

ORGANIZATION

Its Character, Purpose, Place,
and Development

in the

Seventh-day Adventist Church

By

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FOREWORD

MUCH has been written regarding the experiences and labors of the pioneers of the Seventh-day Adventist movement. But none had attempted fully to trace the historical development of the principles and plan of organization until the late C. C. Crisler undertook the task. This volume is therefore unique and distinctive.

The manuscript was finished in 1925. Plans were partly effected to publish the book at that time, but they were not carried to completion. In the meantime the author has passed to his rest. All recognize his special qualifications to prepare such a work. Realizing the imperative need of placing this matter in the hands of all our workers, those responsible have regarded this as an opportune time for publishing it.

A younger generation of men are now bearing the responsibility of the ministry and leadership in this cause. They have not had personal knowledge of the struggles of the pioneers in establishing the foundations of gospel order in this movement. It is therefore fitting that we should have available the essential facts for our understanding and guidance.

"We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history."—*"Life Sketches,"* p. 196.

A careful study of this book will bring to all a reverent appreciation of God's leadership in the founding of the

advent movement. Step by step the providence of the Lord is revealed in establishing the principles of organization upon a Scriptural foundation. Our safety today depends on our building upon these principles.

J. L. McELHANY.

NOTE TO THE READER

IN this book an attempt has been made to present in connected form, for study and for convenient reference, an outline of the development of gospel order in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, with extracts from the writings of the men bearing the chief burden of this work. Much also has been quoted from the counsels and admonitions of Mrs. Ellen G. White, the last section of the book being made up wholly from her writings.

The work emphasizes the Bible plan for concerted action, and points out the dangers that would arise from any attempt to do away with agencies divinely appointed for the purpose of maintaining a wise distribution of responsibilities. An effort has been made to set forth underlying principles; the details of church, conference, and institutional organization are only incidentally touched upon. A knowledge of the fundamentals of gospel order makes possible a proper application of Bible principles in the outworking of administrative detail.

Grateful acknowledgment is due those who have given various chapters a critical reading. To the painstaking and sympathetic cooperation of many friends and helpers, the author is indebted for much of value.

It is hoped that this book will tend to strengthen confidence in God's leadership of His people, and in the value

of the means He has ordained for the maintenance of unity and efficiency in all the relationships and responsibilities of Christian believers.

THE AUTHOR.

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OUT OF WEAKNESS MADE STRONG

FROM the first, Sabbathkeeping Adventists have endeavored to shape their forms of church government in harmony with the principles underlying the organization of the apostolic church. In this effort they have endeavored to follow closely the teachings of the prophets and apostles; yet even these inspired counsels have not always satisfied some who might have advanced from strength to strength by uniting heartily with their brethren in Christian fellowship. Nevertheless the leaders among us have persevered in teaching that during the closing scenes of this earth's history, when confusion and anarchy will reign well-nigh supreme, the people of God, in all their movements, will continue to reveal to the world the harmony of heaven.

Regarding organization among Sabbathkeeping Adventists during the first twenty years after the passing of the time of 1844, Mrs. E. G. White wrote to the brethren assembled in General Conference in 1893:

"I was one of the number who had an experience in establishing it [gospel order] from the first. I know the difficulties that had to be met, the evils which it was designed to correct, and I have watched its influence in connection with the growth of the cause. At an early stage in the work, God gave us special light upon this point; and this light, together with the lessons that experience has taught us, should be carefully considered.

“From the first our work was aggressive. Our numbers were few, and mostly from the poorer class. Our views were almost unknown to the world. We had no houses of worship, but few publications, and very limited facilities for carrying forward our work. The sheep were scattered in the highways and byways, in cities, in towns, in forests. The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus was our message. . . .

“Our numbers gradually increased. The seed that was sown was watered of God, and He gave the increase. At first we assembled for worship, and presented the truth to those who would come to hear in private houses, in large kitchens, in barns, in groves, and in schoolhouses; but it was not long before we were able to build humble houses of worship.

“As our numbers increased, it was evident that without some form of organization, there would be great confusion, and the work would not be carried forward successfully. To provide for the support of the ministry, for carrying the work in new fields, for protecting both the churches and the ministry from unworthy members, for holding church property, for the publication of the truth through the press, and for many other objects, organization was indispensable.

“Yet there was strong feeling against it among our people. The First-day Adventists were opposed to organization, and most of the Seventh-day Adventists entertained the same ideas. We sought the Lord with earnest prayer that we might understand His will, and light was given by His Spirit, that there must be order and thorough discipline in the church, that organization was essential. System and order are manifest in all the works of God throughout the

universe. Order is the law of heaven, and it should be the law of God's people on the earth. . . .

"We had a hard struggle in establishing organization. Notwithstanding that the Lord gave testimony after testimony upon this point, the opposition was strong, and it had to be met again and again. But we knew that the Lord God of Israel was leading us, and guiding by His providence.

THE RESULTS OF UNITED EFFORT

"We engaged in the work of organization, and marked prosperity attended this advance movement.

"As the development of the work called us to engage in new enterprises, we were prepared to enter upon them. The Lord directed our minds to the importance of educational work. We saw the need of schools, that our children might receive instruction free from the errors of false philosophy, that their training might be in harmony with the principles of the word of God. The need of health institutions had been urged upon us, both for the help and instruction of our own people and as a means of blessing and enlightenment to others. This enterprise also was carried forward. All this was missionary work of the highest order.

"Our work was not sustained by large gifts and legacies; for we have few wealthy men among us. What is the secret of our prosperity? We have moved under the order of the Captain of our salvation. God has blessed our united efforts. The truth has spread and flourished. Institutions have multiplied. The mustard seed has grown to a great tree. The system of organization has proved a grand success. Systematic benevolence was entered into accord-

ing to the Bible plan. The body has been 'compacted by that which every joint supplieth.' Eph. 4:16. As we have advanced, our system of organization has still proved effectual. . . .

STRENGTH IN SIMPLICITY

"The business of our conference session has sometimes been burdened down with propositions and resolutions that were not at all essential, and that would never have been presented if the sons and daughters of God had been walking carefully and prayerfully before Him. The fewer rules and regulations that we can have, the better will be the effect in the end. When they are made, let them be carefully considered, and, if wise, let it be seen that they mean something, and are not to become a dead letter. Do not, however, encumber any branch of the work with unnecessary, burdensome restrictions and inventions of men. In this period of the world's history, with the vast work that is before us, we need to observe the greatest simplicity, and the work will be stronger for its simplicity.

STEADY ADVANCEMENT

"Let none entertain the thought, however, that we can dispense with organization. It has cost us much study and many prayers for wisdom that we know God has answered, to erect this structure. It has been built up by His direction, through much sacrifice and conflict. Let none of our brethren be so deceived as to attempt to tear it down, for you will thus bring in a condition of things that you do not dream of. In the name of the Lord I declare to you that it is to stand, strengthened, established, and settled. At God's command, 'Go forward,' we advanced when the difficulties to be surmounted made the

advance seem impossible. We know how much it has cost to work out God's plans in the past, which have made us as a people what we are. Then let every one be exceedingly careful not to unsettle minds in regard to those things that God has ordained for our prosperity and success in advancing His cause. . . .

WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT!

"In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what God has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history. We are now a strong people, if we will put our trust in the Lord; for we are handling the mighty truths of the word of God. We have everything to be thankful for. If we walk in the light as it shines upon us from the living oracles of God, we shall have large responsibilities, corresponding to the great light given us of God. We have many duties to perform, because we have been made the depositories of sacred truth to be given to the world in all its beauty and glory. We are debtors to God to use every advantage He has entrusted to us to beautify the truth of holiness of character, and to send the message of warning, and of comfort, of hope and love, to those who are in the darkness of error and sin.

"Thank God for what has already been done in providing for our youth facilities for religious and intellectual training. Many have been educated to act a part in the various branches of the work, not only in America, but in foreign fields. The press has furnished literature that has

spread far and wide the knowledge of the truth. Let all the gifts that like rivulets have swelled the stream of benevolence, be recognized as a cause of thanksgiving to God.

“We have an army of youth today who can do much if they are properly directed and encouraged. We want our children to believe the truth. We want them to be blessed of God. We want them to act a part in well-organized plans for helping other youth. Let all be so trained that they may rightly represent the truth, giving the reason of the hope that is within them, and honoring God in any branch of the work where they are qualified to labor. . . .

“As the disciples of Christ it is our duty to diffuse light which we know that the world has not. Let the people of God ‘be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.’ 1 Tim. 6:18, 19.”—*General Conference Bulletin, Jan. 29, 30, 1893, pp. 22-24.*

UNITY IN FAITH AND DOCTRINE

MARVELOUS are the providences connected with the laying of the foundations of the faith of Seventh-day Adventist believers. Concerning the experiences of Elders Joseph Bates, James White, Stephen Pierce, Hiram Edson, and others who searched for the truth as for hidden treasure * after the passing of the time in 1844, Mrs. E. G. White, who usually met with the brethren in their seasons of Bible study, has testified thus:

“We would come together burdened in soul, praying that we might be one in faith and doctrine; for we knew that Christ is not divided. One point at a time was made the subject of investigation. Solemnity characterized these councils of investigation. The Scriptures were opened with a sense of awe. Often we fasted, that we might be better fitted to understand the truth. After earnest prayer, if any point was not understood, it was discussed, and each one expressed his opinion freely; then we would again bow in prayer, and earnest supplications went up to heaven that God would help us to see eye to eye, that we might be one, as Christ and the Father are one. Many tears were shed. . . .

“We spent many hours in this way. . . . Sometimes the entire night was spent in solemn investigation of the Scriptures, that we might understand the truth for our time. On some occasions the Spirit of God would come

* See Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 2, p. 56.

upon me, and difficult portions were made clear through God's appointed way, and then there was perfect harmony. We were all of one mind and one spirit.

"We sought most earnestly that the Scriptures should not be wrested to suit any man's opinions. We tried to make our differences as slight as possible by not dwelling on points that were of minor importance, upon which there were varying opinions. But the burden of every soul was to bring about a condition among the brethren which would answer the prayer of Christ that His disciples might be one as He and the Father are one.

"Sometimes one or two of the brethren would stubbornly set themselves against the view presented, and would act out the natural feelings of the heart; but when this disposition appeared, we suspended our investigations and adjourned our meeting, that each one might have an opportunity to go to God in prayer, and without conversation with others, study the point of difference, asking light from heaven. With expressions of friendliness we parted, to meet again as soon as possible for further investigation. At times the power of God came upon us in a marked manner, and when clear light revealed the points of truth, we would weep and rejoice together. We loved Jesus; we loved one another."—*Review and Herald*, July 26, 1892.

"Thus light was given that helped us to understand the scriptures in regard to Christ, His mission, and His priesthood. A line of truth extending from that time to the time when we shall enter the city of God, was made plain to me, and I gave to others the instruction that the Lord had given me.

"During this whole time I could not understand the

reasoning of the brethren. My mind was locked, as it were, and I could not comprehend the meaning of the scriptures we were studying. This was one of the greatest sorrows of my life. I was in this condition of mind until all the principal points of our faith were made clear to our minds, in harmony with the word of God. The brethren knew that when not in vision, I could not understand these matters, and they accepted as light direct from heaven the revelations given.

“For two or three years my mind continued to be locked to an understanding of the Scriptures. In the course of our labors, my husband and I visited Father Andrews, who was suffering intensely with inflammatory rheumatism. We prayed for him. I laid my hands on his head, and said, ‘Father Andrews, the Lord Jesus maketh thee whole.’ He was healed instantly. He got up, and walked about the room, praising God, and saying, ‘I never saw it on this wise before. Angels of God are in this room.’ The glory of the Lord was revealed. Light seemed to shine all through the house, and an angel’s hand was laid upon my head. From that time to this I have been able to understand the word of God.”—*Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 2, pp. 57, 58.*

THE UNFOLDING OF NEW TRUTHS

Among those who came into the ranks of believers shortly after the foundations of our faith had been laid, were men of talent who studied diligently in order to know for themselves that every feature of their newly found faith was in harmony with the sure word of prophecy. As the truth unfolded before their vision, leading to the discovery of new beauties in Holy Writ, they were encouraged

by the pioneers of the third angel's message to continue their researches, but to counsel freely with others before advocating in public any new points of doctrine.

In November, 1850, there appeared in the columns of *Present Truth* a communication from Mrs. E. G. White, in which she wrote:

"I saw that the shepherds should consult those in whom they have reason to have confidence, those who have been in all the messages, and are firm in all the present truth, before they advocate new points of importance, which they may think the Bible sustains. Then the shepherds will be perfectly united, and the union of the shepherds will be felt by the church. Such a course I saw would prevent unhappy divisions, and then there would be no danger of the precious flock being divided, and the sheep scattered without a shepherd."—*“Early Writings,” pp. 61, 62, new edition. (Reprinted from the Present Truth, Vol. 1, No. 11, p. 86, Paris, Maine, November, 1850.)*

The observance of this counsel, through all the years that have passed, has resulted in nought but blessing. While unity has thus been maintained, there has never been a time when a review of fundamental advent doctrines, and, in fact, a thorough study of all lines of truth, as revealed in the Scriptures, has not been encouraged. From time to time, students of the word have discovered precious truths that have long lain hidden in obscurity, and these have been accepted by the ministry and have been clearly set before our people.

In 1875 the following instruction was given:

“God is leading a people out from the world upon the exalted platform of eternal truth, the commandments of

God and the faith of Jesus. He will discipline and fit up His people. They will not be at variance, one believing one thing, and another having faith and views entirely opposite, each moving independently of the body. Through the diversity of the gifts and governments that He has placed in the church, they will all come to the unity of the faith. If one man takes his views of Bible truth without regard to the opinions of his brethren, and justifies his course, alleging that he has a right to his own peculiar views, and then presses them upon others, how can he be fulfilling the prayer of Christ? And if another and still another arises, each asserting his right to believe and talk what he pleases without reference to the faith of the body, where will be that harmony which existed between Christ and His Father, and which Christ prayed might exist among His brethren?"—*Testimonies for the Church,* Vol. III, pp. 446, 447.

