarkable for their independent, liberty-loving spirit.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 220.

It was noon, Friday, October 30, when the White party arrived at Christiania. Elder and Mrs. A. B. Oyen welcomed them at the station and took them to their suburban home at Akersvejen 2. The Oyens were Americans who had come to Norway in the summer of 1884 to help supervise the publishing work there. It was a great joy for both Ellen and Willie White to be able to talk freely in English again. “Although we were welcomed and treated with every attention by our Danish and Swedish brethren and sisters,” Mrs. White wrote at this juncture, “we felt all the time crippled because we could not converse together... But we are again in America, as it were!”—[Manuscript 27, 1885](#).

After what Willie described as “a good square meal,” the Whites were no doubt eager to hear of the progress on the new Norwegian publishing house. Matteson had purchased the building on Akersgaden six years earlier, but a portion of the building had to be torn down when a new street, ThorOlsensGade, was put through by the city. Matteson seized the opportunity to rebuild the publishing house and meeting hall with help from the General Conference. The construction had begun in May of 1885, but would not be completed until the next March.

Shortly after arriving in Christiania, perhaps that same afternoon, Mrs. White visited the new institution along with Elder Matteson. W. C. White, in recounting the incident, tells how as they entered the partially renovated building, she exclaimed: “This place seems familiar to me. I have seen this before.” Then, as they reached the pressroom, she said, “I have seen these presses before. This is one of the places shown me years ago where publications were being issued in countries outside the United States.”

Her reference here was to the vision of January 3, 1875, of a broadening work. At the time the vision was given, the church had only one publishing house, although they are contemplating a second one in California. But now, in 1885, Mrs. White was seeing again what had been so vividly shown to her by the angel of God.

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Meetings in the Good Templars Hall

While their meeting place was being renovated, the 120 members of the Christiania church were meeting in the Good Templars

Hall. Not only was this the largest Seventh-day Adventist church congregation in Scandinavia at the time, but when they came together to hear Mrs. White preach on practical godliness Sabbath morning, many of their friends and neighbors joined them, swelling the audience to more than 200.

As the week progressed, the Christiania church would discover that in the visions God gave her, Mrs. White had seen more than just printing presses in her visions. She related:

“When the mission fields in this new country were opened before me, I was shown that some things in every branch of the mission needed a different mold; there was need of exalting the standard in this church, before a correct and saving influence could go forth to other places.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 211.

The distribution of membership in Norway at the time bore out the validity of the vision. Although the Christiania church had 120 members, there were only about 80 other Adventists in the whole country. For some reason, the truth had not been proclaimed to any extent beyond the confines of the one city.

[118] On Sabbath afternoon one hundred took part in the ordinance of humility and the Lord’s Supper, and all through Mrs. White’s visit in Norway crowds continued to be surprisingly large. On Sunday morning a workingman’s hall was rented. Every seat was taken, every standing space occupied, and scores of people were turned away for lack of space. An estimated 1,400 heard Mrs. White speak on the love of God. What a contrast this was to the small meetings she had just held in makeshift halls!

The Little Flock at Drammen

About 20 miles southwest of Christiania lay the town of Drammen. On Tuesday, Mrs. White took the train for a visit to the little congregation of Adventists there. The best hall that could be secured was still not very representative, but though the Drammen church had only 20 members, 700 turned out to hear her speak. She used [John 3:16](#) as the text on which she based her remarks.

She describes the hall as a room “used for balls and concerts, about thirty-six by eighty feet in size, with a narrow gallery on each side, and a huge stove in each end. There was no pulpit nor place for one. Six beer tables, brought in from an adjoining room, served to make a platform. a square carpet was thrown over this platform, and another table set on top for light-stand and pulpit, while steps were made with chairs and stools. We doubt if the hall or beer tables were ever put to so good use before.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 207](#).

The next morning Mrs. White made her way back to Christiania. This time, however, the fog that had obscured her view on the trip to Drammen had lifted.

“The scenery is very fine. The country is broken. There are high bluffs and rocky mountains, lakes and islands. In summer this would be a very pleasant place to live in.”—[Manuscript 27, 1885](#).

Busy though she was with her tasks at this center of the work in Norway, she did not forget the needs of the cause back in America. She was writing newsy, encouraging letters to her niece, Addie Walling, who was learning to set type and read proof at the Pacific Press in Oakland. She was corresponding with Dr. John Harvey Kellogg in Battle Creek and already warning him that the sanitarium was getting too big. She was also concerned that the doctor was working too hard.

In Healdsburg, California, where a new college was beginning, a revival was under way. There was danger of extremism on the one side and danger that the Spirit of God would be quenched on the other. She was writing letters of counsel to leaders on both sides to keep things in balance! And often her letters of counsel would arrive just in time to meet some critical situation. [119]

On Thursday, November 5, she continued her writing and made up for the rainy, disagreeable weather with a “very pleasant, profitable visit” with Brother L. Hansen. Hansen, a building contractor who had become an Adventist, was a key figure in the Christiania church at this time. He was in charge of the construction of the new publishing house and meeting hall, and he had also been the

architect for the publishing house in Basel. As he and Mrs. White chatted through their interpreter, she shared with him some of her own pioneer experiences in the work. She also told him of her early health-reform visions and how these visions had led her to alter her eating habits. [The most important of the health-reform visions came to her on June 6, 1863. Cautions and warnings came from the lord, pinpointing the dangers to health present in man's diet, women's dress, and the drugging by the physicians of the time. Attention was called to a simple diet, the natural use of water, and to nature's remedies generally. Later visions provided additional light from heaven. Her five books and numerous periodical articles on the subject made adventists the most health-conscious people in christendom. The christmas day vision of 1865 in Rochester, New York, led church leaders to establish at Battle Creek in 1866 the first of a series of health centers that now belt the globe.]

Problems in the Christiania Church

Two evening meetings were held during that first week, both attended by 500 people, but on Sabbath, November 7, Ellen White's work for the Christiania church began in earnest. Two serious problems plagued this important church: a lax spirit in regard to Sabbath observance, and fanatical criticism over matters of minor importance. In place of the true test of loyalty, the church members had manufactured tests of their own on dress and photographic pictures. Interpreting the second commandment to apply even to photographs, some had burned pictures of their friends.

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“Thus a spirit of criticism, fault-finding, and dissension had come in, which had been a great injury to the church. And the impression was given to unbelievers that Sabbath-keeping Adventists were a set of fanatics and extremists, and that their peculiar faith rendered them unkind, uncourteous, and really unchristian in character.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 211.](#)

“It is true,” Ellen White told them during the course of her visit, “that altogether too much money is expended upon pictures; not a

little means which should flow into the treasury of God is paid to the artist. But the evil that will result to the church from the course of these extremists is far greater than that which they are trying to correct.”—[Ibid.](#), 212.

Mrs. White was not a stranger to the business of handling extremists, She wrote:

“Years ago, we had to meet this same spirit and work. Men arose claiming to have been sent with a message condemning pictures, and urging that every likeness of anything should be destroyed. They went to such lengths as even to condemn clocks which had figures, or ‘pictures,’ upon them.

“Now we read in the Bible of a good conscience; and there are not only good but bad consciences. There is a conscientiousness that will carry everything to extremes, and make Christian duties as burdensome as the Jews made the observance of the Sabbath....

“The second commandment prohibits image worship; but God Himself employed pictures and symbols to represent to His prophets lessons which He would have them give to the people, and which could thus be better understood than if given in any other way. He appealed to the understanding through the sense of sight. Prophetic history was presented to Daniel and John in symbols, and these were to be represented plainly upon tables, that he who reads might understand.”—*Ibid.* See also [Selected Messages 2:319, 320](#).

Sabbathkeeping and the School Authorities

But the question of Sabbath observance was the one she took up on that second Sabbath she spent with the Christiania church. [121] The problem was complicated by the fact that school attendance was required (but not compelled) on Sabbath. Some tried to justify sending their children to school on the basis that Christ said it was lawful to “do good” on the Sabbath day. But such an argument, she pointed out, proved too much, because under that defense even

common labor would be acceptable—after all, wasn't a man doing good when he worked to support his family?

Instead, she urged that some arrangement be worked out with the school authorities. "If this fails, then their duty is plain, to obey God's requirements at whatever cost."—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 216](#). She was not unaware that some Adventists in Central Europe had been fined and imprisoned for not sending their children to school on Sabbath. In one place, she revealed, when the authorities came to take the children to school the youngsters took their Bibles with them instead of the textbooks they usually carried, and spent the day studying God's Word.

Recounting in her diary that night what she had told the people, she wrote:

"There is in the Sabbath of the fourth commandment a test. It is God's test. It is no man-made test. This is to be the separating line to distinguish the loyal and the true,—him that serveth God from him that serveth Him not....

"He has made precious promises to those who keep His Sabbath from polluting it. His infinite wisdom and power and love are engaged in our behalf. The heavenly host are registering our names as among the loyal and the true. It is safe always to be on the Lord's side."—[Manuscript 27, 1885](#).

[122] Mrs. White knew she was speaking very plainly about a very serious problem, and at the close of her sermon, she "invited those to come forward who felt they were sinners, not in harmony with God, and who needed His converting power." About fifty responded. Mrs. White came down in front of the pulpit and knelt there with the people. She prayed while Elder Matteson interpreted. When opportunity was given for testimonies, "quite a number confessed that they had about given up the truth and separated from God, and now wished to repent and come back with God's people." Although the leaders attempted to close the meeting, it was impossible. Two and three people were on their feet at a time, waiting to give their

testimony. Finally, the meeting drew to an end. It had lasted three hours. But Sister White wrote in her diary: “The work must go deeper yet.”—*Ibid.*

The Largest Audience in the Military Gymnasium

On Sunday she addressed the largest crowd she was to encounter in any of her public efforts in Europe. The president of the local temperance society had invited her to make a temperance address at the soldiers’ military gymnasium, the largest hall in the city. The hall was packed with 1,600 people for the occasion. Obviously the interest in temperance reform was high.

When she arrived, Mrs. White found an American flag placed as a canopy above the pulpit, “an attention,” she remarked, “which I highly appreciated.”

In the audience to hear her were many prominent citizens, including the Bishop of the State Church and a number of other clergymen.

Her approach to the subject was a surprise to her hearers, who had expected a rousing campaign address, full of garish stories and startling statistics. Instead, Mrs. White chose to present temperance from a religious point of view. “When they saw that the subject was to be argued from a Bible standpoint, they were at first astonished, then interested, and finally deeply moved.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 211](#).

Her analysis of the audience reaction at various stages of her address is indicative of how closely she observed them, even as she was speaking. Just a few weeks before, as she was addressing the European Council in Basel, she had recommended this approach to all the ministers:

“When Christ was teaching on earth, He watched the countenances of His hearers, and the kindling eye, the animated expression, told Him in a moment when one assented to the truth. Even so should the teachers of the people now study the countenances of their hearers.”—[Ibid., 147](#).

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As she found her words falling on attentive ears, Mrs. White proceeded to show the importance to temperate habits by citing warnings and examples from Bible history.

“Nadab and Abihu were men in holy office; but by the use of wine their minds became so beclouded that they could not distinguish between sacred and common things. By the offering of ‘strange fire,’ they disregarded God’s commands, and they were slain by His judgments.”—[Ibid.](#), 208.

After drawing lesson after lesson from one Bible character after another, she concluded with a challenge:

“There is need now of men like Daniel,—men who have the self-denial and the courage to be radical temperance reformers. Let every Christian see that his example and influence are on the side of reform. Let ministers of the gospel be faithful in sounding the warnings to the people. And let all remember that our happiness in two worlds depends upon the right improvement of one.”—[Ibid.](#), 211.

At the close of her lecture Dr. Nisson, the president of the temperance society, stepped forward and addressed the audience. He called attention to the fact that the prosperity of the American temperance movement was based on its support by religious zeal and appeals to Bible truth. Then, as the crowd was dismissed, other local temperance leaders pressed forward to greet the gifted lecturer. Dr. Nisson introduced her to each one. Some of them urged Mrs. White to come and address them again, but she politely declined. She felt her help was needed more by the Christiania church.

[124] The weather remained foggy and damp, and to be more comfortable, Ellen White arranged to have a Norwegian shoemaker measure her foot and make her a new pair of shoes. She also purchased a cloak to protect her from colds.

“I am very grateful that I can have so comfortable a garment,” she wrote ([Manuscript 27, 1885](#)).

Melting the Ice of Indifference

But Mrs. White had far greater concerns than just protecting herself from colds. She was laboring hard to melt the ice of indifference that had chilled the Christiania church, both workers and laity. Her thoughts were expressed in writing:

“God calls upon the workers in this mission to reach a higher, holier standard. Christiania is an important point in our mission fields; it is the great center of the work for the Scandinavian people. From this place the publications are sent out, and the laborers go forth to proclaim the commandments of God, and it is of the greatest importance that a right influence be exerted by this church, both by precept and example. The standard must not be placed so low that those who accept the truth shall transgress God’s commandments while professing to obey them.... If this people will conform their lives to the Bible standard, they will be indeed a light in the world, a city set upon a hill.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 218, 219.](#)

Every evening during her second full week in the city she spoke earnestly to the people, and testimony meetings followed. Some held back “as if in doubt and questioning,” her diary indicates, but others testified that they “were unhappy and troubled and wished to return to the truth” ([Manuscript 27, 1885](#)).

In the early mornings the servant of the Lord would awaken at three, too burdened to sleep longer. Summarizing the experience later, she wrote:

“During our meetings, the dear Saviour came very near to us again and again. a good work was begun. We called them forward for prayers several times, and though this was a new experience to them, there was a quick and hearty response. Earnest, heartfelt confessions were made. Several had become discouraged and backslidden because of the

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accusing spirit manifested, and the lack of love for God and for one another. These humbly confessed their own wrong in allowing their faith in God and the truth to become weakened. Some had yielded the Sabbath through fear that they could not support their families. Others acknowledged that they had indulged a critical, fault-finding spirit. Many said that they had never realized as now the importance of the truth and the influence that it must have upon their life and character. Not a few testified with gratitude that they had received God's blessing as never before."—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 218.](#)

Meanwhile, W. C. White, Matteson, and Oyen were spending their days laying plans for the publishing house. On Tuesday, November 10, a letter came from the Review and Herald Publishing Company in Battle Creek refusing some requests that had been made in behalf of the Christiania Publishing House. For three weeks W. C. White had been convinced that he should go to the General Conference session that was about to begin in Battle Creek. He was now familiar, to a degree, with the problems of Europe and could speak out in committee meetings and on the conference floor.

At first, as he presented this proposal, Mrs. White opposed his going, but she wrote the next day that "careful, calm consideration of the subject" had changed her mind.

"I thought he could serve the cause of God and especially His work in these mission fields better by going to America, so that from his own lips the Conference could hear of the necessities of the case for laborers and for money, rather than to read the same arguments in letter form. I now think it is right that W. C. White should go, although I shall miss him very much and his counsel and advice seem to be almost a necessity at this time here."—[Manuscript 27, 1885.](#)

So it was on Friday, November 13, that W. C. White left Christiania. He knew there was no way to reach Battle Creek by the

opening session of the conference, [The conference extended from November 18 to December 6.] five days hence. But even though he knew he would arrive a week late, the needs of the cause in Europe compelled him to make the attempt. [126]

Sabbath was another important day in Christiania, the last she would have with the church. “The hall was filled,” she wrote, “and we hoped that deep impressions were made.”—*Ibid.* At quarter-to-six Monday morning the White party arrived at the station to begin the return journey to Basel. The Hansens, E. G. Olsen and his wife, the Oyens, and several others were there to see them off.

“Shall we meet again in this life,” Ellen White wondered as the train pulled slowly away, “or shall we meet no more until the judgment? It is a solemn thing to die, and a far more solemn thing to live.”—*Ibid.*

Chapter 13—Scandinavia to Switzerland

Across Germany's countryside

As Ellen White's party left Norway they witnessed one of nature's grandest spectacles—a northern sunset. Mrs. White loved the beauty of the natural world. To her, nature was God's second book. She was awed by the grandeur:

“We were favored with a sight of the most glorious sunset it was ever my privilege to behold. Language is inadequate to picture its beauty. The last beams of the setting sun, silver and gold, purple, amber, and crimson, shed their glories athwart the sky, growing brighter and brighter, rising higher and higher in the heavens, until it seemed that the gates of the city of God had been left ajar, and gleams of the inner glory were flashing through. For two hours the wondrous splendor continued to light up the cold northern sky,—a picture painted by the great Master-Artist upon the shifting canvas of the heavens. Like the smile of God it seemed, above all earthly homes, above the rock-bound plains, the rugged mountains, the lonely forests, through which our journey lay.

“Angels of mercy seemed whispering, ‘Look up. This glory is but a gleam of the light which flows from the throne of God. Live not for earth alone. Look up, and behold by faith the mansions of the heavenly home.’ This scene was to me as the bow of promise to Noah, enabling me to grasp the assurance of God's unfailing care, and to look forward to the haven of rest awaiting the faithful worker. Ever since that time I have felt that God granted us this token of His love for our encouragement. Never while memory lingers can I forget that vision of beauty, and the comfort and peace it

brought.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 220, 221.](#)

But she and Miss McEnterfer were not long to enjoy such tranquil scenes as the glorious sunset in Scandinavia. Boarding a small passenger boat at Goteborg, Sweden, they began a six-hour crossing of the channel to Denmark.

A Dangerous Crossing

At first the weather was pleasant, the sea calm. Mrs. White enjoyed two quiet and restful hours in the ladies' lounge relaxing.

“But soon the captain, passing through the cabin, advised us to go below and lie down at once, for we were coming into rough water. We complied, though rather unwillingly. In a short time the boat began to rock violently; we could hardly keep our position upon the sofas.... The waters seemed lashed into fury by the merciless winds. The boat was wrenching and creaking as if going to pieces.... As I lay helpless and exhausted, with closed eyes and ashen face, Sister McEnterfer feared that I was dead. She was herself unable to leave her sofa, but from time to time she called my name to assure herself that I was still living.

“Death seemed very near; but I felt that I could cling, with the firm grasp of faith, to the hand of Jesus. He who holds the waters in the hollow of His hand could keep us in the tempest.... The lesson of trust I learned during those few hours was very precious. I have found that every trial of life is given to teach me a new lesson of my own dependence, and of trust in my heavenly Father. We may believe that God is with us in every place, and in every trying hour we may hold fast that hand which has all power.

“At 3 p.m. we arrived in Frederickshaven, and were glad to step off the boat, and to feel solid ground again beneath our feet.”—[Ibid., 221.](#)

[129] At Frederickshaven they exchanged the violent tossing and pitching of the channel boat for “the gentle, gliding motion of the train.” Settled in their compartment, they were soon fast asleep.

At the German Border

The next incident in a series of travel experiences aroused Mrs. White’s inborn sense of humor and must have made her smile whenever she thought about it in later years:

“We were sleeping soundly when at three in the morning the cars stopped, and the guard informed us that we had reached the borders of Germany, and must all pass through the custom-house. It was bitterly cold, and Bro. Kellogg went to the officers and asked permission for the ladies to remain in the car, stating that one of them was ill, and must not be disturbed. But no, nothing would avail; sick or well, we must all appear for inspection. Two officials came to the car door, and the other ladies of the party at once started to leave the car, but they had only stepped on the platform when the officers said. ‘That is enough; you can go back.’

“But they were not fully satisfied about the reputed sick woman. As I lay covered with shawls and blankets, they evidently suspected that I might be a bundle of dry goods which our party were trying to smuggle into Germany. As the officers again came to the door, flashing the bright light of their lanterns into the compartment, I quickly sat up and said, ‘Here I am, gentlemen, please look, and see that I am a living woman.’ I do not know whether they understood my words, but they burst into a hearty laugh, said in German, ‘All right,’ and left us to compose ourselves to sleep again if we could after this untimely interruption.”—[Ibid., 222](#).

The journey across Germany’s countryside and through her historical cities intensified Ellen White’s interest in European Reformation history. As she traveled south to Switzerland through the

Rhineland she was quick to observe important historical places such as Cologne and Worms. She was also alert to “learn something of the habits and customs of the people,” which intrigued her.

Impressions at Cologne

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Finally Mrs. White’s train brought her to Cologne, arriving at 8:00 P.M. Her hotel was only a short distance from the cathedral.

“We had a good view of it by moonlight. This is said to be [Mrs. White is reporting here what was stated to her in Cologne. Information about cathedrals, railroad tunnels. Castles, et cetera, she derived from reading travel literature or listening to tour guides.] the most magnificent Gothic edifice in the world. It is built ... in the form of a cross, is 444 feet long, and has two towers each 512 feet high, the loftiest in Europe,—*Ibid.*”

But the city itself held far greater interest for the Lord’s servant than the grand cathedral. She wrote:

“Hither came Tyndale from Hamburg, to complete the printing of the New Testament, hoping to find here better opportunities for sending the work, when finished, to England. He had not, however, proceeded far in his labors, when his secret was betrayed, and he escaped from the city only in time to save his printed sheets from falling into the hands of the papists. a little boat conveyed him and his precious wares up the Rhine—along the very route which we are to take—to Worms. There he completed his great work, and England for the first time received the Bible printed in the language of the people.”—*Ibid.*, 222, 223. See also [The Great Controversy, 245-248](#).

Tyndale had received the gospel from Erasmus’ Greek New Testament. He then began to preach his convictions.

To the papist claim that the church had given the Bible, and the church alone could explain it, Tyndale responded:

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“Do you know who taught the eagles to find their prey? Well, that same God teaches His hungry children to find their Father in His word. Far from having given us the Scriptures, it is you who have hidden them from us; it is you who burn those who teach them, and if you could, you would burn the Scriptures themselves.”—D’Aubigne, *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, b. 18, ch. 4.

The trip by train along the banks of the picturesque Rhine River took the party through the towns of Bingen and Meyence, as well as the cities of Cologne and Worms, and left the wide-eyed visitors all aglow with admiration.

“About noon we passed through Worms, the quaint old town which Luther has inseparably linked with the history of the Reformation, [Luther’s bold defense of the gospel at worms before the emperor charles V and the diet was one of the most memorable victories of the reformation. “The wisdom of popes, kings, and prelates had been brought to naught by the power of truth. The papacy had sustained a defeat which would be felt among all nations and in all ages.”—*Ibid.*, 162.] and from which went forth Tyndale’s Bible, the most powerful agent in the Reformation of England.”—*Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists*, 225. See also *The Great Controversy*, 145-170.

Finally, on November 19, after four days along the return route, Mrs. White and her traveling companions reached Basel. She had been gone six weeks and traveled more than 2,500 miles.

Two Meaningful Observations

As Ellen White reviewed her first major thrust into the continental fields of the European missions, she made two meaningful observations.

First, though she spoke in English and through many translators, her messages were welcomed and received with enthusiasm by her many audiences.

“In all the meetings in Scandinavia as in Switzerland, my sermons were spoken in English, and translated sentence by sentence into the language of the people. Although this was hard work for the speaker, yet the interest of the hearers was sufficient encouragement, it being equal to that of any congregations we have seen in America. On some occasions some who could not find seats would stand for one hour without any sign of weariness.”—*Ibid.*

If any real prejudice existed against the woman messenger and prophet from America, it did not appear among those who actually [132] heard her speak. They accepted her as an honest woman who believed that she was led by the Lord in her unique ministry. And the Adventists shared this view.

Second, not only were her messages received by Seventh-day Adventists as instruction from the Lord but gratitude and appreciation were often expressed for her efforts:

“Wherever we went, our people warmly expressed their gratitude for the help which had been sent them and the interest manifested in their behalf by the brethren in America. In the social meetings nearly all spoke with deep feeling of their sorrow that we could not understand each other’s speech. They knew that this barrier was the result of sin, and they looked forward with earnest expectation to the time when there would be nothing to prevent our communion with one another.”—*Ibid.*

Chapter 14—The First Visit to Italy

Attack by “friend” and foe

Arriving back in Basel, Switzerland, on Thursday evening, November 20, Ellen White found Mary K. White healthy, but granddaughter Ella, [Ella in young womanhood married Dores Robinson, son of Asa T. and Loretta Farnsworth Robinson. Dores was a pastor-teacher-editor-evangelist. But his real talent was editorial research and writing. For years he served in the White Estate offices assisting Ellen White until she died in 1915. He served in editorial work and teaching in the United States and Africa, then in the White Estate offices at Elmshaven and Washington, D.C. In all of his service at home and overseas the ebullient Ella was a faithful participant. At the time this book is being written both she and her younger sister, Mabel, are living.] now almost four, was ill, but not seriously. So it was good to be “home” again.

Many times in the months ahead she would return to her home base in Basel, then venture forth as God’s messenger to deliver His word to the people. This was the pattern of her labors in Europe.

[134] W.C. White, who arrived in New York a week after his mother’s return to Basel, wrote instructions to Mary his wife: “I suppose Mother will be let down after her long, hard journey. You must help her rest. Make dresses, ride out, walk around, kill time, and give nature a chance to strengthen her for another campaign.”—W. C. White, November 28, 1885. But Willie’s hope that his mother might get some rest before another “campaign” had been thwarted long before he even wrote about it. On her first full day in Basel, B. L. Whitney told her she was needed in Italy immediately. A. C. Bourdeau, who went there just after the European Council, badly needed encouragement and help.

The very next evening Whitney returned for another long interview, this time about the spiritual health of the workers in the office, especially the younger ones. Sister White’s work was cut out for

her before she had any chance to think of making dresses, riding, walking, or resting.

Bernard Kalaria, the “Converted” Jew

She spoke Sabbath morning, and in the social meeting that followed listened to Bernard Kalaria, a Jew converted to Christianity who was attending a theological school in Basel. Kalaria had become interested in Adventist beliefs and was trying to get work at the publishing house as a German translator.

Willie White had even written a letter to the General Conference president asking whether there might be a place in one of the church’s American colleges where the twenty-four-year-old scholar could teach Hebrew.

But Ellen White was not anxious to see him hired at Basel. Though he “spoke well,” he had not yet taken his stand for the truth. She was afraid that to speak to him encouragingly about employment would cloud the issue. “The question is, What does God say? What does He require?” she wrote. She did not want him to make his decision on the basis of whether he could get employment. He was not to be “bribed or bought” ([Manuscript 28, 1885](#), p. 2).

As it turned out, the young man was hired for a while but did not remain long. “Kalaria,” wrote W. C. White a little later, “has left us after doing what harm he could.” Circumstances proved it was better to test him early rather than late.

Ellen White through the years was given instruction concerning labor for the Jewish people: “We are plainly taught that we should not despise the Jews: for among them the Lord has mighty men who will proclaim the truth with power.”—[Manuscript 87, 1907](#). And before the General Conference in session on May 27, 1905, she made the prediction: “The time is coming when there will be as many converted in a day as there were on the day of Pentecost, after the disciples had received the Holy Spirit. The Jews are to be a power to labor for the Jews; and we are to see the salvation of God.”—[The Review and Herald, June 29, 1905](#), p. 8.

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Labors in Northern Italy

During the next few weeks Ellen White was to journey by rail over the magnificent Alps and labor in the Waldensian regions about Turin. This large city, like Milan, is situated in the “boot top” of the Italian peninsula. Her appointments in Italy were all concentrated here. She never had occasion to travel south to Florence, Rome, or Naples. All her speaking appointments were in the subalpine regions of Torre Pellice.

At Torre Pellice she learned of the problems in which A. C. and D. T. Bourdeau were involved. Daniel was the first of the Bourdeau brothers to work in Italy. His brother, A. C., followed him. Now A. C. Bourdeau was in need of help in northern Italy, and his brother, Daniel, who was launching an evangelistic program in Geneva, was also sadly in need of counsel and direction.

[136] He was proposing to get out a handbill advertising himself as an American missionary and citing flattering remarks made about him in the past year in American newspapers. Ellen White tried to dissuade him. She told him that two extremes needed to be avoided. On the one hand, Americans should not be ashamed of their nationality and try to mimic the people among whom they lived, but on the other hand, she said, “I have been shown that we need to move with the greatest wisdom, that we shall not in anything create prejudice by giving the impression that Americans feel themselves superior to people of other nations.”—[Letter 24, 1885](#). She also pointed out the folly of Bourdeau’s representing himself as a “missionary”. This, she said, would create jealousy and suspicion and be regarded as “the worst kind of insult” ([Manuscript 28, 1885](#)).

Reduce the length of your sermons, she further counseled, for these wear out everybody, audience and preacher included.

[137] The Bourdeau brothers were talented evangelists, zealous of good works, but they needed balance and wisdom, which the Lord provided through the Spirit of Prophecy. But more about this later.

By Train Across the Alps

Mrs. White celebrated her fifty-eighth birthday, Thursday, November 26, 1885, by beginning the interesting journey into Italy. With her she took Mary K. White, leaving Sara McEnterfer behind to care for Ella. Martha Bourdeau accompanied them.

The trip by rail through the famous St. Gotthard pass and “along the borders of the beautiful Lake Maggiore” had brought the party to Turin in northwest Italy. The train ride through the Alps fascinated Mrs. White, and she wrote at length about the uniqueness of the mountains. “The Alps of Europe are its glory. The treasures of the hills send their blessings to millions. We see numerous cataracts rushing from the tops of the mountains into the valleys beneath.”—[Manuscript 29, 1885](#).

At Turin the party spent a pleasant night in a hotel, and Friday morning at an early hour they were on their way again to the quaint little town of Torre Pellice. Mrs. White described the journey:

“About thirty miles west of Turin we left the vast plains which ‘stretch like a garden for two hundred miles along the foot of the Alps,’ and passing through a narrow opening in a low range of mountains, entered the Piedmont valleys. Only one of these valleys...is traversed by the railroad. Soon after entering this valley, several others spread out like a fan, some at our right and some at our left. But it is in this central and largest valley at the terminus of the railroad, that Torre Pellice is situated.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 230, 231](#).

And she commented, Thither our course is directed that, if possible, we may encourage the little company there who are striving under great difficulties to obey God.—*Ibid*.

When the travelers reached Torre Pellice, A. C. Bourdeau was there to meet them and was particularly happy to see his wife, Martha, again.

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Early Labors of Czechowski

The little city of Torre Pellice was the first place M. B. Czechowski entered when he arrived in Europe in 1864 as an unofficial missionary. There he led Jean David Geymet and Catherine Revel to a knowledge of the third angel's message. They were the first SDA converts in Europe.

Brother Geymet describes his experience with the zealous Czechowski in the *Revue Adventiste* of May 1, 1922:

“In 1863 on leaving my work one evening in a silk factory in Torre Pellice, in the Piedmont Valley in Italy, I saw a small group of people on the main road in front of a store.... In the middle of the group was a man with a long beard and a little stick explaining the prophecy of [Daniel 2](#) with the help of a prophetic chart. It was Mr. M. B. Czechowski.”

“As far as I was concerned I didn't belong to any church, and I had had no religious instruction. I was won to this truth as soon as I heard it, and thus became the first Seventh-day Adventist (with Sister C. Revel) as far as date is concerned.”—[The Review and Herald, December 27, 1973](#), p. 20.

Geymet and Czechowski and later heralds of the Advent in those Waldensian valleys, like the Bourdeau brothers, must have hoped that they could lead some of these Bible-loving people to the full light of the “present truth.” Doubtless they succeeded to some extent, but the harvest from those valleys was not yet ripe. Mrs. White wrote prophetically:

“There will be many, even in these valleys, where the work seems to start with such difficulty, who will recognize the voice of God speaking to them through His word, and, coming out from under the influence of the clergy, will take their stand for God and the truth.

“This field is not an easy one in which to labor, nor is it one which will show immediate results; but there is an honest people here who will obey in time.

The persecutions which their fathers endured have made them apathetic and close-mouthed, and they look upon strangers and strange doctrines with suspicion. “But the miracle of God’s mercy, working with man’s human effort, will yet cause the truth to triumph upon the very soil where so many have died to defend it. Knowledge will be increased, faith and courage will revive, and the truth will shine as the light of the morning all through these valleys. The old battle field will yet be the scene of victories now unseen, and the adoption of Bible truth will vindicate the past fidelity of their fathers.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 249.

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Geymet was like Zacchaeus, small of stature but honest in heart, a man with unbounded energy, and destined to be a leader in the publishing ministry of the church. E. Naenny, prominent in the publishing work in the Euro-Africa Division, recently wrote about this pioneer and Czechowski, his mentor:

“Brother Geymet devoted himself to the spreading of the gospel. He accompanied Brother Czechowski in Switzerland in 1866, where he helped him in his evangelistic labors, in publicity, and in building, earning his livelihood in between times.

“In 1867 Czechowski built a house in St. Blaise, Switzerland, and set up a print shop and founded the journal *The Everlasting Gospel* with J. D. Geymet and Ludomir Czechowski as the printers, and Anna de Prato as the editor. Unfortunately, lack of funds forced the journal to be discontinued after only two years. During his stay in Tramelan, Switzerland, he translated *Daniel and the Revelation* by Uriah Smith into French (it was never published). After 1870 he spent a number of years in the Piedmont, where he married Theresa Trombotto.

“In 1877 J. N. Andrews visited the Waldensian valleys ‘and made such an impression on my wife that she cried when she heard of his death,’ Geymet wrote.

“During the winter of 1884-1885 D. T. Bourdeau, an American minister, and Albert Vuilleumier, a Swiss, gave public lectures. Among those who were baptized was the wife of J. D. Geymet. Shortly afterward a church ... was established in Torre Pellice.

