

REVIEW & HERALD--SUPPLEMENT.

Defense of Our Action in the Case of Dr. Wm. Russell.

WHEREAS, Dr. Wm. Russell has placed himself in an attitude of hostility toward the Seventh-day Adventist people, by giving to the world an unjust statement through a sheet especially hostile to our cause, or at least by throwing himself into the hands of its publishers so that they do it with his evident consent, it becomes necessary for us to make a statement of facts in self-defense.

Dr. Russell was employed for a considerable space of time as a physician at the Health Institute in Battle Creek. During this time the circumstances of the church were not favorable. The state of backsliding, of worldliness and unbelief on the part of the church, which arose during Bro. White's sickness, seriously affected Bro. Russell. His mind became unsettled with regard to the Testimonies of Sr. White, and with regard to some points of present truth. During the fall of 1868, he formed the purpose of establishing an Institute of his own at Mauston, Wis., and in March, 1869, he visited Wisconsin for the purpose of treating a patient who had applied to the Institute for help, and also for the purpose of transacting some business of his own.

After he had left Battle Creek, many statements that he had made from time to time while here, were brought to the notice of the General Conference Committee, the Trustees of the Publishing Association, and the Directors of the Health Institute. These expressions, if correctly reported, indicated a degree of treachery and hypocrisy on the part of Dr. R., which greatly astonished them. At the same time a letter came to Dr. Russell from Marion, Iowa, which plainly indicated that he was in correspondence with our most hostile opponents. This letter was opened by Dr. Lay, it being the practice of the physicians at the Institute to open each others' letters in the absence of the one to whom the letter is addressed. When we had these evidences of Dr. R.'s treachery and guile, and when we called to mind the fact that he had avowed his intention of establishing an Institution of his own, to do which he must borrow from some source quite large sums of money, and, furthermore, when we learned that it was his intention to take steps in this direction on this very visit, the question arose with those having knowledge of these facts, whether it was not duty to place our brethren upon their guard concerning him, as they would naturally confide in him, from his supposed good standing at Battle Creek. We thought that if he could use such treachery toward us, as was apparent from the things which then came to our knowledge, he would do the like with the brethren whom he might meet in the West. As Sr. White had pointedly reproved Dr. R., in a written Testimony, and especially in the matter of his proposed Health Institute, giving reasons why he should not enter into it, the question arose with us, whether we ought not to send out a portion of this Testimony as a warning to those brethren. After some degree of hesitation and regret at the necessity of the action, it was decided to send out a portion of this Testimony to such of the brethren as it was thought were in danger of being drawn into the investment of their means in Dr. R.'s Institute. This course of action was therefore adopted.

When Dr. Russell returned, he manifested much exasperation of feeling, and although we set before him the evidences of duplicity and decep-

tion on his part, and presented our reasons for what we had done, he continued to express dissatisfaction, and after a few week's time removed with his family to Mauston, his former place of residence.

At the time of the General Conference, in May, 1869. Brn. Andrews and Waggoner decided to telegraph to Dr. Russell to come to the Conference at our expense, desiring to relieve his mind by a faithful explanation of our course in his case, and also by inquiry into such business transactions as had taken place here, which we thought were to his disadvantage. Dr. Russell came in response to this invitation, and after calmly talking over the action of March last, giving him our grounds to think that there was treachery on his part, he seemed to be satisfied with the explanation made. Whereupon, to leave no act of justice toward Dr. R. undone, the same persons who had sent out the testimony above referred to, namely Brn. Andrews, Smith, and Walker, sent a circular to the same persons to whom the testimony was sent in the West, explaining why we had taken the action we had, also that we had had an interview with Dr. R., and were satisfied that he was not guilty of the treachery which we had feared. Subsequent developments have led us reluctantly to adopt our original conviction in the matter. To this paper Dr. R. attached the following certificate:

"I hereby certify that the above has been submitted to me for examination, and that it meets my approval. Had the facts in relation to my future course been better understood, there would have been no need of sending out the testimony referred to: but in my absence the brethren could only act from such evidence as was presented to them, and I hereby exonerate them from any blame, believing that they did it for the good of the cause."