In later years, some have seemed to lose sight of the willingness of the pioneers of the third angel's message to accept new views of truth that were in harmony with God's word. During the General Conference of 1883, in an address to ministers, principles well understood in earlier years were repeated:

"Though we have an individual work and an individual responsibility before God, we are not to follow our own judgment, regardless of the opinions and feelings of our brethren; for this course would lead to disorder in the church. It is the duty of ministers to respect the judgment of their brethren; but their relations to one another, as well as the doctrines they teach, should be brought to the test of the law and the testimony; then, if hearts are teachable, there will be no divisions among us. Some are

inclined to be disorderly, and are drifting away from the great landmarks of the faith; but God is moving upon His ministers to be one in doctrine and in spirit.”—“*Gospel Workers*,” p. 443 (1893 edition).

Later, to a group of workers in Europe who were unacquainted with some of these principles, the following instruction was given:

“The history of God’s work in the past shows that some have an understanding of one thing, others of another. It is His plan that there should be a counseling together. In the multitude of counselors there is safety. There should be harmony in sentiment and action among the workers. Doctrines and plans should be compared with the law and the testimony. We should never feel too independent to learn of one another. While it is not according to God’s plan that one man’s mind shall control all other minds, He is not pleased to have individuals strike out on a new track, and present new theories independent of the body.

“As ministers, as the church of Christ, labor to be in harmony among yourselves, to be one in heart, one in sympathy. If you cannot all see alike on every subject, do not allow hard feelings to arise. When the cause was young, if there was one who did not view some point of truth as the body viewed it, a day of fasting and prayer was observed. We did not then try to see how far apart we could get; but we prayed, and searched the Scriptures, until the light of truth illuminated the darkened mind, and all could see eye to eye.”—“*Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists*,” p. 125.

At the time of the Minneapolis General Conference, in

1888, attention was called anew to the principles underlying a prayerful investigation of the Scriptures. Some of these principles are outlined in "Testimonies for the Church," Volume V, from which are taken the following extracts:

"God intends that, even in this life, truth shall be ever unfolding to His people. . . . There are mines of truth yet to be discovered by the earnest seeker. . . .

"Peter exhorts his brethren to 'grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.' 2 Peter 3:18. Whenever the people of God are growing in grace, they will be constantly obtaining a clearer understanding of His word. They will discern new light and beauty in its sacred truths. This has been true in the history of the church in all ages, and thus it will continue to the end. But as real spiritual life declines, it has ever been the tendency to cease to advance in the knowledge of the truth. Men rest satisfied with the light already received from God's word, and discourage any further investigation of the Scriptures. They become conservative, and seek to avoid discussion.

"The fact that there is no controversy or agitation among God's people, should not be regarded as conclusive evidence that they are holding fast to sound doctrine. There is reason to fear that they may not be clearly discriminating between truth and error. When no new questions are started by investigation of the Scriptures, when no difference of opinion arises which will set men to searching the Bible for themselves, to make sure that they have the truth, there will be many now, as in ancient times, who will hold to tradition, and worship they know not what.

REVIEWING THE FUNDAMENTALS

"I have been shown that many who profess to have a knowledge of present truth, know not what they believe. They do not understand the evidences of their faith. They have no just appreciation of the work for the present time. When the time of trial shall come, there are men now preaching to others, who will find, upon examining the positions they hold, that there are many things for which they can give no satisfactory reason. Until thus tested, they knew not their great ignorance. . . .

"God will arouse His people; if other means fail, heresies will come in among them, which will sift them, separating the chaff from the wheat. The Lord calls upon all who believe His word to awake out of sleep. Precious light has come, appropriate for this time. It is Bible truth, showing the perils that are right upon us. This light should lead us to a diligent study of the Scriptures, and a most critical examination of the positions which we hold. God would have all the bearings and positions of truth thoroughly and perseveringly searched, with prayer and fasting. Believers are not to rest in suppositions and ill-defined ideas of what constitutes truth. Their faith must be firmly founded upon the word of God, so that when the testing time shall come, and they are brought before councils to answer for their faith, they may be able to give a reason for the hope that is in them, with meekness and fear.

"Agitate, agitate, agitate. The subjects which we present to the world must be to us a living reality. It is important that in defending the doctrines which we consider fundamental articles of faith, we should never allow

ourselves to employ arguments that are not wholly sound. These may avail to silence an opposer, but they do not honor the truth. We should present sound arguments, that will not only silence our opponents, but will bear the closest and most searching scrutiny. . . .

“Whatever may be man’s intellectual advancement, let him not for a moment think that there is no need of thorough and continuous searching of the Scriptures for greater light. As a people we are called individually to be students of prophecy. We must watch with earnestness that we may discern any ray of light which God shall present to us. We are to catch the first gleamings of truth; and through prayerful study, clearer light may be obtained, which can be brought before others.”—*Pages 703-708.*

At the time when light shone anew on the doctrine of justification by faith, it was necessary that these principles regarding the unfolding of truth, should be repeated often. In a sermon delivered January 14, 1889, and published in the *Review and Herald*, the following instruction was given:

“Some have asked me if I thought there was any more light for the people of God. Our minds have become so narrow that we do not seem to understand that the Lord has a mighty work to do for us. Increasing light is to shine upon us; for ‘the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.’ Prov. 4:18.

“Truth is eternal, and conflict with error will only make manifest its strength. We should never refuse to examine the Scriptures with those who, we have reason to believe, desire to know what is truth as much as we do.

Suppose a brother held a view that differed from yours, and he should come to you, proposing that you sit down with him and make an investigation of that point in the Scriptures; should you rise up, filled with prejudice, and condemn his ideas, while refusing to give him a candid hearing? The only right way would be to sit down as Christians, and investigate the position presented, in the light of God's word, which will reveal truth and unmask error. To ridicule his ideas would not weaken his position in the least if it were false, or strengthen your position if it were true. If the pillar of our faith will not stand the test of investigation, it is time that we knew it. There must be no spirit of Pharisaism cherished among us. When Christ came to His own, His own received Him not; and it is a matter of solemn interest to us that we should not pursue a similar course in refusing light from heaven.

"We must study the truth for ourselves. No living man should be relied upon to think for us. No matter who it is, or in what position he may be placed, we are not to look upon any man as a perfect criterion for us. We are to counsel together, and to be subject to one another; but at the same time we are to exercise the ability God has given us to learn what is truth. Each one of us must look to God for divine enlightenment. We must individually develop a character that will stand the test in the day of God. We must not become set in our ideas, and think that no one should interfere with our opinions."
—*Review and Herald, June 18, 1889.*

A year later, the following paragraph appeared in the *Review*:

"The question has been asked me, 'Do you think that the Lord has any more light for us as a people?' I answer

that He has light that is new to us, and yet it is precious old light that is to shine forth from the word of truth. We have only the glimmerings of the rays of the light that is yet to come to us."—*Id.*, June 3, 1890.

And in 1892:

"It is necessary that our unity today be of a character that will bear the test of trial. . . . We have many lessons to learn, and many, many to unlearn. God and heaven alone are infallible. Those who think that they will never have to give up a cherished view, never have occasion to change an opinion, will be disappointed. As long as we hold to our own ideas and opinions with determined persistency, we cannot have the unity for which Christ prayed. . . .

"When any of our brethren receive new light upon the Scriptures, he should frankly explain his position, and every minister should search the Scriptures with the spirit of candor to see if the points presented on a new subject can be substantiated by the Inspired Word. 'The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.' 2 Tim. 2:24, 25."—*Id.*, July 26, 1892.

LIBERTY OF THOUGHT

From a manuscript outlining the principles that govern liberty of thought, these paragraphs are selected:

"Christ prayed that His disciples might be one even as He and His Father are one. In what does this unity consist? This oneness does not exist because every one has the same disposition, the same temperament, and

thinks in the very same channel. All do not possess the same degree of intelligence. All have not the same experience. In a church there are different gifts and varied experiences. In temporal matters there is a great variety of ways of management, and yet these variations in manner of labor, in the exercise of gifts, do not create dissension and discord and disunion.

“One man may be conversant with the Scriptures, and some particular portion of the Scriptures may be especially appreciated by him, another sees another portion as very important, and thus one may present one point, and another, another point, and both may be of highest value. This is all in the order of God. But if a man makes a mistake in his interpretation of some portion of the Scripture, shall this cause diversity and disunion?—God forbid. We cannot then take a position that the unity of the church consists in viewing every text of Scripture in the very same light. The church may pass resolution upon resolution to put down all disagreement of opinions, but we cannot force the mind and will, and thus root out disagreement. These resolutions may conceal the discord; but they cannot quench it, and establish perfect agreement. Nothing can perfect unity in the church but the spirit of Christlike forbearance. . . .

“The great truths of the word of God are so clearly stated that none need make a mistake in understanding them. When as individual members of the church, you love God supremely and your neighbor as yourself, there will be no need of labored efforts to be in unity; for there will be oneness in Christ as a natural result.”—*Ellen G. White Manuscript 24, 1892.*

Repeatedly God's people have been counseled not to

make prominent their differences of opinion on minor matters. The ministers have been urged not to introduce teachings that would cause dissension, unless they have clear evidence that God is calling upon them to deliver a special message.

This is in harmony with a paragraph in "Early Writings," written in 1850:

"I saw the necessity of the messengers, especially, watching, and checking all fanaticism wherever they might see it arise. . . . There are many precious truths contained in the word of God, but it is '*present truth*' that the flock needs now. I have seen the danger of the messengers' running off from the important points of present truth, to dwell upon subjects that are not calculated to unite the flock and sanctify the soul. Satan will here take every possible advantage to injure the cause."—*"Early Writings," p. 63, new edition.*

AVOIDING FALSE TEACHINGS

The brethren in responsibility are called upon to safeguard the cause of God from the subtle influence of teachers of false doctrines. The following was published in May, 1888:

"God has a special work for the men of experience to do. They are to guard the cause of God. They are to see that the work of God is not committed to men who feel it their privilege to move out on their own independent judgment, to preach whatever they please, and to be responsible to no one for their instructions or work. Let this spirit of self-sufficiency once rule in our midst, and there will be no harmony of action, no unity of spirit, no safety for the work, and no healthful growth in the cause.

There will be false teachers, evil workers who will, by insinuating error, draw away souls from the truth. Christ prayed that His followers might be one as He and the Father were one. Those who desire to see this prayer answered, should seek to discourage the slightest tendency to division, and try to keep the spirit of unity and love among brethren.

“God calls for laborers; but He wants those who are willing to submit their wills to His, and who will teach the truth as it is in Jesus. One worker who has been trained and educated for the work, who is controlled by the Spirit of Christ, will accomplish far more than ten laborers who go out deficient in knowledge and weak in the faith. One who works in harmony with the counsel of God, and in unity with the brethren, will be more efficient to do good, than ten will be who do not realize the necessity of depending upon God, and of acting in harmony with the general plan of the work.”—*Review and Herald, May 29, 1888.*

A FIRM PLATFORM

Regarding the “established faith” of the body of believers, the following was published in 1858:

“I saw a company who stood well guarded and firm, giving no countenance to those who would unsettle the established faith of the body. God looked upon them with approbation. I was shown three steps,—the first, second, and third angels’ messages. Said my accompanying angel, ‘Woe to him who shall move a block or stir a pin of these messages. The true understanding of these messages is of vital importance. The destiny of souls hangs upon the manner in which they are received.’ I was again

brought down through these messages, and saw how dearly the people of God had purchased their experience. It had been obtained through much suffering and severe conflict. God had led them along step by step, until He had placed them upon a solid, immovable platform.

"I saw individuals approach the platform and examine the foundation. Some with rejoicing immediately stepped upon it. Others commenced to find fault with the foundation. They wished improvements made, and then the platform would be more perfect, and the people much happier. Some stepped off the platform to examine it, and declared it to be laid wrong. But I saw that nearly all stood firm upon the platform, and exhorted those who had stepped off to cease their complaints; for God was the Master Builder, and they were fighting against Him. They recounted the wonderful work of God, which had led them to the firm platform, and in union raised their eyes to heaven, and with a loud voice glorified God. This affected some of those who had complained and left the platform, and they with humble look again stepped upon it."—*“Early Writings,” pp. 258, 259, new edition.*

Further instruction as to the strength of the platform upon which Seventh-day Adventists have been led to take their stand, was given in 1875:

"God is leading out a people and establishing them upon the one great platform of faith, the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus. He has given His people a straight chain of Bible truth, clear and connected. This truth is of heavenly origin, and has been searched for as for hidden treasure. It has been dug out through careful searching of the Scriptures and through much prayer. . . . Shall the established faith in the strong points

of our position, which has led us out from the world and united us a distinct and peculiar people, be given up as erroneous?"—*Testimonies for the Church,* Vol. III, p. 447.

A SURE FOUNDATION

"For the past fifty years every phase of heresy has been brought to bear upon us, to becloud our minds regarding the teaching of the word,—especially concerning the ministration of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, and the message of heaven for these last days, as given by the angels of the fourteenth chapter of Revelation. Messages of every order and kind have been urged upon Seventh-day Adventists, to take the place of the truth which, point by point, has been sought out by prayerful study, and testified to by the miracle-working power of the Lord. But the waymarks which have made us what we are, are to be preserved, and they will be preserved, as God has signified through His word and the testimony of His Spirit. He calls upon us to hold firmly, with the grip of faith, to the fundamental principles that are based upon unquestionable authority."—*Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 2, p. 59 (1904).*

AN OBJECT LESSON

THE early advent believers who accepted the three angels' messages and the Sabbath truth, were coming into the unity of the faith at the very time when those Adventists who refused to accept these doctrines, became confused and disorganized. The following paragraphs from "Early Writings," written in 1850, portray the conditions prevailing at that time:

"God's people are coming into the unity of the faith. Those who observe the Sabbath of the Bible are united in their views of Bible truth. But those who oppose the Sabbath among the advent people are disunited, and strangely divided. One comes forward in opposition to the Sabbath, and declares it to be thus and so, and at the conclusion calls it settled. But as his effort does not put the question to rest, and as the Sabbath cause progresses, and the children of the Lord still embrace it, another comes forward to overthrow it. But in presenting his views to get around the Sabbath, he entirely tears down the arguments of him who made the first effort against the truth, and presents a theory as opposite to his as to ours. So with the third and the fourth; but none of them will have it as it stands in the word of God: 'The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God.'"—"*Early Writings,*" pp. 68, 69, new edition.