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“In 1885 Ellen G. White ... visited the Waldensian Valley, a visit that had a decisive influence upon Brother Geymet and his choice of a future vocation. He became a book evangelist [After he was 75 years of age he would walk ten or twelve miles a day to place his precious books in the homes of interested readers. When he was 80 years old he wrote a message in the *Revue Adventiste*, including this challenging paragraph which has meaning today: “I cannot conceive of how a true adventist can remain inactive and silent about the second coming of Jesus Christ, and not impart this happy hope to the hearts of his fellow men.” (See [The Review and Herald, December 27, 1973.](#))] about 1886.”—*Ibid.*, [December 27, 1973.](#)

Opposition in Torre Pellice

Among D. T. Bourdeau’s converts in Torre Pellice, during the winter of 1884-1885, were Mary, Mrs. Revel’s daughter, and Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Malan, who edited a secular newspaper *l’Avvisatore Alpino*.

In late February, A. C. Bourdeau came to Torre Pellice to relieve his brother, Daniel, and Ademar Vuilleumier, his assistant. He succeeded in formally organizing a church of eighteen members in May.

Ellen White did not have to wait long to observe the nature of A. C. Bourdeau’s trouble. J. P. Malan, Daniel Bourdeau’s most promising convert, had apostatized, and was doing all he could to obstruct the progress of the little church. Like seed planted on shallow ground, he had no root in himself and did not long endure. It seems that Malan had borrowed heavily to improve his printing establishment in Torre Pellice, but when he had become an Adventist early in 1885 his creditors had demanded their money in full. Malan

borrowed from the bank to pay them off, but by the time of the European Council in September (which he attended), the note was due.

Malan owned and operated the only press in Torre Pellice. He had a good command of French and Italian. His wife could speak English, French, and German, also Dutch. It looked as though he would become the strong local leader of the Adventists. So, W. C. White and B. L. Whitney helped scrape together \$1,600 to help Malan pay his note to the bank.

During the European Council, White went so far as to compliment Malan in a letter to Elder Butler noting that he was “sharp as a steel trap.” Now, two months later the steel trap had sprung! [141]

Interference and Hostilities

When Bourdeau asked Malan on Friday whether he would print some handbills to announce Ellen White’s talk in Torre Pellice for the next afternoon, he flatly refused. They went ahead anyway, but because of the lack of announcements, only twenty-five people were present and only three or four of these were non-Adventists. She spoke for some time on the importance of obeying God and walking in the light, regardless of the opinions or course of the world.

As she was about to finish her talk, Malan, who had been in the audience taking notes, leaped to his feet. He demanded to know whether keeping the Sabbath was necessary to salvation, and wanted a “yes” or “no” answer.

“She tried five or six times to answer it,” wrote Mary K. White to Willie the next evening, “but he would spring to his feet every time and in a fury of passion demand an answer, ‘yes or no.’”—M. K. White letter, November 29, 1885.

Ellen White attempted to explain that such an important question called for more than a yes-or-no answer, and in between Malan’s outbursts tried to tell him that if a person had light on the Sabbath he could not be saved while rejecting it.

Malan took out a paper he had written, and began to read something to the effect that one could observe the Sabbath without abstaining entirely from labor. A. C. Bourdeau tried desperately to translate so Sister White could understand, but Malan rushed ahead.

Finally she told Malan courteously but firmly she would reply in writing, and the Sabbath afternoon meeting closed. Then Malan's distraught wife, who was still faithful to the Advent message, came forward and begged Sister White to excuse her husband. It was a tearful time for her.

[142]

The Difficulties Mount

Sunday morning dawned clear and beautiful. Ellen White was impressed by the scene she saw when she walked out into the market place. There women with inflamed eyes and coarse, leathery skin were crying out, trying to sell their wares. In the wintertime many of these mountain people lived in stables with their cows and goats, in order to keep warm. The buildings generally had only one small window.

On Sunday afternoon Ellen White stood up to talk to a small group once more. While she was speaking Malan came in again. This time he sat there looking very agitated. Whenever something was said with which he agreed, he would nod his approval. If he didn't agree, he would shake his head and begin to murmur to those around him. Finally he popped up again and asked Bourdeau, who was interpreting, "Do you keep all the Commandments any better than the Pharisees? Answer me!" Bourdeau ignored him, and Malan presently grabbed his hat and hurried angrily from the room.

"This was not a very encouraging beginning," Ellen White wrote in her diary that night, "but we will remain and see if the Lord has anything further for me to do."—[Manuscript 29, 1885](#).

Happily she could write the next day, "We have a most glorious morning. The sun shines so warm and mild, the doors are open and it seems like spring."—*Ibid.* All through her stay in Italy the air was soft and clear, and she took full advantage of the situation to get outdoors as much as she could.

That afternoon Bourdeau hired a carriage and took Ellen White and B. L. Whitney for a ride. They went up past St. Johns, a Protestant village, and on through a quaint Catholic town. They saw men and some boys, even small ones, at work in a granite quarry.

The little party then returned to Bourdeau's house, with a better understanding of the life-style of these humble folk of the mountains.

Part of Ellen White's plan in coming to Italy was that she should get some of the rest and quiet she had missed in Basel. So on Thursday there was another five-mile carriage ride. On Friday it was time to plunge back into the evangelistic meetings again. [143]

The workers had concluded after Malan's two intrusions during the meetings on the first weekend that they would have to hire another hall. Malan owned the hall they had been meeting in, so felt free to break in whenever he pleased.

Intrusions of Miles Grant

By going to a town a few miles away they had managed to get handbills printed announcing meetings on Friday and Sunday evenings, and Sabbath and Sunday afternoons. But as if the opposition from Malan was not enough, handbills appeared the next morning proclaiming the arrival of Miles Grant, an American and an old foe of Seventh-day Adventists. He announced he would hold meetings in the hall just above the new one Bourdeau had rented. Grant's meetings were slated for the same days, but different hours. His handbills were the same size and style as those Bourdeau had posted.

Grant was an Advent Christian minister and evangelist, editor of the *World's Crisis*, during the years 1856-1876. At one point Seventh-day Adventists had sponsored some meetings of his in California since he taught conditional immortality and had similar prophetic views, but the arrangement did not work out, and Grant became an active opposer of Seventh-day Adventists and particularly Ellen White.

On Friday night she spoke at seven o'clock on [Matthew 11:28-30](#), "Come unto me all ye that labour." Half an hour later Grant opened his meeting in the room above, speaking on sanctification, but making little mention of Mrs. White. He did tell his audience that she was among them in the crowd, but later corrected himself. Instead, Mary K. White and A. C. Bourdeau attended, Mary K. taking down Grant's sermon in shorthand. At Grant's side to do the translating was a Mr. O. Corcorda whom Mary described as a "smooth voiced, age-to-come no-Sabbath man." [144]

The next evening Grant launched into a tirade of criticism, speaking with the single purpose of “exposing and discrediting the Lord’s messenger,” “He spoke more freely,” Ellen White said, “bringing forth the precious dish of slander that he loves so well. He served up to the people in his very best style the rare tidbits that he has been gathering and manufacturing during the last thirty years, as condemning evidence that the vision of Mrs. White are not of God.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 236. [Attacks upon Mrs. White and her visions have come from outside the church and from within. As far back as the 1840’s Ellen White wrote: “I saw the state of some who stood on present truth, but disregarded the visions—the way God had chosen to teach in some cases, those who erred from Bible truth. I saw that in striking against the visions they did not strike against the worm—the feeble instrument that God spake through—but against the holy ghost. I saw it was a small thing to speak against the instrument, but it was dangerous to slight the words of God. I saw if they were in error and God chose to show them their errors through visions, and they disregarded the teachings of God through visions, they would be left to take their own way, and run in the way of error, and think they were right until they would find it out too late.”—[Selected Messages 1:40](#).]

Ellen White, however, steadfastly refrained from mentioning Grant or from replying to any of his charges. “It has ever been against my principle to enter into controversy with any one, or to spend my time in vindicating myself.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists](#), 237. She confessed in her diary, though, that at times she felt “sorely tempted” to depart from this custom and attempt to vindicate her cause ([Manuscript 29, 1885](#), p. 9).

Naturally the report went out that two Adventists had come into the valley to fight each other, and although she pointed out that this was not true since she did not fight against Grant, the effect on the work was not good.

On Sunday she had a long visit with Mrs. Malan, who was in “deep trial” because of her husband’s opposition. She was kind and understanding of her distress. After speaking again Sunday night,

Mrs. White had a good rest and woke refreshed ([Manuscript 29, 1885](#), p. 8).

Tuesday, she and Mary, along with the Bourdeaus and J. D. Geymet, set off on a journey three miles up the mountain to Catherine Revel's home. They had only a little donkey to pull the carriage, and the animal could hardly make the grade. Bourdeau's son, Arthur, spent most of his time out of the carriage literally pulling the donkey up the mountain. [145]

The next day Martha Bourdeau took her stepdaughter, Sarah (A. C.'s daughter), and left for Basel. Edith Andrews' condition had continued to deteriorate, and Martha wanted to be with her child during her last days. There were more rides into the mountains for Ellen White that week, and more trouble when the weekend came. Now Corcorda and Grant had managed to influence the man from whom Bourdeau had rented the new hall to turn the Adventists out of that one, too! He finally decided to hold the meetings in his own house until he could purchase a hall. Here the messenger of the Lord spoke to the believers for the balance of her visit.

Back to Basel

On Tuesday, December 15, Ellen White rose at 3:30 A.M. to catch the train for Turin. To save money they traveled third class. Though the car was cold, they reached Turin without too much discomfort.

The train passed through some magnificent Alpine scenery that delighted Mrs. White, leading her to exclaim that she had never seen anything so spectacular, not even in the Rocky Mountains of her own country.

Arriving in Geneva in the evening, they were met by Daniel T. Bourdeau, Marion, his wife, and his 10-year-old son, Augustin. They walked a short distance to Bourdeau's rented house at Chautepoulet 12.

The next morning Bourdeau hired a carriage and took Ellen White and Mary for a two-hour tour of the city. "We walked some distance upon a very high eminence," she wrote in her diary, "and looked down where the two waters meet—the Rhone and the Geneva [Arve]. One is dark blue, the other a greenish color, and although [146]

the streams meet they do not lose their distinct colors and blend in one for a long distance.”—[Manuscript 30, 1885](#).

Counsel for a Young Couple

Mrs. White stayed in during the afternoon, while Mary went out to a museum with Bourdeau’s daughter, Patience (later Dr. Patience Bourdeau Sisco). But even though she stayed at home, she was not completely at rest. It seems that Albert Vuilleumier’s daughter, Elise, was being courted rather ardently by a tenacious young man. Here Sister White met Elise’s suitor and in an earnest conversation told him that since both of her parents did not approve of his marrying their daughter, he should honor their wishes. Later she wrote him a lengthy letter that formed the basis for an article on courtship and marriage in the *Review*. The entire article was finally reprinted in [Messages to Young People, 443-451](#). Here is a pertinent section:

“A young man who enjoys the society and wins the friendship of a young lady unknown to her parents, does not act a noble Christian part toward her or toward her parents. Through secret communications and meetings he may gain an influence over her mind; but in so doing he fails to manifest that nobility and integrity of soul which every child of God will possess. In order to accomplish their ends, they act a part that is not frank and open and according to the Bible standard, and prove themselves untrue to those who love them and try to be faithful guardians over them.

“Marriages contracted under such influences are not according to the word of God. He who would lead a daughter away from duty, who would confuse her ideas of God’s plain and positive commands to obey and honor her parents, is not one who would be true to the marriage obligations.”—Page 445.

A typical aspect of Ellen White’s writings is that she consistently points her readers to the Bible as the established standard of conduct.

[147] If the parents were unbelievers or misguided believers, the young

would be wise, she counseled, if they would seek their directions in the Scriptures and wise Christian counselors.

Leaving Geneva, Thursday noon, December 17, she and her daughter-in-law reached Basel that evening. It was a journey that had brought some joys, and much heartache and distress to the servant of God.

Chapter 15—At Home in Switzerland for the Winter

Appointments in Basel, Geneva, and Lausanne

Ellen White spent the first day of 1886 writing and knitting stockings. In a letter to her niece, Addie Walling, she told of her New Year resolutions:

“The old year is in the past and the new year is before us. Day by day the record will go up to God. What history shall I make? Oh, that it may be such a record as I shall not be ashamed to meet in the Judgment. I want to have Jesus with me every hour.”—[Letter 91, 1886](#).

Early the next morning, Sabbath, Kristine Dahl came to her room and opened her heart to the older woman, telling her she wanted to be a Christian and had decided to be baptized that day. Exclaimed Mrs. White, “Oh, how thankful I felt that she had strength to do this—to identify herself with the people of God.”—[Manuscript 61, 1886](#).

That afternoon Kristine and three others were immersed. Then everyone participated in the ordinances of the Lord’s house. After taking her stand Kristine regularly joined the Whites in their family worship, taking her turn in reading the Scriptures. Before coming to Basel she had lived with her family in Norway.

That Sabbath was a special day of victory in another sense. The leaders of the work in Basel had hoped to raise extra money during the holiday season to purchase tents for evangelistic work in Central Europe. The appeal had been delayed because of Edith Andrews’ death, but when \$140 came in on the first Sabbath of the New Year, Ellen White was highly pleased.

Faith and Sacrifice of the Believers

She wrote to Willie, who was still in America:

“The church [members] at Basel you know are all poor. There are but about two brethren in Switzerland who own the houses they live in; all have to pay rent. Of those who work in the office here, the highest wages they receive for their labor is one dollar per day. That is six dollars per week, and they work early and late and board themselves at these wages. Others have less.

“I can see a spirit of sacrifice on the part of our people here, far ahead of that which is seen in America. They believe the Testimonies and accept them as the voice of God to them and they will, of their small wages, do all they can do to advance the cause and work of God.”-[Letter 72a, 1886](#).

By the beginning of 1886 Ellen White had had a fair chance to judge the condition of the work in Europe. She had attended the European Council, she had served in Britain, and now she had visited the Scandinavian countries and Italy. She observed that the situation in the Old World in the 1880's was quite similar to what the Adventist pioneers had faced in America in the 1850's. The believers were new, many of the workers inexperienced, financial resources scarce, and the responsibility of proclaiming the last warning message to the world immense, and not always understood.

When the plans were laid for the Whites to visit the European countries no specifications were made as to the length of the visit. They felt that they would be able to accomplish their work within a few months. But more and more it became obvious that they would not be able to leave Europe as soon as they had first thought might be possible. a month or two previously she had talked of returning to America in May, 1886, for the summer camp meeting season. Now that plan was abandoned:

[150]

“I cannot see how we can get away from here as soon as spring.... I was urged to go to Europe and in Europe I shall stay until I feel that I can be released to

return.... I am in no hurry to return unless the Lord says, Go to America. We have scarcely begun.... I am glad I came, for the Lord has sustained me.”—*Ibid.*

During January, February, and March, she settled more and more into the routine of her work in Europe, speaking almost every Sabbath in the Basel church, and pouring out a steady stream of letters, not only to workers in Europe but to America, as well.

The White Apartment in Basel

Her apartment in the publishing house was not fancy, but the rooms were made comfortable with borrowed furniture. Charles Andrews, J. N.’s son, went to America after the Third European Council, and Mrs. White inherited his bed, bureau, table, and wardrobe. Since the steam heat did not always take the chill off the winter mornings, a coal stove was installed.

In addition to Ellen White’s room, the White family was supplied with a dining room and two other bedrooms. One of these was fitted up as an office with desk, typewriter table, and bookshelves. The other provided sleeping quarters for Willie, Mary, and little Ella.

Various Activities Day by Day

Mrs. White found time to be a good neighbor, as well. On Sunday, January 3, she and Mary walked out to visit Mrs. Erzberger. They found her on her way to visit Mr. and Mrs. Louis Aufranc, so they all went together. Mrs. White felt sorry for Mr. Aufranc. He had served as a translator in the Basel office for years, but his poor health habits during his student days had undermined his constitution.

[151] During the following week, she began to have her own health problems. Her left eye became inflamed, and she was afflicted with headaches. When she couldn’t write she would dictate her letters, thus continuing to work despite her indisposition. She tried to get out into the open air as often as possible.

One day in the middle of January, just a few days before her granddaughter, Ella, turned four, she took the little girl by the hand, and together they went for a walk. As grandmother and bubbly

youngster walked and talked, they became so engrossed in their cheerful adventure that they lost account of their whereabouts. No one seemed to understand English well enough to tell them how to find the printing office. For an hour they searched for the way home. Finally they found the railroad track, which they knew led past their street. When they reached the office they found everyone very worried over their long absence!

Her eye trouble persisted throughout January, and sometimes, when she could not bear to write longer, Mary White would hear her singing to while away the time.

Reinforcements From America

Meanwhile Willie White was completing his work in America, preparing to return in early February. He noted that Volume I of the *Spirit of Prophecy* (the forerunner of *Patriarchs and Prophets*) was out of print, and suggested that work should go forward at once to prepare another edition. Mrs. White herself had suggested to him that if she was to stay in Europe she should push her literary work there. She even envisioned the possibility of having some of her books published in Switzerland to provide work for the struggling publishing house. Except for translations of her books, this never materialized. She kept up her prodigious literary output throughout her stay in Europe. There was the continual correspondence with workers and laymen in America and the opening mission lands, the preparation of articles for church journals, as well as sermons that were edited for publication.

Marian Davis accompanied W. C. White when he returned to Europe, to help with the typing and preparation of Ellen White's writings for publication. When they arrived they found Ellen White ill and confined to her bed. The day before she had suffered two hours of severe chills. But seeing her son and her good friend Miss Davis brightened her spirits. [152]

Marian had worked with her as a secretary and literary assistant since 1879 and would continue to do so for many years to come. Her first job in Basel was to work with Mary K. White in arranging Ellen White's accounts of her travels thus far in Europe for the book *Historical Sketches*.

Literary Assistants Help Ellen White

With her busy preaching and writing schedule, Mrs. White was producing more than Mary could cope with. And now, with plans being laid for the preparation of major books, it was even more essential that extra help be brought in.

The need for these literary assistants is not hard to understand. Mrs. White's sermons were delivered extemporaneously, in a free, lively style. But as any public speaker knows, oral presentations require editing before they are ready for the printed page. Mrs. White's literary assistants took down her sermons as she spoke, typed them out in proper form, and then passed them back to her for her careful study and approval. With her handwritten articles, a similar procedure was followed. This enabled her to work much more quickly, freed from the concern of the meticulous work of a copy editor.

The editorial work was standard copy editing and included correcting spelling and grammatical errors, punctuation, and also noting repetition or awkward expressions. If Mrs. White used the wrong tense of a verb her faithful assistants would correct it. Her secretaries were not "ghost writers," nor did they rewrite her messages. She was the author of all the books and articles that bore her name.

[153]

L. R. Conradi Comes to Europe

When W. C. White returned to Europe in February he brought another important addition to the mission force, Louis R. Conradi, a native German who had gone to America when he was 17. He had become a Seventh-day Adventist while there and had been ordained in 1882. Conradi would remain in Europe for many years, eventually becoming the head of the European work.

Ellen White noted his arrival by saying, "Brother Conradi is here now and he thinks of visiting Russia soon as there is a deep interest already awakened there through reading. I am glad Brother Conradi has come, for he is a successful worker among the Germans."—[Letter 29, 1886](#).

In late February Mrs. White was still not fully recovered. She confessed in a letter to Dr. Kellogg that for a time she had felt

homesick and discouraged, “but the peace of Christ rested upon me in the night season and I felt sure that the promises of God would be verified to me” (Letter 32, 1886). The next day was a mild one, and she was up for a walk with Marian. She wrote:

“The streets are filled with baby carriages and women walking with infants in their arms on a pillow. They seem to be far more painstaking than in America to give their children fresh air and sunshine. Mothers act more like mothers than many in America who devote much time to dressing their children. The children are dressed plainly ... and their cheeks are rosy.”—Letter 95, 1886.

A Horse and Carriage for the Visitor

These walks were getting more and more difficult for Sister White. Her hip was giving her pain, and her ankles, both of which had been broken at one time or another, troubled her. At one point she was so lame she had to speak on Sabbath sitting in a chair. All agreed that she needed a horse and carriage. She kept putting off the purchase, thinking all the time how much the money was needed for the mission. But at last she consented.

Dr. John Harvey Kellogg offered to pay for the purchase, but by the time his offer arrived she had already borrowed the necessary funds and bought a second-hand carriage and “an ordinary horse.” She found the carriage comfortable, and even noted that it would have to be greased only two or three times a year. In 1887, just before she left Europe, she sold the outfit and donated the proceeds to the work there. [154]

Strenuous Personal Labor

During the first three months of 1886 Ellen White carried on a steady correspondence with the Bourdeau brothers, Daniel, who was working in Geneva, and A. C. Bourdeau, still laboring in Torre Pellice, Italy. Both of these men, although veteran workers, apparently had more than their share of personal problems. A. C.

Bourdeau did not seem to be accomplishing much in Italy, but when she suggested early in January that he might come to Geneva and help his brother, he gave all kinds of reasons why he should not leave the Waldensian valleys. She finally succeeded in prying him loose, and he reluctantly went to Geneva for a month.

Since Ellen White always worked closely with conference officials, there is reason to believe that this suggestion was acceptable to the Swiss leadership. Then a series of circumstances finally called for Ellen White to go to Geneva herself.

When L. R. Conradi had first arrived in Basel it was planned that his work would be to hold meetings with James Erzberger for the German-speaking Swiss in that city. But since so little preliminary work had been done, the two men were sent to Lausanne, near Geneva, in D. T. Bourdeau's territory. Conradi found the colporteurs in Lausanne lacking any systematic approach to their labors, and set about at once to put everyone on a regular schedule. He was a good organizer.

[155] Just as the work was getting well under way, Bourdeau wrote
[156] from Geneva that "after meditation and prayer" he had decided to
[157] come to Lausanne the following Sunday night (March 14) and preach
[158] on the subject of the Sabbath. This word was quickly relayed to B.
[159] L. Whitney and W. C. White, who were in Basel, and they hastily
[160] sent a telegram to Bourdeau, who was on his way to Lausanne. They
[161] urged him to abandon his intention to introduce the Sabbath truth at
[162] so early a point in the program.

[160] Ever since her letter to Bourdeau about his handbill in which
[161] he called himself an "American missionary" Ellen White had been
[162] writing him, giving kindly counsels and urging him to take a more
[163] humble view of himself and not try to do all the preaching. Then
[164] in mid-January he had a dream which he unfortunately felt had
[165] some significance. In his dream, he and James Erzberger were out
[166] fishing. Bourdeau was baiting the hooks, and when he offered the
[167] pole to his colleague, Erzberger politely insisted that Bourdeau do
[168] the fishing himself. Bourdeau, of course, stepped forward to do so,
[169] but it seemed that in the dream, other ministers were scaring the fish
[170] away. Naturally Bourdeau interpreted the dream as a sort of divine
[171] approval of his course.

The week before he had planned to go to Lausanne and preach on the Sabbath truth, Ellen White had written him a letter, attempting to open up to him in a kind and tactful way some of his weaknesses. Among other things, she said:

“If you do as you have done in the past, you will press yourself forward, grasp the opportunities which your brethren should have, and use the time yourself to your own injury, and to the disappointment of the hearers. You flatter yourself that you can interest the hearers better than any of your brethren, and sometimes in this you deceive yourself.”—[Letter 35, 1886](#).

Meanwhile, Bourdeau’s wife, thinking to do him a favor, decided that he was too busy building up the work to stand the fragmenting shock of Ellen White’s message, and so she held it up until the Sunday morning when he started for Lausanne. He read it on the way. Then to make matters worse, when he reached Lausanne he was handed the telegram from Whitney and White urging him not to preach on the Sabbath question. The double surprise was more than Bourdeau could accept. Instead of staying in Lausanne where he was needed, he returned to Geneva at once for a “week of meditation.”

[172]

Good Meetings in Bienne

It can be seen that Ellen White’s decision to go to Geneva to encourage and help Bourdeau was timely. She left on Friday, March 19, and spent Sabbath along the way with the church in Bienne. As the train glided along the sixty miles she enjoyed the scenery, the many tunnels, and the quaint little villages in the mountain valleys. She also took careful notice of the status of women at that time:

“We see men and women both at work on the land that can be cultivated—women with their hoes and spades.... Men are working also, with far less diligence. One or more is standing by with his hands in his pockets, looking on or directing these women in their work. The working women in Europe generally bear the heaviest part of the burdens. It is a common thing to see

women walking, driving the load, with two or three men riding upon the load drawn by a couple of large cows.”—[Manuscript 53, 1886](#).

At Bienne she stayed at the home of another of the Vuilleumiers—Virgil ([Letter 96, 1886](#)). Six churches had come together in Bienne for a weekend of meetings. She preached four times. James Erzberger spoke Sabbath afternoon. Then there was a “social meeting.” “The testimonies were excellent,” Ellen White said, “right to the point.” ([Letter 96, 1886](#)).

[173] Sunday morning she addressed the people for the last time and then left for Lausanne, where she visited briefly with the workers. Elder Bourdeau was back in Lausanne when she arrived, and she went with him on a three-hour steamer ride to Geneva. The next day she hastened back to Basel. Of her thoughts on the train she wrote: “As we journeyed from Geneva to Basel, we passed through large and small cities and my meditations were, How is this people in these large cities to be warned?”—[Letter 38, 1886](#).

But even though her stay was short, D. T. Bourdeau appreciated her counsel and her visit. He had known her for many years, and her frank messages to him only deepened his respect for her. In his very next letter after her visit he begged her to come to Geneva again, and by midsummer, his letters showed that he was diligently working to apply her counsel in his life. He wrote:

“Thanks for your interest as expressed in your last letter which came to hand four days since.... I do not neglect visiting, nor am I disposed to rush on independently of my brethren in this enterprise.”—D. T. Bourdeau letter, July 10, 1886.

It was never an easy thing for Ellen White to have to bear messages of reproof. About this same time when G. I. Butler felt the corrections of the Lord’s servant were severe, she explained to him just how she felt in her own heart:

“The Lord knows I am not pleased with this kind of work. I love and respect my brethren, and would not

in the slightest manner demerit them, cause them pain; but I have tried to move with a single eye to the glory of God.”—[Letter 73, 1886](#).

Bourdeau labored in Europe until 1888, when he returned to America, where he continued to serve among French- and English-speaking people until he died in 1905, carrying the full respect of his brethren.

Chapter 16—The Second Visit to Italy

A season of hard labor

Early in April, Ellen White testified that she was enjoying good health and the beautiful weather: “Everything is looking so green and lovely that we are sure winter is passed and spring has come.”—[Letter 41, 1886](#).

A Letter From Torre Pellice

Just at this time a letter arrived from A. C. Bourdeau back again in Torre Pellice. Interest was good in two places where he was holding regular meetings, and he urged Ellen White to come. In a few weeks the people would begin to leave the valleys to spend the summer in the mountains, so it was all the more essential that she go at once if her visit was to be helpful.

She had been writing him regularly since her last visit to the Piedmont valleys, and while his brother Daniel’s problem had been that he did most of the work himself, A. C.’s shortcoming was that he didn’t seem to be getting much work done at all. Ellen White described his efforts at one point as “an array of Quaker guns” ([Letter 31, 1886](#)). Evidently her prodding had taken effect, and now when he called for help she responded immediately.

[175] W. C. White relayed the plans: “Since receiving your last letter, Mother has been thinking much about coming to Italy, and Brother Whitney [mission president] has thought that it would be well for us to go soon, and so we have decided to come at once.”—W. C. White letter April 12, 1886. Ellen White, along with Willie and Mary, left Basel on Thursday, April 15, 1886, for a second visit to Italy. The train left Basel in the morning and arrived in Milan, Italy, that night.

Milan and the Great Cathedral

Since their train was not to leave until ten-thirty next morning, they improved the time sight-seeing. [The American traveler's diaries reveal that her "sight-seeing" was usually done while waiting for trains en route to appointments or peering out the windows of the cars, during a few free hours while in the cities of Europe, or attending council meetings. Recreational activities as far as she was concerned were always subordinate to the demands of the work. Yet she did take time for rest and change, and this she considered essential. (See [Testimonies for the Church 1:514, 520](#).)] The main point of interest, of course, in Milan, was the grand cathedral, the most important Gothic structure in Italy. The cathedral, begun in 1386, was just then being completed. She confessed that no one could fail to be impressed with the grandeur and immensity of the huge white-marble building, but she still looked upon it as a vast "extravagance." Some art critics have had similar reservations about the cathedral, but her judgments were colored by factors other than mere artistic taste. While she was overwhelmed by the architecture, she was favorably impressed by "the windows and walls ... adorned with high-colored pictures, painted by the finest Italian artists. These paintings represent scenes in Bible history and in traditional church history. It seemed to me that I never saw such a gorgeous combination of colors."—[The Review and Herald, June 1, 1886](#).

But she was pained as she saw the worshipers enter, dip their fingers in a marble basin of "holy water," make the sign of the cross, and go quietly to seats in front of the altar. As she saw them bowing before the images, it seemed to her a pathetic sight not unlike pagan worship. "How I longed to lift my voice in this grand old building, and point the poor, deluded souls to God and heaven!" The sight of women kneeling before the confessional boxes was even more painful to her. "It was placing a man with like passions as themselves in the place of Christ," she said (*Ibid.*).

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The cathedral is decorated inside and out with no less than 2,245 statues and images, and it is little wonder that Ellen White remarked later, "How the Roman church can clear herself from the charge of idolatry we cannot see. True, she professes to worship God through

these images: so did the Israelites when they bowed before the golden calf” (*Ibid.*).

A Lesson in Contrasts

At Torre Pellice that evening, as she stood up to speak to the 20 believers who had walked through a driving rain to celebrate the beginning of the Sabbath, she could not help contrasting the plain, whitewashed walls of the building with the elegance she had seen in Milan.

“Here in this little upper chamber of a dwelling house, there was nothing in the exterior to charm the eye, nothing in the interior to absorb or attract, but we had a Guest that day, and we all felt the warmth of His love and the value of His pardon. This precious Jesus could forgive sin. There was no uncertainty here. It was a precious season. I had not one desire for the grand temple and its cold worship. I prize the warmth of Jesus’ love.”—[Manuscript 62, 1886](#).

Sabbath, too, it rained, but the believers came to hear her speak just the same. Sunday morning she awoke at five. The skies were cloudy, but the peach, cherry, and plum trees were in blossom, making the air heavy with their fragrance. “I see a providence in all God’s works,” she wrote, and making the best of the situation, she went on to observe, “Clouds are not pleasant for present convenience, but an unseen hand is at work blessing the earth, making nature very lovely.”—[Manuscript 54, 1886](#).

[177] In spite of the continuing rain, they hired a horse and started up the mountain for Villar Pellice, where she had an appointment for four in the afternoon. The horse they had rented would only go at a slow walk, so they were late for the appointment. They found the meeting place literally packed with people. “The peasant women were intelligent looking,” Ellen White observed. She was especially charmed by the “neat blue dresses and white bonnets.”

Her sermon that afternoon described Christ’s triumphal ride into Jerusalem. Elder Bourdeau translated into French, and some in the

audience were translating quietly into Italian for those who spoke only that language. The message of Christ's love and mercy got through to the people, and the Lord's servant noticed that some of her hearers were weeping.

Sowing Beside All Waters

She was beginning to sense more and more the difficulties of evangelistic labor in Europe. "This is a hard field," she admitted, "but we are to sow beside all waters. These valleys have been watered with the blood of the Christian Waldenses, and it must be that the seed of truth will spring up and bear fruit to the glory of God. We will work, we will pray, and we will believe. It is no harder field than Jesus found when He came to our world."—*Ibid.*

The next day the rain continued to fall, and Ellen White devoted the day to writing while Elder Bourdeau walked the five miles to Villar Pellice to fill his speaking appointment. Tuesday she managed to get a covered carriage to take her to St. John's, where she spoke again.

Finally on Wednesday, April 21, the sun broke through, and Mrs. White, along with Mary K., Martha Bourdeau, and Martha's daughter, Sarah, rented a carriage to ride out in the sunshine. "We drove very slowly, for the horse, although strong, had no idea of hurting his constitution," Ellen White remarked wryly!

Later that day Antoine Biglia arrived from Naples, Italy, where he had lived and worked for a number of years. Biglia, like others who had had only the most limited opportunities to learn how to be an effective minister, was in need of counsel. Of the interview Ellen White reported:

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"We labored with him, and sought most earnestly to help him to take hold of the work, not as a fighter, contending and debating, as was his habit, driving people away from the truth rather than into it. He saw we talked the truth, not with storm; not pelting the people with denunciations like hailstones. We had very precious seasons of prayer....

“This brother from Naples said he had received much light, and would labor in altogether a different manner than he had done.”

“We have to work with these men who are really intelligent just as we worked with them one by one in the infancy of the Seventh-day Adventist cause, separating from these precious souls their unsanctified ways and manners, talking to them about Jesus, His great love, His meekness, His lowliness, His self-denial. These rough stones we bring if possible into the workshop of God where they will be hewed and squared, and all the rough edges removed.... Thus they may grow up into a holy temple for God.”—[Letter 44, 1886](#), p. 3.

The next day was market day, and the clatter of wooden shoes woke Ellen White at 5:00 A.M. She looked out of her window on the crowds of people hurrying to market.

Then A. C. Bourdeau appeared on the scene with exciting news. The night before, his meeting place was crowded with people, and more than one hundred were unable to gain entrance. Fortunately J. D. Geymet was on hand to speak to those outside while Bourdeau took care of the crowd in the building. It was a successful evening.

On Friday the rain came again, and Sabbath also, but the meetings continued to be crowded with eager listeners.