The Dr. then returned home to attend to some matters of personal business, and after some time returned again to the Institute, where he spent a considerable portion of the summer, Bro. and Sr. White meanwhile spending the summer in Greenville. Toward the latter part of the summer, however, he returned to his family in Mauston, dissolving all connection with our Institute.

Bro. and Sr. White felt deeply that Dr. R. had not been rightly used by Brn. Aldrich and Walker, in their selling of land to him, and in his becoming involved in the building of his house. They thought this had given Dr. R. just occasion for stumbling, and they determined to make a further effort to help his mind. Accordingly at the camp-meeting at Kirkville, N. Y., about the middle of September last, Sr. White wrote Dr. Russell, inviting him to the camp-meeting at Clinton Junction, Wis., the following week, inclosing money to defray the expenses of his journey thither. This letter was endorsed by Brn. White and Andrews. By some oversight this letter was not sent till it was too late for it to reach him in season for the meeting in Wisconsin. Still, feeling anxious in his case, Bro. White wrote on the envelop of said letter, an urgent invitation, with the same condition inserted, that he should meet them at the Minnesota Camp-meeting, and sent the letter from Clinton, Wis., by brethren who lived at Mauston. And so, when Elder White and wife on their way to Minnesota, passed through Mauston, Dr. Russell joined them on the cars. In this manner he accompanied them to the camp-meeting.

At this Camp-meeting, he had opportunity to become more perfectly acquainted with the nature of the labors of Bro. and Sr. White, and to ask many questions, and to acquaint himself fully with everything he desired to learn, and to state his discouragements and difficulties; which he freely did. And during the meeting he expressed himself in the warmest terms of confidence and regard for Bro. and Sr. White, for their piety, and for the assurance he felt that they were engaged in the work of God; that his mind was relieved from its embarrassments and difficulties; that now he had become acquainted with them; that he understood the character of the work they were doing; that they had his sympathy and his confidence, and that they should have his co-operation. And he expressed bitter regrets that he had written an article for that sheet which was so hostile to them. He stated that he could now return home and prepare to return to Battle Creek, to take hold, and throw all his energies into the work there, and that he would gladly and heartily do this. And with the most tender feelings of union, so far as outward appearance could bear testimony, Dr. R. parted from Bro. and Sr. White, just before the close of the Camp-meeting, and Bro. W., from his own purse, paid his expenses to the meeting, amounting to \$18 or more.

After Dr. Russell's return to Mauston, he wrote a very cordial, friendly letter, expressing the same purpose that he had, by word of mouth, avowed at the Camp-meeting, and Bro. W., in good faith, and with a complete vindication of his course, so far as words and actions were concerned, stated in the REVIEW that Dr. R. had decided to go with the brethren to Minnesota, and to cast in his strength for the cause.

A short time after this, at Bro. White's request, Bro. Andrews wrote Dr. Russell, inviting him to come to Battle Creek, and also asking him to make a statement through the REVIEW that should recall as far as possible the statement he had given to the public through a hostile paper, against our people and cause and work. Although he had promised to give such statement at the Minnesota meeting, he now, under some excuse, neglected to do this. Bro. Andrews wrote him the third time before he responded by coming to Battle Creek. By this time we had begun to be somewhat in doubt in reference to his position; yet we decided that whatever might be his course, we would make an effort to have all his business transactions in Battle Creek made right, on the part of those who had involved him in financial embarrassment. After Dr. Russell came, we found that he was very different in manner from what he was in Minnesota. He did not come out and frankly avow his purpose to cast in his lot with those who oppose us, but hid his real position as far as possible.

In the meantime we received several letters from Iowa which strongly indicated that Dr. Russell was acting a treacherous part; that although we had sent for him in good faith to come and have a position in our Institute; and though he had never made any statement to us that he was committed to our opponents, yet such was the fact, all the time; so that while he came here in response to an invitation to come and act as physician in our Institute, he came really with the purpose of remaining a short time only, and then going to those who are opposed to us.