"At Oswego, New York, September 7, 1850, . . . I was pointed to those who claim to be Adventists, but who

reject the present truth, and saw that they were crumbling, and that the hand of the Lord was in their midst to divide and scatter them."—*Id.*, p. 69.

Commenting on the conditions existing among the advent believers who refused to accept the Sabbath truth, James White wrote in December, 1850:

"In 1843 . . . the message was proclaimed everywhere, and everywhere felt. Then its proclaimers were perfectly united in faith, in feeling, and in their course of action. Now those who profess to be still giving the same message, are very much limited in their sphere of action. . . . And what makes their case look really 'wretched and miserable,' is the fact that the work of many of them, for months past, has been to 'bite and devour one another.' They are, therefore, being 'consumed one of another.'"—*Review and Herald, Vol. I, No. 2, December, 1850.*

The inability of the opposers of the Sabbath truth to unite on some commonly accepted basis of belief, was freely acknowledged in their own publications. For example, among those who, after the passing of the time, refused to walk in the light shining upon the sanctuary question, the Sabbath, and the three angels' messages of Revelation 14, were some who afterward supported a paper, the *Second Advent Watchman*, published in Hartford, Connecticut, and edited by W. S. Campbell and J. Turner.* In the issues for June 2 and 9, 1852, the leading editorial, headed, "Our Present Position," is a remarkable admission of the weakness that existed among them. It is necessary to quote only a few paragraphs of this editorial to reveal the prevailing confusion:

* The Joseph Turner ("J. T.") mentioned in "Life Sketches," pp. 213-229 (1880 edition).

"OUR PRESENT POSITION

"Having been occupied in preaching, now mostly for more than two months past, . . . we have had an opportunity of looking over the field, and are somewhat prepared to speak as to the state of things among that portion of the advent brethren with which we are identified. . . .

"It is a very important matter to hold to present truth; but it is not to be held or presented in such a way as to cast off and reject those who do not see with us, on that account. We are satisfied this has been the case with us too much, altogether; and we have not only reaped the fruits of it, in having driven off many from us and kept many from coming, but this has been one great cause of great dissensions among ourselves; and still the cause operates—still the result follows. We see the sad fruits in the dwindling interest, in very many instances: the cause manifestly sinking, and growing less and less. In such cases, generally, the great effort is upon opinions and views which are most earnestly contended for, each of which, in turn, [it is thought] is a new and important truth, and so is most strenuously advocated, but which is very likely to prevent the preaching of the gospel fully, at least, with a practical effect. The result has been bad—the church has languished; sinners have not been awakened; there has been but little building up and spiritual improvement. . . .

"We have failed to urge the necessity of the Spirit of God in the awakening and conversion of sinners, and the upbuilding and consolation of believers. . . . It appears that, in failing to do this, we have had many less converted and added to us; and, as a people, in many instances, have been shriveling and dying. . . .

“Again, there is talebearing, and strife as the consequence, for ‘where there is no tattler, the strife ceaseth.’ . . .

“Who will deny that we are speaking of things which exist? and how can the church prosper while cursed with such things? . . .

“Connected with this, we find the angry criminations and bickerings which exist among the brethren, in the ministry and out of it. The state of feeling resulting from the division of the body, has been unfavorable to deep piety. An influence prevails upon either party which cannot be good and saving in its effect, and which we very much regret. It is painful to contemplate it. It is time we thought less of our party feelings and interests, and more of the coming and kingdom of Christ, with the necessary preparation for it. . . .

“Finally, we would point to the fact that many are too tenacious for their own particular views, not for themselves, perhaps, but for the good of others; and if every one has a doctrine which he wishes to enforce, and will insist that each other member shall see as he does, then the whole body must suffer. Union is soon destroyed. Where one set of opinions is held up continually and earnestly, the effect will be bad upon the minds of others; and they, in turn, will immediately feel the same spirit. Soon fellowship will be withdrawn, and then those who had taken sweet counsel and united in the house of God, will be separated. This is precisely the condition which has obtained; and so it ever will be, till we learn to do better, and allow that a man is a Christian and a brother, who may differ from us in respect to questions, upon the decision of which, we know well enough, our salvation does not depend. . . .

“What want of charity we behold, often all on account of difference in some views, mere opinions of our own. May God have mercy upon the flock, and save it from the dissolution and destruction so imminent.”—*The Second Advent Watchman, Hartford, Conn., Vol. IV, Nos. 18, 19 (June 2 and 9, 1852), pp. 140, 148.*

EARLY EXPERIENCES IN ESTABLISHING ORDER

THE unity in faith and practice that has characterized the believers in the third angel's message from the beginning, has often been a special object of Satan's attack.

Soon after the removal of James White and his wife to Saratoga Springs, New York, in 1851, the Lord revealed to Mrs. White, in vision, conditions existing among believers in Vermont. Some had adopted views that had led them into fanaticism. The false teaching of these misled souls was rapidly bringing in a state of confusion and disorder. The appointment of a series of conferences in Massachusetts and Vermont gave Elder and Mrs. White an opportunity to visit some of those in need of help.

Friday, October 24, 1851, the workers reached West Medford, Massachusetts, where the first conference was to convene. Of his labors at these meetings, Elder White wrote:

"Here [at West Medford] we found seven of our old tried friends from Maine, strong in the faith. . . . There were also eight from Fairhaven and Dartmouth, and a good attendance of the friends of present truth in the vicinity of Boston.

"We were much grieved to learn that some discord had been created among the brethren, by the presentation of fanciful views of unfulfilled prophecies. Such things are extremely painful to those who labor to unite the precious flock of Christ upon the great truths connected

with the message of Revelation 14:9-12. The evil result of leaving the important truths of the present message, or connecting with them fanciful views of unfulfilled prophecy, was pointed out, and with the special blessing of Heaven, the brethren *all* felt deeply the importance of being '*perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment,*' and of united action in the great work before us. . . .

"There were some present who had not embraced the Sabbath. . . . When they learned our views of gospel order, union, etc., and witnessed the spirit of the meeting, and felt its melting power, they were ready to confess that God was indeed with us. And when the evidences of our position were presented, they yielded to the force of truth, and could rejoice in its freedom. Those who have formerly been in error confessed their faults in tears, and we never witnessed a more perfect union, or a more healthy interest, than existed when we left Monday morning. . . .

"October 31, we arrived at the place of meeting in Washington, New Hampshire, and found a large collection of the scattered brethren. This was a meeting of deep interest, of trial, and of joy. Here the brethren felt called upon to withdraw fellowship from one who had fallen into, and taught, dangerous errors. . . .

"The conference appointed to be held in the vicinity of East Bethel was at the house of Brother W. Morse in Royalton. . . . Here also the importance of union was dwelt upon, and the Holy Spirit seemed to break down all opposing influences, and the honest children of God were made one. . . .

"The conference at Johnson [Vermont] commenced

November 7. Here we found a large gathering of the brethren and sisters, quite a number of whom we there met with for the first time. Gospel order, and perfect union among the brethren, especially those who preach the word, were . . . dwelt upon, and all seemed to feel the importance of following our perfect guide, the Bible, on these subjects, as well as all others. . . .

“We intended to return directly home from Johnson, . . . but duty seemed very plain to spend another week in Vermont, and visit the friends in the vicinity of Vergennes.”—*Review and Herald*, Nov. 25, 1851.

Prior to Elder and Mrs. White's journey from Saratoga Springs to these meetings in New England, the Lord had revealed to Mrs. White some of the things she would have to meet at Vergennes. “I was shown,” she wrote, “a company in Vermont with a woman among them who was a deceiver, and that the church must be enlightened as to her character, lest poisonous error should become deeply rooted among them.”

Accordingly, while meeting with this church in Vermont, Mrs. White delivered a plain message on the Sabbath day. Of this experience she afterward wrote:

“That afternoon, as we united in prayer, the blessing of the Lord rested upon us, and I was again shown the case of this deceived woman, and the danger of the church in listening to such teaching as came from her lips. Her course was calculated to disgrace the cause of God.”

Mrs. White was further shown that “if the church did not cut loose from those who pursued such a course, and lift their voices against it, they would incur God's frown, and be partakers with them in their evil deeds, and that the Lord had sent us to the church with a message which,

if received, would save them from greater danger than they yet realized. . . .

“We returned from that journey with feelings of satisfaction, knowing that the Lord had wrought for His people.”—“*Life Sketches*,” pp. 286, 287 (1880 edition).

UNBELIEF AND REBELLION

At this time, some who had accepted the truths of the third angel’s message left the ranks of believers because of their adoption of spiritualistic sentiments. Others advocated the idea that it was best for every individual to follow his own judgment, irrespective of the counsel of his brethren and the teachings of the word. This sometimes led them into the grossest forms of fanaticism, and into open rebellion, and the believers could not continue in fellowship with them.

These elements of unbelief and rebellion gained a strong foothold in Michigan prior to the time of the first visit of Elder James White and his wife to that State, in May, 1853. The experiences met with during this time of trying labor have been recorded by Mrs. White thus:

“While in Michigan we visited Tyrone, Jackson, Sylvan, Bedford, and Vergennes.*

“At Jackson we found the church in great confusion. In their midst the Lord showed me their condition, and I related that portion of it which was clear before me which related to the wrong course of one present. C. and R. were greatly prejudiced against this sister, and cried out, ‘Amen! amen!’ and manifested a spirit of triumph over her, and would frequently say, ‘I thought so! It is just so!’ I felt very much distressed, and sat down before I

* There was a Vergennes in Vermont, and also a town of the same name in Michigan. The Vergennes here mentioned was in Michigan.

had finished relating the vision. Then C. and R. arose and exhorted others to receive the vision, and manifested such a spirit that my husband reproved them. The meeting closed in confusion.

“While at family prayer that night at Brother S’s I was again taken off in vision, and that portion of the vision that had passed from me was repeated, and I was shown the overbearing course of C. and R., that their influence in the church was to cause division. They possessed an exalted spirit, and not the meek spirit of Christ. I saw why the Lord had hid from me the part of the vision that related to them. It was that they might have opportunity to manifest before all what spirit they were of.

“The next day a meeting was called, and I related the things which the Lord had shown me the evening before. C. and R., who zealously advocated the visions the day before, were dissatisfied when shown to be wrong, and did not receive the message. They had stated before I came to the place that if I saw things as they looked upon them, they should know that the visions were of God; but if I saw that they had taken a wrong course, and that the ones whom they regarded wrong were not faulty, they should know the visions were incorrect. But both parties were shown me to be wrong, especially C. and R. and some others.

“They now began to fight against my testimony, and here commenced what is called the ‘Messenger party.’”—*“Life Sketches,” pp. 303, 302, 303 (1880 edition).*

A CRISIS

“In the fall of 1853 we attended conferences at Buck’s Bridge, New York; Stowe, Vermont; Boston, Dartmouth, and Springfield, Massachusetts; Washington, New Hamp-

shire; and New Haven, Vermont. This was a laborious and rather discouraging journey. Many had embraced the truth, who were unsanctified in heart and life, and the elements of strife and rebellion were at work, and it was necessary that a movement should take place to purify the church."—*Id.*, p. 304.

It was in this crisis, when many believers were in grave danger of being led astray, that the testimony entitled, "Gospel Order," was written out for publication in the "Supplement to the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White."

Portions of this testimony are here reprinted, in order that all may know how clearly the Lord instructed His people in a critical time to "flee to God's word, and become established upon gospel order."

GOSPEL ORDER

"The Lord has shown that gospel order has been too much feared and neglected. Formality should be shunned; but, in so doing, order should not be neglected. There is order in heaven. There was order in the church when Christ was upon the earth, and after His departure order was strictly observed among His apostles. And now in these last days, while God is bringing His children into the unity of the faith, there is more real need of order than ever before; for, as God unites His children, Satan and his evil angels are very busy to prevent this unity and to destroy it. Therefore men are hurried into the field who lack wisdom and judgment, perhaps not ruling well their own house, and not having order or government over the few that God has given them charge of at home; yet they feel capable of having charge of the flock. They make

many wrong moves, and those unacquainted with our faith judge all the messengers to be like these self-sent men. Thus the cause of God is reproached, and the truth shunned by many unbelievers who would otherwise be candid, and anxiously inquire, Are these things so?

“Men whose lives are not holy, and who are unqualified to teach the present truth, enter the field without being acknowledged by the church or the brethren generally, and confusion and disunion are the result. . . .

“Those men who are not called of God, are generally the very ones that are the most confident that they are so called, and that their labors are very important. They go into the field and do not generally exert a good influence; yet in some places they have a measure of success, and this leads them and others to think that they are surely called of God. It is not a positive evidence that men are called of God because they have some success. . . .

“I saw that the church should feel their responsibility, and should look carefully and attentively at the lives, qualifications, and general course of those who profess to be teachers. If unmistakable evidence is not given that God has called them, and that the ‘woe’ is upon them if they heed not this call, it is the duty of the church to act, and let it be known that these persons are not acknowledged as teachers by the church. This is the only course the church can take in order to be clear in this matter; for the burden lies upon them.

“I saw that this door at which the enemy comes in to perplex and trouble the flock can be shut. I inquired of the angel how it could be closed. He said, ‘The church must flee to God’s word, and become established upon gospel order, which has been overlooked and neglected.’