[179] On Sunday morning Ellen White took time to visit the young man from Switzerland who had wanted so much to marry Elise Vuilleumier. He had come to Torre Pellice just after receiving Ellen White’s letter and moved his church membership there. There is no way of knowing what she said to him, but she was conscious that her earlier counsel to him was not easy to bear. Now she showed a tender interest in him and his welfare.

Up the Mountain to Bobbio

After the visit, William and Mary, Elder Bourdeau, and Ellen White went up the mountain to Bobbio to visit the cave where a group of Waldensian refugees had been suffocated in the smoke of a fire ignited by their persecutors. W. C. White was not with his

mother on her first visit, so these sites of heroic martyrdom were of thrilling interest to him. As a child he had sat at his mother's knee as she read the history of the Waldenses to him and to James White, and now he was visiting the very scenes where Waldensian history had been made.

The little party ate their lunch near the cave and, after a time of prayerful consecration, descended the mountain to Villar Pellice, where an open-air meeting had been scheduled. This innovation was necessary because of the large crowds coming to the meetings.

“It was entirely a new thing under the sun for them to hear a woman speak, and yet after I had spoken a few moments there was the best attention. I spoke to about 300 people. Some were seated upon the wall of the enclosure, some on steps that led to the meeting room above. The piazza above was well filled with people. It was to all a novel meeting house. We had the canopy of heaven above us for a covering, the earth—which is the Lord's—beneath our feet.”—[Manuscript 62, 1886](#).

Early in the week there was yet another sight-seeing trip, this one to Angrogna, the valley of groans. The little group walked out over a beautiful green tableland. a white-haired Vaudois led them to a place where the plain ended abruptly, falling off hundreds of feet. The Waldenses here had been attacked by their enemies who had come from Turin to burn their village. As they fled from their homes, they were driven like cattle across this plain, and were forced off the edge of the cliff. And what was their offense? They believed the Bible and dared to worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. This, Rome would not tolerate.

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“We are told that thousands were driven off from this precipice to be mangled and torn to pieces or instantly killed by their descent upon the sharp and jagged rocks. Some bodies were suspended upon the pointed rocks, which fastened into their clothing, and their remains were found two or three weeks afterward.”—*Ibid.*

Then God's messenger added soberly, "And this is the church which claims to be a successor in the direct line of Jesus Christ and the apostles!" (*ibid*).

Finally on Thursday, April 29, after she had spoken seven times during her visit, the White party left Italy, bound for Geneva.

Chapter 17—The Magnificence of the Alps

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Observations en route to Geneva

The Alps are the major system of mountains in south central Europe, forming a 680-mile arc from southeastern France across Switzerland, a portion of southern Germany, Austria, through Yugoslavia, to Albania. Mont Blanc (15,781 feet) is the highest point in the chain. The magnificent sweep of giant peaks forms the seat of a mammoth footstool, the legs of which stretch south into Yugoslavia and Italy. Gorgeous lakes of blue and more somber hues dot the alpine foothills, and streams flow north and south, east and west, from the snowclad summits.

Ellen White was deeply impressed as she viewed these mountains from her coach window while traveling northward through Italy and France into Switzerland. Her unique description of these scenic wonders, penned as she traveled, reveals a keen appreciation for natural beauty and, more important, a reverent and worshipful spirit.

The lessons she drew from nature's grand spectacle are worth repeating:

“The scenery is very grand on this route. With pen in hand, I sketch down the scenery as the cars move swiftly along. Now on either side of us rise almost perpendicular

mountains, pointing towards the heavens, and between these mountain gaps are seen in the distance mountain peaks above mountain peaks....

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“Villages are quite frequent here and there on the mountain sides and in the valleys are planted forests of evergreens. Then we come to rocks, bleak and bare like masonry towering up to an immense height. We pass through a tunnel and look down thousands of feet into a

wild rocky ravine where the green waters are running over the rocks....

“Then we reach again the high precipitous mountains. Houses are built, terrace after terrace, to the mountaintop, that looked as if hanging like nests to the very rocks....

“Our track was cut through the heart of rocky mountains.... We come to a village. It is very old. Its name is Chilamonte. It stands two thousand feet above the level of the sea. These houses are roofed with dark brown flat stones, which give them an ancient appearance....

“We pass through tunnel after tunnel. We emerge from one quickly to enter another. With pen in hand I have not chance to write more than one word before we are enclosed in darkness. We emerge from the fifteenth tunnel, and a beautiful scene is opened to our view. [Later she mentions passing through a tunnel “seven miles long,” doubtless the mont cenis tunnel from Bardonecchia, Italy, to Modane, France. The simplon tunnel (Switzerland-Italy is twelve miles long—the world’s longest railway tunnel. It was built in the early twentieth century.] Down, down, a long way below us is a valley which is nicely cultivated land. This smooth plain of grass and grain of living green extends to some distance. There are houses far below us. There is a stone wall—large, but in ruins—while on the tops of high mountains are buildings and ruined castles....

“After traveling some hours we reached ... France, which is a beautiful country and the climate is mild and healthful. This scenery is composed of hills and mountains, with beautiful trees. The earth is now most lovely, clothed in her garments of living green, the trees are covered with the loveliest green foliage, and the fruit trees, many of them, are in full bloom. The apple, plum, peach, and horse chestnut and hedges of lilac make the air fragrant with their blossoms. There are trees that bear a rich pink and red blossom resembling a tulip in shape. There are also trees with pure white

blossoms of the same description. [At another point Mrs. White indicates that she is describing the area near Chambery, France.] These broad valleys with the mountains in the background are clothed with forest trees. Up on the high mountain summits are built round towers and observatories and castles.

“The varied scenery is a scene of indescribable loveliness. As I look upon the marvelous works of God in nature I am filled with amazement at the ingratitude of men, that their hearts are not drawn out in love and adoration to God....

The World Before the Flood

“If everything in God’s works looks to us so beautiful, and the majestic mountains and towering stern old rocks have attractions, how far exceeding it in beauty, in grandeur and loveliness, was the world before the flood, which was destroyed because of man’s sinfulness. God has surrounded them with the precious things of earth because He loved them. But these blessings were turned into a curse, and they used the precious things of earth to gratify their pride and to glorify themselves until the Lord destroyed them and the earth which was defiled by their violence and corrupting works....

“We come to scenery that appears to our senses as indescribably grand. Mountain peaks rise above mountain peaks, the massive, curiously splendid shaped rocks that were heaved up by mighty agencies and sculptured by the storms of ages. The bare, naked crags, rough hewn. Then there comes a little tableland high between jutting rocks....

“The great God has reared His mighty structures in the granite rocks, in the towering mountains, in clefts, in the gulches, in the gorges, and in the castle rocks and the caves of the earth and with these surroundings of evidences of God’s power....

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“We trace in unmistakable tokens the handiwork of the great Architect. There is beauty in the valley’s awful grandeur, in the solemn, massive, cleft rocks; there is majesty in the towering mountains that look as if they touched the heavens. There are the lofty trees with their delicately formed leaves; the spires of grass, the opening bud and blossoming flower, the forest trees, and every living thing,—they all point the mind to the great and living God. Every faculty of our being testifies that there is a living God and we may learn the most precious lessons from the open book of nature in regard to the Lord of heaven.

“In this study the mind expands, is elevated and uplifted, and becomes hungry to know more of God and His Majesty. We have awakened in our hearts feelings not only of reverence and awe, but of love, of faith, of trust and entire dependence upon One who is the giver of all good. And as I look at His marvelous works and see the evidences of His power I instinctively inquire, ‘What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?’ [Psalm 8:4](#). All the greatness and glory of these wonderful things in God’s house can only be appreciated as they are connected in the mind or associated with God, and the future home of bliss He is preparing for those who love Him. The precious things of the lasting hills we enjoy, but these will be as nothing compared with the glories that shall be awarded to the worshipers of the true God.

Evidences of the Flood

“Men may trace, in the broken surface of the earth, the evidences of the flood. Men think themselves wiser than God, and altogether too wise to obey His law and keep His commandments and obey the statutes and precepts of Jehovah. The rich things of earth which God had given them did not lead them to obedience, but away from obedience because they misused their choice

favors of heaven, and made the blessings given them of God objects to separate from God. And because they became satanic in their nature, rather than divine, the Lord sent the flood of waters upon the old world and the foundations of the great deep were broken up.

“Clay, lime, and shells that God had strewn in the bottoms of the seas, were uplifted, thrown hither and thither, and convulsions of fire and flood, earthquakes and volcanoes buried the rich treasures of gold, silver, and precious stone beyond the sight and reach of man. Vast treasures are contained in the mountains. There are lessons to be learned in God’s book of nature....

“We see in the broken face of nature, in the cleft rocks, in the mountains and precipices, that which tells us a great wrong has been done, that men have abused God’s gifts, forgotten the Creator, and that the Lord was grieved and punished the wicked transgressors of His law, and as the result we have its effects in creation. Storms rage with destructive violence. Harm comes to man and beast and property. Because men continue to transgress God’s law, He removes their defense. Famine, calamity by sea, and the pestilence that walketh at noonday, follow because men have forgotten their Creator. Sin, the blight of sin, defaces and mars our world, and agonized creation groans under the iniquity of the inhabitants thereof. God has given us faculties to be cultivated, to be improved to His glory and for eternity.”—[Manuscript 62, 1886](#).

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She thought also of the saints who would arise on the resurrection morning, from the rocks and the caves of those majestic mountains.

“Martyrs have perished here, and these places will never reveal their sacred trust until the Lifegiver shall call them.... They died in exile, some by starvation, others by the cruel hand of man. They walked with God, and will walk with Him in white because they are found worthy.”—[Manuscript 62, 1886](#).

The journey was one of unforgettable interest to the Lord's messenger. And because of her diary notes, the experience has been repeated here for thousands of others to enjoy.

Chapter 18—Among the Swiss Believers

[186]

Busy times with the Roth family

After the breathtaking journey through the Alps, Ellen White's train pulled into Geneva Thursday evening in a driving rainstorm. At the station waiting for the traveling party from Italy were the D. T. Bourdeau family. Soon the travelers were again comfortably situated in the hospitable Bourdeau home.

Much of the next day Ellen White spent in writing and then that evening, after the setting of the sun, spoke to a small group of interested persons in Bourdeau's home. Sabbath morning she took the train for Lausanne and went directly to the hall where Sabbath services were in progress. Bourdeau translated her message into French while Conradi rendered it in German. Here Conradi had at least twenty who had accepted the Sabbath.

As she met with the workers on Sunday she was impressed with their self-sacrifice, and the difficulty of their task:

“There are efforts being made, but how few the workers! Limited means, bound about constantly for want of money—it is pinch here and pinch there, and that kind of plain diet that in America they would think they would be going on the starvation plan. Many and most of their meals are bare bread and hot milk, and frequently the bare bread. The dress of all is severely plain; and yet how much easier working now than when the bloodhounds of persecution were upon the track of everyone who had dared to differ in sentiment from Rome, and afterward from the State Church....

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“When I saw them in Lausanne in a small hall, boards without backs for seats, I then thought of how much good a little means might do that is squandered upon attractive garments or extras in diet and furniture by so many in America. My heart aches. I so long to

see the example of Christ followed in self-denial, in self-sacrifice.”—[Letter 97, 1886](#).

Tour of the Swiss Churches

On Monday morning, May 3, Ellen White returned to her home in the publishing house in Basel, but not for long. In less than three weeks she was off again on a tour of the Swiss churches.

If Ellen White had once believed that her work in Europe would be finished in a few months, all thoughts of a short stay were banished by now. She knew that there was work enough to keep her busy for a long time. She wrote to her eldest son, Edson, [Edson, 1849-1928, was the second son of James and Ellen White. He was a printer, composer of music, musician, and minister. The notable achievement of his life was his long effort (1894-1912) to reach American negroes with the third angel’s message. As a consequence of his missionary activities, 50 schools were instituted for the blacks in the Southern States. In the 1970’s black Seventh-day Adventists in North America numbered well over 80,000. White’s pioneering activities for negroes were a direct result of reading and following his mother’s written counsels urging the church to undertake work for this race at that time only 30 years removed from slavery.] and his wife, Emma, saying, “I can tell you, children, that there is not much chance for idleness here. Everyone has all that he can possibly do. I can see no way to leave here until one year from now”—[Manuscript 54, 1886](#).

While their objective was Tramelan, there were other Swiss churches to visit on this trip. And so it was on Thursday, May 20, Ellen White took her new carriage and her horse, Dolly, and with Willie, Sara McEnterfer, and John Vuilleumier set off to visit Tramelan, where the first SDA meetinghouse in all of Europe was soon to be built.

[188] She had traveled through this area by train and decided the scenery was equal to that of Colorado, but when seen from an open carriage the view was even more breathtaking, perhaps because more time was allowed to take in the scene. She declared that the view far exceeded anything she had ever seen. “No one can tell what

Switzerland is unless they have traveled over the road by horse and carriage,” she added ([Letter 78, 1886](#)).

Tramelan and the Roth Family

That night they slept at the Crown Hotel in Moutier, and Friday at dinnertime reached the pleasant home of the Roth family in Tramelan. The Roths were in many ways an exceptional Adventist family. They had ten children—seven boys and three girls—but unlike most Adventists of the time they were not exactly poor. The father and oldest son were merchant tailors, and the next son, Oscar, had been a successful baker, but was now working as a colporteur. The building in which the family lived contained their bakery, two tailor shops, and a general store where they handled hats, shoes, and groceries, as well. Two of the Roth children worked in the publishing house at Basel.

For the meeting that Friday evening the Roths’ large family room had been cleared, and benches and boards brought in. Besides the believers in Tramelan, a dozen had come from Chaux-de-Fonds to hear Ellen White speak. That night after the meeting she could not sleep until about midnight. This often happened when she spoke at an evening meeting. “When before the people I feel so deeply in earnest that they should come up to the holy standard erected by our Lord that I am unable to lay off the burden,” she explained ([Manuscript 64, 1886](#)).

Caught in a Hailstorm

Sunday afternoon her friends took her off on a ride to visit a two-hundred-year-old convent. Suddenly clouds began to gather, lightning flashed, and huge hailstones fell, some as large as hickory nuts. Cattle and horses were running wildly about the fields. Roth put the cover up on the carriage and hastened to a nearby farmhouse, where the farmer threw open the doors of his barn to admit the horse and the carriage. [189]

While Ellen White sat in the carriage waiting for the storm to pass, Oscar Roth talked with the family. It turned out that the farmer and his wife were devout Roman Catholics, and they were soon

taking Roth to task for the frank statements they had read in *Les Signes* about the Catholics. The man was greatly offended, but Roth told him that he was not the one who chose the contents of the magazine. Finally the farmer calmed down and said, “Well, we will talk no more about it.” Ellen White remarked, “We look upon this as being an interesting little bit of experience” (*Ibid.*). Later she was led to give counsel regarding the articles in our journals:

“Every article you write may be all truth, but one drop of gall in it will be poison to the reader. One reader will discard all your good and acceptable words because of that drop of poison. Another will feed on the poison, for he loves such harsh words.”—[Letter 91, 1899](#) (published in [Counsels to Writers and Editors, 65, 66](#)).

“We may have less to say in some lines, in regard to the Roman power and the papacy, but we should call attention to what the prophets and apostles have written under the inspiration of the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit has so shaped matters, both in the giving of the prophecy, and in the events portrayed, as to teach that the human agent is to be kept out of sight, hid in Christ, and the Lord God of heaven and His law are to be exalted.”—[Letter 57, 1896](#) (published in [Counsels to Writers and Editors, 65](#)).

[190] There was a missionary meeting that evening at which Ellen White spoke on the privileges and duties of the Christian. She stressed the importance of a right relationship to God, especially for believers who only rarely heard a regular minister preach. Everyone, she said, should become a channel of light to others, because “every true follower of Christ is a missionary” ([The Review and Herald, July 20, 1886](#)).

Monday, she drove to Bienne with Sara, Willie, and Mary and Oscar Roth. Here she spoke for another missionary meeting with Mary Roth serving as her translator. Then it was on to La Chaux-de-Fonds on Wednesday. The next day she took a trip to Le Locle to visit the Pierre Shield family and arrange an appointment for the

following Sunday. She returned to La Chaux-de-Fonds to speak again that evening.

W. C. White was urging his mother on from place to place, trying to get her to visit as many groups of believers as possible. And she was doing her best. But the evening meetings and loss of sleep were beginning to take their toll. She spoke again Sabbath morning in La Chaux-de-Fonds however, and said of the meeting:

“The Lord blessed me. I was very weak, but I knew Jesus was in our midst, and His sustaining grace was given me. My heart is seldom more deeply stirred than it was at this meeting. I could not forbear weeping as I had a vivid sense of the love of Christ. The congregation was many of them in tears. I knew that Jesus of Nazareth was passing through our midst, and His blessing was flowing in rich waves of love to our souls.”—[Manuscript 20, 1886](#).

She knew that there were some in the congregation who were convicted, but had not yet decided to follow Christ, so she asked those who wanted to be “fully on the Lord’s side” to stand. Nearly all stood. Erzberger offered a “deed and earnest prayer” followed by a lively social meeting (*ibid*).

On Sunday they traveled on to Le Locle. The Adventists here had suffered a great deal of opposition, and were almost afraid to have her come to speak. But they had secured a hall, and she spoke to a good crowd on temperance. After the meeting the believers took heart and decided that if she would return they would get an even larger hall.

Later that day she sent her Swiss friends back to Tramelan with her carriage while she took the train for Neuchatel for a final speaking appointment before returning to Basel. Her work required haste, and she must surrender her preference for the quiet carriage ride amidst the beauties of nature to the demands of the Lord’s work, but she never forgot those glorious days, itinerating in lovely Switzerland.

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Chapter 19—a Second Round of Meetings in Scandinavia

Conference sessions in Sweden and Denmark

The 1886 session of the Swedish Conference was slated for late June, with a week of workers' meetings to precede it. So two weeks after her visit to Tramelan and her tour of the Swiss churches, Ellen White was on the road again. On this six-week tour of the Scandinavian countries (June 15-July 28) her strong spiritual influence would be seen and felt by thousands of people.

This time Sara McEnterfer and Kristine Dahl accompanied her. Kristine had been living with the W. C. White family in Basel since the previous November, and now she was returning to her family in Christiania.

The party left on Tuesday, June 15. The following evening they met Willie in Hamburg. He had gone the day before to attend to publishing house business in Leipzig.

Their route was the same as before, to Kiel, Germany, by train, then by boat to Korsor, Denmark. Arriving in Copenhagen, the party was able to catch a boat leaving for Malmo, Sweden.

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When they reached Orebro, the site of the conference, no one was there to meet them, but a Swedish coachman appeared eager to "help." The man "seemed determined to take our satchels right out of our hands," Ellen White related, "but we held to them valiantly. Although he talked eloquently in Swedish, we knew not a word he said."—[Letter 2, 1886](#). It was about seven in the morning, so they decided to walk the mile to the Jacobson home where they stayed before. Here they discovered Elder O. A. Olsen, [O.A. Olsen was born at skogen near Christiania in 1845. His labors in Europe extended from 1886 to 1888, when he was elected president of the general conference (he served 1888-1896). His work for Europe was continued later when he labored for two years shepherding the interests of the cause on the continent. He also headed the work in

England for a short period. For four years he was president of the Australian union conference, and he labored for one year in South Africa. In 1913 he was elected vice president of the North American division. His services as an administrator were truly international in character. Olsen died of a heart attack in 1915.] who had recently come from America to labor in Scandinavia. Elders Oyen and Matteson were also at the Jacobson home.

The men explained that they had met every train the day before, but had thought that the party could not then possibly arrive before noon. Just to be sure, they had given a Swedish coachman special instruction to bring them should they come earlier! Poor coachman!

Two furnished rooms and a kitchen had been rented for Mrs. White and Sara. "We found excellent accommodations," noted Ellen White, as she turned her attention to the workers' meeting, which had already begun.

A School for Workers

"This is an important season for those assembled," she wrote. "They may never be as favourably situated again to be instructed."—[Manuscript 65, 1886](#). By "instruction" she meant that the meetings were actually conducted like a school for workers.

A busy schedule of meetings was in progress, beginning with a social meeting at six-thirty each morning. At nine there was a bookkeeping class; at eleven-thirty instruction in "missionary labor." a class in how to give Bible readings was conducted at 4:00 p.m., and finally the day closed with a preaching service at 8:00 p.m. All of this reflected the willing response of the Swedish workers to the appeals from Sister White and others at the Third European Council in Basel for a better-trained working force. [194]

Her first sermon came on Sabbath afternoon. And after a testimony meeting had been held, she exclaimed, "We could but say, One Lord, one faith, one baptism. The brethren in Sweden have the very same experience as our brethren in America."—*Ibid.* She repeated these sentiments more than once while in Europe, all of which reflected the good impressions made upon her mind.

A Practical Talk on Sanctification

Ellen White gave a brief devotional talk for the early morning meeting the next day. Her subject was sanctification, and she called it a “practical talk” (*Ibid.*). She told the workers:

“There is one point that I wish to emphasize. Those who are striving to keep the law of God never boast of their holiness.... Sanctification is not the work of a moment, but of a lifetime. It is not gained by a happy flight of feeling, but is the result of dying to sin, and constantly believing and living to Christ, practicing the virtues of Christ.... Every day our faith should increase. While we say ‘I know that I am a sinner,’ we can say also, ‘I know I have a Saviour.’”—[Manuscript 25, 1886](#).

Late that Sunday afternoon the meeting hall was packed with 400 people eager to hear her speak. So crowded was the room that she could hardly make her way to the platform.

Each morning the Lord’s servant had a Spirit-filled devotional message to share with the workers. On Monday she tried to impress them not to be discouraged by trials and opposition. On Tuesday she emphasized Christian courtesy. “God does not require us to be like a prickly burr, but to cultivate everything lovely and attractive in our manners and disposition, for this is the fruit of the Spirit—love, joy, peace.”—[Manuscript 65, 1886](#). She challenged the brethren to broader plans, and when she finished, “testimonies were borne, [195] evidencing that the Lord was moving upon hearts, and they were ready at the command to ‘Go forward.’”—*Ibid.*

The next day the conference session opened, and the reports received were encouraging. There were evidences of real progress. Sweden now had 327 Sabbath-keepers. Of these, 250 were members of the ten churches. The others were in isolated places where there were no organized churches. This was a gain of 57 over the previous report in September, 1885. Three new churches were admitted to the conference: Rattvik and Kartylla and Halmstad.

God Calls for Sacrifice

The financial situation in Sweden, however, was not encouraging. Only about \$65 had been received from the churches since the previous September. Ellen White spoke to the delegates about the beginnings of the work and the sacrifices required:

“It is true the brethren are poor, but no more so than when the work was in its infancy in America. We worked then according to the directions of God with what facilities we had, in establishing systematic benevolence [The name given to a system calling for tithes and freewill offerings developed from Bible study in 1859. The refinements of the system practiced by Seventh-day Adventists today, reckoning the tithe on the basis of income, were years in maturing. Not until 1878-1879 was the biblical idea for reckoning the tithe understood fully. In this search for and discovery of the true light on gospel finance, the spirit of prophecy played an important part, confirming what Bible study clearly revealed.] and organizing tract societies. We showed by our works that we expected the Lord to do something for us and the Lord honored our faith.”—*Ibid.*

Before the conference was out, the Swedes had resolved: “That we most earnestly request our brethren to donate of their means for the support of the laborers,” and that “in order to attain a greater unity in this matter, we will try to follow the Bible plan for the support of the ministry.”—[The Review and Herald, August 10, 1886](#).

These were the longest days of the year in Sweden—it was light by 2:00 a.m. and at 10:00 p.m. one could still write by daylight. [196]

That evening the town was a scene of busy activity as the citizens prepared to celebrate “Midsummer’s Day,” June 25. The people came past Ellen White’s window bearing green branches, shrubs, roses, “anything that will be a fitting emblem of summer” ([Manuscript 65, 1886](#)). The next day all the stores were closed as the parades and celebrations were carried on. Ellen White saw “animation and gladness” everywhere.

Critical Days for the Conference President

Behind the scenes at this Swedish conference in Orebro, some feelings were being stirred, and important issues were looming that would be felt throughout Scandinavia. J. G. Matteson, who had pioneered the work in the Northland, quite naturally controlled it up to this time. He was a man of tremendous talent, ability, and dedication. The Scandinavian Adventists held him in the highest esteem. But no man is in a safe position when he stands on giddy heights.

Ellen White saw clearly that if the cause of truth was to continue to prosper, different minds and different talents would need to be introduced to give balance. Matteson knew of her feelings. So when O. A. Olsen came from America, Matteson was suspicious, and fearful that he was being pushed aside. But such was not to be the case. Before the conference was finished on Monday, June 2, Elder Matteson was re-elected as president of the conference. To bring breadth and strength to the growing work, a tract and missionary society was organized. O. A. Olsen was chosen to lead in this.

[197] Mrs. White had been shown that one of the great temptations of administrators in the work of God would be the pre-empting of leadership, taking it wholly into their own hands. This danger existed with Matteson, but not alone with him. It seemed to be a temptation that beset men called to pioneer important phases of the work. In 1883, in letters to J. N. Andrews, she had cautioned him about trying to dominate the work, and had mentioned that J. N. Loughborough suffered from the same temptation. It was a common weakness that the Lord's servant was frequently called upon to combat. At the same time, she recognized the good that dedicated men accomplished and strongly defended them wherever she could.

When Willie White left for the General Conference session of 1885 Ellen White charged him to take a good report about Matteson.

“Willie, I want Matteson to stand in a proper light before the [General] Conference. We see mistakes and failures in his work and mission, but how much better would others have done under the circumstances? I am

thinking he has done, in many respects, a good work. He has suffered privation and taken the work from nothing. All these things deserve our appreciation and we will encourage him all we can, and not say one word to discourage.”—[Letter 36, 1885](#).

Even though she was called to the unpleasant work of pointing out a man’s shortcomings and mistakes, it never undercut her confidence in or friendly regard for him. Just after her return to Basel from her first visit to Italy, she had written Matteson and his wife a long, newsy letter about the trip for no apparent reason other than simply to show her friendship.

At the conference session at Orebro, Matteson seemed to her to be somewhat withdrawn. She had a long talk with his wife, and “told her that Brother Olsen was not to take Matteson’s place, but to help him in the work and both were not able to do one-half of that which should be done in these kingdoms” ([Letter 117, 1886](#)).

And in a letter to G. I. Butler, the General Conference president, she confided: [198]

“I have been writing close letters to Elder Matteson in regard to many points of his manner of labor where they should change. I wanted to heal the wound by all kindness and sympathy and courtesy on my part; and now there seems to be all openness on his part and he seems to feel we do not want to hurt him but to help him.”—*Ibid.*

At the close of the session the people dispersed to their homes, and Matteson and Olsen went together in good spirits to the Danish Conference meeting, which began two days later in Jerslev in Northern Jutland.

Ellen White lingered in Orebro until Thursday, when she took the train for Christiania, stopping overnight in Charlottenberg. She reached Christiania on Friday morning and found new faces in the headquarters buildings. Niels Clausen had just arrived to edit the Danish-Norwegian papers, and a John Lorentz had also come to assist in the new publishing house.

The new presses were now ready for operation, and the old portion of the building had been remodeled and designed for family apartments. Two rooms had been reserved for the White party, and the Norwegian church members had all contributed to furnish them temporarily. "We will be comfortable here," Ellen White noted with pleasure in her diary.

Sabbath morning W.C. White spoke to the church in their meeting hall in the new publishing house. He found it a good place in which to speak, with no ring or echo, and observed that the two-part gallery was convenient for Bible study during Sabbath school.

That afternoon Ellen White spoke on [2 Peter 3:11-14](#) about the "necessity of being diligent to be ready for the appearing of Jesus Christ." It was the beginning of a week and a half of most earnest labor for the Christiania church. The problems that the members had faced during her last visit had not disappeared. But before she got involved again with the church in the capital city, she had an appointment to fill at Larvik, a town about seventy miles distant where E. G. Olsen had been working since the previous December.

It was an all-night trip by steamer. All the staterooms were occupied, so Ellen White, Sara, and eleven other ladies had to do the best they could on the seats in the ladies' cabin. When they arrived at Larvik they were worn out and went directly to a hotel.

[199] After dinner with the Olsens they took a walk in the park. As she walked among the beautiful beech trees she was surprised and pleased to notice that no beer or liquor was sold there. "Mild, simple drinks as soda water, are dealt out," she observed.

At four o'clock she went to the hall to speak. There were about twenty who had accepted the Sabbath in Larvik, and they, with their friends, had gathered to hear the diminutive lady preacher. She had intended to address them in a way that could not offend anyone, but Providence planned a special message for her. "The Lord gave me a message to the people in regard to the false theory of sanctification," she said, and Ellen White spoke with power about God's holy law and a godly life ([Manuscript 57, 1886](#)). Larvik was afflicted at this time with a number of people who claimed perfect holiness, but were transgressors of the law. One even said he was Christ Himself!

The talk almost frightened Edward Olsen, but he stated, “The believers were very much pleased and benefited and that it was just what they needed” (*Ibid*)..

The next morning they were back on the steamer headed for Christiania. Meanwhile, Elder Matteson had returned from the Danish conference. He brought a good report. “The [Danish] brethren seem willing to work and make advancement. They have done remarkably well, poor as they are, in keeping up their finances.”—[Manuscript 66, 1886](#).

Matteson and Olsen along with Niels Clausen, Willie White, and John Lorentz immediately began laying plans for the new publishing house, evangelistic efforts, and colporteur training. The Spirit of Prophecy counsels and the European Council actions calling for the preparation of workers were taken seriously.

[200]

Chapter 20—Turmoil and Peace

Developments in Norway and Denmark

While Ellen White did not feel too well on this second journey into the Scandinavian countries, she refused to let this keep her from doing her God-appointed work. And of course she needed a change from the incessant writing and speaking. So she and Sara bought cloth and were soon busy making dresses. She had consistently found diversion in sewing, meeting her own clothing needs and the needs of others. Often the church sisters sought her out as a buying companion, for she knew well how to select good material.

Writing to Mary in Basel, she asked for patterns so she could make her granddaughter, Ella, a neat garment, as well. Willie wrote home to his wife in a light vein: “Mother and Sara have carried on quite a stroke of dressmaking. If you will rent a store I think they will be able to stock it with a good line of dress goods.”—W. C. White letter, July 16, 1886.

A Symbol of Sister White’s Work

[201] But Ellen White’s work as the Lord’s messenger was more serious and far more difficult than making garments out of cloth. Perhaps her mind went back to the year 1868 when she wrote about a dream in which the Lord repeated to her symbolically the character-building work she was doing in the church:

“A person brought to me a web of white cloth, and bade me cut it into garments for persons of all sizes and all descriptions of character and circumstances in life. I was told to cut them out and hang them up all ready to be made when called for.... I had been engaged in cutting garments for others for more than twenty years, and my labors had not been appreciated, neither did I see that

my work had accomplished much good.”—[Testimonies for the Church 2:10, 11](#).

Her “guide” admonished:

“Cut out the garments. That is your duty. The loss is not yours, but mine. God sees not as man sees. He lays out the work that He would have done, and you do not know which will prosper, this or that.’...

“Before me lay new, polished shears, which I commenced using. At once my feelings of weariness and discouragement left me; the shears seemed to cut with hardly an effort on my part, and I cut out garment after garment with comparative ease.”—[Ibid., 2:11, 12](#).

Needs of the Church in Christiania

And now there was need in Christiania to use the “shears” again. She had been writing to believers there ever since her previous visit and she identified two reasons why the church was in a demoralized condition: “A neglect to keep the Sabbath properly, and a tolerating of meddlers. There are talkers here,” she wrote, “whose tongues are set on fire of hell” ([Manuscript 57, 1886](#)).

Mrs. Oyen had written to Ellen White in April expressing her despair over the condition of things. “I sometimes think some of the members of this church have no hearts, and only enjoy themselves when finding fault and abusing someone.”—Mrs. A. B. Oyen letter, April 11, 1886. In early May, Elder Oyen reported that he had received a testimony from Ellen White and read it to the church. Some of the people responded favorably to the testimony. Mr. L. Hansen, the building contractor who had been breaking the Sabbath, admitted that he had been in error, and resolved to do better in the future. But there were others, Elder Oyen reported, who remained silent and offended. [202]

The man who had promoted the idea that photographs were a violation of the second commandment refused to accept Ellen White’s testimony. Immediately after the meeting where it was read, he called a few of the dissatisfied church members to his house.

Oyen did not know what the meeting was about, but wrote, “Their principal burden heretofore has seemed to be to criticize and find fault with just about everything that is done in the church” (A. B. Oyen letter, May 2, 1886).

Mrs. White had met such unhappy situations before in America, even at the headquarters church in Battle Creek. And it called forth a strong testimony! (See [Testimonies for the Church 1:526-528](#)). The most devastating observations about the awful evils of unjust criticism appeared in her book *Education* in 1903:

“We think with horror of the cannibal who feasts on the still warm and trembling flesh of his victim; but are the results of even this practice more terrible than are the agony and ruin caused by misrepresenting motive, blackening reputation, dissecting character?”—Page 235.

A Disciplinary Recommendation

On Thursday, July 8, Ellen White had a conversation with Elder Matteson about the church situation. She told him that members of the church who persisted in their fierce spirit and were “overbearing, critical, and denunciating” should not be retained as members. “The Saviour has told us the course we should take in dealing with these offending ones,” she said, “and the Bible rule should be followed.”—[Manuscript 66, 1886](#).