During the period of his last visit to Battle Creek, which occupied the greater part of a

month, great pains were taken to learn his grounds of dissatisfaction, and what the difficulties were under which he labored, and to inquire into all his business transactions where any advantage had been taken of him, or where it was feared that any had been taken, and to correct these wrongs as far as possible. So that Dr. Russell finally testified that we had thrown the whole responsibility of his case upon himself. His Biblical difficulties were inquired into, and so thoroughly examined with him, that he was finally constrained to say, and did explicitly say, that he did not see why his objections had not been fairly answered.

When a meeting of several of the brethren was held in the Office to consider and correct some of the wrongs that had risen during the period of Bro. White's sickness, Dr. Russell being present, Bro. White received a letter from Iowa, the second letter touching his case that had been received within a few days, in which statements were made, that indicated that Dr. Russell was acting a deceptive part, apparently friendly toward us, but actually in connection with those who are doing all in their power to tear us down. The reception of these letters caused Bro. White to call on Dr. R. to define his position; that if he was not with us, it was not suitable that he should be present at business meetings of the kind then in session. Dr. R. gave no satisfactory assurance relative to his position, and finally became quite restive under the close questioning to which he was subjected, and a few hours after the close of that meeting, sent Bro. Andrews a letter stating his purpose to leave for home that night. Several things, however, arose to delay him, and he was here for several days.

Dr. Russell was pressed to tell us how it was that we supposed him to be friendly and in connection with us, and spoke of him in that light through the REVIEW, and privately, the people of Marion, who are fighting the Seventh-day Adventists, should correctly understand his position, while we did not. He was pressed to answer this question, because the fact seemed to indicate treachery on his part, he being apparently friendly toward us, yet really friendly toward our enemies, and not toward us. And though he was persistently urged to answer this question, he evaded it. We told him that he placed us in the light of attempting to bribe him, in that we had made some efforts to sustain him in the time when we supposed he was decided to obey the truth; and that these persons knowing his position more accurately than we did, because we were trying to hire a man to labor in connection with us, who, they knew, was not in heart with us, would have some apparent ground to report that we were trying to buy him, and we urged him to tell how it was that they could know accurately the truth in the case, while we were left to make such great mistakes, we thinking him heartily on our side when he was heartily opposed to us. On this point we could get no explanation.

After a few days he left. On the evening of his departure, he gave to Brn. Waggoner and Andrews the strongest assurance that he was determined to go with the Seventh-day Adventists, and not with those who oppose them; that we had placed, by the interest we had taken for him, the burden of his case wholly upon himself; and he asked whether, in case he could persuade his wife to return to Battle Creek, and he himself would come and throw his whole soul into the work, we would receive him. We told him that if he came thus, no doubt he would be received. He also told Dr. Lamson to bid the patients good bye for him, and to inform them that he was going home

for his family and should be back again to the Institute in a few days. One of his principal pleas for leaving was that he must immediately get to his family, and must set out for them that night, so as to reach them before the Sabbath; and though he professed to us so distinctly that he was going to his own home, in Mauston, Wis., and appeared so determined to walk with us in the truth, he actually took the cars not for Mauston, but direct for Marion, Iowa. How to put such words and acts together, and yet preserve the honesty of the author of them, we are unable to see.

Before leaving, Dr. Russell stated to us that if he decided to stop here, he would have to borrow \$300; and he stated further that, if he returned West, he had the promise of assistance to help him out. We told him that till we knew what his position was, we could give him no assurance of doing anything for him in that line, and that even then we must be governed by what should seem just and right in the case; that we should not under any circumstances do anything in the line of bribing. He finally acknowledged, the last evening of his stay here, that he had so compromised himself by what he had written to this opposing party, that if he should now unite with us, he could be held up to ridicule, and disgrace be brought both upon him and upon us.

That his mind was fully prepared for open union with our opponents, of whom mention has already been made, is evident from the fact that, immediately on his arrival at Marion, a meeting of those concerned was called, and he was chosen as one of the corresponding editors of the sheet already alluded to. In the issue of said paper announcing this step on the part of Dr. R., is an article containing some statements in relation to his case, which demand a word of notice at our hands.

It is stated, first, that Bro. R. was a firm believer in the visions of Sr. White when he came to this place. Of this we have no evidence, and hence seriously question it. If such was the case, his course is still more inexplicable even than it stands at the present time.