This is indispensably necessary in order to bring the church into the unity of the faith. I saw that in the apostles' day the church was in danger of being deceived and imposed upon by false teachers. Therefore the brethren chose men who had given good evidence that they were capable of ruling well their own house and preserving order in their own families, and who could enlighten those who were in darkness. Inquiry was made of God concerning these, and then, according to the mind of the church and the Holy Ghost, they were set apart by the laying on of hands. Having received their commission from God, and having the approbation of the church, they went forth baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and administering the ordinances of the Lord's house, often waiting upon the saints by presenting them the emblems of the broken body and spilled blood of the crucified Saviour, to keep fresh in the memory of God's beloved children His sufferings and death.

"I saw that we are no more secure from false teachers now than they were in the apostles' days; and if we do no more, we should take as special measures as they did to secure the peace, harmony, and union of the flock. We have their example, and should follow it. Brethren of experience and of sound minds should assemble, and following the word of God and the sanction of the Holy Spirit, should, with fervent prayer, lay hands upon those who have given full proof that they have received their commission of God, and set them apart to devote themselves entirely to His work. This act would show the sanction of the church to their going forth as messengers to carry the most solemn message ever given to men."—*Early Writings,* pp. 97-101, new edition.

A SERIES OF EDITORIALS ON GOSPEL ORDER

AS James White studied this plain instruction,* he felt encouraged to write a series of editorials on "Gospel Order." These appeared in the columns of the *Review and Herald* during the month of December, 1853. The following paragraphs have been selected for republication.

GOSPEL ORDER

"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.' 1 Cor. 14:33.

"The great apostle, who had the daily care of all the churches, has said much in his epistles on the subject of order in the church of Christ. It was a subject of great importance to the early church, to preserve purity, unity, and strength in the body. And it cannot be of less importance to the church in the last days of peril, when seeking that preparation necessary to meet the coming Judge. If gospel order was of such vast importance that it was necessary for Paul to dwell much upon it in his epistles to the churches, it should not be overlooked by the people of God at this day. We think that it has been much neglected, and that the attention of the church should be turned to this subject, and vigorous efforts should be put forth to restore as fast as possible the order of the gospel.

"We want no human creed; the Bible is sufficient.

* As published later in "Early Writings," pp. 97-101, new edition.

The divine order of the New Testament is sufficient to organize the church of Christ. . . .

“The advent people professed to take the Bible as their guide in doctrine and in duty. If they had followed this guide strictly, and had carried out the gospel principles of order and discipline, much confusion would have been saved. Many, in their zeal to come out of Babylon, partook of a rash, disorderly spirit, and were soon found in a perfect Babel of confusion. And there are those at the present time who start back at the idea of gospel order. . . . They will have to learn that God has not called any of His people away from the confusion of the churches, designing that they should be left without discipline. In mercy He reached forth His hand, and enabled the advent people in 1844 to break the cords of sectarianism that bound them, that they (the Philadelphia church) might be disciplined and guided into the kingdom by the order and pure doctrines of the gospel. To suppose that the church of Christ is free from restraint and discipline is the wildest fanaticism.

“O ye scattered, bleeding flock, flee to the Great Shepherd! He can heal His people, and lead them on in union and love, safely to Mount Zion. O Church of Christ! The Bible! The Bible! Let the Bible be your rule of faith, and of order. Take heed to the sure word, the light that shineth in a dark place.

ALL MEMBERS OF ONE BODY

“The apostle has illustrated gospel order by the human body. And a more beautiful illustration of order cannot be named. He says:

“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and

all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many.

“‘If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased Him.’

“‘God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honor to that part which lacked: that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.

“‘Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.’ 1 Cor. 12:12-18, 24-27. . . .

“Where is the church whose order may be represented by the harmony of the members of the human body? If we look to the discord of the various sects, we shall not find it. And if we look to the divisions of the advent people who have rejected the present truth, we shall see that precious body torn limb from limb, or its members moving in perfect discord, arrayed against each other. Imagine the members of one body all in disorder, acting in disunion, against each other. . . . Such a body would

fitly illustrate the different classes of advent people who reject the present truth. How the dear Saviour has grieved over such a people as this! His wounds have been pierced afresh. The sincere, waiting ones have been made sad, and have indeed sighed and cried for the sins of this people.

A PROPHECY OF BRIGHTER DAYS

“But, thank Heaven, the friends of Jesus may hope for brighter days. A remnant will be rescued from the ruins of corrupted Christianity, and will yet stand in the order of the gospel, looking for the blessed hope. . . . This peculiar people will stand forth free from the confusion of creeds; free from the traditions and commandments of men—keeping the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus. This is enough to make them peculiar. The sweet and cheering voice of the Chief Shepherd is now being heard in the message of the third angel, and many hearts are beginning to beat in union.

“Now the gathering call is sounding,
Solemn in its warning voice;
Union, faith, and love, abounding,
Bid the little flock rejoice.”

—*Review and Herald, Dec. 6, 1853.*

CREED AND DISCIPLINE

“We go for order and strict discipline in the church of Christ. And while we reject all human creeds, or platforms, which have failed to effect the order set forth in the gospel, we take the Bible, the perfect rule of faith and practice, given by inspiration of God. This shall be our platform on which to stand, our creed and discipline. This will not fail to accomplish the work ‘whereto it was sent.’ It came

from above. It has its origin in the councils of heaven. Its author is the God of 'peace' and order; while . . . man-made creeds spring from this world, and have their origin in the brains of poor erring mortals. 'As the heavens are higher than the earth,' so is our creed, which is the word of God, higher in perfection and real worth than all human creeds.

TRIUMPHING OVER DIFFICULTIES

"We have no idea that it is a small thing to arrive at, and preserve gospel order in the church; yet the work must be and will be accomplished. If the friends of Christ, the friends of truth and good order, act well their part, the Lord will help, and work gloriously among us. It will be a work of labor, of care and mental suffering to those who are called to take the watchcare of the flock, who watch for souls as those who must give an account. Such have awful responsibilities resting upon them. O, who is sufficient for these things!"—*Id.*, Dec. 13, 1853.

THE MINISTRY

"It is of the highest importance that those who go forth to teach the word should be in union in sentiment and in their course of action. It is evident that the reverse of this would cause unhappy divisions and confusion among the flock. . . .

"The order of the gospel is that men who are called of God to teach and baptize, should be ordained, or set apart to the work of the ministry by the laying on of hands. Not that the church has power to call men into the ministry, or that ordination makes them ministers of Jesus Christ; but it is the order of the gospel that those who are

called to the ministry should be ordained, for important objects:

“1. That those who go out into a cold world to teach the word of God may know that they have the approbation and sympathy of ministering brethren and of the church.

“2. To produce and secure union in the church. . . . The united action of the church relative to those who take the watchcare of the flock, would have a powerful influence to unite the church in love.

“3. To shut a door against Satan. In no one thing has the gospel suffered so much as by the influence of false teachers. We can safely say, from the experience of several years, that the cause of present truth has suffered more in consequence of those who have taken upon themselves the work of teaching, whom God never sent, than in any other thing. In sending out these men, Satan has caused reproach to be brought upon the precious cause. . . .

“Some have taken it upon themselves to baptize who profess no calling to teach. Others have gone out to teach the word whose lives were not correct at home. Both have injured the cause. . . .

“To save the flock from imposition of this kind, the gospel plan is sufficient. Let those who are called of God to teach and baptize, be ordained according to the word, and known abroad as those in whom the body have confidence. By this course the greatest cause of evils that have existed among us as a people, will be removed. Our preaching brethren west and east now wade through prejudices among the people, caused by men who have traveled quite extensively, yet not called of God; who manifested much zeal for the present truth, but exhibited no sound judgment in the presentation of it. They will testify that

much of their labor is to break down the prejudice caused by some of those who ran before they were sent.

“Brethren, shall we still mourn over these things, and make no effort to prevent them? God forbid. We will rather strive for the order of the gospel, which will heal the breach already made, and prevent these heart-rending evils for the future. Let us shut this door against Satan.”—*Id.*, Dec. 20, 1853.

LAY MEMBERS AS COUNSELORS

“The labor, care, and responsibility of this great work does not rest alone upon a few preachers. Where are the fathers and mothers in Israel?—men and women of experience to bear burdens, give wise counsel, and labor for the spiritual advancement of the young and inexperienced? Such should fill their place in the church. . . . The whole church should be taught to feel that a portion of the responsibility of good order, and the salvation of souls, rests upon her individual members. . . . In one sense we are our brother’s keeper. . . . Let all feel this, and act it out, and the church will at once rise in union, strength, and good order.

THE SUPPORT OF THE GOSPEL

“But while the gospel minister is under the most solemn obligations to labor for the welfare of the flock, the gospel also requires the church to sustain him in his work. The Bible is plain on this point.

- “1. The church should sustain him by their prayers.
. . .
- “2. The church should be ready to see and to supply the temporal wants of those called to labor in word and doctrine. . . .

“This is a time that calls for the united effort of all. The way is fast opening for the present truth to be extensively proclaimed. Men are giving themselves wholly to the work of preaching the world-despised yet crowning truths of the gospel; and they must be sustained. The gospel requires it of the church. And all will share the blessing in acting their part in this work, as the Lord has prospered them. The poor are not excluded from any of the blessings of the gospel.”—*Id.*, Dec. 27, 1853.

“THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE”

“Others, who are convinced that we have the truth, are watching to see what effect the truth is to produce in us. If they see with us, love, meekness, and good order, they will take their stand with us. The destiny of many hangs upon the course we pursue. God help us to rally around the standard of gospel order, that we may be in a position to rescue souls from impending ruin.”—*Id.*, Dec. 20, 1853.

A TIME OF ANXIETY

THE instruction given to Sabbathkeeping Adventists regarding gospel order, was received by some with gladness. Others hesitated, questioned, and doubted. The days that followed were fraught with anxiety and bitter trial. It seemed as if the author of confusion and disorganization was determined to prevent the believers from becoming thoroughly established on gospel order.

For ten years the struggle continued. The full story of this long, trying experience can never be told. Of this chapter in their history, the apostles of the advent movement have left on record only a few of the details.

The believers in Michigan who, because of a desire to maintain private judgment in opposition to the counsel of God's messengers and the united voice of the church, chose to withdraw from the ranks of the Sabbathkeeping Adventists, now began an attack against those with whom they had associated in Christian fellowship. Their attacks were directed largely against the establishment of gospel order in the remnant church, and to further their endeavors, they soon began to publish a paper, the *Messenger of Truth*. Of their work, Mrs. White wrote:

“Those who slandered us through that paper had been reproved for their faults and errors. They would not bear reproof, and in a secret manner at first, afterward more openly, used their influence against us. This we

could have borne, but some of those who should have stood by us were influenced by these wicked persons. Some whom we had trusted, and who had acknowledged that our labors had been signally blessed of God, withdrew their sympathy from us, and bestowed it upon comparative strangers.

“The Lord had shown me the character and final outcome of that party, that His frown was upon those connected with that paper, and His hand was against them. And although they might appear to prosper for a time, and some honest ones be deceived, yet truth would eventually triumph, and every honest soul would break away from the deception which had held them, and come out clear from the influence of those wicked men; as God’s hand was against them, they must go down. . . .

“The Messenger party framed all manner of falsehoods concerning us. These words of the psalmist were often brought forcibly to my mind: ‘Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.’ Ps. 37:1, 2.”—*“Testimonies for the Church,” Vol. I, pp. 95, 96.*

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

In the midst of these dark days, James White wrote an editorial clearly outlining the relation that individual members of the church of God should sustain to the church as a united whole. The following paragraphs are of special interest:

TWO EXTREMES

“A good brother in the West inquires what we mean by church order. By gospel, or church, order, we mean

that order in church association and discipline taught in the gospel of Jesus Christ by the writers of the New Testament.

“There are two extremes which we would warn all against. One extreme is to resort to human creeds to secure church order; the other is no order, each one acting independently of the views and feelings of his brethren.

“On the one hand, men have seen the need of order and union in the church, that the cause of Christianity might advance, and to secure this, have formed creeds and rules of discipline to govern the church, instead of taking the words of life spoken by Christ, and written by inspired apostles. What a sad mistake!

“Human creeds stand unyieldingly against the progress of light and truth; they bind the consciences of many, and stifle the voice of truth, that, were it otherwise, would cheer the hearts of the faithful, and arouse the sinner to flee from coming wrath. Human creeds may have the credit of holding together vast bodies of men professing Christianity; but . . . there is not power in these creeds to purify the body. They shut out the light of those unfolding truths designed to purify men and prepare them for the coming of the Son of man, while these sins lie unrebuked upon the church, which will in the day of wrath sink her in perdition. . . .

“On the other hand, some who have seen the deadly influence of creeds, have run off into the fatal extreme of no order, but each, in their teachings and mode of operation, acting perfectly independently of the views, feelings, and wishes of their brethren. This extreme leads to anarchy and confusion. . . .

“Some of our dear brethren who engaged in the work

of teaching the Sabbath of the fourth commandment and other truths connected with the message of the third angel, have stumbled, and some of them are now inactive, in consequence of taking this last extreme. . . . Their extreme views of individual responsibility, and not being in a Scriptural sense subject to their brethren, led them to . . . pursue a course which has resulted in much evil. . . . These things have arisen for want of gospel order among us. And while we see the holy cause of present truth is hindered in its onward progress in consequence of these evils, we cannot remain silent on this subject.

“The inquiry comes in from many places, ‘What is the matter? Why does not the cause of present truth move more rapidly?’ The best answer we can give, is this: God will not suffer this holy cause to move faster than it moves right. (What else could we expect in the last sealing work?) And He is waiting for His people to get right, and in gospel order, and hold the standard of piety high, before He adds many more to our numbers. . . .

“A shaking is now going on among us, and we cannot pray, Stay Thy hand, Lord, but we desire it to go on till we are left a holy and perfectly united people, prepared to work for God. . . . Brethren, one and all, let us arise in the strength of the Lord to the work before us. We see the evils that have existed and do now to some extent exist among us, and their sad results. It will not profit us to see these things, and sink in discouragement as we view them. But let us arise and put these things from us, that the frown of God may be turned away, and His power be manifested among us. . . .

“We have briefly noticed the two extremes, and their results. Between them we may find gospel order. Read

the exhortation of the apostle, given by inspiration of God, to those who feed the flock:

“The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

“Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.’ 1 Peter 5:1-6. . . .