“No church can be in a healthy, flourishing condition unless its leaders shall take firm, decided measures to repress this fault-finding, accusing spirit wherever it exists. Its indulgence should be made a matter of church discipline.”—[The Review and Herald, October 19, 1886](#).

[203] Matteson confirmed the seriousness of the situation. He related how one member accused another of being a thief right in a meeting when there was no truth whatsoever in the allegation. What made the situation worse was that this person was on the church board.

Ellen White told Matteson that he should not have neglected to take action in these cases, but Matteson wanted her to assume the unpleasant task of speaking to the church about the matter. She dreaded to do so, remembering how she had labored with the people during her previous visit. “How hard it is to take up dropped stitches, how hard to put a new mold upon a people when they have been permitted to go on year after year in a demoralized condition!” she remarked ([Manuscript 57, 1886](#)). But if others would not act she had to!

Sabbath morning she urged upon the people the message of [John 5](#), where the story of the healing of the sick man by the pool of Bethesda is told. The believers needed to be reconverted before they could become righteous. This was the burden of her appeal.

The next morning she had another Bible message for them—this time on [Luke 19:10](#); “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Then she met with the trustees of the publishing house and helped them resolve a troublesome problem: a portion of the building directly beneath the meeting house had been rented thoughtlessly to a blacksmith, and nearby another space had been let to a gravestone maker.

“Prayers are ascending from the minister and people amid the sound of the hammer and the anvil, the handling and rattling of iron; and just on the other side of where we live is the marble factory where the noisy, continuous sound of chisel and hammer is mingled with the prayers and preaching and the exhortation.”—[Letter 19a, 1886](#).

All this on the Sabbath day.

Standing before the committee, Ellen White gave a testimony that surprised everyone. She told them that while she was still in America the condition of things in Christiania and other churches in Europe had been presented to her in vision. The angel informed her that the sound of hammer and anvil and chisel were heard along with the prayers of the people, but she had not understood what was meant at the time. Now she did. “And the angel said to me that God could not let His blessing rest upon a people who have so little

respect for His word.... But here the matter is under your control and right on your own premises,” she said with a note of incredulity in her voice ([Manuscript 7, 1886](#)).

As she concluded she admitted that the things she was saying probably appeared to them merely as a tale being told, but she added solemnly, “You must meet them in the judgment, and I must meet them” ([Letter 113, 1886](#)).

Response of the Committee

As soon as she had finished, Mr. Hansen stood up. “I do not consider these as idle tales,” he responded. “I receive them, and believe the truth has been spoken to us this morning and I thank Sister White for saying them.”

Hansen’s response was important because, although he had withdrawn for a time from church membership, he was still a very influential man in the church. His own problem had involved Sabbath observance. As a building contractor, he employed many other men, and he had been settling up business accounts on the Sabbath because it was convenient to do so.

Ellen White had been writing to Hansen “close, earnest” letters, warning him “in love,” she said, “pleading in Christ’s stead for him to save his soul.”

After the ordeal of the committee meeting she felt “weak as a child.”

“This bearing plain testimonies affects me much. I always dislike to give pain, but when I see evil and its tendency to weaken and destroy the church discipline... I cannot hold my peace. I have to speak and in the name of the Lord seek to repress the incoming tide of evil.”—[Manuscript 66, 1886](#).

[205]

At times like this, Willie White knew his mother needed some rest and recreation. He hired a carriage and took her for a two-hour ride through the forest parks owned by the city. There, as they passed the families with their picnic baskets, and drove along the margin of beautiful lakes, she could relax and refresh herself. “We enjoyed this ride very much,” she said. “We felt peaceful and rested” (*Ibid.*)

A Disappointing Board Meeting

As the week progressed, she and Willie tried to walk out twice a day, going often to the king's palace and gardens. But her labor with the church was not over. On Monday she had a very pleasant interview with the Hansens, who invited her to come to their home later in the week. But that evening a church board meeting was held in order to discipline the members who had persisted in their criticism and faultfinding. Matteson, who had delayed so long to take this step, had difficulty in handling the situation.

“There was not the wisest course taken. These offending ones were cut off while a spirit of harshness and severity was manifested, rather than a spirit of sorrow and pity and love for them” (*Ibid.*). This naturally aroused the offenders, and they became defiant and combative. The situation was anything but pleasant, and when the vote was taken, a few voted in favor of disfellowshipping, but several did not vote at all. Even some who had been grieved by the slander of the offenders remained silent.

Matteson was so upset when so few supported him that he hastily resigned as president of the publishing association and as an elder of the church. “Thus matters were in a bad jumble,” Ellen White said, and the next day she and Willie had to have a long talk with Matteson to persuade him to reconsider his emotional decision (*Ibid.*).

A Final Service With the Church

The next day was busy with packing and preparations to leave for Copenhagen. Thursday evening, July 15, Ellen White spoke once more to the church, this time on [Philippians 2:1-5](#), where Paul records the appropriate plea: “Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.... Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus” ([verses 2-5](#)). [206]

Just to be sure the point was not missed, she included [Psalm 15](#), as well. The psalm asks who will abide in the tabernacle of the Lord and the answer is: “He that backbiteth not with his tongue, ... nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour” ([verse 3](#)).

She closed with an appeal to the church members to put away the sins that had shut out the “sweet spirit of Christ from the church” ([Manuscript 58, 1886](#)).

“When the heart welcomes Jesus and He abides therein, then there will be love, tenderness, compassion, and all bitterness and evil speaking will be forever put away.”—*Ibid.*

When she asked those to stand who wanted to be on the Lord’s side many responded. There were good testimonies, and then Elders Matteson and Olsen both offered fervent prayers. “We hope this advancement is but the beginning of a decided advance move on the part of every church member,” she wrote.

Elder Matteson reported concerning the work in Christiania:

“These meetings were abundantly blessed by the Lord: especially did the testimony of Sister White make a deep impression on the church, and we have good reason to believe that the church will try earnestly in the future to avoid the temptations and dangers which heretofore have weakened and injured them.”—[The Review and Herald, August 17, 1886](#).

Heartaches in Faraway America

[207] During the preceding few days Ellen White’s attention was directed to a problem in America. While in the Christiania church discipline had been too lax, she was now led to write to those in charge of the school in South Lancaster, Massachusetts, where discipline had been too strict! The brother of Cecile and Kristine Dahl had been sent from Norway to attend the academy in South Lancaster, but had become involved in trouble and had been expelled from the school. Mrs. White knew the boy was prone to misbehave, but she wrote to the chairman of the school board:

“I am a mother and have dealt largely with children and I know that we must have the spirit of Christ with us continually and our own spirit under control or we shall make a failure. Children will be cheerful, full of life, and inclined to mischief, and they may carry their love

of amusement too far; but these things should not be regarded as sins. If the managers should unbend from their grave looks and from their dignity and mingle with the children in their innocent sports and amusements at proper times they would have far more influence over them. If the lines are held too firmly there will be a breaking loose somewhere.”—[Letter 19, 1886](#).

She asked the chairman:

“Why did not some one write to the mother and notify her before sending the boy adrift? ... Why should this boy or any boy in like circumstances be treated thus, turned adrift in a foreign country? His mother and sisters separated from him by the broad Atlantic Ocean. Would they have wanted one of their children treated in like manner?”—*Ibid.*

“I do think the older members of the church have too little sympathy and forbearance for the youth, and they have very many lessons to learn at the feet of Jesus, that they exercise patience to young sinners, as old sinners wish patience to be shown to them.”—*Ibid.*

Next Stop: Copenhagen

At noon on Friday, Ellen White, Sara and Willie, and the Scandinavian leaders, Olsen, Matteson, and Oyen, left Christiania for Copenhagen aboard the steamer *Melchior*. Many friends from the Christiania church went with her to the steamer, and as she was about to leave they handed her a bouquet of flowers as a token of Christian love and friendship. The voyage took a little more than 24 hours, and though they disliked traveling on the Sabbath, it was the only way they could reach Copenhagen in time for the Sunday appointments that had been made for them. [208]

Since Matteson had moved his family to Stockholm by this time, two rooms on the third floor of a pension were rented for Ellen White. The same building today is the Hotel Botanique, on the corner of Norre Volgade and Gothersgade.

She spoke to a well-filled hall on Sunday evening. What a contrast this was to her previous visit. The accommodations were excellent. The hall was well lighted and seated with chairs. Since many halls were empty during the summer, Matteson had been able to rent it for less than a dollar per meeting. Her health improved markedly during her stay there, and she was pleased to discover that the little church had grown, as well.

On Monday, July 19, the training school for colporteurs opened. She was determined to give strong support to these worker-training sessions. She was to spend a full week with them. Four meetings a day were scheduled, a devotional meeting at eight-thirty, instruction in methods at ten-thirty, Bible study at six o'clock P.M. and a preaching service at seven-thirty.

The American visitor spoke for the devotional meeting on Monday. Only twenty-four were present, but she well understood the reason. This was a time of great economic and political turmoil in Denmark. Thousands were out of work, and naturally Seventh-day Adventists were even more likely than most to lose their jobs, because of the Sabbath.

She spoke five times at the devotional meetings that week and twice she had the evening sermon. Over the weekend she continued to speak to the believers and workers.

The Round Tower of Copenhagen

[209] During the week in Copenhagen, Mrs. White had opportunity to take a little time for sight-seeing. With Willie and Elder Brorsen, she visited the "Round Tower." The tower, a Copenhagen landmark, was built in 1642 by Christian IV as an observatory for astronomers of the University of Copenhagen. Connected with the tower is Trinitatis, the University church.

She was intrigued by the fact that instead of stairs, the tower had a broad, gradual ramp on an incline, winding to its top, nine stories high. The guide at the tower informed the visitors that once Peter the Great and Frederick IV of Denmark rode to the top of this tower. As they looked down from the dizzy height, Peter said to Frederick, "Which of us has soldiers who would prove their loyalty by throwing themselves down from here if their king required it?"

Frederick replied that he could not claim to have any such soldiers, but he was not afraid to sleep in the house of the poorest subject in his kingdom. “Noble man! Noble answer!” Ellen White exclaimed in a letter to her niece, Addie Walling ([Letter 101, 1886](#)). But as she gazed down on the great city her thoughts turned from its noble past to its clouded future. She began to imagine what it would be like the day Christ comes. “This city is given up to pleasure and worldliness,” she said. “Beer-drinking and card-playing, dancing and revelling, absorb the attention of the people.”—[The Review and Herald, October 26, 1886](#).

The people of Copenhagen, like the dwellers in Sodom, would wake only when it was too late, she said.

“As the sun arose for the last time upon the cities of the plain, the people thought to commence another day of godless riot. All were eagerly planning their business or their pleasure, and the messenger of God was derided for his fears and his warnings. Suddenly as the thunder peal from an unclouded sky, fell balls of fire on the doomed capital. ‘So shall also the coming of the Son of man be.’”—*Ibid.*

The words sounded strangely like the warning voice from an ancient seer.

On Monday, July 26, 1886, Ellen White and her traveling companions left Copenhagen to return to Basel once again, reaching home on Wednesday, and she was glad to be back! It had been a time of turmoil and a time of peace.

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[211] **Chapter 21—Work and Recreation in Switzerland**

A time for reflection

There were a number of letters waiting for Ellen White when she returned to Basel on July 28, and she began at once to read them and write replies. This constant letter writing and manuscript preparation had always been a cause of weary lament to her husband, James White, who could never quite keep up with his indomitable wife. Her writing continued with even greater concentration after Elder White's death in 1881.

On Sunday morning, August 1, Elder Whitney came to share with her his concern for the work. They decided to conduct another series of early-morning meetings, "to arouse the workers.... to a deeper piety and a firmer faith" ([Letter 105, 1886](#)).

[212] The Basel institution was much more than simply a publishing house. It was a school and a training center for workers. It would have been much cheaper, actually, to employ experienced non-Adventists to come in and do the printing. Pressmen, binders, and stereotypers could handle the work in all languages, and skillful translators, proofreaders, and business clerks could have been hired to handle individual languages. But what would their influence be? And what about the many Adventist young people who needed employment and experience? The leaders decided that even though it cost more, the long-term health of the work would be more vigorous if the publishing house provided training and employment for the church.

As the months passed, many young people were doing remarkably well with their trades, and also wanted to learn more about the Bible. Classes were established to study Bible history and doctrines and English grammar. These classes began at six-thirty in the morning, and now, on Tuesday, August 3, an extra feature was to be added: Mrs. White's spirited devotional talks every morning, bright and early, at five-thirty!

About two weeks into the meetings, Ellen White reported:

“I have been very earnestly at work here. We have been seeking to do everything in our power to educate the people here to understand what it means to be a Christian. We have been holding morning meetings the past week at half past five, lasting one hour. All who are connected with the office and all in the building attend these meetings. I talk to them about 30 minutes and then we have a social meeting. In the past two weeks I have spoken nine times; three times at length.

“I feel deeply that we must do everything in our power to educate the people to be Bible Christians. Not only must we show in our character the meekness and lowliness of Christ, but we must educate the people who profess present truth so that they will not be satisfied to merely have a nominal faith in the truth for this time but have that faith brought into their character as a sanctifying power.”—[Letter 7a, 1886](#).

In a letter to her son Edson she commented that “our meetings are doing good. I wish there could be something of this kind every morning in the Review and Herald office” ([Letter 105, 1886](#)). And in another letter she said, “When we know that Satan will make special attacks upon the ones who are employed in our institutions, then special efforts must be made to lift up a standard against him by elevating the characters of those who are engaged in the work.”—[Letter 106, 1886](#).

Mrs. White’s Oral Presentations

[213]

In her frequent public addresses in Europe and in other places she was impelled to speak by the direct agency of the Holy Spirit. And sometimes she spoke in reproof. For example, she warned her listeners at the Third European Council in Basel of the peril in failing “to heed the admonitions of His Spirit” ([Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 137](#)).

Later in 1890 she wrote in a general statement:

“Before I stand on my feet I have no thought of speaking as plainly as I do. But the Spirit of God rests upon me with power, and I cannot but speak the words given me. I dare not withhold one word of the testimony.... I speak the words given me by a power higher than human power, and I cannot, if I would, recall one sentence.

“In the night season the Lord gives me instruction in symbols, and then explains their meaning. He gives me the word, and I dare not refuse to give it to the people. The love of Christ, and, I venture to add, the love of souls, constrains me, and I cannot hold my peace.”—Ellen G. White [Manuscript 22, 1890](#).

[214] Again Ellen White wrote regarding divine guidance when she was called upon to address the people:

“I am never left alone when I stand before the people with a message. When before the people there seems to be presented before me the most precious things of the gospel and I participate in the gospel message and feed upon the Word as much as any of the hearers. The sermons do me good, for I have new representations every time I open my lips to speak to the people. I can never doubt my mission for I am a participant in the privileges and am nourished and vivified, knowing that I am called unto the grace of Christ. Every time I set forth the truth to the people, and call their attention to eternal life which Christ has made possible for us to obtain, I am as much benefited as they, with most gracious discoveries of the grace and love and the power of God in behalf of His people, in justification and reconciliation with God.”—[Manuscript 174, 1903](#).

A Pleasant Trip to the Rigi

Not alone was Ellen White interested in the spiritual health of the office workers in Basel, she was also happy to join them

in wholesome recreation. Late in August she, her family, and a large group of office employees went on an all-day outing. Their destination was the Rigi, a group of mountains lying between Lakes Lucerne and Zug. The broad panoramic view from the top of these mountains is magnificent. After a sixty-mile train ride to Lucerne, they all took a steamer to Vitznau, where they boarded the sturdy little rack-and-pinion train for the ride up to the mountain.

“The Rigi is new, one of the most popular resorts of Switzerland,” Ellen White remarked. The view of the lake’s “greenish, blueish waters,—is... a most beautiful sight” ([Manuscript 33, 1886](#)).

She was fascinated by the little train that took them up the mountain.

“The car consists of one carriage holding fifty-four persons not divided into compartments. It is more like a city railway car. The gauge is that of ordinary railways. Between the rails in the center run two others close together provided with teeth on which a cog wheel under the locomotive works. The train is propelled upward by steam power.”—*Ibid.*

After twenty minutes of climbing, the train plunged into a tunnel, then burst into the light again to cross a deep ravine on a bridge supported by two iron pillars.

A little farther on they reached the station at Kaltbad. To their left was a large health resort. “This place looked interesting,” she noted, “and I would have much liked to have spent some hours here.”—*Ibid.*

Still farther up they reached Rigi-Staffel, where the rail line from the other side of the mountains joined the one on which they were traveling. Again she wished she could stay, but the train went on:

“We climb, climb higher and still higher until we become almost giddy and we have reached at last the summit. ... We had a nice chance to view the scenery. We looked down into canyons thousands of feet and where streams of water were running swiftly.”—*Ibid.*

Descending again, the cheerful group of workers found seats under the trees while they waited for the steamer.

“The steamer glides up to the landing, and we step on board. It is crowded so that it seems next to impossible to urge our passage in the closely packed crowd. The scenery on this Lake Lucerne is very beautiful but we see a shower arising. The muttering thunder and the lightning flash warn us to take shelter.... We hasten down before the crowd gets in motion; and there out of the cabin windows we see a most beautiful sight—the large drops of rain falling upon the smooth surface of the lake look like glittering diamonds. I never witnessed such a scene as this before.”—*Ibid.*

The rain was still pouring down when the steamer docked. Willie White tried to find a hack to take them to the railway station, but none was available. The schedule was close, and there was nothing to do but to hasten through the downpour to the station and catch the train for Basel.

The wet weather could not dampen their spirits, however, as Ellen White said:

“We were rather a wet, uncomfortable, sorry-looking set. Ella clapped her hands and in a joyous tone exclaimed, ‘Now Sara, aren’t you glad you went to the Rigi? Sara, aren’t you glad you went to the Rigi?’ We had a good laugh and tried to look at the matter in her light and drop out the dark colorings.”—*Ibid.*

Now it was time to lay plans for another long trip. Once again Ellen White was to become involved in the thick of preaching and counseling responsibilities.

Chapter 22—The Fourth European Council

[216]

September 27 to October 4, 1886

The fourth session of the European Missionary Council was scheduled for late September, 1886, in Great Grimsby, England. So after two weeks at home in Basel, Ellen White left on Tuesday, September 14, to attend this council and the meeting of its British workers that preceded it.

Since W. C. White had to remain behind at the publishing house a little longer, Louis Aufranc, a translator from the office appointed to attend the council, was asked to travel with Mrs. White and Sara. The trip had its difficulties. The first night there was space enough in the second-class compartment for only her to lie down, while Sara and Mr. Aufranc had to do the best they could on the hard seats.

The channel crossing was a stormy one, and everyone was tossed about by the giant waves. “It was a joy to leave the boat and look upon something that stood still,” she wrote with a sigh of relief ([Manuscript 59, 1886](#)).

Arriving in London the next day, they took a cab to the Great Northern Hotel, where they spent the night. The prospects for the council that lay just ahead were in some respects not nearly so encouraging as those for the one held the previous year in Basel, but Ellen White approached it with the same total dedication. She awakened on Thursday morning in that London hotel with a great desire for the Spirit of the Lord in large measure to be imparted to her. She wrote:

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“I arose early and sought to draw nigh to God. I felt wholly inefficient for the work before me unless the Lord should help me then and there. How could I be a help and blessing to others unless my own soul was quickened and abundant grace supplied? I must work for the Master, giving myself unreservedly to Him; and, catching the divine rays of light from Jesus, I must

impart them to others. This is the work of every Christian.”—*Ibid.*

When they reached Great Grimsby later in the day they were delighted to find their old friends William and Jennie Ings. The Ingses and the Whites had been friends since 1866, when the couple had come to help in the publishing house in Battle Creek. Not only had they pioneered the work in the British Isles, as mentioned earlier, but after their return from their first tour of duty in Europe in 1882 they had traveled extensively with Ellen White. Mrs. Ings, a native German, served as her nurse and helper.

The Workers' Meetings Begin

Friday morning the sky was clear and the air much cooler than it had been in Basel. The meeting of British workers began later in the day, and on Sabbath Ellen White spoke twice.

When the discouragements of some of the workers are taken into account, Ellen White's sermons during the meetings take on a new depth and power. At one time a little group gathered about the stove in the meeting hall and began to talk about their experiences and disappointments. It seemed that great difficulties were confronting every branch of the work in England.

Each day she tried to inspire them with the consecration, courage, and confidence they so much needed. In closing one sermon she said:

“This life is a conflict, and we have a foe who never sleeps, who is watching constantly to destroy our minds and

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lure us away from our precious Saviour, who has given His life for us. Shall we lift the cross given us? or shall we go on in selfish gratification, and lose the eternity of bliss? ...

“I do not look to the end for all the happiness; I get happiness as I go along. Notwithstanding I have trials and afflictions, I look away to Jesus. It is in the strait, hard places that He is right by our side, and we

can commune with Him, and lay all our burdens upon the Burden Bearer, and say, ‘Here, Lord, I cannot carry these burdens longer.’ Then He says to us, ‘My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.’ Do you believe it? I have tested it. I love Him; I love Him. I see in Him matchless charms. And I want to praise Him in the kingdom of God.”—[Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 291, 292.](#)

In another sermon she commented:

“By my past experience I can testify that I would not have one trial less, one sorrow less, for Paul says, ‘These light afflictions which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.’”—[Manuscript 16, 1886.](#)

And finally, she closed with an appeal:

“A little longer and we shall see the King in His beauty.... Will you be there? Will the crown of glory be placed upon your brow? ... God grant that we shall every one be there. You cannot afford to lose this. God bless you here tonight; and may God come into your souls and shine around you here.”—*Ibid.*

Help for the Struggling Workers

On Tuesday, Ellen White spoke in the morning about the resurrection at the second advent of Christ, and in the evening she delivered a stirring message based on Christ’s resurrection and how that event inspired the discouraged disciples. Again, the sermon was especially helpful to the struggling workers:

“He has risen, dear friends, and in your despondency you may know ... Jesus is by your side to give you peace....

“I know what I am talking about. I have seen the time when I thought the waves were going over my head; in that time I felt my Saviour precious to me.

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When my eldest son [Henry, aged 16] was taken from me I felt my grief was very great but Jesus came to my side and I felt His peace in my soul. The cup of consolation was placed to my lips. And then he [my husband] ... was taken. We had labored together side by side in the ministry, but we had to fold the hands of the warrior and lay him down to rest in the silent grave. Again my grief seemed very great, but after all came the cup of consolation. Jesus is precious to me. He walked by my side ... and He will walk by your side.”—[Manuscript 80, 1886](#).

Opening of the Council Delayed

Willie White arrived in Grimsby on Wednesday, September 22. The European Missionary Council was scheduled to begin on Friday, but when the day came, most of the leading workers had not arrived. Whitney, Olsen, Oyen, Matteson, and D. T. Bourdeau were all absent. W. C. White advised those who were there to spend their time in study and preparations for the Sabbath.

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But if the prospects for the council were somewhat dismal, one factor that must have encouraged the workers was the excellent public response to the tent meetings they were conducting three nights a week in connection with their workers' meeting and annual council. When Ellen White rose to speak on Sunday evening, September 26, the tent was packed, and many were standing outside. She gave a very practical sermon, spending part of her time on the subject of child rearing and again adding interesting insights from her own personal experience:

“I have said that if God would accept my work in training my children for the future immortal life, I will say I have not lived in vain. But this cost me labor and tears. I have had no time to put on the extra dress, to decorate myself. My time must be spent to prepare these children for the future life....

“This is our work, mothers, but not that they should go out into the pleasures of the world. I have had people

say to me, ‘Why, Mrs. White, your children will not know how to act in society.’ Said I, ‘I am educating them for the society of heaven. I want them to be educated to do right because it is right, and well pleasing to God!’—[Manuscript 84, 1886](#).

After the meeting, the man on whose ground the tent was pitched stepped in front of Ellen White to clear a path through the crowd as she went home. His action was hardly necessary, but he was trying to help in every way he could.

Since Whitney, the president of the European Mission, and Oyen, its secretary, had still not arrived by Monday morning, September 27, W. C. White and J. H. Durland were chosen to fill in and get the meeting under way. Elder White and his mother were official delegates to the council. By now they were not merely American visitors; they were, according to the minutes of the council, from Central Europe. In his introductory remarks Elder White reminded the workers that forty years earlier, when the Seventh-day Adventist Movement began, there were no more believers in the whole world than were gathered together for the present meeting. Then he sketched briefly the development of the work. The rest of the time was taken by S. H. Lane’s report of the progress of the work in Britain.

The Council Convenes at Last!

Finally, by Tuesday, the rest of the leaders had arrived, and work began in earnest. The reports of the various fields came first. Scandinavian progress was encouraging—more than one hundred Sabbathkeepers had been gained. The Swiss Conference had not yet met, so no statistics were available for Central Europe. In Britain the increase of only twenty-two believers was a cause for concern. That afternoon almost the entire time of the council was spent studying how to improve the publishing work in England. Apparently col-porteurs had been trying to sell American books. Now the council resolved to secure a few of the best Adventist books and thoroughly adapt these to English readers, altering style, spelling, and references to conform to British usage. There were some differences of opinion

[221] as to whether a fully equipped printing office should be established in Britain or whether the work should be hired out, but all agreed that the headquarters of the work should be shifted from Grimsby to London as soon as possible. London was a publishing center and the logical location for our work. Later in the week the council decided to double the size of *Present Truth* from eight to sixteen pages—another move to bolster the cause.

The Use of Tents a Success

At the Third Annual European Council in Basel in 1885 the decision had been made to purchase and use tents in the various European countries. Had the effort been successful?

O. A. Olsen reported enthusiastically on the use of tents in Scandinavia. In Norway there had been no trouble getting a good central location at a reasonable price, and for five weeks during the latter part of the summer the crowds had been excellent—even better than had been secured in halls. Olsen’s verdict was “Tent work is a success in Norway,” and he fully expected it would work in Denmark and Sweden, as well.

In France and Italy tents had also served well, although D. T. Bourdeau had experienced some difficulties with rowdy students in the initial phases of his effort in Nimes.

Again, it was in Britain that the most difficult problems had been encountered. The political turmoil accompanying the general elections during the past year had cut sharply into the crowds. The damp weather deteriorated the tents quite rapidly and made it more difficult to keep the people comfortable. Nevertheless, there was a strong feeling that tents could be used to advantage in England. Expenses were no more than a hall, meetings could be held without interruption, attendance was generally larger, and the novelty of the tent was good publicity.

[222] So the council concluded that it had been demonstrated that tents could be used successfully in European countries, and resolved, “That we express our gratitude to God for this means, and that we recommend the use of tents wherever they seem to furnish the most successful method of advancing the truth” ([The Review and Herald, November 2, 1886](#)).

As the work was pushed forward in Europe, the need of well-trained workers became increasingly apparent. The council reaffirmed their previous resolutions to hold regular training schools for Bible workers, preachers, and colporteurs, and they also requested the General Conference to send a number of qualified workers to teach in these schools. An experienced Scandinavian colporteur was requested. For Britain, two veteran ministers, S. N. Haskell and E. W. Farnsworth, were called. A city mission and training center was proposed for Liverpool where workers could learn to do ship missionary work, as well as how to sell our literature more successfully.

Behind the scenes, of course, there was the ever-present question of how the individual laborers were developing. L. R. Conradi replaced D. T. Bourdeau on the main governing committee of three of the Central European Missions. Everyone wondered whether there would be some hurt feelings. But Bourdeau went along with the change without complaint. And there was another man whom they were watching—O. A. Olsen. He was still new in the European field, but W. C. White reported very favorably on his role to Elder G. I. Butler:

“I tell you Bro. O. A. Olsen was a pillar of strength. He did some good work. He felt slow to take hold, as this was the first council he had attended, and he felt he did not have the run of things, but when he did speak it was to the point.”—W. C. White letter, November 6, 1886.

A Prophetic Word About the Future

During one of the council meetings one of the speakers, after referring to some of the barriers to the progress of the message, appealed to Mrs. White to state her views as to what more could be done, and whether there might be expected changes in the conditions under which the laborers were struggling. [223]

In answer to this question, she said that changes would come that would open doors that were closed and barred, changes that would alter conditions and arouse the minds of the people to understand

and appreciate present truth. Political upheavals and changes in the industrial world, and great religious awakenings, would prepare minds to listen to the third angel's message. "Yes, there will be changes," she assured them, "but *nothing for you to wait for*. Your work is to go forward, presenting the truth in its simplicity, holding up the light of truth before the people."

Then she told them how the matter had been revealed to her in vision. The multitudes in our world, to whom is sent the warning message that Christ is soon coming, were presented as enveloped in mists and clouds and dense darkness, even as described by Isaiah, who wrote, "Behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people" ([Isaiah 60:2](#)).

As in the vision she looked upon this scene with intense sorrow, her accompanying angel said, "Look ye," and as she looked again, there were to be seen little jets of light, like stars shining dimly through the darkness. As she watched them, their light grew brighter, and the number of lights increased, because each light kindled other lights. These lights would sometimes come together as if for the encouragement of one another; and again they would scatter out, each time going farther and lighting more lights. Thus the work went on until the whole world was illuminated with their brightness.

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In conclusion she said:

"This is a picture of the work you are to do. 'Ye are the light of the world.' [Matthew 5:14](#). Your work is to hold up the light to those around you. Hold it firmly. Hold it a little higher. Light other lights. Do not be discouraged if yours is not a great light. If it is only a penny taper, hold it up. Let it shine. Do your very best, and God will bless your efforts."—[Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 295](#).

A Shopping Tour in Grimsby

For her part, Ellen White was not only helping in the council meetings but was carrying a full speaking load in the evening meetings for the public. And there were times when she broke away from the strenuous routine. One day she and Sara, always alert for

a bargain, found a draper's shop going out of business in Grimsby. The prices were cheap, most "too cheap to keep any money in the purse," Sara remarked. Ellen White wrote home to Mary, sending samples and asking whether she should buy more:

"The pink cotton and wool cost one English shilling. This red oil goods—I can get remnants like this, two yards for thirty cents....Prints are eight cents per yard, good twilled calico like this sample. Shall I get any for Ella or any other purposes? I saw in the great hotels white curtains trimmed with this cloth."—[Letter 23a, 1886](#).

But her great burden was the challenge to evangelism throughout Europe and the need of each worker's reaching the high standard God had for him. The closing appeal of one of her sermons typifies the constant spiritual power of her work:

"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Do we want this benediction? I do, and I believe you do. May God help you that you may fight the battles of this life and gain a victory day by day and at last be among the number that shall cast their crowns at Jesus' feet and touch the golden harps and fill all heaven with sweetest music. I want you to love my Jesus....Do not reject my Saviour, for He has paid an infinite price for you. I see in Jesus matchless charms, and I want you to see these charms. May God bless this congregation is my prayer."—[Manuscript 84, 1886](#).

On Monday, October 11, Ellen White left Great Grimsby for London, where she spent the night, then went on to Dover. She expected to get aboard the boat for France immediately, but when she reached the wharf the waves were running "mountain high."

Mrs. Ings, who was traveling with Ellen White now, had her hat blown off. While she was off chasing it with the help of a small boy, the rest of the party decided to stay overnight rather than face another violent round of seasickness on the stormy channel.

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The next day the crossing was accomplished with a minimum of distress, but Ellen White remarked that the waves were still “considerably stirred up.”

Chapter 23—Will France Receive The Light?

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The visit to Paris, Nimes, and Valence

As one of the dominant powers of Europe, France had known periods of greatness and glory. The centuries following the Reformation were marked by civil war, the tyranny of absolutism and revolutions, the Napoleonic wars of expansion, and the vicissitudes of several forms of government.

During the time of Mrs. White's visit the country was under a political system known as the Third Republic. According to the light Ellen White received from God the history of France might have been more salutary if the nation had received fully the teachings of the Reformation in the sixteenth century. (See [The Great Controversy, 211-236; 265-288.](#))

Even so, the light of the gospel shone brightly in France for years under the teaching of LeFevre and Farel and Berquin, and the valiant Huguenots—until persecution nearly silenced the voices of God's messengers.

In vision the cause-and-effect relationship in these historic developments in church and state were opened up to the mind of the Lord's servant. She saw the French Revolution as a harvest reaped more than two centuries after the fateful seed sowing in the time of the Catholic King Francis I and Charles IX and the St. Bartholomew's massacre.

The Light of the Advent Message

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As the light of the Reformation appeared in France, centuries later the light of the Advent proclamation touched that historic land and French-speaking Switzerland.

“The light shone also in France and Switzerland. At Geneva, where Farel and Calvin had spread the truths of the Reformation, Gausson preached the message of the

second advent. While a student at school, Gausson had encountered that spirit of rationalism which pervaded all Europe during the latter part of the eighteenth and the opening of the nineteenth century; and when he entered the ministry he was not only ignorant of true faith, but inclined to skepticism. In his youth he had become interested in the study of prophecy. After reading Rollins' *Ancient History*, his attention was called to the second chapter of Daniel, and he was struck with the wonderful exactness with which the prophecy had been fulfilled, as seen in the historian's record....

“As he pursued his investigation of the prophecies, he arrived at the belief that the coming of the Lord was at hand. Impressed with the solemnity and importance of this great truth, he desired to bring it before the people.”—[The Great Controversy, 364, 365](#).

Gausson printed his prophetic lessons and circulated them faithfully among young and old. He became one of the “most distinguished and beloved of preachers in the French language” ([Ibid., 366](#)). But he was “suspended from the ministry” because of his views on Bible prophecy and the coming of the Lord.