It is stated, secondly, that more direct relation with the source of the visions caused him to doubt their authenticity. This is not correct. It was not associating with Bro. and Sr. White, but with those who were so far backslidden in spiritual things as to occupy a position of indifference or even of hostility toward them, which helped Bro. Russell on into the darkness which has since encompassed him.

It is stated, thirdly, that he was invited to meet Bro. and Sr. White at the cars at Mauston, on their way to Minnesota, and that he was there so strongly urged to attend that meeting, they offering to pay his expenses, that he consented and went with them. This carries the idea that it was by getting access to him personally that Bro. and Sr. White were able to induce him, by over-urging and persuading, to take the steps he did toward recovering his union with this body; whereas the invitation for him to attend the meeting in Minnesota, and the proposition to pay his fare if he would go, were made to him by letter, while yet Bro. and Sr. White were at the Clinton meeting. From the letter he accepted the invitation. There was no urging him by Bro. and Sr. W. while on the cars for Minnesota; and they did not see him for something like an hour or more after he had come on board the train.

It is stated, fourthly, that an influence was brought to bear on brethren in Wisconsin, after the Minnesota meeting, to lead them to withhold the means they had promised Dr. Russell in his

Institute enterprise. This is not correct. Nothing of this kind has been done since the Minnesota meeting, and nothing at any time, except a limited circulation of a portion of the vision, while Dr. Russell was in Wisconsin last spring, as already set forth. Moreover, Bro. and Sr. W. supposed he had given up such an enterprise, from the assurance which he gave them, at the Minnesota Camp-meeting, that he was then ready to throw his whole effort into the work already established.

It is stated, fifthly, that during the past summer Dr. Russell was still prosecuting his enterprise of establishing an Institute of his own. The writer of that statement must either have been misinformed, or Dr. R. was acting toward us a course of the utmost falsity; for he was here at the time, professedly acting entirely for the good of this Institution, and under a solemn pledge to unite his efforts and sympathy entirely with us, as hereafter stated.

In the progress of this unhappy experience with Dr. R., he has made some statements with which the reader should become acquainted. In a letter to Brn. White, Andrews, and Waggoner, dated May 22, 1869, which it will be noticed was at the time of the Conference already described, he said: "My soul is filled with love toward you. You have saved me, no doubt, from ruin. Oh, that I could tell you the feelings of my heart! I am astonished when I realize where I stand; but I would return to God and his people with weeping, with humility of soul."

Again, in the same letter, he says: "I thank you for the kindness and interest you have manifested in me. I have felt unworthy of it. I will try to redeem the past. I will prove my fidelity, by the help of the Lord." How he proved his fidelity, of which he here gave so promising a pledge, the reader can judge from the facts already set forth. He did it by traitorously playing into the hands of the enemy, and secretly working for the establishment of an opposing Institution, while professing to be wholly devoted to the interests of our own.

Again, in a letter to Brn. White and Andrews, dated Jan. 17, 1870, just before leaving the place, he says: "I confess I have some fears at times; for I know I am almost on the brink of infidelity." We quote this statement to show that when a person has received light on the present truth, apostasy from it subjects the mind to a terrible ordeal. This is the difference between receiving and giving up the truth. The mind that is being led to embrace the truth, is never racked to the verge of infidelity. We trust this may not be his landing-place; but we see no safety for him, judging from the course of some who have but recently preceded him in the course he is now taking.

We have no personal feelings nor ill-will against Dr. Russell. But the reader will see that the case has assumed a phase which renders it necessary that we speak out and present the facts, to save ourselves from being placed in a false light, and to save any from being stumbled by those who are warring against the cause of truth. And we have no wish that statements be colored, or that facts be overdrawn. All we wish is, that simple facts may be allowed to speak for themselves. Whether his course is the result of treachery, or doublemindedness, we will not presume to determine. And now we leave his case to the brethren, to be regarded in the light which to them shall seem just and right, feeling meanwhile that we have done, according to his own acknowledgment, all in our power to help him to that position, and to pursue that course, where we confidently believe that truth and safety lie.

GENERAL CONFERENCE COMMITTEE.