“SUBJECT ONE TO ANOTHER”

“We would call especial attention to the expression, ‘Yea, all of you be subject one to another.’ It will be seen at once that if this injunction is obeyed, union will be certainly restored and secured to the flock. It strikes a deathblow at the extreme view of individual responsibility, that men are not to be governed at all in the views they advance and the course they pursue, by those they believe to be the true church of God. It plainly shows that in these things they must be subject to the church. The pride of the natural, ungovernable, unteachable heart will start back at this plain gospel sentiment; but we dare not withhold it. There never can be gospel union until this gospel truth obtains and is carried out by the flock.

“Turn to the fifteenth chapter of Acts, and there read the account of the course pursued by the apostle to secure the union of the faithful. . . . If such a course should now be pursued under similar circumstances, we should hear those who go for no order, exclaiming, ‘Don’t abridge our rights: let us enjoy gospel liberty!’ To such we would say that the teachings and example of the apostles do not abridge the lawful rights and liberty of any Christian; but they do rebuke him who would use his ‘liberty for a cloak of maliciousness.’ 1 Peter 2:16.

“The spirit of the humble and pure will be in harmony with these words of Paul: ‘Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another;’ ‘submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.’ Rom. 12:9, 10; Eph. 5:21.

“‘Fulfill ye My joy, that ye be like-minded, 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.’ Phil. 2:2, 3.

“‘And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.’ 1 Cor. 14:32, 33.”
—*Review and Herald, March 28, 1854.*

INDEPENDENCE AND FANATICISM

IN the earliest numbers of the published "Testimonies for the Church," written during the time of anxious labor preceding the final establishment of gospel order among Sabbathkeeping Adventists, there is given much instruction dealing with principles underlying individual responsibility, and revealing the close relationship existing between independence of spirit and fanaticism. To quote:

"November 20, 1855, while in prayer, the Spirit of the Lord came suddenly and powerfully upon me, and I was taken off in vision. . . .

"I saw that the enemy is busy to destroy souls. Exaltation has come into the ranks; there must be more humility. There is too much of an independence of spirit indulged in among the messengers. This must be laid aside, and there must be a drawing together of the servants of God.

"There has been too much of a spirit to ask, 'Am I my brother's keeper?' Said the angel, 'Yea, *thou art* thy brother's keeper. Thou shouldst have a watchful care for thy brother, be interested for his welfare, and cherish a kind, loving spirit toward him. Press together, press together.'"—*"Testimonies for the Church," Vol. I, pp. 113, 114.*

In a testimony written October 21, 1858, God's people are exhorted to move unitedly, in order to avoid the confusion that is sure to follow unorganized effort:

"Some run ahead of the angels that are leading this

people; but they have to retrace every step, and meekly follow no faster than the angels lead. I saw that the angels of God would lead His people no faster than they could receive and act upon the important truths that are communicated to them. But some restless spirits do not more than half do up their work. As the angel leads them, they get in haste for something new, and rush on without divine guidance, and thus bring confusion and discord into the ranks. They do not speak or act in harmony with the body."—*Id.*, p. 207.

As pointed out in the extract just quoted, a spirit of independence opens the door wide for fanaticism and rebellion. This is further shown in messages of warning and reproof sent to some brethren and sisters whose minds and hearts were not "united and in union with the work." These manifested a desire to "draw off from their brethren," and seemed to have no regard for order. Refusing to be taught by workers of experience, they willfully, stubbornly followed their own course. As a result, their judgment was perverted by Satan's power. God gave them their choice, to be instructed through His servants in His own appointed way, or to go on, maintain their willful course, and fall into bewildering fanaticism. Because of their desire to work independently of the counsel of those whom God had seen fit to place at the head of the work, they were finally left to follow their own blind judgment, and soon they became involved in foolish, wild fanaticism. (See *Id.*, pp. 228-232, 311-323, 326-340.)

THOROUGH DISCIPLINE

In 1863 the brethren and sisters in the East were urged by Mrs. White to unite heartily with the workers

in Michigan and elsewhere in an effort to perfect the organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In this appeal some of the early experiences with fanatics were reviewed, and a policy was outlined, which, when carried out, brought strength and stability to the cause throughout New England:

“The only remedy for the East is thorough discipline and organization. A spirit of fanaticism has ruled a certain class of Sabbathkeepers there; they have sipped but lightly at the fountain of truth, and are unacquainted with the spirit of the message of the third angel. Nothing can be done for this class until their fanatical views are corrected.”

“God is bringing out a people and preparing them to stand as one, united, to speak the same things, and thus carry out the prayer of Christ for His disciples: ‘Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.’ John 17:20, 21.

“There are little companies continually arising who believe that God is only with the very few, the very scattered, and their influence is to tear down and scatter that which God’s servants build up. Restless minds who want to be seeing and believing something new continually, are constantly arising, some in one place and some in another, all doing a special work for the enemy, yet claiming to have the truth. They stand separate from the people whom God is leading out and prospering, and through whom He is to do His great work. They are continually expressing their fears that the body of Sabbathkeepers are

becoming like the world; but there are scarcely two of these whose views are in harmony. . . . They all want full religious liberty, and each acts independent of the others, and yet they claim that God is especially at work among them. . . .

“God has led out men who have toiled for years, who have been willing to make any sacrifice, who have suffered privation, and endured trials to bring the truth before the world, and by their consistent course remove the reproach that fanatics have brought upon the cause of God. They have met opposition in every form. They have toiled night and day in searching the evidences of our faith, that they might bring out the truth in its clearness, in a connected form, that it might withstand all opposition. Incessant labor and mental trials in connection with this great work have worn down more than one constitution, and prematurely sprinkled heads with gray hairs. They have not worn out in vain. God has marked their earnest, tearful, agonizing prayers that they might have light and truth, and that the truth might shine in its clearness to others. He has marked their self-sacrificing efforts, and He will reward them as their works have been.

“On the other hand, those who have not toiled to bring out these precious truths, have come up and received some points, like the Sabbath truth, which are all prepared to their hand, and then all the gratitude they manifest for that which cost them nothing, but others so much, is to rise up like Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and reproach those upon whom God has laid the burden of His work. They would say, ‘Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them.’ Num. 16:3. They are strangers to

gratitude. They possess a strong spirit, which will not yield to reason, and which will lead them on to their own destruction.

“God has blessed His people who have moved forward, following His opening providence. He has brought out a people from every class upon the great platform of truth. Infidels have been convinced that God was with His people, and have humbled their hearts to obey the truth. The work of God moves steadily on.

“Yet notwithstanding all the evidences that God has been leading the body, there are, and will continue to be, those who profess the Sabbath, who will move independent of the body, and believe and act as they choose. Their views are confused. Their scattered state is a standing testimony that God is not with them. By the world, the Sabbath and their errors are placed upon a level, and thrown away together. . . .

“No occasion should be given to unbelievers to reproach our faith. We are considered odd and singular, and should not take a course to lead unbelievers to think us more so than our faith requires us to be. . . .

“There is a great work for us to do in the world, and God would not have us take a course to lessen or destroy our influence with the world.”—*Id.*, pp. 411, 417-422.

THE VALUE OF WISE COUNSEL

“Some who have but little experience, and are least qualified to teach the truth, are the last to ask advice and counsel of their experienced brethren. . . .

“Ministers of experience, who realize the sacredness of the work, and feel the weight of the cause upon them,

. . . consider it a privilege to advise with their brethren.”
—*Id.*, p. 444.

In a communication addressed to a self-sufficient worker, Mrs. White emphasized the necessity of taking heed to the counsel of men of experience:

“You despised counsel, and would not listen to God’s servant whose whole soul was devoted to the work. God in His providence provided you an adviser whose talents and influence entitled him to your respect and confidence, and it could in no way have injured your dignity to be guided by his experienced judgment. God’s angels marked your self-sufficiency, and with grief turned from you. He could not safely display His power in your behalf, for you would have taken the glory to yourself, and your future labors would have been of but little value. . . . You should not, in your labors, lean upon your own judgment, which has so often led you astray. You should yield to the judgment of those of experience. Do not stand upon your own dignity, and feel so self-sufficient that you cannot take the advice and counsel of experienced fellow laborers.”
—*Id.*, pp. 626, 627.

“There are many restless spirits who will not submit to discipline, system, and order. They think that their liberties would be abridged were they to lay aside their own judgment and submit to the judgment of those of experience. The work of God will not progress unless there is a disposition to submit to order, and expel the reckless, disorderly spirit of fanaticism.”—*Id.*, p. 413.

A PERIOD OF DEVELOPMENT

WITH the introduction of important features of gospel order, called for so definitely in 1853 and 1854, the cause of present truth was freed from some of the elements that had for a time hindered its progress.

As a precautionary measure and a means of mutual protection, the workers in whom the believers had confidence were given cards "recommending them to the fellowship of the Lord's people everywhere." Through the wise ministrations of these workers, confidence was restored, and during the next few years the cause of present truth was liberally supported. Of this period of prosperity, J. N. Loughborough writes:

"The work advanced so rapidly that at the close of 1857 the number of Seventh-day Adventists had doubled, and the office property of the Review and Herald had increased from seven hundred dollars to five thousand dollars."—*The Church: Its Organization, Order, and Discipline,* pp. 104, 105.

The growth in numbers was largest in Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Ohio. A good beginning had also been made in Indiana, Illinois, and Minnesota. In the Eastern States, where the third angel's message had been proclaimed first, progress was very slow. One reason for this slow advance is that the believers in the East had allowed some of their best laborers to go west to labor in States known at that time as "mission fields;" but other and more

weighty reasons are given in an early testimony, entitled, "The East and the West," published in 1856:

"The Lord has shown me in vision some things in regard to the East and the West, which I feel it my duty to set before you. I saw that God has been opening the way for the spread of present truth in the West. It requires much more power to move the people in the East than in the West, and at present but very little can be accomplished in the East. Special efforts should be made at the present time where most good will result.

"The people in the East have heard the proclamation of the second coming of Christ, and have seen much of the display of the power of God, and have fallen back into a state of indifference and security, where it is almost impossible to reach them at present. After uncommon efforts are made in the East, with the best gifts, but very little is accomplished.

"I saw that the people in the West . . . have not had the light of the truth, and have not rejected it, and their hearts are more tender and susceptible to the truth and the Spirit of God. The hearts of many in the West are already prepared to eagerly receive the truth; and as the servants of God go out to labor for the salvation of precious souls, they have much to encourage them in their arduous work. As the people are anxious to hear, and many embrace the truth, the gift which God has given His servants is called out and strengthened. They see that their efforts are crowned with success.

"I saw that tenfold more has been accomplished in the West than in the East with the same effort, and that the way is opening for still greater success. I have seen that much can be done at present in Wisconsin, and still more

in Illinois, and that efforts to spread the truth must be made in Minnesota and Iowa. It will take effect in many hearts there. There was a large, very large, field of labor spread out before me in vision, which has not yet been entered; but there is not self-sacrificing help enough to fill half the places where the people are all ready to hear the truth, and many to receive it.

“New fields of labor, entirely new, must be visited; many will have to go a warfare at their own charges, enter such fields with the expectation of bearing their own expenses. Here, I saw, is a good opportunity for the stewards of the Lord to act their part, and support those who carry the truth to these places. It should be a great privilege for these stewards to render to God that which belongs to Him. By so doing they will discharge a Scriptural duty, and free themselves of a portion of their earthly treasure, which is now a burden to many who have an abundance. It will also add to their treasure in heaven. . . .

“I saw that special efforts should be made in the West with tents; for the angels of God are preparing minds there to receive the truth. This is why God has moved on some in the East to move to the West. Their gifts can accomplish more in the West than in the East. The burden of the work is in the West, and it is of the greatest importance that the servants of God should move in His opening providence.

“I saw that when the message shall increase greatly in power, then the providence of God will open and prepare the way in the East for much more to be accomplished than can be at the present time. God will then send some of His servants in power to visit places where little or nothing can now be done; and some who are now indiffer-

ent, will be aroused, and will take hold of the truth.”—*“Testimonies for the Church,” Vol. I, pp. 146-149.*

SERIOUS ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS

For a time after the removal of the Review and Herald office from the East to Michigan, the brethren in responsibility found it possible, usually, to confer with one another regarding the general interests of the cause in Michigan and other States near by. Local meetings, and a general annual meeting in Michigan, gave the leaders in the work direct access to the people of the Central States, and occasional tours in the East gave them opportunity to bring before the believers in New England important matters requiring attention.

As the cause developed, and laborers pressed on into new territory in widely scattered districts far removed from the center of the work and from the strong constituency in the East, those bearing the burden of leadership found themselves facing some serious administrative problems. How were the efforts of the messengers at the outposts to be wisely directed? What adequate means of support could be assured those who were venturing their all to give to others a knowledge of the third angel's message?

As was natural, those constituting the older groups of believers, while giving somewhat regularly for the support of their home work, failed to appreciate fully the necessity of sending workers and means into unentered fields. How were these believers to be made acquainted with the needs of the cause in the newer and more promising fields, where the work could not at first be carried forward on a self-supporting basis?

SYSTEMATIC BENEVOLENCE

One of the plans inaugurated at this time, as a solution of the problem of support, was "the plan of systematic benevolence, on the tithing principle," which was set before our people in the columns of the *Review and Herald*, in February, 1859.

This plan, which has since developed into the tithing system, was laid before representative assemblies of believers in many parts of the field in 1859 and 1860, and was generally endorsed and adopted. (See *Review and Herald*, Feb. 3, 1859; also June 9 and 16, 1859.)

In "Testimony for the Church," No. 5, published in 1859, there is a communication addressed to the believers, from which a few paragraphs are selected:

"There is order in heaven, and God is well pleased with the efforts of His people in trying to move with system and order in His work on earth. I saw that there should be order in the church of God, and that system is needed in carrying forward successfully the last great message of mercy to the world. God is leading His people in the plan of systematic benevolence, and this is one of the very points to which God is bringing up His people which will cut the closest with some. With them this cuts off the right arm, and plucks out the right eye, while to others it is a great relief. To noble, generous souls, the demands upon them seem very small, and they cannot be content to do so little. Some have large possessions, and if they lay by them in store for charitable purposes as God has prospered them, the offering seems to them like a large sum. The selfish heart clings as closely to a small offering as to a larger one, and makes a small sum look very large.