Brief Stay in Paris

When Ellen White arrived in Paris on Wednesday evening, October 13, she doubtless wondered what would be the attitude of the French who listened to the Adventist evangelists proclaiming the message now in that country. During the next two weeks she found the answer.

[228] The White party was met by a young man named Garside, whom D. T. Bourdeau had led to Christ just a few months earlier in Geneva. Garside had worked briefly with Bourdeau as a colporteur in Nimes, and then moved on to Paris with his trunk of books and papers. He took the travelers to a nearby hotel where, six stories up, they found comfortable lodgings.

Ellen White was fascinated by the flashing lights of the carriages as they passed to and fro on the street far below her window. The

next day she would see the great city from a better perspective. Upon returning to America she would describe in her book *The Great Controversy* certain events of the Reformation that took place there.

At five the following morning, she was up writing by candlelight. “I seemed to be transferred back to old times when candles were the only lights used except whale oil in our lamps,” she wrote.

As we reflect upon her messages we see that there was nothing narrow or provincial in her teaching. Before the “one world” idea became so widely discussed in our time, this clear-thinking spokeswoman for God was describing how this *one* message of truth was to develop *one* church unified throughout *one* world. She and the church leaders were agreed on that goal! That same year, 1886, while at Basel she wrote:

“Our prayer should ascend to the throne of grace with fervor for the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into His vineyard. My heart aches as I look around upon the mission fields and see so feeble efforts to get the truth before the people. No censure can be attached to our leading men. I believe, brethren, you are one with me in heart, in sentiment, in regard to our great need, and in the earnest desire and earnest efforts to meet the mind of the Spirit of God in these things.”—[Letter 55, 1886](#).

Whether in Europe or Australia, she poured forth a stream of letters and manuscripts addressed to many parts of the world, a total of nearly 2,500 during her eleven overseas years. And now she was in France. What fruitage would develop from her labors there?

A Walk Through the Streets of Paris

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Later that morning Brother Garside came and escorted her and her company on a short walking tour of Paris. Apparently they were near the Stock Exchange and climbed into a second-floor gallery where they could look down into the room where the stock-exchange business was exploding before them.

Mrs. White wrote about the grand melee:

“Men were pushing and crowding one another, screeching at the top of their voices. Many were hoarse, and yet they shrieked on louder than ever. Hundreds were there and men were coming and going, wrestling and crowding one another like mad men. And what was all this for? Trading in stocks. Some would gain, others lose. And it was all for a little of the inheritance in this life.... I thought of the scene when the day of judgment should take place. What confusion would come to all who have not made God their dependence and were not prepared for the great day of final decision. Let us make our calling and election sure.”—[Manuscript 70, 1886](#).

The visit to the Exchange was followed by a carriage trip to Versailles and a tour of the exquisite home of French monarchs. Ellen White called it “the palaces of the kings.” She was impressed by the grandeur and elegance of the expensive and richly adorned halls, bedrooms, and chambers. She was unhappy with certain paintings, however, which according to her understanding of Bible history depicted Biblical scenes inaccurately. She wrote:

“Earthly-minded men may be skilled in their science of art, but how utterly unable they are to approach the Divine model.”—[Manuscript 75, 1886](#).

Invalides and the Tomb of Napoleon

[230] Sister White visited the Invalides and saw the tomb of Napoleon and some of his generals who shared his triumphs, his glory, and his defeats. The guide who directed her party repeated the thrilling events that marked the life of the brilliant military genius and his subordinates. She was duly impressed and not unappreciative, but she hated war and bloodshed. Mrs. White was told that:

“this grand building [Actually the hotel des invalides was established by Louis XIV in the late seventeenth century for the care of disabled soldiers. The building also served Napoleon’s Armies.] was presented to the government for a hospital or asylum for old soldiers

who served in Napoleon's armies. Their families and their children and grandchildren were to be taken care of. There have been as many as five hundred sick and disabled soldiers in this building at one time. Their preparation for cooking is very extensive. These soldiers are supported by the government."—[Manuscript 70, 1886](#).

After a busy day's tour she and her friends assembled at the hotel, climbed the six flights of stairs, and ate a simple supper. Then after a solemn season of prayer the group divided. Brother Garside remained in Paris, Willie White and Sara McEnterfer headed for Basel, and Ellen White, accompanied by Elder and Mrs. Ings, boarded a carriage for the four-mile trip to the train that would take them to Nimes, where she was to conduct a series of meetings. Mrs. Ings had plenty of experience as Mrs. White's nurse, so she stayed with her. Besides, Sara was needed in Basel, where Mary K. White was due to have a baby very soon.

Arrival at Nimes

The next morning when they arrived in Nimes, D. T. Bourdeau and his two assistants, J. D. Comte and J. P. Badaut, were on hand to meet them. a tram took them to Bourdeau's comfortable second-floor flat at Rue Freres Mineurs 5.

Bourdeau had started the work in southern France ten years earlier, but political turmoil and legal restrictions on evangelistic activities had hampered his efforts. He had returned to the area, this time to Nimes, in June of 1886, accompanied by James Erzberger and Albert Vuilleumier, who stayed until just before Ellen White's arrival. Comte, a former Baptist evangelist whom Bourdeau had converted in Bastia, Corsica, two years earlier, and Badaut, from the church in Granges, France, were working with Bourdeau as colporteurs.

The early meetings in the 40-foot round tent that Bourdeau pitched had been disrupted by rowdy students. Finally admission cards were issued to the serious listeners in the congregation, and

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the nine-foot wall surrounding the tent was patrolled inside and out, local police assisting.

By the time Ellen White arrived on October 15, some fifteen people had decided to keep the Sabbath, and a lively interest was aroused through the tent meetings and the Bible readings conducted in the homes.

The next day, Sabbath, she spoke twice, once in the forenoon and again in the evening. The French were delighted to hear the message from the American visitor.

William Ings spoke in the afternoon on the subject of the restoration of the Sabbath. When he made his appeal there was a good response. Sixteen people bore their testimony in the social meeting that followed. These converts had just embraced the Sabbath and begun to keep it. They were “witnesses for God to reflect the light in that ... city” said the servant of the Lord. And Nimes was no small city! Here centuries earlier the merchant Peter Waldo had preached the truths of the Bible, and gathered about him a company of “soldiers”—”The Poor Men of Nimes”—to witness for Christ. They were forced by persecution to flee to northern Italy to seek shelter in the mountains. There the Waldensian movement grew and became strong.

Roman Ruins in Nimes

[232] On Sunday, Mrs. White and her friends took a walk into the heart of Nimes. The market activities were as busy as on any other day of the week. She was especially impressed by the Roman antiquities for which the city is famous. She visited the Maison Carree or “Square House,” a perfect little pillared stone temple dating from the days of Augustus Caesar.

At Nimes Sister White met Mr. Guilly, an evangelical preacher and preceptor of a school for orphans and fallen women. She took a large interest in the charitable work he was doing for Christ.

For two weeks she remained in the city and the kindly Mr. Guilly did all he could to make her stay as pleasant as possible. One day he took her to the Tour Magne, the Great Tower, another impressive Roman ruin on a hill north of the city. After a long climb up the hill-

side they reached the tower of the old castle and gradually ascended its narrow stone steps.

Ellen White wrote to her sister, Mary Foss:

“We ... were richly rewarded for our toil in the magnificent view.... We could overlook Nimes and the olive groves abounding in and about Nimes, presenting a very beautiful picture. I thought while so high up of the temptation of Christ when He was beset by Satan. He was placed on the pinnacle of the temple and then invited ... and taunted to evidence that He was the Son of God by casting Himself down from the dizzy height....

“From this eminence we had a broad extended view. But nothing that was in comparison to the view of the kingdoms of the world spread out before the Son of God in most bewitching loveliness and richness.”—[Letter 108, 1886](#).

Near the end of her stay she took dinner with Mr. Guilly at Bourdeau’s house. The next day she toured his school and orphanage.

On Sabbath, October 30, she spoke twice in the afternoon and in the evening. Mr. Guilly, his wife, the directors of the asylum that he managed, and fifty of his students attended the services. Sister White said, “We hope this acquaintance may be in the providence of God a blessing to them and to us” (*Ibid.*).

The Young Watchmaker

She was a soul winner. She was constantly laboring to help others. Not only did she preach almost every day in Nimes but she was alert to every opportunity to share her Christian witness. [233]

There was a young watchmaker there named Abel Bieder who especially attracted her interest, for she had seen him in vision and knew of his problem. Abel was once a member of one of the Swiss Adventist churches. Wrote Ellen White:

“There was a young man who had become discouraged through the temptations of Satan and through some mistakes of our brethren who did not understand how

to deal with the minds of the youth. He gave up the Sabbath and engaged to work in a manufacturing establishment to perfect his trade in watch-making. He is a very promising young man. My watch needed repairing, which brought us together. I was introduced to him, and as soon as I looked upon his countenance I knew that he was the one whom the Lord had presented before me in vision. The whole circumstance came distinctly before me....

“He attended the meeting when he thought I would speak, and would sit with his eyes riveted on me through the entire discourse, which was translated into French by Brother Bourdeau. I felt a duty to labor for this young man. I talked two hours with him and urged upon him the peril of his situation. I told him because his brethren had made a mistake that was no reason that he should grieve the heart of Christ who had loved him so much that He had died to redeem him....

“I told him that I knew the history of his life and his errors (which were the simple errors of youthful indiscretion) which were not of a character that should have been treated with so great severity. I then entreated him with tears to turn square about, to leave the service of Satan and of sin, for he had become a thorough backslider, and return like the prodigal to his Father’s house, his Father’s service. He was in good business learning his trade. If he kept the Sabbath he would lose his position.... a few months more would finish his apprenticeship, and then he would have a good trade. But I urged an immediate decision.

“We prayed with him most earnestly, and I told him that I dared not have him cross the threshold of the door until he would before God and angels and those present say, ‘I will from this day be a Christian.’ How my heart rejoiced when he said this. He slept none that night. He said as soon as he made the promise he seemed to be in a new channel. His thoughts seemed purified, his purposes changed, and the responsibility

that he had taken seemed so solemn that he could not sleep. The next day he notified his employer that he could work for him no longer. He slept but little for three nights. He was happy, so thankful that the Lord had evidenced to him His pardon and His love.”—[Letter 59, 1886 \(Evangelism, 449-451.\)](#)

On Sunday, October 31, Sister White spoke again. The hall was packed with eager listeners. Her constant effort in France was to preach evangelistic sermons, to make prominent the gospel of Jesus Christ and the special truths God has given to Seventh-day Adventists for the world. The prophetic gift she had from God enabled her to present the doctrines clearly.

Meetings in Historic Valence

Early Monday morning Ellen White and her party boarded the train for Valence. It was here that Bourdeau had worked ten years earlier. Here in 1798 history was made as Pope Pius VI was kept as a prisoner of Napoleon. The pontiff died there the next year. Thus prophecy was fulfilled. (See [The Great Controversy, 579.](#))

She spoke for three quarters of an hour in an evening meeting attended by a small company of believers and their friends. There was a keen interest in her message, and at the request of the people she decided to stay over an extra day. a man was present in the meeting who had begun to keep the Sabbath, but who had given it up. In her diary she tells of how she prayed earnestly that the sermon would have an influence in planting his feet once again upon the pathway to heaven. That same day, back in Basel, her second grand-daughter was born, but she did not receive word till several days later.

Early on the morning of Tuesday, November 2, Mrs. White [235] arose early and engaged in writing. Meanwhile the brethren in Valence were out inviting their friends and stirring up an interest in the evening service. Brother Bourdeau drove many miles out into the country to pick up a brother and bring him to the meeting, but his mission was fruitless. The man was away from home, and the

rain fell so heavily that he could not have attended anyway. But they had an excellent meeting in spite of the inclement weather.

The Cathedral of Saint Apollinaire

While in Valence, Ellen White was intensely interested in visiting the Cathedral of Saint Apollinaire where she observed the officiating priests with their white robes and over these a surplice of black velvet trimmed with gold braid, with the form of the cross marked in the back. She heard their words of prayer and their chanted hymns. This exposure while in Europe to the grandeur and impressiveness of the Catholic worship services proved helpful to her as she described Catholic worship in the book *The Great Controversy*. (See pp. 566, 567.)

She wrote:

“We looked upon the bust of Pius VI. The marble statue beneath the bust contained the heart of the Pope. This is the Pope specified in prophecy, who received the deadly wound. [See [Ibid.](#), 266, 267, 356, 357, 439.] He was carried captive to Valence and we looked upon the tower where he was confined and where he died. From this tower he could look upon the beautiful waters of the Rhone and this gave him much delight.

“It was a gratification to look upon this representation of the Pope which prophecy has so faithfully described. We looked upon a black cloth stretched across the walls of the portion of the building where the people were worshipping the second day of November. This black cloth was adorned with ghastly death-heads and bones in white, which looked frightful. But they were observing the feast for the dead [All Soul’s Day].

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“These vestments of the priests, symbolically adorned with large figures of the cross and with a variety of colours, bore no resemblance to the simplicity of worship. But priestly ceremonies, burdened with pompous display, processions, and art to produce effect,

are abundant. Lighted tapers and outward display are very poor substitutes for spiritual vitality, which was wanting.”—[Manuscript 70, 1886](#).

Reflections on Valence

As Sister White went on her way, she reflected upon the opportunities in Valence to lead others to Christ.

“There was a young man of excellent capabilities—a bookbinder. He had been learning the trade for nearly three years, and for his labor he was paid only three dollars per week and boarded himself. His keeping the Sabbath threw him out of two days. His sister has a good education, but keeping the Sabbath places her where she labors daily for twenty cents per day in doing common serving. She would make a good missionary worker if she only had the chance. Her mother engages in working in the field, receiving twenty cents when she can obtain work. We must seek to connect them with the office in Basel.”—*Ibid.*

Third Visit to the Piedmont Valleys

Leaving Valence on Wednesday, November 3, Ellen White and the Ingses took third-class passage and found themselves in the midst of thirty-three Italians emigrating back to Italy from America.

And why was Mrs. White traveling third class? To save money as other Christian workers have done. Thirty-six francs to be exact! She had found D. T. Bourdeau short of funds and had given him nine dollars. Then too, she had paid the fare of her young watch-maker convert, Abel Bieder, to Basel so he could work with Elders Conradi and Erzberger in evangelistic meetings for the Germans.

At Modane the party was able to transfer to second class, and that evening arrived safely in Turin, where they spent the night. The next morning it was on to Torre Pellice for her third and final visit to the Piedmont valleys.

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A. C. Bourdeau had a package of letters for her from Basel, one of which was of special interest to her. She wrote Willie that the last

letter she opened “contained the important news of the birth of your second daughter.... I shall be much pleased to welcome the little one” ([Letter 110, 1886](#)).

W. C. White was properly proud of the new arrival and wrote to his brother, Edson: “Early Monday morning, November 1st, Mary presented me with a little girl.... They call her Mabel, and she promises to be as good as other Swiss children” (W. C. White letter, November 10, 1886). In another letter he described his new daughter as “fat, pretty (of course) and possessed of a most amiable disposition.... Ella says that I may give away the doll babies now, for this one is better” [Mabel, by name, at the age of 88 at the time of this writing, lives at Elmshaven, California. Her married name is workman.] (W. C. White letter to C. H. Jones, November 10, 1886).

The same evening she arrived in Torre Pellice, Ellen White witnessed an unusual occurrence, a spectacular star shower. She had been but a girl of five when the “stars fell” on November 13, 1833, and probably slept through it all. [A spectacular part of the 1833 star shower occurred very early in the morning in Portland, Maine, her home town. (See [The Great Controversy, 332-334](#).)] But she didn’t miss this November star shower.

“Here I was looking upon a sight I never expected to see—the starry heavens ablaze with shooting, falling stars, each leaving a tail of light in its passage across the heavens, and then disappearing. They were criss-crossing in every direction, yet we could not miss any of these bright jets of light. With emotions I cannot describe, we looked for hours upon these shooting, flashing meteors. I looked upon the snowcapped Alps, and the flashing lights seemed to fall directly upon them.... What did it mean?

“When we returned at midnight the same scenes continued. But for all the hundreds of stars flying across the heavens, we could not miss one—not a single glory in the starry host seemed to be missing. The following nights we had no such scene repeated. God’s host still shines in the firmament of the heavens.”—[Manuscript 73, 1886](#).

The servant of the Lord did not draw any lessons beyond that of the unchangeable certainty of the fixed stars and constellations behind the hundreds of meteorites that flashed for a moment and were gone. But there was a lesson in the stars that night, one that had at least some relevance to the problems that still plagued the work in northern Italy.

O. Corcorda, the former Adventist who had joined with Miles Grant in his attacks on the church during Ellen White's previous visit, had come again with his "flaming notices" that he would give the history of the Adventists from the beginning and thus discredit them ([Letter 110, 1886](#)). The outlook was discouraging, she admitted: "The people cannot tell what is piped or what is harped. They think one talks well and another entirely the opposite in faith talks well."—[Manuscript 73, 1886](#).

Adopting the same course she had taken previously, she made no reply to the attacks, but went quietly about her work. But Corcorda's "flaming notices" were like the meteorites that flashed brilliantly for a moment and soon burned out while the fixed stars of present truth remained to cheer the hearts of the believers with their precious light.

Mrs. White's diaries and letters for this final visit to Italy are uncommonly brief, but we do know she stayed two weeks. November 20 we find her back in Switzerland, visiting the Swiss churches at Lausanne and Bienne, returning home to Basel on Wednesday, November 24. Two days later she passed her fifty-ninth birthday.

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Chapter 24—a Bible-Centered Ministry

Two weeks of public evangelism at Nimes, France

In the two weeks Ellen White spent at Nimes, France, she presented twelve consecutive messages to the little company of believers there and the general public who were invited to attend. Ten of these sermons sketched in longhand are extant today. Some of these were preached in afternoon meetings, others in the evening. Bible in hand, Mrs. White would read her selected text and then elaborate upon the truth of the word. Like an evangelist, she presented a Christ-centered message. The titles of her sermons and the texts from which she preached follow:

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Sabbath, October 16, “If Thou Wilt Enter Into Life,” [Matthew 19:16-20](#) Sunday, October 17, “Come Unto Me,” [Matthew 11:28-30](#) Monday, October 18, “Walk in the Light,” [John 14:21](#) Wednesday, October 20, “The Ladder to Heaven,” [2 Peter 1:1](#) Thursday, October 21, “Search the Scriptures,” [2 Peter 1:19-21](#) Friday, October 22, “The Cross Before the Crown,” [Matthew 16:24-27](#) Sabbath, October 23, “God’s Law the Standard of Character,” [John 7:14-17](#). Sunday, October 24, “The Hope Set Before Us,” [1 John 3:1](#) Sabbath, October 30, “Two Standards,” [1 Corinthians 2:12-14](#) Sunday, October 31, “Gaining a Fitness for Heaven,” [Luke 12:34](#).

While all the addresses were Bible-based, it was in her presentation “Search the Scriptures,” given Thursday afternoon, October 21, that she led her hearers to appreciate and revere the Bible as the word of the living God. “Our text tells us,” she said, “that we have something sure, and that is the Scriptures that are revealed to us, and this is the voice of God that is speaking to us.”—[Manuscript 43, 1886](#).

In the pious Protestant home of her childhood, her godly parents, Robert and Eunice Harmon, taught her and the other seven children to have faith in the Holy Scriptures as “the voice of God” speaking to them. There was never any doubt throughout her lifetime about the inspiration of the Word of God, as she later wrote:

“In the Word of God the mind finds subject for the deepest thought, the loftiest aspiration. Here we may hold communion with patriarchs and prophets, and listen to the voice of the Eternal as He speaks with men.”—[Testimonies for the Church 5:25](#).

It was true of this diminutive woman from the United States as it was of young Timothy “that from a child thou has known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus” ([2 Timothy 3:15](#)).

While she was endowed with the gift of prophecy, she consistently directed her listeners to the messages of the prophets and apostles of old. This was her practice throughout her lifetime.

After presenting her early experiences and many of her early visions in her first book of only 64 pages, she wrote:

“I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word we are to be judged. God has, in that Word, promised to give visions in the ‘*last day s*’; not for a new rule of faith, but for the comfort of His people, and to correct those who err from Bible truth. Thus God dealt with Peter when He was about to send him to preach to the Gentiles ([Acts 10](#)).”—*Christian Experience and Views*, p. 64 ([Early Writings, 78](#)).

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The Need for Bible Study

Mrs. White’s sermon that autumn day at Nimes concentrated upon the need for Bible study and personal, prayerful investigation of the Scriptures. Her text was [2 Peter 1:19](#). Here are some of the thoughts she expressed on that occasion:

“We see and feel the importance of each having an understanding of the Scriptures. There may be those who will tell us of the things contained in the Word of God, but that will not meet the requirements. We must search the Scriptures for ourselves. There are special points that we must understand pertaining to our own time. We are living in an age of error and heresy on every hand. Christ has told us that ‘there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, who shall show great signs and wonders: insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.’ [Matthew 24:24](#). These teachers spoken of by Christ will come in sheep’s clothing, and will delude the people with their heresies, and this we shall see more and more as we draw nearer the end. Consequently it is of the greatest necessity that we search the Scriptures for ourselves, and learn their contents.

“Our text tells us that we have something sure, and that is the Scriptures that are revealed to us, and this is the voice of God that is speaking to us. One may come and say that he has truth, and such teachers will multiply, but we must not take their word in the matter. We must go directly to the Word. Feelings should not be our guide. The plain declaration of the Word is what is required. ‘All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.’ [2 Timothy 3:16-17](#).”—[Manuscript 43, 1886](#).

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Back to the Bible

One must understand Mrs. White’s veneration for the Word of God in order to grasp the character of her prophetic mission. The false prophet, by his testimony, makes of none effect the work of former prophets. The true prophet always brings the people back to the established, time-honored Word of God. [Scholars have noted

with special interest the extensive manner in which she employed scripture in her speaking and writing. The three-volume index to her published works denotes 150 two-column pages devoted entirely to scripture references from which she quoted in her books.]

Relevant to this understanding is the following passage:

“I took the precious Bible and surrounded it with the several *Testimonies for the Church*, given for the people of God. Here, said I, the cases of nearly all are met. The sins they are to shun are pointed out. The counsel that they desire can be found here, given for other cases situated similarly to themselves. God has been pleased to give you line upon line and precept upon precept. But there are not many of you that really know what is contained in the *Testimonies*. You are not familiar with the Scriptures. If you had made God’s word your study, with a desire to reach the Bible standard and attain to Christian perfection, you would not have needed the *Testimonies*. It is because you have neglected to acquaint yourselves with God’s inspired Book that He has sought to reach you by simple, direct testimonies.”—[Testimonies for the Church 5:664, 665](#).

Purpose of the Visions

Every Seventh-day Adventist should understand the purpose of the visions given to God’s servant and the testimonies that she wrote. Ellen White indicated that they were given: “To bring the minds of His people to His word.”—[Ibid., 5:663](#). “God has through the *Testimonies* simplified the great truths already given.”—[Ibid., 5:665](#). To call attention to Bible “principles for the formation of correct habits of living.”—[Ibid., 5:663, 664](#).

They were not given “for a new rule of faith, but for the comfort of His people, and to correct those who err from Bible truth.”—[Early Writings, 78](#). [243]

They were provided to specify “man’s duty to God and to his fellow man.”—[Testimonies for the Church 5:665](#). Also, “to encourage the desponding.”—[The Review and Herald, January 10,](#)

1856. (Read carefully [Testimonies for the Church 5:654-696](#); also *Testimony Treasures*, vol. 2, pp. 270-293.)

The Definition and Meaning of Scripture

But Ellen White was more than a champion of Bible truth, more than an advocate or promoter of Bible study and expositor of God's Word. To her was communicated by the Holy Spirit an understanding of Scripture.

As the Lord's messenger she received and bore God's Word to the people, explaining its meaning.

Years before, the Saviour instructed her:

“In your youth I set you apart to bear the message to the erring ones, to carry the word before unbelievers, and with pen and voice to reprove from the Word actions that are not right. Exhort from the Word. I will make My Word open to you. It shall not be as a strange language. In the true eloquence of simplicity, with voice and pen, the messages that I give shall be heard from one who has never learned in the schools. My Spirit and My power shall be with you.

“Be not afraid of man, for My shield shall protect you. It is not you that speaketh: it is the Lord that giveth the messages of warning and reproof. Never deviate from the truth *under any circumstances*. Give the light I shall give you. The messages for these last days shall be written in books, and shall stand immortalized, to testify against those who have once rejoiced in the light, but who have been led to give it up because of the seductive influences of evil.”—[Selected Messages 1:32](#).

“By His Holy Spirit the Lord has enabled me to perform the work which He gave me to do.”—[Ibid., 1:32, 33](#).

[244] As the New Testament prophets were given light on the meaning of Old Testament scriptures, so Ellen White received light from God on the correct interpretation of the teachings of the Bible prophets and apostles and further developed the truths taught by them.

The Testimony of S. N. Haskell

“What are some of the unmistakable fruits by which a true prophet may be recognized?” was a question the old pioneer Bible teacher S. N. Haskell would ask his students. He answered his own question as follows:

“The testimony of every true prophet will agree with the testimony of the prophets of God before him, and it may be a further development of the same truth uttered by them. The words of God are definite and pure, ‘as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation forever.’ [Psalm 12:6, 7](#). The words of God are represented as being refined; ‘As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the Lord is tried’ (refined, margin). [Psalm 18:30](#). in [Psalm 119:140](#), we find it spoken of as being ‘very pure’ (refined, margin)....

“No one can add anything to the revelation we have in the Bible, but every prophet who is inspired will develop the subject, or the words spoken by prophets before him...

“In [Psalm 138:2](#) are found these words, ‘Thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.’ In [Isaiah 42:21](#), we have the prophecy concerning Christ: ‘The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness’ sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable.’ An illustration of the principle of how it is magnified is found in [Matthew 5:21-26](#) which verses magnify the sixth commandment, while [verses 27-32](#) magnify the seventh commandment. It is this principle alone that is a positive proof of inspiration, and any prophet who does not make other scriptures seem broader and more wonderful, does not bear the right kind of fruit.”—S. N. HASKELL, quoted in F. C. Gilbert, *Divine Predictions Fulfilled*, pp. 29-33.

Haskell was an associate of Ellen White in labor and had observed carefully the fruitage of her ministry. He testified:

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“After over sixty years’ study of Mrs. White’s writings with the Bible, we can truthfully say that we know not of one Bible test of a true prophet but has been most literally fulfilled in her writings and in her character.”—[Selected Messages 1:33](#).

The Word and the Spirit

Four years before sailing for Europe, J. N. Andrews wrote in the *Review and Herald* an article titled “Our Use of the Visions of Sister White.” He made clear that the work of the Holy Spirit did not cease with the writing of the last book of the Bible, and that the ministry of prophets was not intended to end with Bible times. He also made the point that since the Holy Scriptures describe the Holy Spirit’s work in bestowing spiritual gifts upon believers until the end of time (see [1 Corinthians 12](#) and [Ephesians 4](#), that these texts are a part of Scripture and cannot be ignored by those who oppose the visions of Ellen White. He wrote:

“While ... we do heartily accept the Scriptures as teaching man’s whole duty toward God, we do not deny the Holy Spirit that place in the church which the Scriptures assign to it....

“Thus [1 Corinthians 12](#), and [Ephesians 4](#), which define the gifts of the Spirit of God, cannot really form a part of the rule of life of those who affirm that the Scriptures are so efficient in themselves that the gifts of the Spirit are unnecessary....

“The object of spiritual gifts is to maintain the living work of God in the church. They enable the Spirit of God to speak in the correction of wrongs, and in the exposure of iniquity. They are the means whereby God teaches His people when they are in danger of taking wrong steps. They are the means by which the Spirit of God sheds light upon church difficulties, when otherwise their adjustment would be impossible. They also constitute the means whereby God preserves His people from confusion by pointing out errors, by correct-

ing false interpretations of the Scriptures, and causing light to shine out upon that which is in danger of being wrongly understood, and therefore of being the cause of evil and division to the people of God. In short, their work is to unite the people of God in the same mind and in the same judgment upon the meaning of the Scriptures....

“In the reception of members into our churches, we desire on this subject [The baptismal candidate, of course, must also be fully informed on the other basic doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The subject of spiritual gifts is a necessary theme for prebaptismal instruction, and in all fairness to the candidate he should be informed concerning Ellen White’s prophetic ministry.] to know two things: 1. That they believe the Bible doctrine of Spiritual gifts; 2. That they will candidly acquaint themselves with the visions of Sr. White, which have ever held so prominent place in this work. We believe that every person standing thus and carrying out this purpose will be guided in the way of truth and righteousness. And those who occupy this ground, are never denied all the time they desire to decide in this matter.”—[The Review and Herald, February 15, 1870](#).

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In the light of Andrews’ observations, it is easier to see why Seventh-day Adventists regard Mrs. White’s writings as an exaltation and definition of the Bible text, but not an addition to or a contradiction of Bible teaching. Mrs. White’s inspiration [In a broad sense the inspiration of the prophet included the “divers manners” ([Hebrews 1:1](#)) In which he received guidance from the lord. In Mrs. White’s case note the following from the *Testimonies*, Volume 5:1. Visions, pages 671, 686; 2. Mind enlightened while reading the Bible, page 686; 3. Mind imbued with thoughts while preaching, page 678; 4. The accumulated wisdom of many revelations from God over a period of time, which qualified her to write messages of counsel not necessarily associated with any immediate vision, pages 683-691. As in ancient times the Lord spoke in divers manners to his messengers, so in Ellen White’s case she received the revelations and

then communicated the truths she received orally and in writing to the church.] must not be confused with the illumination of the Bible text available to all thinking, praying Christians (see [John 14:16, 17, 26](#)). Inspiration by the Holy Spirit embodies the reception and conveyance of truth while the illumination suggests an influencing of attitudes and spiritual perception.

Ellen White's evangelistic messages at Nimes encouraged implicit obedience to the Word of the Lord and to the law of God much as the words of Mary, the mother of Jesus, encouraged the servants at the marriage feast in Cana to obey the instructions of Christ: "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it" ([John 2:5](#)). "Do whatever He tells you!" The preaching of Ellen White led people into an experience in repentance and the saving grace of Christ after the Bible pattern.

Chapter 25—Christmas Day at Tramelan

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First church dedicated in Europe

The General Conference session of 1886 was in progress in the United States at the time Ellen White returned to Basel in late November. [The twenty-fifth session was held in Battle Creek, Michigan, 71 delegates present, November 18-December 6. George I. Butler was president of the general conference.] Whitney had gone to the session from Switzerland to represent the Central European Mission. Reports reached America of the success of Mrs. White's European journey, and it was obvious at the session that there was a strong demand for her return to America in time for the spring camp meetings. Naturally the American brethren would like to hear reports of the work in Europe, and would welcome her ministry, but the action taken only requested that she and W. C. White should return "whenever they feel that it is their duty."

It is not known exactly when Ellen White decided to return to the United States, but we know that on April 18, 1887, she wrote, "We are straining every power to close up our work here in Basel" ([Letter 82, 1887](#)).

A petition from Australia was also presented to the General Conference in session asking Mrs. White and W. C. White to visit that field. They were to honor the request five years later, and spend nine fruitful years in the land "down under."

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Until then there was plenty of good hard work to keep her busy. At the publishing house another financial crisis was in the making. Debts had come due, and the institution was overdrawn at the bank in Basel by 30,000 francs, or \$6,000. There was not even enough money to pay the office workers their regular salaries.

At the session the church leaders resolved to raise \$100,000 to meet the ever-growing financial demands of the cause as it expanded in Europe, South Africa, Australia, and the West Indies, as well as in the United States. But the money was needed urgently and

immediately in Basel. Willie wrote to Elder Haskell that though it was very “refreshing” to read that the brethren had resolved to raise \$100,000, it was a little like the “old story of Protestants being chained in a dungeon, and starved to death, with abundance of good food just out of their reach.” He was more than a little relieved when a draft for \$2,000 came in mid-December.

Need of All Missionaries

In the appeal Mrs. White wrote to the leaders in Battle Creek at this time, she took a broad view of the situation and saw beyond the need for money the more urgent need for good young men.

“From time to time,” she wrote. “I have felt urged by the Spirit of the Lord to bear a testimony to our brethren in regard to the necessity of procuring the very best talent to work in our various institutions.” The men must be “trained men, men whom God can teach.... They must be thinking men, men who bear God’s impress, and who are steadily progressing in holiness.... If they are growing men ... they will, like the sun, pursue an undeviating course, and they will grow in vision and in favor with God” ([Letter 63, 1886](#); [Selected Messages 2:190](#)).

[249] She appealed for excellence in every line. “Our institutions are doing a great and final work for the world,” she wrote, “and should have in their employ the very best talent to be obtained anywhere” ([Letter 63, 1886](#)).

Not only ministers were needed but most able businessmen:

“I was shown the great deficiency there is in keeping the accounts in the various departments of the cause. Bookkeeping is and ever will be an important part of our work, and those who have become intelligent in it are greatly needed in all our institutions.... This branch of the work has been neglected shamefully, and altogether too long. It is a shame to allow work of such magnitude to be done in a defective, bungling manner. God wants as perfect work as it is possible for human beings to do.... Bookkeeping is a subject that needs to be studied in

order that it may be done with correctness and dispatch and without worry and taxation.”—*Ibid.*

It is not surprising that the General Conference session voted to send one of their best accountants, A. H. Mason, to Basel just at this juncture to audit the books, set up a new and better system of record keeping, and train bookkeepers to carry on when he left.

Evangelistic Team in Basel

While the financial status of the publishing work was discouraging, on the evangelistic front prospects were encouraging. Conradi and Erzberger had been holding meetings among the German-speaking Swiss for some time, and Ellen White was elated by their success: “Brethren Conradi and Erzberger are two good workmen,” she testified late in December. “They have been laboring here in Basel for the last two months. The hall they have hired is filled, and some evenings a small room adjoining the hall is filled. Brother Erzberger told me last evening that sixteen had decided to keep the Sabbath. This is very encouraging to us all.”—[Letter 60, 1886](#).

Meanwhile, William Ings had discovered a new approach in the use of our literature. Accompanied by Oscar Roth, he began to canvass the better hotels, attempting to leave neatly bound copies of Adventist papers in the lobbies. To their surprise, there was hardly a hotel that refused to accept the journals. Plans were quickly laid to implement the idea in hotels all over Europe—wherever there were trusted church members who could be sure the papers were kept up to date and in good condition.

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Church Dedication at Tramelan

And another milestone had been reached in the work in Europe; the first Seventh-day Adventist church building was ready for dedication in Tramelan, Switzerland. [The little structure in the village of tramelan, at the time of publication of this book, still stands like a cherished antique in a quiet little garden, with walls in front and houses on either side and in back. It no longer belongs to the church, and at the time of this writing no plan is being implemented to secure

the property as a historical center of interest.] The structure built by the Roth family for 3,300 francs (US\$660) stood in the lot just behind their home. It was tiny, but it was a beginning, and Ellen White was pleased with it. She was invited to be the dedicatory speaker.

Early in the morning, the day before Christmas, she took the train out of Basel, accompanied by William and Jenny Ings. The weather was appropriate to the season:

“We passed slowly along and the trees looked very beautiful laden down with pure, fresh snow.... I was back in my girlhood in my native state [of Maine] passing through the pine forests and exclaiming with delight at the lovely picture presented, but I had seen nothing to remind me of this scene so thoroughly as this morning. Thirty years ago such scenes were familiar in the state of Maine.”—[Manuscript 72, 1886](#).

One of the Roth boys was waiting at the station with another European “first” for Mrs. White—a sleigh ride in the snow to the Roth home. She was delighted with it. Believers had gathered from several Swiss churches for this important occasion, and that night Elder Erzberger addressed the Germans among them.

[251] On Sabbath, Christmas Day, Ellen White spoke for the official dedication of the little chapel. Appropriately she took her text from [1 Kings 8](#), where the dedication of Solomon’s Temple is described.

“It is true that the company at Tramelan is small ... but the Lord’s presence is not confined to numbers.... We are thankful that God has put it into the heart of the Brethren Roth to build this comfortable, neat house for the worship of God.... The first tabernacle, built according to God’s directions, was indeed blessed of Him. The people thus were preparing themselves to worship in the temple not made with hands—a temple in the heavens. The stones of the temple built by Solomon were all prepared at the quarry and then brought to the temple site.... Even so, the mighty cleaver of truth has

taken out a people from the quarry of the world and is fitting this people, who profess to be the children of God, for a place in His heavenly temple.”—[Manuscript 49, 1886](#).

Then she recalled early churches in Battle Creek history:

“The first house [The first church building erected by Seventh-day Adventists was built in Battle Creek, Michigan, in the early Spring of 1855. It was 18 x 24 feet and seated 40 worshipers. It was called the house of prayer.] built in Battle Creek was only about one third larger than this, and when we entered that building we felt happy. The meetings heretofore had been held in a private house. We all felt poor, but we felt that we must have a place to dedicate to the Lord.... In two years it had to be given up for a larger one. [The second Battle Creek Church was built in 1857. In this larger building the name *Seventh-day Adventist* was chosen by a committee of leaders, October 1, 1860. Mrs. White wrote concerning this name: “We are Seventh-day Adventists. Are we ashamed of our name? We answer no, no! We are not. It is the name the Lord has given us. It points out the truth that is to be the test of the churches.”—[Letter 110, 1902](#). (See [Selected Messages 2:384](#))]. It was not long before the third had to be built, and then the present one which will seat three thousand persons.... We hope that the Lord will so bless your work that this house will prove too small for you. We expect to see other houses erected by our people and in this our faith will be revealed, for faith without works is dead. This house, so small as it is, is recorded in heaven. I can come to visit you with more courage now than heretofore because the people will see that you mean business.”—*Ibid.*

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She went on to talk about reverence in the house of God, and the solemn importance of worship together. She concluded:

“Above everything else, be at peace among yourselves ... and from this place may light and truth go out, and work upon the hearts of the people, and then your testimony will be felt. We must weave the principles of truth into our character and thus we can be prepared for the temple of God and be privileged to join in the anthem, Worthy is the Lamb.”—*Ibid.*

Future of the Advent People

Regarding the future of the Adventist people, she wrote that same year, 1886:

“Our people have been regarded as too insignificant to be worthy of notice, but a change will come. The Christian world is now making movements which will necessarily bring commandment-keeping people into prominence. There is a constant supplanting of God’s truth by the theories and false doctrines of human origin. Movements are being set on foot to enslave the consciences of those who would be loyal to God. The law-making powers will be against God’s people. Every soul will be tested. Oh, that we would, as a people, be wise for ourselves, and by precept and example impart that wisdom to our children! Every position of our faith will be searched into; and if we are not thorough Bible students, established, strengthened, and settled, the wisdom of the world’s great men will lead us astray.”—[Testimonies for the Church 5:546](#).

The next morning as the workers were meeting to discuss church business they noticed a crowd gathering down the road a short distance. a man who had “celebrated” Christmas with too much liquor had stumbled into the deep snow the night before, and, unable to extricate himself, had frozen to death. “He had a mother living,” Ellen White wrote sadly. “He had been a great grief to that mother, and now there will be mourning for this poor son who died in consequence of strong drink.”—[Manuscript 72, 1886](#).

Crowd Gathers in Large Baptist Church

That afternoon Mrs. White was scheduled to speak in the large Baptist church in Tramelan. a notice was sent to the pastor of the church, but he refused to read it to his congregation, thinking she would dwell on the Sabbath question. Nevertheless, there were nearly 300 waiting to hear her when she arrived at the church. Her sermon was on genuine faith. She was naturally interested in the responses of the people, and as they filed out, many of them greeted her with expressions like: "I shall take home that which I have heard; I see nothing objectionable in it."

The minister of the church said he was very sorry he had not announced the meeting. Had he known the subject, he certainly would have.

Returning to Basel, Mrs. White was on hand for a meeting the next evening in which the nativity story was presented. She gave a short talk. Then a fragrant evergreen tree was brought in loaded down with money gifts for the Saviour. The reason for this service during the Christmas season was to secure financial help for the colporteurs in Russia. Their ministry was made difficult by the fact that the Seventh-day Adventist Church was not recognized by the government. The threat of imprisonment hung over their heads, and their labors were performed with enormous difficulty. The Christmas tree in Basel yielded 429 francs for their support. Quite a harvest!

In the *Review*, Sister White had written:

"We are now nearing the close of another year, and shall we not make these festal days opportunities in which to bring to God our offerings? I cannot say sacrifices, for we shall only be rendering to God that which is His already, and which He has only entrusted to us till He shall call for it. God would be well pleased if on Christmas, each church

would have a Christmas tree on which shall be hung offerings, great and small, for these houses of worship.

"Letters of inquiry have come to us asking, Shall we have a Christmas tree? will it not be like the world? We answer, You can make it like the world if you have

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a disposition to do so, or you can make it as unlike the world as possible. There is no particular sin in selecting a fragrant evergreen, and placing it in our churches; but the sin lies in the motive which prompts to action, and the use which is made of the gifts placed upon the tree.

“The tree may be as tall and its branches as wide as shall best suit the occasion; but let its boughs be laden with the golden and silver fruit of your beneficence, and present this to Him as your Christmas gift. Let your donations be sanctified by prayer.”—[The Review and Herald, December 11, 1879](#).

Ellen White in her counsels about Christmas observance recognized that there was no Bible support for the celebration of the day, but she was practical enough to see that Christmas could not be passed by unnoticed by parents. The children would not understand. The wise procedure would be to direct the minds and hearts of the little ones to Christ, whose “birthday” was being celebrated. So she counseled them to bring their gifts to Jesus as the Wise Men did.

Her teaching was positive. The counsels were practical and dealt with the everyday issues the church must meet in its pilgrimage through this world.

“Let us represent the Christian life as it really is; let us make the way cheerful, inviting, interesting. We can do this if we will. We may fill our own minds with vivid pictures of spiritual and eternal things, and in so doing help to make them a reality to other minds.”—[Ibid., January 29, 1884](#).

Chapter 26—Literary Work

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As she was finishing her work of *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4 (*The Great Controversy*), in California early in 1884, Ellen White penned these words:

“Write, write, write, I feel that I must, and not delay. Great things are before us, and we want to call the people from their indifference, to get ready for that day. Things that are eternal crowd upon my vision day and night. The things that are temporal fade from my sight.”—[Letter 11a, 1884](#).

As the book came from the press, Seventh-day Adventists bought it eagerly and they read it earnestly. For several years it had been promised as the fourth and climaxing volume of the four-book series recounting the great controversy story from the fall of Lucifer and Creation through the centuries to our day and then to the new earth. As the author embarked for Europe in 1885, the book was enjoying a good sale among church members, and plans were being laid for its publication as a volume to be sold by colporteurs.

Coming to Europe and living in the environment of Reformation history together with reports of the successful sale of *The Great Controversy* in America and the calls from her European brethren for the book in their languages led Ellen White to begin to plan for the enlargement of it and other of the conflict books, and particularly volumes one and four for sale, both within and without the church.

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At first she thought of this as work she would undertake on returning to American shores. As the months stretched out and the realization finally came over her that if her work was to be effective she must continue on in Europe for a year or two, she, as we have seen settled down in Basel, making this her base for writing.

Having both her trusted helpers, Marian Davis, who had come to Switzerland in February, 1886, and her daughter-in-law, Mary

White, to assist her, Ellen White looked forward to real progress in book preparation. Before she could turn to the enlarging of the great controversy story, she must do her part in furnishing her sermons and the account of her travels in connection with the European trip for the forthcoming book *Historical Sketches of SDA Foreign Missions*.

Under her supervision, decisions had to be made as to what to include and what to omit. Her sermons had to be edited. Then there were the historical articles prepared by the leading workers in Europe about the beginnings of the work—all these Marian had to check for accuracy and proper spelling of names.

By early November, *Historical Sketches* was completed. It was an attractive, 294-page, illustrated, two-column volume in English and would sell in America for 90 cents. But Marian was a little discouraged. She had come over in February to work on the *Spirit of Prophecy* volumes, she had been in Europe nearly a year, and Ellen White had up to that time almost no time to write for the new, enlarged books.

In addition to the work on *Historical Sketches*, there were editing and typing of testimonies to individuals, preparing and duplicating addresses to be read at camp meetings in America, and sending Ellen White's sermons and other articles for publication in the *Review and Signs of the Times*.

[257] Finally, in December, 1886, Ellen White began seriously the work of revising and enlarging volume 1—*Patriarchs and Prophets*.

All through the first three months of 1887, she concentrated her efforts on the Old Testament history. The plan was to finish the manuscript in Europe and have the book published and on the market by Christmas of 1887. But forces were at work that changed her plans.

C. H. Jones, the manager of Pacific Press, in California, had written that there was a need for a new edition of volume 4, *The Great Controversy*.

Sales had been so good that the printing plates were already showing signs of wear. It was decided to reset the book in larger type. Meanwhile, J. G. Matteson had completed a Danish-Norwegian translation of the book, and the Scandinavian leaders were eager to publish it for their colporteurs. In America, Danish and Swedish immigrants were also calling for it.

Seeing the success of the book in America, German and French workers in Europe were eager to get *The Great Controversy* in their languages, and translators in Basel were ready to begin the work.

W. C. White talked the situation over with his mother and wrote to C. H. Jones that they would give the book a careful examination, smooth out some expressions that were not as clear as they might be, and add some more references at the foot of the pages. By mid-April, 1887, Ellen White had laid aside her work on volume 1 and had turned to volume 4, and was working diligently to get the latter book ready.

The writing of the great controversy story stemmed from several visions, but particularly two that were very comprehensive. One was given to Ellen White in 1848 and the other on March 14, 1858. In great panoramic views the history of the age-long conflict between Christ and His angels and Satan and his angels passed before her. Of this she later wrote:

“Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the scenes of the long-continued conflict between good and evil have

been opened to the writer of these pages. From time to time I have been permitted to behold the working, in different ages, of the great controversy between Christ, the Prince of life, the Author of our salvation, and Satan, the prince of evil, the author of sin, the first transgressor of God’s holy law....

“As the Spirit of God has opened to my mind the great truths of His word, and the scenes of the past and the future, I have been bidden to make known to others that which has thus been revealed—to trace the history of the controversy in past ages, and especially so to present it as to shed a light on the fast-approaching struggle of the future.”—[The Great Controversy](#), x, xi, Introduction.

When in the summer of 1858 her first published account came from the press, it was comprehensive in its over-all outline, but brief

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and sketchy, and the high points of the great controversy story were encompassed in a book of 219 small pages. [The volume bore the title of *Spiritual Gifts*, Volume one, “the great controversy between Christ and his angels, and Satan and his angels.”] Considering the fact that there were then fewer than three thousand Sabbathkeeping Adventists, the book rated well for size.

The volume opens with the words. “The Lord has shown me that Satan was once an honored angel in heaven.” At least once for each page, by the use of such phrases as “I saw,” “I was shown,” “As I beheld,” et cetera, the readers are reminded that what is before them is an eyewitness account, as it were, of the great controversy.

The main part deals with the life and work of Jesus, the early Christian church, the period of time to the Advent Movement, and then events to the new earth.

The span of centuries between the apostles and the Advent Movement is encompassed in twenty-one small pages. Nonetheless, the reader easily detects that the author is describing events as she in vision witnessed them transpiring. At times symbolic representations spanned and summarized the events of important periods. Chapter 17, entitled “The Great Apostasy,” opens with the words:

“I was carried forward to the time when the heathen idolaters cruelly persecuted the Christians, and killed them.”—Page 103.

“It was presented before me in the following manner: a large company of heathen idolaters bore a black banner upon which were figures of the sun, moon, and stars. The company seemed to be very fierce and angry.

“I was then shown another company bearing a pure white banner, and upon it was written Purity, and Holiness unto the Lord. Their countenances were marked with firmness and heavenly resignation. I saw the heathen idolaters approach them, and there was a great slaughter. The Christians melted away before them.”—Page 105.

The next chapter, “Mystery of Iniquity,” continues in the same vein, with the events of centuries reduced to a few scenes and some symbolic representations.

There is a five-page chapter titled “The Reformation,” with Martin Luther and Melanchthon introduced (page 120) and other Reformers alluded to.

“Luther was chosen to breast the storm, and stand up against the ire of a fallen church, and strengthen the few who were faithful to their holy profession. He was ever fearful of offending God.”—Page 120.

“I saw that Luther was ardent and zealous, fearless and bold in reproving sin, and advocating the truth.... Luther possessed fire, zeal, courage and boldness, and at times might go too far; but God raised up Melanchthon, who was just the opposite in character, to aid Luther, and carry on the work of reformation.... I was shown the wisdom of God in choosing these two men, of different characters to carry on the work of reformation.

“I was then carried back to the days of the apostles, and saw that God chose as companions an ardent and zealous Peter, and a mild, patient, meek John.”—Pages 122, 123.

Coming to the Advent Movement, Ellen White opens the chapter titled “William Miller” with the words:

“I saw that God sent His angel to move upon the heart of a farmer who had not believed the Bible, and led him to search the prophecies. Angels of God repeatedly visited that chosen one, and guided his mind, and opened his understanding to prophecies which had ever been dark to God’s people.”—Page 128.

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The internal evidence is clear. Ellen White in vision was shown events taking place and at the same time was taken “behind the scenes,” so to speak, to gain a perception of the deeper meanings involved in what she saw. There is no evidence that there was

imparted to her the whole of world history, or even all the events of the history of the periods that passed before her in panoramic view. But that she did see the transpiring of historical events involving the Christian church and the Reformation cannot be denied when one reads this initial E. G. White account thoughtfully.

[261] *The Great Controversy* vision of 1858 created an interest on the part of James and Ellen White in reading the history of the Reformation of the sixteenth century, and they did so, comparing and interpreting the events in the light God gave to her as to events, their philosophy and significance. Of this her son W. C. White reports:

“When I was a mere boy, I heard her read D’Aubigne’s *History of the Reformation* to my father. She read to him a large part, if not the whole, of the five volumes. She has read other histories of the Reformation. This has helped her to locate and describe many of the events and the movements presented to her in vision. This is somewhat similar to the way in which the study of the Bible helps her to locate and describe the many figurative representations given to her regarding the development of the great controversy in our day between truth and error.”-W. C. White in an address to the General Conference Council, October 30, 1911. Quoted in [The Ellen G. White Writings, 189](#). [For a more detailed discussion of Ellen White’s writing in the field of reformation history, the reader is referred to the currently available book, *The Writings of Ellen G. White*, Prepared by arthur L. White.]

As time passed, two editions of the little 1858 book were sold out. The church had grown and could handle larger books. As the years passed by, in many visions certain parts of the great controversy story were repeated to Ellen White in greater detail. Consequently she decided to present the great controversy story in larger volumes. As she wrote of the Reformation, she quite naturally turned to accepted Reformation historians and in her description of events often quoted from them.

Of this she wrote in 1888.

“In some cases where a historian has so grouped together events as to afford, in brief, a comprehensive view of the subject, or has summarized details in a convenient manner, his words have been quoted.”—*Ibid.*, [xii](#), Introduction.

And she explains:

“The quotations are not given for the purpose of citing that writer as authority, but because his statement affords a ready and forcible presentation of the subject.”—*Ibid.*

The book published in 1884 picked up the great controversy story with the account of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, dealt with the apostasy of the Christian church, the Dark Ages, the Reformation, et cetera. This was followed by the account of the Advent Movement, the development of a church under the messages of the three angels of [Revelation 14](#), then sweeps through in prophetic forecast to the second advent of Christ, the millennium, the destruction of the wicked, and the earth made new. It contained 492 pages of text, followed by certain appendix notes.

This was the book that Ellen White, now in Europe in 1887, with the aid of her literary assistants, was enlarging to meet a wider reading audience both in America and in Europe.

She found that her visits in the countries of Europe to places linked with the scenes of the Reformation aided in depicting the scenes by pen. Of this her son wrote:

“During her two years residence in Basel, she visited many places where events of special importance occurred in the Reformation days. This refreshed her memory as to what she had been shown and this led to important enlargement in those portions of the book dealing with the Reformation days.”—W. C. White letter to L. E. Froom, December 13, 1934. Quoted in [The Ellen G. White Writings](#), 127.

And while in Europe, as has been noted in chapter 9, as she reported her visit to Sweden and recounted the experiences of the child preacher, she wrote:

“Years ago the work of the first message in these countries was presented before me, and I was shown circumstances similar to those related above.”—[Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists, 206.](#)

On one occasion W. C. White recounted an enlightening experience in Basel:

“One Sabbath, at Basel, as I was reading Wylie’s *History of Protestantism*, telling about the experience of the Roman armies coming against the Hungarians [Bohemians], and how a large body of persecutors would see a little body of Protestants, and become frightened, and beat a hasty retreat. As I read it to Mother, she interrupted me, and told me a lot of things in the pages ahead, and told me many things not in the book at all. She said, ‘I never read about it, but that scene has been presented to me over and over again. I have seen the papal armies, and sometimes before they had come in sight of the Protestants, the angels of God would give them a representation of large armies, that would make them flee.’

“I said, ‘Why did you not put it into your book? [*Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 4]. She said, ‘I did not know where to put it.’” W. C. White talk at Takoma Hall, Takoma Park, Maryland, December 17, 1905. Quoted in [The Ellen G. White Writings, 126.](#)

[263] Of her visit to Zurich, Switzerland, he wrote:

“I was with Mother when we visited Zurich and I well remember how thoroughly her mind was aroused by seeing the old cathedral and the market place and she spoke of them as they were in the days of Zwingli.”-W.

C. White letter to L. E. Froom, December 13, 1934.
Quoted in [The Ellen G. White Writings, 127](#).

In later years she also recounted how her mind was refreshed as she was writing the history.

“While writing the manuscript of ‘Great Controversy,’ I was often conscious of the presence of the angels of God. And many times the scenes about which I was writing were presented to me anew in visions of the night, so that they were fresh and vivid in my mind.”—E. G. White [Letter 56, 1911](#). Published in [The Ellen G. White Writings, 191, 192](#).

In her work in Basel, Ellen White was appreciative of having access to Elder Andrews’ library now at the publishing house and could gain easy access to accepted historical works as she wrote, in the spring and summer, on *The Great Controversy* manuscript.

At the same time, the work was being prepared for translation. W. C. White explained in a letter to J. H. Waggoner dated April 15, 1887:

“We are now reading it [Vol. 4] through with those who are to translate it into German and French and by discussing various points we think it will enable them to make a better translation. We are finding some places where corrections should be made in the English and on some points Mother wishes to add. She is now writing about Huss, which will make chapter five a little larger. She is also writing about Zwingle.”

Each morning then, at seven, a little group gathered in the office library: W. C. White, Marian Davis, B. L. Whitney, and the French and German translators. W. C. White commented on the type of problems they discovered: “We find several places where figurative language is used, which though perfectly plain to SDA’s and those familiar with the Bible may not be clear to all the readers to whom your new edition will go.” Years later, he recalled:

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“When we reached those chapters relating to the Reformation in Germany and France, the translators would comment on the appropriateness of the selection of historical events which Sister White had chosen, and in two instances which I remember, they suggested that there were other events of corresponding importance which she had not mentioned.

“When this was brought to her attention, she requested that the histories be brought to her that she might consider the importance of the events which had been mentioned. The reading of the history refreshed to her mind that which she had seen, after which she wrote a description of the event.”—[The Ellen G. White Writings, 128](#).

In mid-April, 1887, Ellen White herself told of her work in a letter to her son Edson:

“I stopped my work on that [Vol. 1] to put additions into Volume 4. I work early and constantly until dark, then retire early and generally rise between three and four.”—[Letter 82, 1887](#).

Several years later she would recall:

“The words have been spoken in a charge to me, ‘Write in a book the things thou hast seen and heard, and let it go to all people; for the time is at hand when past history will be repeated.’ I have been aroused at one, two, or three o’clock in the morning, with some point forcibly impressed upon my mind, as if spoken by the voice of God...

“I was shown ... that I should devote myself to writing out the important matters for Volume 4, and that the warnings must go where the living messenger could not go, and that it would call the attention of many to the important events to occur in the closing scenes of this world’s history.”—[Letter 1, 1890](#). (May 14, 1890.)

Another objective of the revision and enlargement of *The Great Controversy* was to make it more understandable to the people of Europe:

“Mother has entered heartily into this work of making the book more suitable for European readers,” W. C. White wrote, “and has added several important passages.”

While this work was going on, the publication of the book in Norway and in America was held up, but with important additions coming from the pen of Ellen White there was nothing to do but wait. For more than a month, Mrs. White wrote energetically—early and late. Her diary entries sometimes contain nothing more than the number of pages she had produced: [265]

April 23 22 pages letter paper April 24 22 pages letter paper April 25 32 pages letter paper April 26 17 pages letter paper, 12 pages notepaper April 27 wrote 18 pages letter paper April 28 20 pages letter paper April 29 8 pages letter paper, 12 pages note.

It was near the end of this period of intensive writing that she made the visit to Zurich referred to earlier. W. C. White explained the purpose:

“For several days we have been thinking of making a short visit to Zurich. We have been reading the account of Zwingle’s work, and before leaving [Europe] we want to see his city. Mother is especially anxious to see Zurich, and we have some business matters to attend to also.”

While good progress was made on the enlargement of *The Great Controversy* the work was unfinished when it came time to leave Basel for the last round of visits in Germany, Scandinavia, and England. Literary work usually takes longer than the most optimistic estimates of the time that would be involved. She would take the unfinished manuscript of both *Patriarchs and Prophets* and *The*

Great Controversy back with her to America. At her Healdsburg, California, home she would finish *The Great Controversy* in April, 1888, and *Patriarchs and Prophets* in early 1890.

Nonetheless, Ellen G. White's literary work done in Basel formed an important segment of her published messages.

Chapter 27—The Final Months in Switzerland

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“Snapshots” from her diary

Late in 1886, as noted, Mrs. White began to think in terms of summarizing her efforts in Europe. Her thoughts turned to the success attending the proclamation of the Advent message in the Old World. Her reflections were not those of a tourist who had come to Europe to see the wonders of the stately old cities, or even the magnificent scenery. Her heart was impressed more by the work of God upon recreated human lives than the wonders of His created works. And she was concerned about the unfinished task of the church.

“I have now been in Europe 15 months. I have visited and labored in Switzerland, Italy, England, Denmark, Sweden, Norway and France. In all these places the banner of truth stands unfurled—the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus—and yet there are very many large cities as well as small that have not had the message proclaimed to the inhabitants.”—[Manuscript 76, 1886](#).

And now it was wintertime. And winter in mid-Europe and north of the Alps can be severe, with travel restrictions imposed by the icy weather. We see Ellen White in the coldest months of late 1886 and early 1887, limiting her work largely to Basel.

A brief preview of the high lights of those final months in German-speaking Switzerland before returning to America provides the following snapshot pictures of her activities:

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Sabbath, January 1, 1887: As always, Ellen White is challenged by the prospects of a new year with its fresh opportunities, and its privileges and responsibilities. It was to her a time to begin again.

In her diary she wrote about a special little gathering in Basel:

“I spoke to 25 who understood English, without an interpreter, in regard to our duty and obligations to God and how to begin the year aright. We then had a social meeting. Many testimonies were borne and many confessions made well wet down with tears. It was a profitable meeting.”—[Manuscript 29, 1887](#).

Another Visit to Tramelan

On February 5 through 7 she is again at Tramelan for a weekend of meetings accompanied by Elder Ings with Jean Vuilleumier as interpreter.

In the Sabbath afternoon meeting she took her text from [Malachi 3:16-18](#) and [4:1, 2](#). God gave her freedom in speaking. The Spirit of the Lord took her words and brought them home with power to the hearts of the listeners, and in the social meeting that followed, “Many testimonies were borne with deep feeling.”

This heart-warming meeting was typical of the Spirit-filled revival and reformation services conducted by Ellen White wherever she went, not simply in Europe, but in Australia and America. The results were always wholesome with conversions and baptisms of new people, and the undergirding of the faith of the believers. While the meetings were not spectacular, there developed a cumulative wave of power and influence that swept over the churches of Europe while Mrs. White was among them like the rising surf of the sea—washing and cleansing as it rose and fell.

[268] The care of Brother Guenin is an example of this influence. He testified with thanksgiving and praised the Lord because of recent changes that had developed in his own family. His eldest son, who had dropped out of the church for about a year, was present at the meeting and “spoke with deep feeling, confessing his wrongs. His tears flowed freely. He said he would change his course.... He seemed to be in real earnest,” she wrote (*Ibid.*).

Brother Guenin’s wife arose and admitted that she had entertained prejudice in her heart regarding visiting ministers from America, and this had kept her away from the Lord and the church. “But a change came over her and she expressed her desire to take part with the people of God” (*Ibid.*).

And there was Guenin's brother for whom he had prayed for years. This man lived a few miles from Tramelan. He was deeply exercised upon the Sabbath. He told his wife that he could not work another Sabbath. His tools were so heavy in his hands when he labored with them on the Sabbath day, it seemed as though they would drop to the floor. So he understood this to be God's confirmation of His truth. He fully decided to keep the Sabbath. With his brother's conversion, Brother Guenin's testimony was one of buoyant and cheerful praise. God had truly worked miracles on behalf of his relatives.

There were other testimonies. For example, a "young man who had fallen into great sin arose and made a humble confession and asked the forgiveness of those he had injured" (*Ibid.*).

There was still another case, an intelligent man, "deeply interested in the truth." Prayers had been offered that this gentleman would take a decided stand. This he did finally, expecting to lose his position, but his employer told him to go on as he had done before, and thus the Lord worked in his favor.

At the close of the meeting Brother Guenin "went to all in the house shaking hands while the tears ran down his face. He shook hands with his three sisters—all strong in the faith—and saluted them. He seemed to be deeply affected. There was weeping upon the necks of some of the brethren as they embraced each other. Sister Roth said, 'Peace has come into my house'" (*Ibid.*).

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Temperance Lecture in Baptist Chapel

On Sunday Mrs. White spoke on the subject of temperance to approximately 200 people in the National Baptist church. The National minister opened the meeting with prayer and singing. For two hours she spoke to an audience who listened with respect to this earnest little mother from faraway America. "There was not one who was asleep or uneasy," she could testify (*Ibid.*).

This was Sister White's third visit to Tramelan, and it came only a few weeks after the Christmas Day dedication of the church in 1886. In spite of her brief stay, she spoke four times and wrote 50 pages of notepaper to church members who needed counsel.

She returned to Basel, Monday morning, February 7, leaving at eight o'clock in a sleigh. At the station she took a little train with only two compartments, in which she rode six miles to Tavannes. Then she stepped on board the regular train, which took her without change to Basel.

The Swiss Conference of 1887

Reporting in the *Review and Herald*, Mrs. White wrote:

“The Swiss Conference commenced here Thursday evening, February 17. There were quite a number present from abroad.... We have had delegates ... from France, Switzerland and Italy, and also a good representation of our brethren and sisters; and as I looked upon the people assembled, and saw such an intelligent, interested congregation as filled our chapel so that extra seats had to be brought in, my heart was filled with gratitude to God to see the marked change, the improvement over one year ago. I knew that the Lord had been at work by His Holy Spirit, and could see that progress had been made in many directions. There have been additions to the churches in La Chaux-de-Fonds, Lausanne, and Basel, and in other places; and as one soul saved is of more value with God than the whole world, why should we not praise God for this good work?”—April 19, 1887.

[270] On Friday she preached from one of her favorite texts, [John 15:1-8](#). Three meetings were assigned to her for the Sabbath day—morning, afternoon, and evening. Her subject at the evening service was drawn from Daniel, chapter one. Temperance was a theme God had represented to her as of great importance. She continued on Sunday morning to stress the broad place of temperance in the Christian's life. This time her text was [Romans 9:24-27](#).

“I never felt more in earnest when addressing a people on the subject of temperance, and we had evidence on this occasion that many hearts were deeply

impressed. a request was made for me to speak again on the subject of temperance Sunday evening, which I did. There seemed to be no diminishing of the interest. After the discourse Sunday evening, the pledge was circulated, and one hundred and thirty-seven names were attached.”—*Ibid.*

Signing the Temperance Pledge

But some of the Adventists would not sign the temperance pledge. The reasons given were not justified, however. Mrs. White explained:

“Their excuse was that their work called them into places where wine would be passed to them (as is customary in this country), and they could not refuse to take it for fear of offending those for whom they worked. I thought that here was a very good opportunity for them to lift the cross, and let their light shine forth as God’s peculiar people whom He was purifying unto Himself.

“We should never be ashamed of temperance in all things, while we remember Christ’s long and painful fast to break the power of Satan’s temptations over the race upon the point of appetite. Christ fought the battle in painfulness, in weakness, and conquered Satan, making it possible for man to conquer in the name and strength of Jesus Christ. Then why should the followers of Jesus be ashamed to refuse the tempting wine cup?”—*Ibid.*

And what was to be done about the drinking of beer? Was this matter of no consequence for the Adventist?

“The beer-drinkers will present their glasses of beer, and those who claim to be children of God may plead the same excuse for not signing the temperance pledge,—because they will be treated with beer, and it will not be agreeable to refuse. These excuses may be carried to any length, but they are not of any weight; and we were sorry that any who claimed to believe the truth should

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refuse to sign the pledge—refuse to put barriers about their souls and fortify themselves against temptation. They choose to leave the bars down, so that they can readily step over and accept temptation without making the effort to resist it.”—*Ibid.*

The servant of God brought the test of temperance home to the consciences of the people with fine distinction:

“Jesus endured the painful fast in our behalf, and conquered Satan in every temptation, thus making it possible for man to conquer in his own behalf, and on his own account, through the strength brought to him by this mighty victory gained as man’s substitute and surety. We thank the Lord that a victory was gained upon these points, even here in Basel; and we hope to carry our brethren and sisters up to a still higher standard to sign the pledge to abstain from Java coffee and the herb that comes from China. We see that there are some who need to take this step in reform.”—*Ibid.*

The Swiss Conference continued until March 8. During the nearly three weeks of the session Ellen White spoke 17 times. Apparently there were some obstreperous and harsh spirits to be conquered, for Ellen White felt the need for words to be spoken about kindness and patience, and on Sunday, March 6, she addressed the workers from [Ephesians 6:10-12](#). Then she wrote: “My mind was taken into a channel wholly unexpectedly to me upon the subject of patience and kindness and forbearance with one another.”—[Manuscript 29, 1887](#).

Practical Help for the Workers

[272] And there were other matters “closer to home” that required attention. One of the difficulties to be faced at headquarters centered on a young lady named Alace, daughter of a dedicated press worker. Alace had run away from home. Ellen White explained that “this is the fruit of ... flirtations and courtships.” This is no doubt considered a little chapter in romance resulting from the reading of “fiction and

romance,” she said. Young people who read their Bibles did not “do these things.” (*Ibid.*) So we see her seeking to lead the youth in Basel to the Word of God. “Wherewithal shall a young man [woman] cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word” ([Psalm 119:9](#)).