"I was pointed back to the commencement of this last

work. Then some who loved the truth could consistently talk of sacrificing. They devoted much to the cause of God, to send the truth to others. They have sent their treasure beforehand to heaven. Brethren, you who have received the truth at a later period, and who have large possessions, God has called you into the field, not merely that you may enjoy the truth, but that you may aid with your substance in carrying forward this great work. And if you have an interest in this work, you will venture out and invest something in it, that others may be saved by your efforts, and you reap with them the final reward. Great sacrifices have been made and privations endured to place the truth in a clear light before you. Now God calls upon you, in your turn, to make great efforts and to sacrifice in order to place the truth before those who are in darkness.”—“*Testimonies for the Church*,” Vol. I, pp. 191, 192.

ANNUAL MEETINGS

In the hope of solving the problem of concerted action on the part of the entire body of believers in every State, and of bringing the stronger constituencies into close touch with the messengers at the outposts, James White suggested the advisability of holding general meetings annually in the various States. In an editorial in the *Review and Herald*, he wrote, under the heading “Yearly Meetings:”

“We wish to call the attention of the brethren to the subject of holding one or more conferences yearly in each State where needed. Our yearly meetings in this State [Michigan], held at Battle Creek for a few years past, have been most beneficial and refreshing. Then why not have a regular annual meeting in each State, and, perhaps, three or four in Michigan, New York, and some other States? . . .

“We lack system. And we should not be afraid of that system which is not opposed by the Bible, and is approved by sound sense. The lack of system is felt everywhere, especially in New England, New York, and the West. Much labor is lost by this lack. Why not have a yearly meeting in Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, Pennsylvania; several in New York, Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Iowa; one in Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, and so on as the truth spreads, and friends rally around the standard? . . .

“Many of our brethren are in a scattered state. They observe the Sabbath, read with some interest the *Review*; but beyond this they are doing but little or nothing for want of some method of united action among them. It is time that all do something to add to the strength of this cause. Its enemies are many and active, and its friends should be awake and zealous. Then let the scattered friends of the cause of Bible truth be assembled in their localities yearly, to learn their present position and duty, and be cheered on to vigorous action.”—*Review and Herald, July 21, 1859.*

A month later, James White and his wife were in the State of New York, beginning a tour of the Eastern States. “One object of this tour,” Elder White declares in his first report, “is to awaken interest in behalf of missions in those parts of our country which seem to be waiting for the word of God, where there are but very few, if any, friends of the cause. The time has come to increase our efforts, let our light shine, and sound the alarm abroad.”—*Id., Sept. 1, 1859.*

Referring to conditions in New York, Elder White writes:

“We doubt not the way is preparing for successful labor in this State. The cause has long languished for want of united action. The numerous friends can fully sustain the cause and not feel it. Our preachers will labor where the way is opened for them, unless especially impressed to labor in some particular location. The brethren in Michigan have raised from one to four thousand dollars yearly to advance the cause in that State, and their numbers and strength have increased twentyfold within four years, while New York, without united, energetic action, has made but very little progress in numbers and in strength. The people of the Empire State are waiting for the word of God; and will not the church arise, and let her light shine? United action is indispensable to the progress of this cause—every brother and every sister must raise the helping hand.”—*Idem*.

In a later report of his efforts to arouse the brethren and sisters of New England to share in the support of laborers in the West, Elder White wrote from Topsham, Maine, under the heading, “New Fields:”

“Our venerable Brother Bates was the first in this cause, and knows all the hardships and discouragements of its early existence. His labors were greatly blessed in New England, and he was the first to enter the great West. His numerous friends in the East would be extremely gratified to enjoy his labors and visits, and sustain him liberally. And there would appear the greatest propriety in his enjoying the fruits of his former labors, in his advanced years. But he is continually breaking new ground, laboring incessantly, preaching from five to ten times a week, and receiving a limited support. Last winter about fifty came out on the Sabbath under his labors. God sees

all this and a faithful record is kept in heaven. Says Jesus, 'Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.' Thank God for that—'as his work shall be.' Rev. 22:12."—*Id.*, Oct. 6, 1859.

Toward the close of this Eastern tour, Elder White wrote: "We are happy to know that among our people there is no East or West; but the cause is one everywhere. Eastern brethren now appear to take as much interest in the cause west, as in the cause at home."

"The Vermont brethren did nobly for the cause of missions. They sent one of their tents west, let their most experienced preachers go west, and are now sending means west to help the cause in its present embarrassments. It will be expected of the numerous friends west, that they will be moved by the liberality of Eastern brethren, to contribute sufficiently to meet the wants of the cause in their own States, and extend the message to others."—*Id.*, Nov. 10, 1859.

PLANNING FOR A LARGE WORK

During this Eastern tour, Elder White wrote an editorial entitled, "The Loud Voice of the Third Angel," in which he outlined the greatness of the work before the believers. It gives some idea of his conception of the magnitude of the work to be accomplished in future years:

"We are now in the time of the third message, and the preparatory work for the loud cry of this message is going on. The work of the angel of chapter 18, is future, for it is a message to escape the *last* plagues, and will introduce the loud cry of the third message. With this view we get an exalted idea of the extent and power of the closing work of the message. . . .

“Notice the terms [in Revelation 18:1, 2] which express the greatness of the work. The angel has ‘*great power,*’ the ‘*earth was lightened with his glory,*’ he ‘*cried mightily with a strong voice.*’ Be assured, dear reader, this glorious message will forget its feebleness soon; for the angel is to have great power, and cry ‘*mightily*’ with a ‘*strong voice.*’ This work will not be finished up in a corner; for the earth is to be lightened with his glory.

“The subject before us is of thrilling interest. If our views are true, is it not time for us to look these great truthful facts square in the face, and be making up our minds and laying our plans for a vast work? Where are we now? is a natural and important inquiry. We are in the time of the third message, but the loud cry of the message is future. . . .

“The present, then, is the time of preparation for the loud cry. The great truth of the message is being brought out and made plain. And now God is rolling upon His people the weight and importance of the subject of perfect unity of sentiment and spirit. He is making His people one according to the Bible standard of unity. . . .

“Those who are seeking for perfect union on Bible truth are gathering with Christ, and preparing for the loud voice of the third angel. Those who are stupid to the subject are in danger, while those disposed to act independently of the church please Satan, wound their brethren, and are preparing for a fall.”

“The work of Bible union is well begun among us, and is progressing gloriously. Thank God for religion that will convert both heads and hearts, so that we may be perfectly united in mind, judgment, and spirit!”—*Id.*, Oct. 20, 1859.*

* This article was reprinted in the *Review* dated April 26, 1860, shortly after the proposal was made to organize a publishing association.

INSTITUTIONAL ORGANIZATION, AND CHOOSING A NAME

PRIOR to the year 1860, Sabbathkeeping Adventists had not adopted a denominational name, nor had they any legal organization for the holding of property. This occasioned constant anxiety. Early in 1860, James White, who had long borne the chief financial responsibility of the publishing work, proposed to organize in such a manner as to hold church property legally in the name of the church. Much discussion followed.

A few weeks later, J. N. Andrews suggested that the brethren meet in a general council, in the hope that light might break in, and all might come to see eye to eye. (See *Review and Herald*, Aug. 21, 1860.)

The official call for this conference appeared first in the *Review* dated September 4, 1860, and was signed by J. N. Andrews, Uriah Smith, J. H. Waggoner, and James White. (See *Id.*, Sept. 11, 1860.)

A REPRESENTATIVE GATHERING

The brethren met in Battle Creek, Michigan, September 28, 1860. The attendance was representative. "We were gratified," wrote Uriah Smith, the secretary, "to see quite a full representation of preachers from different parts. Among these were Brethren M. Hull and M. E. Cornell, from Iowa; Wm. S. Ingraham, from Wisconsin; Joseph

Bates, J. H. Waggoner, James White, J. N. Loughborough, J. B. Frisbie, R. J. Lawrence, and J. L. Edgar, from Michigan; T. J. Butler and G. W. Holt, from Ohio; E. A. Poole, from New York; and also J. N. Andrews and C. W. Sperry, from their labors in that State the past summer.

“Many brethren met for the first time at this meeting, whose cordial salutations and beaming countenances bespoke their joy at meeting, their union of heart, and their love for the truth. As the hour arrived for religious exercises at the commencement of the Sabbath, the house was densely filled with the brethren and sisters who had come up from different States to this happy gathering to wait upon the Lord and receive His promises.”—*Review and Herald, Oct. 2, 1860.*

THE QUESTION UNDER CONSIDERATION

Upon invitation, James White reviewed the successive steps leading up to the call for a council meeting during which the brethren might determine upon some plan of action for safeguarding the general interests of the cause. He said, in part:

“I have presented some of the necessities of something being done; but I have not undertaken to point out just *what* should be done. . . . I suppose the real question is, whether we shall so organize as to hold our office of publication and our meetinghouses.”—*Id., Oct. 9, 1860.*

Before the close of the morning session, J. N. Andrews, J. H. Waggoner, and T. J. Butler were appointed as a committee to bring in recommendations for consideration by the believers at the afternoon session of the conference.

Their report, as rendered, reads as follows:

A PLAN FOR ORGANIZING A PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION

"1. We recommend to the conference the organization of a publishing association that may legally hold the Review office.

"2. That the association shall consist of seven members selected by this conference, who shall apply to the legislature for an act empowering them to hold the office property, and carry on the business of publication.

"3. That members may be admitted to this association on the payment of one dollar annually, and they may become life members on the payment of twenty-five dollars. [Membership in the association, as finally provided for by Article IV, Section I, of the bylaws of the association, was on the following basis: "Any person keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ may become a shareholder in this association on the payment of ten dollars into its treasury, and each person may hold as many shares as they shall thus purchase, and for each and every share held by them, they shall be entitled to one vote in all the business meetings of the association."—*Acts of Incorporation and By-Laws of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association;* p. 8, Art. IV, Sec. I (published in 1861).]

"4. That the officers of the association shall consist of a business agent, a committee on publication, a treasurer who shall also act as secretary, and an auditor, to be elected annually.

"5. The business agent shall be the presiding officer of the association.

"6. This association shall be called the Advent Review Publishing Association [changed at time of organization to Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association].

"7. It shall be located at Battle Creek, Michigan.

"8. The whole amount obtained by donations, subscriptions, sales of publications, or otherwise, shall be expended in the publication of periodicals, books, and tracts, and for charitable and benevolent purposes."—*Review and Herald*, Oct. 16, 1860.

FAVORABLE ACTION

The items of the report, considered one by one, were adopted unanimously. The committee that had brought in the report, was enlarged by the addition of Brethren Poole, Loughborough, Smith, Ingraham, White, Hull, and Appleton, and the next morning at sunrise a constitution was presented and unanimously adopted.

"The following names were then presented to the conference as the first seven brethren to form the commencement of the association, and make application to the legislature: James White, J. H. Waggoner, J. N. Loughborough, G. W. Amadon, U. Smith, George T. Lay, and D. R. Palmer.

"These nominations were ratified by the conference."—*Id.*, Oct. 23, 1860.

ADOPTING A NAME

Action having been taken to organize a publishing association, the brethren in council still faced the necessity of choosing some name by which the denomination might be known, as no legal steps could be taken by a nameless body. The discussion on this question was a lengthy one, leading, however, to a happy conclusion.

"The name 'Seventh-day Adventists' was proposed as a simple name and one expressive of our faith and position,"

and the brethren finally agreed upon the adoption of a resolution reading,

“Resolved, That we call ourselves Seventh-day Adventists.”

Thus closed the memorable meeting at which official action was taken to organize a publishing association and to adopt a denominational name.

THE VOICE OF APPROVAL

Although there were a few who demurred for a time, this action met with general favor throughout the field. John Byington, kept from the conference by illness, wrote:

“I am glad to learn that the conference saw eye to eye in forming a legal association so that there may be order in the temporal matters of the church. If it is right for a brother to give or take a deed of a house, in my mind it is equally so for an association to so arrange that they can legally hold a meetinghouse or printing establishment. God is a God of order in temporal as well as spiritual matters pertaining to His church on earth.

“As to a name, I have sometimes thought the plain Scriptural term, ‘Church of God,’ was all that is necessary. But in reflecting more on this subject, I see that God has given to His people and to individuals names suitable to the time and circumstances under which they were placed. The Lord said Jacob should be called Israel, and though in many places in the inspired Book after this we read the name Jacob, yet Israel was the significant name; for he had power with God and with men, and prevailed. Gen. 32:28. The first followers of our Saviour were called disciples, as a disciple is a learner. Christ was their teacher in person. . . . The disciples were called Christians first

at Antioch. Acts 11:26. I know not whether by friends or enemies, or both; but I do know that the name Christian at that time was very significant, as Christ was very dear to His saints, but by the mass He was called an impostor. I would say to my brethren scattered abroad, I cannot see a reasonable or Scriptural objection to the name Seventh-day Adventists, as it is significant of the position the church of God must occupy in the time of the end."—*Id.*, Oct. 30, 1860.

R. F. Cottrell, who had opposed the plan at first, wrote: "I am truly glad to hear from the conference, by brethren that were present, and feel to thank the Lord for the unity of spirit that exists among His people, and which pervades their assemblies. I do not feel like waiting for the full report in the paper, but upon the information received from brethren who were present, can say, I am persuaded that the means recommended are in accordance with the will of God. . . . In my first articles on the subject of organization, I was wrong in taking the position that the property of the church was properly held. This point, upon consideration, I immediately yielded."—*Id.*, Nov. 6, 1860.

James White, while en route to Iowa shortly after the close of the conference, wrote to Uriah Smith:

"Our conference was one of wearisome labor, yet let God be praised that a good degree of harmony prevailed, and that the dear servants of the Lord parted with increased confidence in and love for each other. We look back with the greatest pleasure to the doings of our conference. The action upon securing church property legally is all that we have ever suggested, and more than we ever expected would be so unanimously adopted. This

takes a great burden from our mind, and inspires courage to labor on in the cause."—*Id.*, Oct. 30, 1860.

The following year, 1861, "Testimony for the Church," No. 6, was published. One of the articles in this is entitled, "Our Denominational Name." From this article are selected these extracts:

"I was shown in regard to the remnant people of God taking a name. Two classes were presented before me. One class embraced the great bodies of professed Christians. They were trampling upon God's law and bowing to a papal institution. They were keeping the first day of the week as the Sabbath of the Lord. The other class, who were but few in number, were bowing to the great Lawgiver. They were keeping the fourth commandment. The peculiar and prominent features of their faith were the observance of the seventh day, and waiting for the appearing of our Lord from heaven. . . .

"No name which we can take will be appropriate but that which accords with our profession and expresses our faith and marks us a peculiar people. The name Seventh-day Adventist is a standing rebuke to the Protestant world. Here is the line of distinction between the worshipers of God and those who worship the beast and receive his mark. . . .

"The name Seventh-day Adventist carries the true features of our faith in front, and will convict the inquiring mind. Like an arrow from the Lord's quiver, it will wound the transgressors of God's law, and will lead to repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."—"*Testimonies for the Church*," Vol. I, pp. 223, 224.

INCORPORATING THE REVIEW AND HERALD OFFICE

During the first business session of a conference held in Battle Creek, Michigan, April 26-29, 1861, "the seven who were chosen at the conference of September 28, 1860, to form the commencement of the association, petition to the legislature for a law, etc., reported to the conference through Brother Loughborough."

Early in 1861 the legislature of the State of Michigan had passed an enactment "to provide for the incorporation of associations for the publication of periodicals, newspapers, books, tracts, documents, and other publications." This was signed by the governor, March 7, 1861. The way was now open for the formation of a legal company. (See *Review and Herald*, April 30, 1861.)

On May 23, 1861, "the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association met according to appointment, . . . and proceeded to the adoption of bylaws, and the election of officers."—*Review and Herald*, May 28, 1861. "The following were nominated and chosen: . . . President, James White; vice-president, G. W. Amadon; committee on publication, James White, Cyrenius Smith, and J. P. Kellogg; secretary, E. S. Walker; treasurer, U. Smith; auditor, J. N. Loughborough; editor of the *Review and Herald*, James White; editor of *Youth's Instructor*, G. W. Amadon."—"Acts of Incorporation and By-Laws of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association," pp. 14, 15 (published in 1861).

"This was the first of the various legal organizations formed by this people. . . . All can now see the necessity for such corporations, and may wonder that it was not always seen by us. But let none lose the practical lesson

contained in this case. While we should most earnestly seek the Lord for divine guidance, we must remember that as He works in us as His instruments, we too have a work to do. We are not to expect Him to do what He has left for us to do, and what He 'works in us' 'to do.'—*J. N. Loughborough, in "The Church; Its Organization, Order, and Discipline," p. 113.*

LOCAL CHURCHES

IN the earlier years of the experience of Seventh-day Adventists, "church organization and church order were alike unknown, and sometimes spoken against; and when the number of believers increased, it was with the utmost caution that the simplest form of organization of a single church, was advanced and received."—*Conference Address on "Organization," signed by nine ministers, and published in Review and Herald, June 11, 1861.*

The brethren faced a real perplexity,—the problem of providing for the legal holding of church properties, and at the same time following the simple organization of the primitive Christian church. "We should not depart from the apostolic churches," J. N. Andrews urged in his plea for carefulness in taking any advance step. (See *Review and Herald*, Oct. 9, 1860.)

During the council meeting held in the fall of 1860, when the legal organization of churches was urged as advisable, a few finally signified their willingness to take the advance step proposed. J. N. Andrews said:

"I hope I am not understood as opposing such organization of individual churches as would enable them to hold church buildings legally."—*Review and Herald*, Oct. 16, 1860.

One of the ministers from Ohio, T. J. Butler, was fearful of possible criticism in the future. "So far as principle is concerned," he declared, "we all want to take such a

course as to free ourselves from criticism." "That we never can do," quickly responded Elder Loughborough. (See *Idem.*)

THE CONFERENCE OF APRIL 26-29, 1861

Light on proper church order came to some of the ministering brethren during a conference held in Battle Creek, April 26-29, 1861. Of this occasion, Uriah Smith wrote:

"Solemnity characterized the exercises from the commencement to the close. Upon the preachers seemed to rest the burden of cultivating themselves, and inculcating upon others, a spirit of deeper devotion and more entire consecration. . . .

"At the close of the business session on the evening following first day, at nine o'clock, commenced the last of the feast in which was furnished the best of the wine. Meeting continued till half past eleven that evening, and the day following from 7 to 11 A.M., and from 2 to 5 P.M. Those who were laboring under feelings of spiritual destitution, discouragements, and trial, spoke freely of their cases; and heartily did the brethren take hold to afford them help by their exhortations and their prayers. God's signal blessing rested down, and at times the house resounded with shouts of praise and thanksgiving. The efforts that were made for freedom, for a bursting of the fetters with which the enemy would fain bind God's people, and for a consolidation of union between hearts which he had long been trying to estrange from each other, together with their results, were indeed encouraging."—*Review and Herald, April 30, 1861.*

At this council meeting, the business sessions of which

“were characterized by promptness of action, and the utmost unanimity of sentiment, no dissenting vote being offered on a single question,” Elder Loughborough urged “a more complete organization of the church.” “We had come to that point,” Elder Smith, the secretary, reported, “where the cause of God demanded organization, not that organization which constituted Babylon, but such as would ensure order in the church.” Elder White entreated his brethren in the ministry to take hold of this work. J. H. Waggoner, before coming to the meeting, had resolved to unite with his brethren in perfecting the organization of the church.

The discussion on this topic was followed by a unanimous vote “that the ministers that are assembled at this conference be requested to write out an address on the subject of church organization.” (See *Idem.*)

AN ADDRESS ON NEW TESTAMENT ORDER

This action was carried out in part by the publication, a few weeks later, of a signed “Conference Address,” entitled, “Organization,” in which a general statement of the subject under consideration was made. The address was signed by J. H. Waggoner, Joseph Bates, James White, J. B. Frisbie, J. N. Loughborough, M. E. Cornell, E. W. Shortridge, Moses Hull, and John Byington. The publication of this carefully prepared statement had much to do with the shaping of sentiment in favor of organization, and a study of its paragraphs will throw considerable light on the later development of gospel order in the Seventh-day Adventist denomination. In it the brethren gave a carefully written review of past experiences and methods and of the problems they were now facing, and urged the

desirability of taking without further delay some steps leading toward deeper spirituality, better unity, and greater efficiency for service; and to this end they proposed "a more thorough and perfect organization of the Seventh-day Adventists."—*Review and Herald, June 11, 1861.*

A decade before, there were only a few hundred believers, living chiefly in New England and New York. The ministering brethren had been able to visit these occasionally, and also to do much evangelistic work in unentered territory. But as the number of believers multiplied to three thousand or more, and as the territory to be covered became greatly enlarged, including all the Central States and extending into the Middle West, the lack of order and system began to bring very heavy burdens on the workers in the field. That which a dozen ministers had been able to do not many years before, when the believers were "few in number, very much scattered, and in no place assuming to take the name of a church," could not longer be done by former methods of labor, even if the messengers should continue "untiring in their efforts to give aid, traveling far, holding meetings sometimes all night, enduring toils and trials sufficient to exhaust the energies of any class of men."—*Idem.*

The brethren upon whom had rested the care of all the churches, reasoned that should an attempt be made to continue to give personal supervision to local church matters, they would "utterly fail for want of both time and strength." Yet their experience had led them to a solemn conviction that the body of believers in the third angel's message must either have such personal labor bestowed upon them by visiting ministers, "or some step must be taken—some means devised and adopted—to super-

cede the necessity of it. But this labor," they added, "cannot now be bestowed on all the scattered ones, as we have shown; therefore we conclude that means must be adopted for the preservation of order, the correction of wrongs, and consequent growth in grace and spiritual mindedness."—*Idem*.

The remedy proposed was (1) a more thorough organization of local churches for effective service and for spiritual growth, and "to preserve . . . order and purity;" (2) the proper organization of "State or district conferences," which would be "a great benefit by supplying the churches in every part of the field with the means of coming together in their several States or districts for social and public worship, and for the building of each other up in the word of the Lord;" (3) the holding of "general conferences" so representative in character as to be "fully entitled to the name."—*Idem*.

The brethren who wrote this memorial were desirous of giving their chief energies to the proclamation of the third angel's message in unentered fields; and they pleaded this desire as one of the primary reasons for urging a further safeguarding of local church interests. A lessening of the "labor and care" of the gospel messengers "for the welfare of the scattered people of God," they declared, could be attained only "by adopting such rules as shall secure more perfect order in the churches."—*Idem*.

A twofold recommendation was made for the strengthening of local church organizations; namely, (1) that written records of all business transactions in the name of the church be kept for examination by visiting ministers and by others in authority; and (2) that careful record be kept of the various members of the churches. "It should

be definitely known at all times," they urged, "who are and who are not considered members, and then the welfare of all may be looked after, and the erring may be reclaimed by timely action, or the unworthy withdrawn from in a manner to save the cause from reproach."

"This is especially necessary," they pointed out, "to save the ministers and churches from being imposed upon by those who move from place to place. . . . Every person leaving a church by removal should obtain a letter certifying to his standing; and without this precaution our churches are open to 'confusion and every evil work.'"—*Idem.*

"Our object in this [address] is to call your attention to the necessity of a more thorough organization, and invite your cooperation in the effort to effect it. We have seen with deep regret the distrust with which reforms of this kind are viewed, and trust it is for want of understanding the necessities of the case. We have examined it with carefulness and prayer, and hope and pray that you will examine it in the same manner, and believe that you will arrive at the same conclusion. . . . Our position and circumstances are such that any just and proper means of avoiding difficulty and trial in the churches are worthy of your most earnest consideration."—*Idem.*

FURTHER DELAY AND UNCERTAINTY

Definite and decided as were the recommendations made in 1861, the brethren who outlined them, out of deference for the opinions of their brethren elsewhere, still refrained from going forward with the matter arbitrarily. A few weeks later James White wrote:

"The place of worship of the Seventh-day Adventists

of Battle Creek is still the property of S. T. Belden. Organization has been postponed by this church until our ministers and people could come up unitedly to the work. There is no party feeling with those who feel the necessity of organization. They do not wish to move forward until all our ministers and people are prepared to go with them. How long shall we wait?"—*Id.*, Aug. 27, 1861.

The foregoing lines were written during an Eastern trip. It had been the intention of Elder and Mrs. White to visit New York, New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. The situation they met among the churches in central New York led them to change their plans, and to return to Battle Creek after touching only a few points.

In an editorial in the *Review* Elder White referred to his experience on this trip as follows:

"We seem to be wading through the influence of a stupid uncertainty upon the subject of organization. . . . There is everywhere some one to hold back. They have no valid reasons for so doing, still they hold back. . . .

"A few years since we could report success and additions to the ranks at every appointment on our Eastern and Western tours. Now these conference meetings are scenes of wearing labor to hold together and strengthen what remains."—*Idem.*

PRINCIPLES OUTLINED ANEW

In this crisis, as in many another during the establishment of gospel order among Seventh-day Adventists, clear counsel was received as to the steps that should be taken to bring about unity. This was published first in the *Review and Herald* bearing date of August 27, 1861, and

later in "Testimony for the Church," No. 7, under the title "Organization:"

"August 3, 1861, I was shown that some have feared that our churches would become Babylon, if they should organize; but those in central New York have been perfect Babylon, confusion [without organization]. And now unless the churches are so organized that they can carry out and enforce order, they have nothing to hope for in the future; they must scatter into fragments. . . . If ministers of God would unitedly take their position, and maintain it with decision, there would be a uniting influence among the flock of God. Separating bars would be broken to fragments. Hearts would flow together and unite like drops of water. Then there would be a power and strength in the ranks of Sabbathkeepers far exceeding anything we have yet witnessed. . . . The time for ministers to *stand together*, is when the battle goes hard."—*Testimonies for the Church,* Vol. I, pp. 270-272.

ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS

The time for action had arrived. At a general meeting held in Battle Creek, Michigan, October 4-6, 1861, soon after the return of Elder and Mrs. White from their Eastern tour, the brethren gave special study to the principles underlying the organization of believers into churches. According to the report of this council meeting, as published in the *Review*, "the first business presented was the organization of churches." It was—

"*Resolved*, That we refer this subject to the ministers present, instructing them to hold a Bible class on it, and write an address to the brethren, to be published in the *Review*."—*Review and Herald*, Oct. 8, 1861.

This address appeared in the *Review* dated October 15, 1861, and dealt with “(1) the manner of organizing a church; (2) officers and their duties; (3) the reception of members; and (4) letters of commendation.”

During the meeting, it was further—

“*Resolved*, That this conference recommend the following church covenant: We, the undersigned, hereby associate ourselves together, as a church, taking the name, Seventh-day Adventists, covenanting to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ.”—*Id.*, Oct. 8, 1861.

This action opened the way for the formation of Seventh-day Adventist churches throughout the ranks of believers; and during the year that followed, many churches were organized in various parts of the country. Some of the companies in the East, however, were very slow to organize themselves in church capacity, and several years passed by before gospel order was fully established in all parts of the field.

STATE CONFERENCES

THE “conferences,” or general meetings, held at irregular intervals during the earlier history of Sabbath-keeping Adventists, were partially systematized in 1859, when the brethren began holding regular annual meetings in several of the States.* It was two years later, however, before any attempt was made to form permanent working bodies made up of representatives of groups of churches in certain fields.