And when the “cooks” at the publishing house were scrimping a bit on the meals the practical and realistic Mrs. White urged an abundance of nourishing food. About a month after the Swiss Conference terminated, she had a meeting with the families connected with the publishing house. “I spoke very plainly,” she said, “about how the boarders should be treated and how the table should be furnished with nourishing food.... We hope for a change in some respects for the better.”—*Ibid.*

In mid-April she wrote that “we are straining every power to close up our work in Basel.... We shall leave here for Prussia on the 20th of May for conference meetings” ([Letter 82, 1887](#); [Manuscript 29, 1887](#)). Here were indications that the decision had been made to terminate the extended European trip and head westward to her homeland.

Visits to Zurich

But before leaving they felt they must spend a day in Zurich. So May 12, in the company of W. C. White and his wife, Marian Davis, and Elder Whitney, Mrs. White left by train for this adventure. It was a rainy, cloudy day. At noon they arrived in the famous northern city of Switzerland where Ulrich Zwingli proclaimed the truth of justification by faith during the sixteenth century.

Elders Conradi and Erzberger met the party at the train station. One of the first events of the day was to visit a distinguished Zurich landmark, the Gross Munster with its twin towers, a portion of which was said to have been built about A.D. 300. Mrs. White was told that in those early times the chapels had no seats. The congregation simply stood and listened to the preacher.

In a little chapel near the church she delighted in scanning the ancient books in Latin and Greek. Zwingli’s Bible fascinated her. She “saw the veritable writing of Zwingli,” she said.

Emerging into the sunlight again, they viewed a life-sized monument of Zwingli. The statue, done in bronze, represented the Reformer as both soldier and chaplain, about to go into battle.

“One hand rests upon the handle of his sword,” she wrote, “while in the other hand he clasps a Bible.”—[Manuscript 29, 1887](#). W. C. White half a century later wrote of his observations on that day:

“I was with Mother when we visited Zurich and I well remember how thoroughly her mind was aroused by seeing the old cathedral and the market place and she spoke of them as they were in the days of Zwingli.”—W. C. White letter to L. E. Froom, December 13, 1934.

The next year she was to write about Zwingli and his struggles on the field of religious faith and actual war in *The Great Controversy*:

“In Switzerland as in Germany, there came dark days for the Reformation. While many cantons accepted the reformed faith, others clung with blind persistence to the creed of Rome. Their persecution of those who desired to receive the truth finally gave rise to civil war. Zwingli and many who had united with him in reform fell on the bloody field of Cappel.”—Pages 211, 212.

A Boat Ride on Lake Zurich

“After dinner, accompanied by Brother Erzberger, we had a very pleasant ride on Lake Zurich in a row boat. The water was very smooth and we had a good view of the cantons on [around] Zurich Lake. We could see the mountains in the background. This lake is thirty-five miles long and we could gather a good idea of the extent of Zurich and the many cantons situated on the borders of the lake. This is a beautiful expanse of water enclosed with banks which swell upwards with terraced vineyards and pine forests from amid which hamlets and white villas gleam out amid the trees and cultivated hills, which give variety and beauty to the scenery, while in the far-off distance the glaciers are seen stretching their

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icy peaks to the very skies, blending with the golden clouds. On the right the region is walled in with the craggy ramparts of the Abbis Alps, but the mountains stand back from the shore and this permits the light to fall freely upon the bosom of the lake and on the ample sweep of its lovely and fertile banks, giving a charm to the picture that the pen of the artists could not possibly describe.”—[Manuscript 29, 1887](#).

It was in the midst of this natural beauty and splendor that Zwingli, the Swiss Reformer, presented the beauties of Christ the Creator and Redeemer to the Swiss people.

May 20 Ellen White speaks on the Sabbath day to the believers in Basel for the last time. It is a time of sadness, for she leaves the brethren and sisters with whom her life was so intimately entwined for nearly two years, and now she is saying good-by with the prospect of never seeing them again in this world.

Tuesday, May 23, with Sister Ings, she departs from Basel, catching the train and moving northward into Cologne and Vohwinkel, Germany, for appointments. Then on to Scandinavia and Great Britain for her final visits before sailing for America in early August.

[275] **Chapter 28—Germany and the Vohwinkel Vision**

A divine call for unity and good will

In the major coal mining and industrial region of West Germany, bounded on the south by the Ruhr River, are found populous and wealthy cities like Dortmund, Essen, Dusseldorf, Cologne, and Wuppertal. a suburban area of present-day Wuppertal is known as Vohwinkel. Nearby is Elberfeld. In those two small communities Adventists had early formed little companies.

When Sister White arrived at Vohwinkel on Friday afternoon, May 27, she was accompanied by Sister Ings and by L. R. Conradi, who had joined them that afternoon at Mainz. The surrounding country was all a part of old Prussia, from which the “Iron Chancellor,” Bismarck, had reached out to consolidate the German state into an empire.

The little companies of Adventists came together for a general meeting at Vohwinkel with eager expectations, for Sister White had not preached in Germany before. She spent Friday night at the home of a local church elder who lived “in a pleasant location” several miles out in the country.

[276] Ellen White “found the churches ... in difficulty,” and she saw their need for special counsel and help at this time ([The Review and Herald, September 27, 1887](#)). Unkind criticism had crept into the church, and factions and hard feelings had resulted.

Conradi spoke Friday evening to an interested, attentive audience. The German leader was a dynamic, executive type of man, and his influence could be felt.

The Vohwinkel Vision

That night as Ellen White slept, a dream was given to her in which she observed a small company who had assembled for a religious meeting. The Lord appeared to them as a church visitor and spoke to them with love and tenderness. The next day, Sabbath,

May 28, she wrote out this remarkable revelation, which obviously applied to the Vohwinkel company:

“Last night I dreamed that a small company were assembled together to have a religious meeting. There was one who came in and seated himself in a dark corner where he would attract little observation. There was not a spirit of freedom. The spirit of the Lord was bound. Some remarks were made by the elder of the church and he seemed to be trying to hurt someone. I saw a sadness upon the countenance of the stranger. It became apparent that there was not the love of Jesus in the hearts of those who claimed to believe the truth and there was, as the sure result, an absence of the Spirit of Christ and a great want both in thoughts and feelings of love for God and for one another. The assembling together had not been refreshing to any one.

The Stranger Addresses the People

“As the meeting was about to close, the stranger arose and with a voice that was full of sorrow and of tears, he told them that they had a great want in their own souls, and in their own experience, of the love of Jesus which was present in large measure in every heart where Christ took up His abode. Every heart renewed by the Spirit of God would not only love God but love his brother, and if that brother made mistakes, if he erred, he must be dealt with after the gospel plan. Every step must be followed according to the directions given in the word of God.... The stranger continued by asking several questions:

“You seem willing to wound and bruise the hearts of one another. Is this the pattern Jesus has given you? Where is His manner of dealing? Do you find yourselves sustained in having so little love and forbearance, so little patience for your brethren? Have you forgotten

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the words of Christ, 'A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another?' [John 13:34, 35] 'He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.' [John 14:21]

"You are not cultivating love to God or love to your brethren. Be careful how you treat the purchase of the blood of Christ. There will be need of plain and faithful reproving of evil works, but let the one who takes this work upon him know that he is not separated from Christ by evil works himself. He must be spiritual and restore such an one in the spirit of meekness. Unless he has this spirit he has no duty to reprove or to correct his brothers, for he would create two evils in the place of curing one....

"That which distinguishes the character and conduct of Christians from all others is the principle of holy, Christlike love, which works in the heart with its purifying influence. The true Christian will work the works of Christ in giving expression in deeds of love one to another. With this living, abiding, working principle in life and in character no one can resemble the world. If you know the character and works of Christ you will know the disposition and conduct of Christians. Christ hated evil so much that sin and evil met a strong rebuke from His lips and from His example. While He hated sin He loved the sinner....

"How much greater strength you might have had as sons and daughters of God if you had loved God supremely and your neighbor as you love yourself. How much higher ground you might stand upon if you had been following on to know more and more of the truth and gathering more and more divine light to shine forth in good works to all around you.

“Your works are not pleasing to God but pleasing to the enemy. You have lessons to learn in the school of Christ before you will be fitted for heaven. Your self, your ways, your sharp traits of character make you unskillful in dealing with minds and hearts.... If you allow yourselves to be dictatorial, accusing, and judging your brethren, and with unsanctified hearts and unholy tempers seeking to mend their wrongs, you do unskillful work and drive souls away from the service of Christ....

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“You must take hold of God with one hand while with the other hand, in love, you lay hold upon the erring and the sinner and draw them to Jesus. Pray with them, weep with them, feel for their souls, love them, and never let go of them. This is the love Jesus has expressed for you. You must ever strive for unity and forbearance and love. Never draw apart, but press together, binding heart to heart and making supplications in the Spirit. Then the power of God will work in your midst and many souls will be brought to the truth through your influence.”—[Manuscript 32, 1887](#).

All of this seemed as real to Ellen White in her dream as if she had seen and heard the stranger in person. But who was he? The tone of his voice, his words and manner, seemed familiar. She continued:

“He was again seated and the sun, which had been hidden, beamed forth and shone full upon his person. What a revelation! All knew in a moment who had been speaking to them. They said one to another: ‘It is Jesus; it is Jesus!’ and then such confessions of sins as were made and confessions to one another. There was weeping, for the hearts seemed to be broken, and then there was rejoicing and the room was filled with the mellow light of heaven. The musical voice of Jesus said, ‘Peace be with you.’ And His peace was.” -*Ibid.*

The Sabbath Meetings

That Sabbath morning—just a matter of hours after she had the dream—she addressed a large audience, many of whom were non-Adventists. “While we were assembled together in this humble place of worship,” [One or two rooms of the vohwinkel “place of worship” still remain, to which a large rambling two-story house has been attached. The original structure was largely destroyed by bombs during world war II.] she wrote, “I felt indeed the peace of Christ. [279] I felt that Jesus and angels were present” ([The Review and Herald, September 27, 1887](#)).

Conradi was a bit surprised after she finished her sermon when she suggested that the believers have a “social meeting.” Nothing of this kind had ever taken place in the Vohwinkel church. Except for a few who may have visited the church in Basel the congregation didn’t even know what a social meeting was!

The usual procedure was to assemble together on the Sabbath day and pray for one another, then, because they had no minister to preach to them, go back to their homes; but, testimony services, who had ever heard of such! Sister White kindly insisted that such a meeting should be held, and she said, “The Spirit of the Lord was certainly in our midst.” And when it ended they could say, “We had an excellent social meeting.” a rich blessing flowed into all hearts present. Most of the believers participated. “My heart was made glad in the Lord to see so many who were indeed lights in the world” (*Ibid.*).

[280] There were still more meetings that memorable weekend in Vohwinkel. On Saturday night she made a special appeal for unity and harmony among the brethren:

“I was urged to speak again ... at eight o’clock, which I did, upon the subject of making special efforts for harmony, and the necessity of the church having their minds occupied with thoughts upon the truth, the Saviour, and the future life. By living and walking in the truth themselves they will not be employed in talking of the errors and mistakes of others. After I had ceased

speaking, Brother Conradi continued the meeting until midnight.

“Sunday, Brother Conradi spoke in the morning upon missionary work. At three o’clock I spoke to those assembled from [1 John 3, verses 1-3](#). I felt much freedom, although weak for want of food which I could not take upon my stomach. Brother Conradi labored with them faithfully, and I think with good success. There was a healing of their difficulties, except with one brother who left the meeting. Brother Conradi went after him and labored with him until two A.M., with a good prospect of the difficulties being healed.”—[Manuscript 32, 1887](#).

Counsel Regarding Little Companies

The substance of her message at Vohwinkel, Mrs. White reported in the *Review*:

“Let these little companies who seldom have preaching, cling more firmly to Jesus. Let them settle this point first of all, that they are willing to walk in the narrow, cross-bearing path where Jesus has traveled before them. Then let them appropriate to themselves God’s promises of divine guidance.... With these precious promises we need not be discouraged.

“God is not ignorant of the trials and the temptations of any one of His dear children, and if they cherish love and peace and harmony in their midst, how pleasing is this to Jesus! He prayed to His Father that His disciples might be one as He was one with the Father. Now if every one, whatever may be the surroundings, whatever the circumstances, will labor to answer the prayer of Christ in their feelings, and their words, and their actions toward each other, then they will be cooperating with the Lord Jesus in His work, and all Heaven will rejoice.”—September 27, 1887.

Sister White understood the large potential of a little company of believers, such as the one in Vohwinkel, in sharing their faith. Did she perhaps view the expansion and dimension of the future work in Germany? Its substantial growth in the years that followed? “What great good a very few may do if they are wholly united in Christ! ... They are channels of light to the world,” she wrote hopefully.

In conclusion she admonished:

“Let each individual member of the Church feel that he is responsible in a large measure for the strength and prosperity of the church. While you do to the very utmost of your ability, God will as surely do His part, giving you divine enlightenment. God will work, and you must work to the same end to accomplish the same purpose, as faithful soldiers of an army work in harmony with the plans and purposes of their officers. Our will must be surrendered to the will of God. These churches that are small may be living, healthy, strong churches. “I shall never forget this little company and the pleasant associations we have had with them in the worship of God. I should have been pleased to speak to these precious souls directly, but I am thankful that I had the privilege of speaking to them through an interpreter. a Paul may plant, an Apollos may water, but God gives the increase.”—*Ibid.*

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Meetings in Gladbach

On Monday morning the little party left Vohwinkel for Gladbach, a city of some size, south of Vohwinkel and just to the north and east of Bonn, the present capital of West Germany. Sister White was pleased to find Brother Doerner at the station to meet them. They took a hack and were brought to the home of his mother. There Sister Doerner lived with her two daughters who were also Seventh-day Adventists.

A good German breakfast was waiting to be served, but Ellen White could not eat. She was forced to lie down and rest, and

scarcely had strength to sit up. Illness in Basel and the strenuous meetings before she left for Germany left her almost exhausted.

She wrote of the Doerner family:

“Sister Doerner is the daughter of Brother Lindermann, who has kept the Sabbath for twenty-five or thirty years. He is now living, and is 83 years of age. It is through his influence that the Doerner family has received the Sabbath. There are three brothers who at the present time are observing the Sabbath. They are united owners of a large manufacturing establishment, in which cotton goods and cotton and woollen goods are made.”—[The Review and Herald, October 11, 1887](#).

Impact of J. H. Lindermann’s Work

About 30 years before, J. H. Lindermann, as the result of his own investigation of the Bible, came to believe that Christ would return to the earth in the near future. In 1867 he had advanced in his studies to the place where he saw the seventh day as the true Sabbath. Not only did he preach his views but he published these doctrines in pamphlets. Little companies then sprang up from the seed planted at Vohwinkel, Solingen, Gladbach, and Rhedt. [283]

News of Lindermann’s Sabbathkeepers became known to Seventh-day Adventists in Switzerland as the result of a providential contact with an itinerant beggar. a Swiss believer had befriended that beggar. If he had not done so the word might not have reached them at all!

James Erzberger wrote to Lindermann, and he received in reply an invitation to come and visit the group at Elberfeld in the Wuppertal area. Erzberger brought J. N. Andrews with him, and they were delighted to find a company of about 50 expectant people ready to listen to the precious truth they had to bring.

It was from among Lindermann’s followers that the nucleus for the Vohwinkel church was formed, one of the first Seventh-day Adventist German churches in the world, and members of Lindermann’s immediate family were among those who became Seventh-day Adventists.

On January 8, 1876, James Erzberger baptized eight persons at Solingen, a city famous for its fine steel cutlery. It was the first Seventh-day Adventist baptism in Germany, and the little group was organized and became the first Seventh-day Adventist church in the country, with 25 members. The believers at Vohwinkel were organized at about the same time.

The Germans maintained the work of God without financial assistance from Switzerland. However, in 1884 the churches at Solingen and Vohwinkel joined the newly organized Swiss Conference.

Visiting the Church at Gladbach

[284] While at Gladbach, Sister White was charmed by the well-kept grounds at the Doerner home, ornamented with a variety of trees, shrubs, and flowers. The beauty and fragrance acted like a natural healing therapy upon her body and mind. She walked in the garden reflecting upon creation's lovely wonders.

She wrote later:

“While I was in Europe, a sister ... who was in deep distress, wrote to me, asking for some word of encouragement. The night after I had read her letter I dreamed that I was in a garden, and one who seemed to be the owner of the garden was conducting me through its paths. I was gathering the flowers and enjoying their fragrance, when this sister, who had been walking by my side, called my attention to some unsightly briars that were impeding her way. There she was mourning and grieving. She was not walking in the pathway, following the guide, but was walking among the briars and thorns. ‘Oh,’ she mourned, ‘is it not a pity that this beautiful garden is spoiled with thorns?’ Then the guide said, ‘Let the thorns alone, for they will only wound you. Gather the roses, the lilies, and the pinks.’”-[Steps to Christ, 116, 117.](#)

Mrs. White then asked:

“Have there not been some bright spots in your experience? Have you not had some precious seasons when your heart throbbed with joy in response to the Spirit of God? When you look back into the chapters of your life experience do you not find some pleasant pages? Are not God’s promises, like the fragrant flowers, growing beside your path on every hand? Will you not let their beauty and sweetness fill your heart with joy?”-*Ibid.*, 117.

That afternoon she preached a touching sermon from [John 15:1-3](#), Brother Conradi interpreting. She seemed to feel her subject intensely. “The truth was to me a reality,” she explained, “and I felt that God indeed gave me special strength and imparted to me of His Holy Spirit while speaking. I saw before me an intelligent company who had but few privileges and little labor from the ministering brethren. We hope and pray that this meeting may prove a blessing to those who were present.”—[The Review and Herald, October 11, 1887](#). Often during her lifework did the Lord’s servant preach from John, [chapters 14 and 15](#).

The next morning the little itinerant company boarded the cars for Hamburg on their way to Copenhagen. “We saw as we neared Hamburg,” wrote Ellen White, “that there was a great fire. The flames seemingly reaching to the sky above us, lighting up everything around. It was a grand scene. We learned that the ships and warehouses were in flames from petroleum which had exploded.”—*Ibid.* [285]

One half hour later at Altona, “beyond Hamburg,” Ellen White’s party changed cars and proceeded by rail and ferry on to Copenhagen.

Chapter 29—Lewis R. Conradi

L. R. Conradi, with whom Ellen G. White labored in Vohwinkel, was a native of Germany who had gone to America when he was 17. While in the United States he had become a Seventh-day Adventist. He was a graduate of Battle Creek College, an intelligent man with unusual gifts and abilities. He finished the four-year college course in eighteen months and then labored successfully in America among the German-speaking people in the Midwestern States. He was ordained to the gospel ministry in 1882. And now, as we have already noted, at the age of 30 he had returned to Europe with W. C. White in February, 1886. From time to time he worked closely with Ellen White as her translator. She was gratified that he was back in Europe.

In the months that followed, he labored with zeal and sacrifice in Russia. [There were many German-speaking Protestants in Russia, and among them a developing interest in Adventism.] While in the Crimea he itinerated with a native Russian believer, Gerhard Perk, a former Mennonite who had been converted through reading Seventh-day Adventist literature. Conradi was accused by the Russian authorities of teaching Jewish heresy and was imprisoned for forty days. When Ellen White heard of it she was greatly distressed and wrote to him a kind and understanding letter. She assured him that [287] “we will have special care for your wife and child.” “We have not forgotten you but we have presented your case to the highest tribunal,—the great sovereign of the worlds. The Lord whom we serve will deliver you in His own good time.”—[Letter 49, 1886](#).

In this comforting letter she wrote also about the triumph of the truth of God, indicating that nothing that the enemies of the gospel could do would permanently hinder the spread of the message of truth.

Sister White continued:

“God reigns, and notwithstanding His majesty He loves the most helpless, the most suffering ones among His children. God is showing us evidences of His power, and truth will triumph. God will uproot every error in doctrine. Every truth will be immortal. Commit the keeping of your soul to God as unto a faithful Creator. The angels of God are round about you. Have faith in God. Remember Jesus your Redeemer and see what He endured. When the apostles of Christ were thrust into prison, angels of God came within the prison walls and ministered unto them. Oh the tenderness, the compassion of God. He says, ‘Can a woman forget her sucking child? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.’”—*Ibid.*

Conradi’s Rise to Leadership

Later we see Conradi safely back in Germany preaching in Hamburg where he established at 41 Sophienstrasse the headquarters for the developing German church.

He steadily advanced in leadership. In 1891 all of Germany and Russia were detached from the Central European Conference and placed under his direction.

Conradi always labored with zeal and energy. In 1901 the General European Conference was created, and he became its first chairman and in 1903 a General Conference vice-president. He remained head of the work in Europe (later as president of the European Division) until 1922. (See *SDA Encyclopedia*, pp. 302., 303.)

The hardy German leader was an able writer with a number of books to his credit, notable among which was his own revision and enlargement of J. N. Andrews’ *History of the Sabbath*. [288]

Conradi and the Sanctuary Doctrine

Unfortunately, as the years passed, Conradi became entangled with strange new views about the nature of the cleansing of the sanctuary and the actual events connected with the crucial 1844 date. To him developments in the Middle East in 1844 fulfilled

the prophecy of [Daniel 8:14](#). Conradi also came to believe that the proclamation of the three angels' messages of [Revelation 14](#) was fulfilled in the work of the Reformers, particularly the Reformers of the sixteenth century. He saw no special providences of God in the beginnings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Conradi's departure from the faith did not come to its climax in the events of a day or a month or a year. According to his testimony the beginning of his problems dated back of 1886, and they were intensified at the Minneapolis General Conference in 1888 when he resisted the presentation of E. J. Waggoner's views on righteousness by faith. Mrs. White, of course, supported Waggoner's preaching of the doctrine of righteousness by faith. This fact put Conradi in a difficult position. Would he or would he not disparage Mrs. White? In time it became quite clear that he did not hesitate to do this.

A Letter of Confession to Sister White

In 1891, however, he had second thoughts about his independent position, and he sincerely regretted his antagonistic spirit. He discloses this in a handwritten letter of confession to Sister White written in August, 1891. The letter follows:

"Dear Sister in Christ,

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"You may be somewhat surprised to receive a letter from me, but during this past week I felt impressed that to write to you and free my heart, would be only another weight cast aside that may hinder me in my heavenly race. You will therefore pardon when I take some of your valuable time; I shall try to be short.

"When I first became connected with this people, over 13 years ago, I learned by experience what it is to taste the peace of God and the surety of sins forgiven, also to be free from the bondage of sin. As to theory, I confess I had but little light on this point, as on many others. For nearly seven years I remained victor, making steady progress. It was my privilege to make you and your dear husband's acquaintance shortly after embracing the truth and I shall never forget his kindness, as he

bought me the coat in which I graduated and gave me the charts when I began to preach. But when I came to Europe, rather a short time previous, defeats came, at first only slight, at long intervals. While my desire was to work for union, yet I had not always the right feeling toward you.

“The peculiar circumstances at Basel were no help to me and I was slowly losing ground. When I went to America I hoped to be helped, but the Minneapolis meeting only added darkness. Your words proved true in my case. I tried to conquer by keeping at work; this helped for seasons, partly, but the bondage remained. O, how dark are the hours of bondage, if one has tasted freedom before! Had it not been for the freedom and experience gained before this time, I do not know where I would have drifted!

“But the sweet peace of God no longer abideth. I would enjoy freedom and feel His blessings during meetings, but when over there the bondage returned, it was an ‘up’ and ‘down’ and it rather went down, then up. More than once I laid stretched on the floor, asking God to help, but I was not willing to break fully with the idol sin. When I heard of the good meetings last General Conference, I thought if it is only true. I went to London and gained some more light as to my true condition, made some steps, but did not succeed or gain the victory fully.

“Brother Olsen came to Hamburg and we went to Basel. I again went further and struggled and wrestled, until a week ago I came again to Hamburg. The condition of my wife and the unsettled state of our affairs weighed heavily and while I pleaded with God, I can say for once more, I have been freed, the sweet peace of God has returned to abide, and today I [would] rather give life and all than to lose it again by sin.

“O, it tastes so precious, after years of spiritual dearth! And today, with the light I have received from my brethren, I hope to keep the experience and preserve

it unto the end. I can believe that the victory even unto the end is mine, and not because I am able, for I have learned my nothingness, but because Christ liveth in me. For my dark experiences in the past I have but one to blame and that is—myself.

“May outer darkness be ever so great, if we are bright, we bring even light. But I praise God for His long-suffering with me, as unworthy as I was to have not only a position, but a place among His people.

“In view of the feelings I cherished against you and words I have dropped especially during the Minneapolis meeting, I ask your forgiveness and if you and my brethren still grant me a place in the cause of God, I can say, with God’s help of which I have evidence, I shall be a different minister, member and brother. My heart goes out for souls as it did years ago and I feel that freedom from the bondage of sin and the peace of God as I did then. Sad experiences are behind me, but I look forward with good confidence to a brighter future. I want to learn more of the fullness in Christ and what my high calling in Him is. And I want to get in that full harmony with my brethren and sisters, that when we meet again, I can with them enjoy God’s rich blessings.

“God in His mercy even in my dark hours has helped me to keep in peace with my brethren here and in union with our people, and even to work for that union, yet I have marred it only too often by my deeds. The Lord has kept me until now, where I [have] not deserved it, but He has found me again and I want to go no more astray.

“I can now prize your admonitions of the past and see light where before was darkness. Should it not be my privilege to meet you the coming year, I can assure you that in Christ I shall be one with you in your work and that my prayers will follow you. [A] few words from you that you received my letter and that you grant the forgiveness will be appreciated and words of counsel, advice or reproof will be thankfully received....

“[The next two paragraphs report the progress of the work in Germany with five churches and 126 members and 150 Sabbathkeepers in all.]

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“May the Lord bless you on your journey to Australia if it should be in His providence for you to go.
Yours in the truth,
(Signed) L. R. Conradi
(August 16, 1891) [Handwritten original on file in the White Estate vault.]

Any reply from Ellen White must have been a personal handwritten confidential note not placed in the Ellen G. White typewritten files.

Conradi's Faith Revived

Six years later in a letter to Ellen G. White written from Fastow, Russia, it is clear that he was still striving nobly to please the Lord. Sister White was then in Australia. In the very first paragraph of his letter to her he writes about how he has found “light” in the Word of God and “the testimonies of His Spirit.” He expresses also his “gratitude to Christ, who has proven a faithful Friend and High Priest to me, when everything looked dark and Satan even urged there was no hope and that I [had] better cast away my only anchor....My prayer is today, Lord, anoint my eyes, let me see to my own salvation, and guard all my wanderings and strayings from the path of duty and let me know, what Thy will is ... I do not want to mar His work by the past, though He has graciously forgiven. I shall be pleased if you have any light or exhortation or counsel, to receive the same.” He signed his letter, “Your unworthy brother in Christ, L. R. Conradi.”—L. R. Conradi letter to Ellen G. White, October 6, 1897

Here is revealed a faith on Conradi's part in the “testimonies” of Ellen White, also in “any light or exhortation or counsel” that she might have to give to him.

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Sister White's Esteem for Conradi

Her contacts with the European leader through the years were occasional. However, she was well acquainted with his work and esteemed him as a church leader. For example, while preaching at the General Conference session in 1901, which Conradi attended, she mentioned him by name publicly and directed a message to him from the desk. Here are her very words:

“Brother Conradi has carried a very heavy burden of work in Europe. Brother Conradi, God wants you to have laborers to stand with you, and He wants you to give them all the encouragement you can. He wants the work you are doing to go with strength and with power.

“You have been doing the work of several men. God has greatly blessed your labors. The angels of God have done this work, not Brother Conradi. He has opened doors for the angels, and they have entered. And if you will all open doors for the angels and give God an opportunity to work, let me tell you that He will set in operation that which will carry forward the work with a strength you do not dream of.”—[The General Conference Bulletin, April 22, 1901](#), p. 398.

For a time he set a new course for his future life. To what great heights he might have risen had he persisted and endured! But somewhere along the way he drifted back and, exercising a typical independence, returned to his former perilous position. In time he came to believe and advocate views we have referred to that struck at the very heart of the third angel's message.

The Conradi Hearings

Eventually, in 1931, the leaders of the work in Central Europe, in a committee meeting at Friedensau, Germany, found it necessary to challenge him face to face and call into question his erroneous views. He was given an opportunity to present and defend his position. But his conclusions were unacceptable. This marked the

beginning of the end for Conradi's influence as an elected Seventh-day Adventist Church official in Europe. Before the final break [293] came, however, a last effort was made to save him. The General Conference Committee agreed to his request for the privilege of presenting his views in the United States before a group of church leaders.

This committee met October 13-16, 1931, preceding the 1931 Autumn Council in Omaha, Nebraska. Included among those who served on this committee were church administrators who had their roots in German soil: E. Kotz, W. Mueller, R. Ruhling, and G. W. Schubert. C. H. Watson, General Conference president, acted as chairman. W. E. Howell was secretary of the committee.

After several lengthy presentations by Conradi, the brethren met and issued a statement, in the last paragraph of which they asserted the love they had for Brother Conradi, also their love for the truth of God. But the statement was realistic:

“We must say plainly that his expositions of the prophecy take very much the course of those who in past years have departed from the scriptural doctrine of the sanctuary and have dropped out of the movement. As we listened to Elder Conradi's expositions we feel that they confuse Bible truth, and if accepted would destroy the very foundations of this special Advent movement.”—
“Statement on Conradi Hearings,” on deposit in White Estate vault.

The Committee's Report

The committee came to grips with Conradi's doctrinal views and interpretations. a study of the report shows the wide divergence of views held by Conradi and church leaders before whom he appeared in Omaha. The fact that Ellen White's teachings corresponded with those held by the members of this representative committee made up of church leaders is a point that needs to be understood.

The Ellen G. White Position

[294] Ellen White's position, which she held for years, fully supported the concept that the Advent Movement itself met the specifications of the Bible prophecy of [Revelation 14:6-12](#).

Conradi held that the Reformers of the sixteenth century preached this message and thus met the specifications of this prophecy.

In *Testimonies*, volume 9, page 19, Ellen White wrote:

“In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the Word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import—the proclamation of the first, second, and third angels' messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing else to absorb their attention.

“The most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been given us to proclaim to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be our work.”

See also volume 5, p. 206.

Regarding the interpretation of [Daniel 8:14](#), Conradi held that events in Turkey and the East in 1844 were the fulfillment of the prophecy that at the end of the 2300 years the sanctuary would be cleansed. But note the following from the pen of Ellen White:

“The question, What is the sanctuary? is clearly answered in the Scriptures. The term ‘sanctuary,’ as used in the Bible, refers, first, to the tabernacle built by Moses, as a pattern of heavenly things; and, secondly, to the ‘true tabernacle’ in heaven, to which the earthly sanctuary pointed. At the death of Christ the typical service ended. The ‘true tabernacle’ in heaven is the sanctuary of the new covenant. And as the prophecy of [Daniel 8:14](#) is fulfilled in this dispensation, the sanctuary to which it refers must be the sanctuary of the new

covenant. At the termination of the 2300 days in 1844, there had been no sanctuary on earth for many centuries. Thus the prophecy, ‘Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed,’ unquestionably points to the sanctuary in heaven.”—[The Great Controversy](#), 417.

“Thus those who followed in the light of the prophetic word saw that, instead of coming to the earth at the termination of the 2300 days in 1844, Christ then entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, to perform the closing work of atonement preparatory to His coming,”—[Ibid.](#), 422.

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The historic position of Ellen White and the church on the subject of the sanctuary and Christ’s intercessory priesthood is well expressed in these words:

“I know that the sanctuary question stands in righteousness and truth, just as we have held it for so many years. It is the enemy that leads minds off on side-tracks. He is pleased when those who know the truth become engrossed in collecting scriptures to pile around erroneous theories, which have no foundation in truth. The scriptures thus used are misapplied; they were not given to substantiate error, but to strengthen truth.”—[Gospel Workers](#), 303.

The Question of the Spirit of Prophecy

It is not difficult to understand—in the light of Conradi’s divergent views—why he would oppose Ellen G. White. After all, she supported the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of the prophetic scriptures dealing with the three angels’ messages and the sanctuary. It is also easy to understand why the break finally came, with Conradi’s separation from the church. The committee meeting at Omaha made this statement:

“On the question of accepting the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy, the positions taken by Elder Con-

radi ... have very naturally led him to question the position and authority of the Spirit of Prophecy in the church, since these writings clearly teach the accepted denominational view of the sanctuary and its cleansing.”—“Statement on Conradi Hearings,” p. 8.

The statement noted also the position of the church regarding Mrs. White’s inspiration:

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“The Word of God, however, clearly reveals that this prophetic gift will be manifested in the remnant church and will constitute one of its distinguishing features. [Revelation 12:10](#). The proof of this gift in the church, as manifested through the work of Mrs. E. G. White, has been found in the harmony of her teachings with the Holy Scriptures. Her work has ever been to point the church of Christ to the Bible as the foundation of faith and to the Lord Jesus Christ as the one and all-sufficient Saviour. The same spirit that inspired the prophets of old has been manifest in her work for the church. While the Scriptures constitute the basis of all faith and doctrine, they at the same time plainly teach the existence of the gift of prophecy in the remnant church.”—Statement on Conradi Hearing, a General Conference Document, p. 8.

Conradi ceased to be a Seventh-day Adventist in 1932 at the age of 76. His last years were spent in Hamburg, Germany, where he is buried. His son, a notable physician, and his son’s wife continued in the faith. Conradi was accepted as a minister for the Seventh Day Baptists; in fact, he became the principal organizer and promoter of that denomination in Germany.

Thus we trace with sorrow the defection of a much-loved brother and leader among the Adventists in Europe. The story of similar defections of prominent workers in America has been described in print, e.g., D. M. Canright, who became a Baptist, and Moses Hull, who drifted into spiritualism. These experiences warn all of us off Satan’s enchanted ground of deception and apostasy from the

“Present Truth.” “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall” ([1 Corinthians 10:12](#)).

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Chapter 30—First Adventist Camp Meeting In Europe

Hundreds flock to Moss, Norway

When Ellen White reached Copenhagen en route to Moss, Norway, and the first camp meeting in Europe, she was surprised to find Danish royalty and dignitaries at the station. “Men dressed in scarlet... were brilliantly flashing everywhere,” and a Brussels carpet was laid down ceremoniously from the car to the station.

Why all the excitement? Someone said that the Crown Prince of Denmark had been on the train. The crown prince, later to be King Frederick VII, was indeed at the station, but had not been on the train.

The crown prince’s brother, Valdemar, and his wife, Marie, were there, as well, for Marie’s mother, the Duchess of Chartres, had been traveling on the train with Ellen White. The Danish royal family was intermarried with most of the royal houses of Europe at this time, and it is little wonder that the people were confused and Mrs. White misinformed.

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The Danish king at this time was called the “Father-in-law of Europe.” [Daniel’s latter-day prophecy had declared concerning the nations of Western Europe, “they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay” ([Daniel 2:43](#)).] Crown Prince Frederick was married to a Swedish princess; the oldest daughter, Alexandra, married the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII of England; the next son, William, became King George I of Greece; Valdemar, the other prince Ellen White saw, was married into the French nobility. Dagmar, the next oldest child, was married to Czar Alexander III of Russia; and finally, the youngest girl, Thyra, was married to the British Duke of Cumberland.

The royal entourage passed through an arched doorway to a carriage surrounded by plumed soldiers and was soon on its way

to the palace. Ellen White left in a hack and went to much more humble quarters.

No Brussels carpet was spread for her, no assemblage of royal figures received her with honor, but the humble saints of God, the royalty of Heaven's kingdom, were waiting in Copenhagen for her and the message she would bring from the King of kings.

On Friday she took dinner with Edward G. Olsen and his wife, Elizabeth. Olsen, the younger brother of O. A. Olsen, had been in Copenhagen since the previous October. Under his ministry, the church had grown until it now numbered more than fifty members. The Olsens had a new week-old baby, their first child. With such important visitors, Elizabeth did not want to be thought lazy, so she was up and working much earlier than was customary in those days. Ellen White appreciated her loving interest but was genuinely concerned about her "imprudence."

Visible Improvements in Copenhagen Church

Mrs. White was delighted to see so many improvements in the little Danish church. "What a great change in Copenhagen since we first visited them!" she exclaimed. Then she reminisced:

"Our meetings were held in a little damp hall.... Next our meeting was transferred to a basement. Above was a dancing hall and there were saloons all around us.... Nearly a year ago—July 17—I again visited Copenhagen.... We had a hall—an improvement upon the one we had on our first visit.... And there were more than double the number when we were on our first visit, and some of the best quality of people.... And now, June 4, we see many more who have been added to the numbers of Sabbathkeepers and our hearts were made glad to see a respectable, noble, intelligent class of believers assembled in the city of Copenhagen.... We could indeed exclaim, 'What hath God wrought!'"—[Manuscript 33, 1887](#).

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And she added with a view to the future:

“And in this great city the work may still progress if the workers will not get above the simplicity of the work, but will keep humble and holy and dependent upon God.”—*Ibid.*

Across by Steamer to Norway

After spending a week in Copenhagen, she left aboard the steamer *Melchior* bound for Moss, Norway. The voyage began quietly, but about three in the afternoon the water grew very rough. As was her practice in times like these, she spent the hours in communion with God.

“This was one of the most precious nights of my life. I enjoyed sweet communion with God and the presence of the Lord and angels seemed to be in my stateroom....I had a sleepless night, suffered with fever and pain, yet my soul was filled with thoughts of God’s mercy and His precious promises....I could say with heart and soul—‘I love Jesus. I love my heavenly Father.’ I felt that I was breathing in the atmosphere of heaven.

“I offered fervent and earnest prayer that I might not be content with momentary flashes of heavenly light, but continually have spiritual illumination.”—*Ibid.*

Because God was to her a never-failing source of light and strength in times of distress, she knew how to encourage others who walked in the shadows.

The *Melchior* landed at Horten, just across the fiord from Moss, and the travelers had to wait an hour for a smaller boat to take them over. At last the boat came, with S. N. Haskell and William Ings on board to escort them back to Moss. By Thursday noon they had reached their destination.

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Camp Meeting Held on an Island

Moss, Norway, situated about 42 miles south of Christiania, was a town of about 8,000 at this time. O. A. Olsen had held tent meetings there the previous October and had succeeded in founding

a church of about 30 members. Now Moss had been chosen as the site of the first Adventist camp meeting in Europe, and in connection with the camp meeting, the Fifth European Council.

The camp was set up among the pines of Bellevue Grove on Jel Island, [Today there is an attractive sanitarium at Jeloy (Jel Island), moss, denominationally owned and generally well patronized.] which had originally been a peninsula about five miles long and four miles wide. For the benefit of Ellen White and visiting ministers, a house was rented on a high rise of ground overlooking the water and the city.

When Mrs. White rose the next morning at four to begin writing, the sun was already shining brightly. Church members arrived from all over Scandinavia, and while everyone was busy that Friday morning getting settled in the family tents or exploring the items at the bookstand, Mrs. White, along with Jenny Ings and Mrs. Olsen, took a carriage downtown.

Sabbath morning found her speaking to the adult Sabbath school in the 60' by 80' main tent.

The camp meeting was attracting wide attention, and on Sunday a reporter from the Christiania *Morgenposten* was on the grounds. Although the Christiania papers were, at this same time, carrying attacks on Adventists by the Lutheran minister in Moss, the reporter who visited the campground was very favorably impressed. He wrote:

“As far as we know this is the first camp-meeting ever held in Europe, but in America such meetings are very common, and in Michigan, where the Adventists are most numerous, from 2,000 to 3,000 people may be found in such a camp. They hire the ground, arrange regular streets, and appoint everyone a place for his tent. They have a camp directory by which anyone can be easily found. It is a perfectly organized though temporary city.... We received the impression that the people occupying these tents must be an economical and well-to-do people.”

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The reporter went on to give a glowing report of Adventist work, not only in Scandinavia but in other parts of the world, as well. [In 1885 Seventh-day Adventist evangelistic work began in Australia with the arrival of S. N. Haskell, J. O. Corliss, M. C. Israel, and Wm. E. Arnold from the United States. This same year, 1887, we see D. A. Robinson, C. L. Boyd, and others in Africa opening up the work on that continent. Within a few years construction would begin on the *Pitcairn*, first SDA missionary ship launched to carry the advent message to the Islands of the South Pacific.]

Even before this friendly story appeared in the paper, Mrs. White could see that the camp meeting was a marked success. She was probably aware of the reporter on the grounds, for she noted optimistically that the news of the meeting would be carried throughout the Scandinavian kingdoms. Her diary reports:

“Many came to these meetings with great fear and trembling. They thought it must be at great risk to live in tents, but when they saw the arrangements...they had naught to fear... The terror and the dread of camp meeting is all removed and the way is opened for camp meetings in these regions.”—[Manuscript 34, 1887](#).

The Fifth Annual European Council

On Tuesday, June 14, as some of the church members returned to their homes, the Fifth European Council opened. Mrs. White was present at the opening session and was thrilled to hear Elder Matteson tell of two successful colporteur schools held during the previous year. In Stockholm twenty had attended, some of whom at first could scarcely read or write. After three months of careful instruction they had been sent out into the towns and villages. Their sales were encouraging. And some were enjoying an additional triumph; they were now able to write intelligent letters to their colporteur leader reporting their activities.

[302] Brother J. Laubhan, who represented Russia at the council, reported 150 Sabbathkeepers in the southern part of that country. Evidently Ellen White could not remain silent in the midst of the many encouraging reports. She rose to bear her own personal testi-

mony of thanks to God, who had strengthened her to speak in several places since leaving Basel. “My heart was broken before the Lord in view of the strength, the presence of the Lord, that had been granted me,” she commented.

The next morning even nature seemed to be cheerful. “We are favored of God with a bright, beautiful morning,” Mrs. White wrote. “The birds are caroling their songs of praise to their Creator and our hearts are filled with praise and love to God.”—*Ibid.*

As the brief, four-day council closed on Friday, June 17, W. C. White had a marked impression of its success. He pronounced it “the most harmonious, and profitable meeting” that he had ever attended.

Among the actions taken at the session were the following: Each mission agreed to hold a three-month training school for literature evangelists every year. Committees were appointed to select new books for publication, and for translation when necessary. Since the message was to reach all classes of people, it was even resolved that it would be “highly expedient” to encourage select individuals to attend the “best institutions of learning, that they may become acquainted with the theories of those who may oppose the truth, and to act as missionaries.” In line with this recommendation, E. G. Olsen was encouraged to take some classwork in Copenhagen. He was also commissioned to improve his language skills.

The council resolved to start a city mission in Hamburg, Germany, as soon as possible—a move that eventually led to the establishment of Hamburg as an important center of Adventist work.

Finally, the Norwegian leaders took the occasion to organize their country into a separate conference with four churches. Christiania, with 144 members; Larvik, 21; Drammen, 21; Moss, 18; plus 40 scattered Sabbathkeepers. It was a small conference, but it was a good beginning. Today in Norway the membership has doubled itself four times.

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That Friday, as the council closed, Mrs. White took time to visit Mr. Erickson, the owner of the grounds on which the camp meeting had been held, and the next day, Sabbath, she met the woman who owned the house in which she had been staying. After a pleasant interview, she handed her a copy of her book *The Life of Christ* in Norwegian.

Contacts With Carl Ottosen

A young medical student from Copenhagen, Carl Ottosen, particularly attracted Mrs. White's attention. She sensed the caliber and potential of this dedicated youth and in several interviews gave valuable counsel and guidance to him. "He is a promising young man," she noted in her diary, "and has fully decided to give himself to the work of the Lord." His parents were not Adventists, but his father was supporting him financially through his studies. A few years later he founded the Skodsborg Sanitarium outside Copenhagen, one of the important Seventh-day Adventist institutions in Europe today.

What a variety of tasks the Lord had entrusted to Ellen White, His servant! There were evangelistic messages presented to the public in tents and halls, large and small; pastoral sermons preached to church members; rich pioneer experiences shared with fellow workers; counsel offered in business meetings; spiritual guidance published in books and articles and sent out in letters. At these important meetings in Norway she had opportunity to function in all these roles.

[304] And her work at Moss was not over yet. On Sabbath, June 18, she and Mrs. Ings took a walk out into the forest. Finding a quiet place, they spread a fur blanket on the grass, and Mrs. White sat down to write a ten-page letter of counsel and encouragement to Elders D. A. Robinson and C. L. Boyd, who were present at the Moss camp meeting, as they left for their work in Africa. The letter was so rich in encouragement and practical counsel that great portions of it have been reprinted in the book [Evangelism](#), 89-91, 94, 97, 132, 142, 248, 553, as well as in other books.

Finally, on Sunday, June 19, Mrs. White left Moss for Christiania. There she parted with W. C. White, as well as Elders Conradi, Whitney, and Haskell. The latter was on his way to England, the others to Germany. The Ingses and O. A. Olsen would stay with Ellen White for two days in Christiania, then, on Wednesday, June 22, they all would journey on to Stockholm, where Matteson was about to begin a series of tent meetings for the public.

First Tent Meetings in Sweden

Mrs. White spent almost a week in Stockholm, staying with the Matteson family in their rented apartment at 52 Upplandsgatan. On her first day in the city she hired a carriage and took a two-hour tour. The tent meetings began that evening, and the next day, Friday, a full schedule of four meetings was conducted.

This was the first evangelistic series Adventists had ever held in a tent in Sweden, and everyone was anxious to see whether it would be successful.

It was also the annual Midsummer's Day holiday, so the crowds were good, and when Ellen White's turn to speak came at five o'clock, every seat was filled and a solid wall of people stood around the edges. People were even crowded onto the platform itself. Though she had been kept awake the night before by the popping of firecrackers and the noisy celebration of the holiday, in the thrill of the successful tent effort she forgot her weariness.

Each day she shared the speaking duties with Elders Olsen, Matteson, and Ings, and as her stay in Stockholm ended on Monday, she wrote enthusiastically:

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“Yesterday, Sunday, it was estimated that there were about one thousand people in and around the tent listening with deep interest. These meetings have made Elder Matteson and Brother Olsen so glad they do not know how to express their grateful thanks to God. The truth and work will stand higher in Sweden than it ever has before.”—[The Signs of the Times, July 28, 1887](#).

Time to Say Good-by

Finally, it was time to say good-by. That Monday morning, July 27, Mrs. White spoke to the little church in Stockholm, and as she closed, each member greeted her with a warm handshake. The women were especially warm and friendly. But the farewells were not over yet. At Elder Matteson's apartment she found all the colporteurs and workers gathered for a last farewell.

“Each one said a few words of their appreciation of the meetings. They had read the books of Sister White and wanted so much to see her, and as they had listened to her testimony they had accepted the message brought to them and had been greatly benefited and much blessed of the Lord.”—[Manuscript 35, 1887](#).

Her heart touched, Mrs. White responded with a short speech of her own, which Elder Matteson interpreted for the workers.

Finally, at the station there was one more round of good-bys, and Mrs. White left Sweden for the last time. There was a brief stopover in Copenhagen the next day, during which she was entertained at E. G. Olsen’s home. Here she met Carl Ottosen again, and talked to him further about his plans.

The European Council in Moss had voted that O. a Olsen should return to America as soon as possible to attend camp meetings, also the next General Conference session. He planned to sail the first week in August, and Ellen White had decided to go on the same boat.

[306] She now headed for England, where she would spend the final month of her European sojourn. Her route took her to Kiel, Germany, and on to Hamburg. From there she traveled west through Germany and a portion of Holland [Ellen White held no meetings in the netherlands. L. R. Conradi visited holland in 1887, the first adventist minister to penetrate this intriguing land, one of the most densely populated countries on earth. The next year the first dutch paper was published in the united states (de bijbellezer—“The Bible reader”).

“In 1889 conradi visited the netherlands with peter wessels from South Africa. In winschoten they met the potze family and converted Mrs. Potze to the sda faith.

“In 1893 R. G. Klingbeil began preaching and selling books to the sailors in rotterdam harbor. Two years later the first baptism of six converts took place in rotterdam....On April 15, 1898, the first sda church was organized....By 1912 there were 250 dutch Sda’s. On July 7, 1919, the church was recognized by the government as a religious society.”—*Sda Encyclopedia*, p. 844.] before boarding the steamer *Princess Elizabeth* for the trip across the channel.

The final weeks of Mrs. White's stay in Europe were spent in Britain—as her first weeks had been two years earlier.

Chapter 31—Last Stop on the Journey

A busy month in England

Mrs. White’s final month in Europe was spent in Great Britain and began with a long weekend in Kettering. This little city, about fifteen miles east of Birmingham, is in the industrial Midlands and is today a center for the manufacture of shoes. “We walked out and did some purchasing in the city in the great market place,” she wrote soon after her arrival. Then added, “Purchased shoes” ([Manuscript 36, 1887](#)).

Her spiritual feet were shod also “with the preparation of the gospel of peace” ([Ephesians 6:15](#)). Before daybreak Sabbath morning, July 2, she was up and writing. Here is how she expressed her burden of soul for England:

“I felt deeply the need of special help from God in seeking to win souls to Jesus Christ. ‘Without me,’ says Christ, ‘ye can do nothing.’ How weak we are in our own finite strength. We want to work for the Master. I want to please Jesus, who has loved me, who has died for me. There is an unutterable longing of soul for the sweet, constant peace of Christ. I want Jesus in my thoughts continually.”—*Ibid.*

She later continued her diary entry thus:

“At ten o’clock (Sabbath morning) the carriage came to take us to the place of meeting. It is a good-sized hall. Its walls are iron and the hot sun resting upon it made it seem like an oven. We had about fifty assembled. I spoke to them from [Hebrews 12:1-4](#). Although the heat was very great the Lord gave me much freedom in speaking. At twelve the carriage was at the door and we returned to our home with deep and earnest yearning of

heart for the dear people whom we had addressed. We knew that many must have a true conversion to God or they would not be able to keep the truth or to withstand temptation.

“At three P.M. we again spoke to the church in Kettering from [Matthew 22:11-14](#). This was a most solemn subject and the Lord impressed my heart with the terrible fate of the ones who, when Jesus shall come to examine His guests, He shall find without the wedding garment on. I think many were impressed. After the discourse there was a social meeting and many testimonies borne, but I felt that souls were in peril. Souls were undecided and I urged that those who were not fully on the Lord’s side should make decisions that day—should break the chains of the powers of Satan and be wholly the Lord’s.”—*Ibid.*

The results were gratifying, and a man and his wife, still quite young, came forward. He was a building foreman, but an intemperate man and often drunk for days at a time.

“Both bore testimony, and with much simplicity and deep feeling told their determination, and we must leave them in the hands of God for Him to lead, for Him to guide. He will do this if they will only submit themselves to Him as to a faithful Creator. Oh what a terrible curse is intemperance!”—*Ibid.*

Mrs. White had arrived in Kettering on Wednesday evening, June 29, and stayed at the J. H. Durland home on Hawthorne Road. The next day she was joined by her son, W. C. White. Besides the two Sabbath talks, she spoke to the church once on Sunday in a hall the pastor had rented for church gatherings.

On Monday, July 4, Ellen White and her traveling companions journeyed to London and lodged during a four-day visit at the Tranter’s Temperance Hotel on Bridgewater Square, Barbican Street.

Here at last she found a few quiet days going over with Willie [309] the newly written chapters in *The Great Controversy*.

Always interested in the activities of the church that she helped to found, she made a trip out to Holloway to visit the International Book Depository at 451 Holloway Road. And she had time also to call “at the house occupied by our sisters who were giving Bible readings and trying to get access to the higher classes. We found them well situated,” she observed (*Ibid.*).

Ellen White and Prison Work

While in Holloway she visited the Marsh family. Sister Marsh had been keeping the Sabbath for a number of years. Her husband was the warden of a prison, [The holloway prison is today a well-known London prison for women.] and the family lived next door to the large, unfriendly building. “It looked sad, indeed,” Mrs. White remarked with feeling, “to see the large number of prisoners taking their half hour exercise within the glowering prison walls, guarded at every step with officers.”—*Ibid.*

Once, while in Salem, Oregon, June 1878, she had visited such a prison as a guest speaker.

“I had expected to see a set of repulsive looking men, but was happily disappointed; many of them seemed to be intelligent, and some to be men of ability. They were dressed in the coarse but neat prison uniform, their hair smooth, and their boots brushed. As I looked upon the varied physiognomies before me, I thought, ‘To each of these men have been committed peculiar gifts, or talents, to be used for the glory of God and the benefit of the world.’...

“I spoke from the words of John: ‘Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew Him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is.’ 1 [John 3:1, 2.](#)

“I exalted before them the infinite sacrifice made by the Father in giving His beloved Son for fallen men, that they might through obedience be transformed, and become the acknowledged sons of God.”—[Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 233, 234.](#)

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Mrs. White’s personal example in social work as an opening wedge in reaching human hearts is well known. But it is not always understood that this work for prisoners, widows, orphans, et cetera, was as much a part of her commission as the reception and communication of light and truth. (See [Selected Messages 1:33, 34.](#))

A Farewell to the Missionaries

That evening there was a farewell for several workers who had stopped briefly in Europe and were now about to leave for Africa—Elders C. L. Boyd and D. A. Robinson. [As it happened, Elder Robinson’s stay in Africa was rather brief. He returned the next year to Britain, where he labored until 1895. Then he sailed for India. In the year 1900 he died of smallpox. Elder Boyd served in Africa only until 1891, when he returned to America to take the presidency of the Tennessee River Conference. He remained in that state until his death in 1898.] It was most likely on this occasion that Mrs. White passed on to the two men the letter on the conduct of the work in mission lands that she had written at the Moss camp meeting, because she mentions that there was “some plain talk about how the work should be commenced and carried forward in their new field” ([Manuscript 36, 1887](#)).

The next day, at the docks, there was another touching farewell scene: “We could not refrain our tears as we parted with them, not knowing that we should ever meet them again in this life, and not knowing to what they would be subjected in becoming established in their far-off new field of labor. I returned from the boat with many sad impressions.”—*Ibid.*

London to Southampton

From London, Mrs. White, accompanied by Elder and Mrs. Ings, went to Southampton. She arrived there on Thursday, July 7,

[311] and took dinner with Sister S. Phipson at 130 Shirley Road. Mrs. Phipson served as a local agent for Seventh-day Adventist literature in Southampton. Mrs. White spoke several times to the church. On Sunday she took a pleasant side trip to the Isle of Wight. There, with Mrs. Phipson and the Ingses, she visited a Brother Sargent, a ship captain who had been keeping the Sabbath for five years. "The Isle of Wight is a beautiful place," she decided after a lunch of strawberries spread before her. And beyond could be seen the waters over which scores of ships passed to and from the open sea.

Later in the day Mr. Sargent took them across the bay in a rowboat to visit his children. And before she left the quaint and quite place, Ellen White took the opportunity to visit Osborne House, the queen's residence, and the little chapel connected with it:

"We saw the chair where she sits, with her family around her, in an alcove where she cannot be observed by the congregation not only for her own safety but that all eyes will not be attracted to her. This church is for the nobility and the king's household."—*Ibid.*

The Last Item in the Diaries

With her visit to the Isle of Wight, Mrs. White's European diaries end, and only sketchy information is available for the last three weeks of her stay in Britain. But on July 14, she was in Wellingborough, a small city of the Midlands near Kettering. Here she preached on the subject "A Peculiar People." In conclusion she said:

"There was a great excitement in London last week. The Queen was coming. All wanted to see their sovereign. But there is One greater than the Queen coming. 'The glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.' Can we not get up an excitement on this subject? Jesus will bring the dead from their graves, and they shall be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. They shall enter into the city of God. There they shall see the gates open wide to receive them,

and shall eat of the tree of life. There are angels there, who never fell. The saints of all ages are to be there, and take the kingdom, and it shall be theirs....Is it not enough to cause gladness in our hearts?"—[Manuscript 25, 1887](#).

The following week she visited in Grimsby, where she again [312] busied herself with buying flannel and other fabrics to make clothes for her family. She also wrote several letters to one of the young workers in Basel who was drinking and smoking. He was a valuable German translator, but was about to lose his job because of his bad habits. As a result of reading prayerfully Ellen White's rather pointed testimonies, he confessed his errors. By the time Mrs. White left for the United States, reports indicated he was having a genuine reformation in his life and practice.

On Tuesday, August 2, we find Ellen White in Birkenhead, preaching her last sermon in Europe. She also spent a busy afternoon receiving visitors who had come to say a last good-by at George Drew's home at 12 the Woodlands, Clifton Park.

Her testimony as she bore it on hundreds of occasions in Europe is epitomized in her last message to the believers at Moss, Norway:

“We must take our journey through the world as pilgrims and strangers, clinging by living faith to the cross of Calvary. The blessing of God will rest upon every soul that makes a full consecration to Him. When we seek for God with all the heart we shall find Him. God is in earnest with us, and He wants us to make thorough work for eternity. He has poured out all heaven in one gift, and there is no reason why we should doubt His love. Look to Calvary. Christ died for you, and what greater evidence of God's love could you ask than that which has been given in the life and death and intercession of Jesus?

“God asks you to give Him your heart. Your powers, your talents, your affections, should all be surrendered to Him, that He may work in you to will and to do of His good pleasure, and fit you for eternal life. Accept

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the invitation of Christ. He bids you, ‘Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.’ O that we might press toward the mark for the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus! What more can God do than He has done? Let us empty our souls of all enmity, all foolishness, and by living faith connect with Jesus. Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Christ will pardon your transgressions, and receive you graciously.”—[The Review and Herald, May 5, 1891](#).

Chapter 32—Homeward Bound

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Aboard the City of Rome

London! Southampton! Wellingborough! Kettering! Grimsby! Birkenhead! Liverpool!—all of them towns and cities in old England—the last visited by Ellen White before she boarded the *City of Rome* at Liverpool on August 3. She was bound for home at last! These names would linger in her memory as long as she lived.

At eleven in the morning they arrived at Liverpool. Here she met her daughter-in-law, Mary K. White, and her two children, Ella and tiny Mabel, whom she had not seen for several months. W. C. White was left behind in Basel to complete some last-minute work “that demanded his special attention” ([Manuscript 27, 1887](#)).

At the home of Brother Drew in Liverpool, Sister White enjoyed some last pleasant hours. There she met a clerical brother who had recently accepted the Sabbath, a Pastor Smith. “He has been a minister of the State Church and was separated from the church because of his receiving the doctrine of immortality of the soul only through Christ, in accordance with the Word of God.”—*Ibid.* She rejoiced to see this honest Christian advance in the light and she did her best to encourage him.

Her extensive counsel concerning our reaching “ministers of other denominations” is wise and sensible:

“We have a work to do for the ministers of other churches. God wants them to be saved. They, like ourselves, can have immortality only through faith and obedience. We must labor for them earnestly that they may obtain it. God wants them to have a part in His special work for this time. He wants them to be among the number who are giving to His household meat in due season. Why should they not be engaged in this work?”—[Testimonies for the Church 6:77, 78](#).

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The Embarkation from Liverpool

The time had come to embark. The *City of Rome* would carry her and her party [Mary White and the two children shared Mrs. White's stateroom. D. T. Bourdeau and his son Augustin were aboard. A professor Kunz was a passenger and so were O.A. Olsen and his son. Olsen was en route to the general conference session.] safely homeward. Two years before, with some misgivings, she had looked forward to the European adventure. In vision God had opened to her mind certain situations that existed among the workers and the emerging institutions in Europe prior to her departure for the Old World.

But now all of this was in the past. Her thoughts as she sailed from Liverpool were not so much thoughts of anticipation as of reflection.

The advance moves that had been made in the eight countries that she had visited, the sacrifice and unselfish labors of the European and American laborers, and the willingness of the believers to listen and follow the Spirit of Prophecy counsel, brought joy to her heart and praise to her lips.

Her reflections upon the work in Europe are best expressed in a *Review* article that appeared four months after her return to America. "After a two years' stay in Europe we see no more reason for discouragement in the state of the cause there than at its rise in the different fields in America."—December 6, 1887.

[316] She could speak from experience now. Two years on the scene in Europe, visiting, preaching, teaching, counseling, observing, had qualified her to bring back to the brethren in America a true and a good report. Having helped to pioneer the message in the United States, she now had participated in the development of the early churches and institutions in Europe.

State of Three European Missions

She wrote in the same article in the *Review* concerning the three missions in Europe as follows:

"A great work is committed to those who present the truth in Europe.... The population comprised within

the limits of this mission alone is four times that of the United States. a good work has already been done in these countries. There are those who have received the truth, scattered as light-bearers in almost every land. We have nearly three hundred Sabbathkeepers in Switzerland. There are little companies in France, Germany, and Italy, and two hundred souls in Russia, who are obeying God's law; and there is a church of forty members away in the far east, almost to the line of Asia. The foundation has been laid for a church in Holland. In Roumania and Corsica there are a few who are seeking to keep God's commandments, and to wait for His Son from heaven.

“But how little has been done in comparison with the great work before us! ... The laborers in this mission are striving to the utmost of their ability, to meet the wants of the cause. But money is needed to sustain and extend the work. The call is coming in from different countries, ‘Send us a minister to preach the truth.’ How shall we answer this call?

“Our printing house at Basel needs help to carry forward its great and good work of translating and publishing books on the present truth, in the different languages of Europe. Colporteurs are meeting with encouraging success in the sale of our books. The light is thus brought to the people, while the colporteur—who in many cases has been thrown out of employment by accepting the truth—is enabled to support himself, and the sales are a financial help to the office....

“But the work of translating and publishing is necessarily difficult and expensive. The office must be supplied with funds.

“In the Scandinavian Mission, in the face of poverty and great difficulties, many have heard and believed the warning. There are twenty-three churches and nearly 1,000 Sabbath keepers in these countries. Nine ministers and licentiates, and about thirty colporteurs, are now in the field. It is only by self-denial and the closest

economy that this has been gained. There is great need of financial help to send out laborers and publications to these Northern peoples.

“The mission in London, that great city of 5,000,000 inhabitants, demands a place in our thoughts, our prayers, and our gifts. a great work must be done there, and as yet it is scarcely begun. Think of the many cities of England, ... all speaking the same language as our own, that have never yet been entered by the truth.”—*Ibid.*

The Sea Like a Placid Lake

Mrs. White’s reflections on shipboard, mingled as they were with feelings of rejoicing about the growth of the work, as well as care and concern about the future, were matched by the changeable weather at sea.

[318] On the morning of August 4 she awakened feeling strong and well. “All right this morning,” she wrote cheerily. “Had a beautiful night. The water is as smooth as a placid lake. Would not think we were on the boat if we did not hear the machinery and feel a little motion.”—[Letter 165, 1887](#). But the calm was followed by a storm. The porthole was latched and made fast. As Ellen White wrote about it later, she said:

“We had a storm at sea—not the most violent. I was upon deck all day, never tiring of watching the rolling waves—awful in their beauty, burnished like the heavens in their varied reflections as they rise as if in terrible wrath. The senses are fascinated with the sight. The waves scatter their spray like an overflowing cataract when lashed into fury by the merciless winds. They caused the strong, massive boat to tremble. They seem to be in a wild passion.... We heard a shriek on deck and saw two dozen passengers fleeing in every direction, for the waves had washed completely over the deck, giving them a thorough drenching.”—[Manuscript 27, 1887](#).

This turmoil of wind and water would naturally stimulate Ellen White's mind. Here are her words:

“We had solemn thoughts. The massive boat was but a speck on the broad waters. Men who waste their lives in vain struggles after happiness are represented by the troubled sea when it cannot rest. I looked upon the change and conflict through which the deep waters were passing in all their varied aspects of light and darkness—the placid waters like the crystal sea, the gale and the storm, and this proud boat riding upon the storm-tossed waves.

“Card-playing, dancing, and mad mirth upon the boat in mid-ocean have seemed entirely out of order and inappropriate at any time. The waters, unless kept within their appointed bounds by a perpetual miracle of Divine power, would, in storm and tempest, in their wild, boisterous vehemence, wreck the fairest vessels and hurl the living freight to a watery grave. What a thought—a solitary ship upon the boundless deep! Day after day we may look upon the heavens above us, the waters beneath. No landmark we can see—nothing that our eyes rest upon that stands still. Shall we ever reach our homes or shall we be swallowed up in the waters of the great deep as thousands upon thousands before us have been? God, the infinite God, how great His power! Shall we fear to trust Him?”—*Ibid.*

Finally, on August 11, the S.S. *City of Rome* arrived at New York. “Had ... a pleasant voyage,” was her laconic comment ([Letter 50, 1887](#)). “However,” she added soberly, “the very night we landed we took another steamer” for her first speaking appointment in America. Then followed one camp meeting after another.

These intensive meetings occupied her time for two months until finally she arrived at her home in Healdsburg, California, in mid-October.

Her Influence on the European Church

L. H. Christian, in charge of the work in Europe during the years 1922-1928 and president of the Northern European Division 1928-1936, wrote:

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“The advent movement in Europe would never have been the same if it had not been for her visit. For many, many years our members and their children in England, Switzerland, Norway, Denmark, and Sweden never tired of telling about Mrs. White. And when now and then in later years a few disloyal ones ridiculed and belittled the gift of prophecy and the servant of God, our people said: ‘We know better. We heard her speak. We have seen her humble, godly, inspiring life. We have her books, and they agree with the Bible and deepen our love for Jesus.’

“When I first went to Europe, in 1903, nearly all our people still remembered the visit of Mrs. White, and they loved to tell of her meetings and experiences, as they felt greatly helped by her stay.”—*The Fruitage of Spiritual Gifts*, pp. 161, 162.

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In the year 1912 a small group of Norwegian Adventists were informed by a church brother that November 26 was Ellen White’s eighty-fifth birthday. They felt a strong attachment to the writings of God’s servant and decided in their own unique way to “celebrate.” In a letter to Ellen White they wrote:

November 26, 1912

Mrs. E. G. White

St. Helena, California.

Dear Mother in Israel and Servant of the Lord!

Greetings from a few Sabbath-keepers in the western part of Norway, gathered together to celebrate your eighty-fifth anniversary by a thanksgiving meeting.

We thank the Lord for all the light He has given through the Spirit of Prophecy, and pray for help to walk in it, and our earnest prayer is that the Lord may protect

and strengthen His aged servant whom He has chosen
to bring us all this wonderful light and guidance....

(Signed)

Alma Anderson

Ranghild Johnsen

John Johnsen

Laura Hansen

Augusta Johnsen

Emma Fleischer

Arthur Johnsen

Elverhoi, Voss

Norway

A Prophetic Voice Speaking to the World

Mrs. White helped to pioneer the Seventh-day Adventist Church in America. She helped to build the church in Europe. Later, also, she became a pioneer builder in Australia (1891-1900). And when her busy life ended in 1915 she could testify concerning her witness for Christ and her seventy years of service in the cause she loved, "I have done the best that I could."