An outline of the advantages to be gained by the formation of State conferences, was given in the address on organization published in June, 1861. “Much of the business attended to at these conferences,” said the ministers who wrote this address, “is of a local nature, especially concerning the locality or State wherein the conference is held. In this respect the wants of all cannot be equally attended to. This may be remedied by holding State or district conferences.

“We have several reasons,” they continued, “to urge for the organization of such conferences. . . . We hold them essential to the efficiency of our ministry; and this in a twofold manner. First, that our accepted ministers may go out before the world with the endorsement and authority of the body with which they stand connected. This would often open the way for their introduction into

* See the last topic of the chapter entitled, “A Period of Development;” also article by James White, entitled, “Yearly Meetings,” in *Review and Herald*, July 21, 1859.

schoolhouses, courthouses, or meetinghouses, which are often (and often properly) closed against irresponsible persons who cannot show that they have the confidence or sanction of any body of believers. . . .

“This stands closely related to the second point, which is, that our brethren be not imposed upon by false teachers, or conceited, self-called messengers of the third angel’s message. Trouble has been occasioned and churches sometimes nearly ruined by those who professed to fill this office, who were both unqualified and unworthy; but the churches had no authority to which to appeal, unless to those to whom God had entrusted the great burden of this work, but who could not have a personal acquaintance with everybody, and therefore could not always give timely and satisfactory information.”

Further, the brethren in charge of the interests of the work throughout the States urged that “such conferences would be a great benefit by supplying the churches in every part of the field with the means of coming together in their several States or districts for social and public worship, and for the building of each other up in the word of the Lord. Of course,” they added, “the business would be done through the delegates of the churches.”—*Review and Herald, June 11, 1861.*

Thus were outlined, in their briefer features, the reasons for recommending the organization of groups of churches into State conferences.

James White, in an editorial calling attention to these matters, expressed the hope that “all our people may be aroused to the necessity of a proper organization, to prevent the loss of a large amount of the labor of our preachers, and confusion among believers.”—*Idem.*

J. N. Andrews approved. "I am . . . decidedly in favor of *concerted* action," he wrote, "and hence would heartily approve . . . of State conferences to assemble annually, or semiannually, that the united strength of the people of God may be brought to bear upon the work that is to be done."—*Id.*, *Sept. 17, 1861*.

Urging the benefits to be derived from the adoption of the recommendation for State conferences, to which he had attached his signature a few months before, J. H. Waggoner wrote from Iowa in September, 1861:

"I feel the necessity of organization at this time, according to the plan advised in the conference address of last spring. I shall be obliged to leave the cause in southern Iowa suffering for want of a conference, which cannot be held, or if held, cannot be fairly represented in our present confused and unorganized state. The main objects for which a conference in this part of this State should be held cannot be attained except through delegates. I am quite well assured that conferences held in the manner in which they have been held in the past have ceased to be a benefit. But a reform to be effectual must be general. When shall it be? What do you say, fellow laborers in the truth?"—*Id.*, *Sept. 24, 1861*.

THE MICHIGAN CONFERENCE

The brethren in Michigan, where were living the largest number of believers, were the first to carry the recommendation into effect. During a general meeting held in Battle Creek, October 4-6, 1861, a series of resolutions providing for the organization of the Michigan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, was adopted, and the conference was fully formed and officered.

Among these resolutions were the following provisions:

“Resolved, That we recommend to the churches in the State of Michigan to unite in one conference, with the name of the Michigan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. . . .

“Resolved, That the conference [in session] be composed of ministers and delegates from the churches. . . .

“Resolved, That the officers of this conference consist of a chairman, clerk, and a standing committee of three. . . .

“Resolved, That our ministers’ papers consist of a certificate of ordination, also credentials to be signed by the chairman and clerk of the conference, which credentials shall be renewed annually.”—Id., Oct. 8, 1861.

A SPIRITUAL MEETING

The meeting during which the Michigan State Conference was formed, was remarkable also for the passage of the resolution quoted in the preceding chapter, providing for the organization of churches throughout the field. And, further, it was a time of unusual blessing. “Our ministers had unusual freedom in preaching the word,” James White remarked a day or two afterward, “and the social meetings were excellent,” especially the one the last night of the conference, which continued “three hours with increasing interest. The time was filled up with short testimonies from many brethren and sisters. A calm, sweet, melting spirit pervaded this meeting, making it the best of the kind we ever witnessed.

“We heard many brethren remark in regard to the conference, that it was the best ever held at Battle Creek. With the sweet influence of the meeting upon the minds

of the brethren and sisters, they parted Monday morning to go to their several homes.

“The unity existing among the brethren at this conference, the eagerness to take a decided position upon organization, and the general readiness to sustain the publishing association, have greatly encouraged us. We are not, in point of hope, faith, and courage, where we stood prior to the trials of the last eighteen months, and perhaps we never shall be; but we certainly made rapid progress during the three days of our conference.”—*Elder James White, in Review and Herald, Oct. 8, 1861.*

OTHER LOCAL CONFERENCES

The happy completion of the work of perfecting the organization of churches into a State conference in Michigan, gave courage to groups of believers in other States to do likewise. It was a time when the work was taking shape rapidly. Throughout the field, churches were being organized, in harmony with the plan adopted by the Michigan Conference; and in several States these newly formed churches banded together in a State organization. The brethren in various places began to discern clearly “the importance of order, union, and concentration of action” in the dissemination of the truths of the third angel’s message. (See resolution in “Reports of the New York State Conference for the Years 1862, 1863, and 1864.”) They began to understand that unless they should adopt some measures to bring about concerted action, the efforts of the individual churches would fall far short of fulfilling the gospel commission.

During the year 1862, six local conferences were formed; namely, Southern Iowa (March 16), Northern Iowa (May

10), Vermont (June 15), Illinois and Wisconsin (September 28), Minnesota (October 4), New York (October 25). The following year, on January 25, 1863, the Southern and Northern Iowa organizations were united and were known as the Iowa Conference. A conference was formed in Ohio on May 31.

November 1, 1867, Maine was organized into a conference; in June, 1871, the Illinois and Wisconsin Conference was separated into two, along territorial lines; and in 1871, also, the New England Conference was formed (August 24). (See "Historical Summary" in "S.D.A. Year Book," 1913, p. 246.)

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

THE General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists was organized May 20 and 21, 1863, during a council meeting of representatives from various local conferences and churches, "for the purpose of securing unity and efficiency in labor, and promoting the general interests of the cause of present truth, and of perfecting the organization of the Seventh-day Adventists."—*Review and Herald*, May 26, 1863, p. 204.

A PLAN FOR COOPERATING

About a year after the first State conference had been organized, J. H. Waggoner, one of the signers of the 1861 memorial asking for a perfected organization, was constrained to write to James White of the confusion and consequent crippling of effort resulting from a failure to have some central organization by which the general interests of the cause might be fostered and advanced. "If a remedy can be applied," he wrote, "it should be done immediately. The remedy is in cooperation. If every conference or State had its own laborers, the case would be somewhat different; but while there exists the necessity for one State or conference to call upon another for laborers, steps must be taken to shut out . . . confusion. Without urging the matter further, I propose the following plan:

"That a General Conference be appointed to convene at or near the time of the annual meeting of the publishing

association. That every conference of Seventh-day Adventists send a delegate or delegates to the General Conference; and that a General Conference Committee be appointed, with whom the State conferences may correspond, and through whom they shall present their requests for laborers."—*Id.*, June 24, 1862.

INITIAL STEPS AT THE MONTEREY MEETING OF
OCTOBER, 1862

In Monterey, Michigan, October 4, 1862, was convened the second annual meeting of the Michigan Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. For nearly eight weeks the announcements had been out, not only for the conference, but for the second annual meeting of the S.D.A. Publishing Association as well. Thus, as Uriah Smith reported, "a very select company of brethren and sisters found themselves assembled together at the time appointed. Brethren were present from all sections of the State, to the number, as it was estimated, of not far from five hundred, besides a few from New York, Ohio, Indiana, and Wisconsin. This was probably the largest body of Sabbathkeepers ever assembled in the State."—*Id.*, Oct. 14, 1862.

An effort was made to effect some temporary arrangement for intelligent cooperation between men in responsibility and general laborers in various fields, by the adoption of a resolution reading thus:

"WHEREAS, Several States are dependent on the Michigan Conference for laborers; and,

"WHEREAS, Those going out as laborers in some instances have been too much under the dictation of inexperienced brethren; therefore,

"Resolved, That it devolves upon the Michigan Con-

ference to direct as to how and where such missionaries shall labor.”—*Idem*.

Another resolution, still more far-reaching, in that it finally made possible the calling of a general assembly for the formation of a General Conference organization, reads thus:

“*Resolved*, That we invite the several State conferences to meet with us, by delegate, in General Conference, at our next annual conference. Adopted.”—*Idem*.

AN APPOINTMENT FOR A GENERAL ASSEMBLY

At the time this action was taken, it was thought that the next annual meeting would be held October 2-5, 1863. But conditions changed, and an earlier appointment seemed advisable. Accordingly, Elders White, Loughborough, and Byington, at that time the Michigan Conference committee, called a special session of their State conference, and also a representative meeting for the formation of the proposed General Conference. Both meetings were to be held at Battle Creek, Michigan, in the month of May, 1863. “The several conference committees in the different States” were “requested to send delegates or letters at their discretion.” “All delegates and letters,” added those who made the call, “must be sanctioned by some State conference, or conference committee, or—where there are no State conferences—some church, or meeting of scattered brethren.”—*Id.*, April 7, 1863.

PRELIMINARY SUGGESTIONS

Three weeks before the conference convened, an editorial appeared in the *Review*, touching on the problems that it was hoped might be solved by organizing a General Conference. James White wrote:

"A few weeks only and our General Conference will be in session. Delegates are being appointed to this assembly from different States, and our people are looking forward to it as the most important meeting ever held by the Seventh-day Adventists.

"The great object of this contemplated meeting, as far as it has been expressed by those who plead that the present state of the cause demands it, is to secure the united and systematic action of the friends of the cause in every part of the wide field. . . .

"As far as the use of means is concerned in securing united, systematic action in the entire body, must not the General Conference be the great regulator? If so, is it not the duty of the General Conference to mark out the general course to be pursued by State conferences? And if it be the pleasure of State conferences to carry out the decisions of the General Conference, unity thus far will be secured."

—*Id.*, April 28, 1863.

Elder White further suggested that a General Conference organization might properly direct the ministering brethren, distributing them throughout the field, and regulating their support. In closing, he wrote:

"Again, should not the General Conference control all missionary labor in new fields? If so, would it not control missionary funds, and require, among other officers, a treasurer and board of directors? Every such organization should be as simple as possible, and accomplish its design. Useless machinery of this kind is badly in the way. But that which is worth doing at all, should be done correctly and well. If the General Conference is not higher in authority than State conferences, we see but little use for it. Think of these things, brethren, and be

ready to act when assembled in General Conference.”—*Idem.*

PERSONNEL OF THE FIRST GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION

The brethren met, according to appointment, on May 20, 1863. “The meeting was temporarily organized by choosing J. M. Aldrich, chairman, and U. Smith, secretary.”—*Id.*, May 26, 1863.

The committee on credentials, chosen during the first meeting, announced the next morning “the following brethren as the duly elected delegates from their respective States: From New York, Brethren J. N. Andrews, N. Fuller, C. O. Taylor, and J. M. Aldrich; from Ohio, I. N. Van Gorder; from Michigan, the ministers present from that State, namely, Brethren White, Bates, Waggoner, Byington, Loughborough, Hull, Cornell, and Lawrence, with a lay representation of Brethren James Harvey, of North Liberty, Indiana, and William S. Higley, Jr., of Lapeer, Michigan; from Wisconsin, Isaac Sanborn; from Iowa, Brethren B. F. Snook and W. H. Brinkerhoof; from Minnesota, Washington Morse.”—*Idem.* To these, Brother H. F. Baker, of Ohio, was added.

ADOPTION OF CONSTITUTION

The committee appointed to draft a constitution brought in their report on Friday, May 21. The preamble of their report reads thus: “For the purpose of securing unity and efficiency in labor, and promoting the general interests of the cause of present truth, and of perfecting the organization of the Seventh-day Adventists, we, the delegates from the several State conferences, hereby proceed to organize a General Conference, and adopt the following constitution for the government thereof.”—*Idem.*

This constitution, which, after being considered item by item, was adopted on May 21, 1863, has stood the test of half a century. From time to time changes have been made in it, to adapt it to an ever-enlarging work; but in its fundamental features it has remained unchanged.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The constitution, as framed in 1863, prepared the way for the formation of the General Conference. The delegates went forward in the fear of God in effecting a permanent organization, by the formal adoption of the constitution, and by the appointment of officers for the ensuing year. The committee on nominations presented the name of James White for president. The conference passed on this unanimously, but Elder White "declined to serve. After a considerable time spent in discussion, the brethren urging reasons why he should accept the position, and he why he should not, his resignation was finally accepted, and John Byington [was] elected as president in his stead. The nominations for secretary [Uriah Smith] and treasurer [E. S. Walker] were then ratified. J. N. Andrews and G. W. Amadon were chosen as the remaining members of the executive committee."—*Idem*.

CONSTITUTION FOR STATE CONFERENCES

Recognizing the advantage of uniformity, the delegates at this first session of the General Conference, before separating, drew up and recommended for adoption a form of constitution for State conferences. (For the text of this constitution, see *Review and Herald*, May 26, 1863.)

DELEGATE REPRESENTATION

In order that all the members of every church might have an equal voice in the deliberations of their respective

conferences, provision was made in the State constitution that the churches should be represented by chosen delegates.

The annual session of each State conference was to be "composed of all ministers in good standing and delegates from organized churches within its limits."—*Review and Herald, May 26, 1863*. The delegates were to be elected by the individual members of local churches, in accordance with a fixed ratio based on the church membership.* And in the General Conference Constitution it was provided that "each State conference shall be entitled to one delegate in the General Conference, and one additional delegate for every twenty delegates in the State conference, such delegates to the General Conference to be chosen by the State conferences or their committees."—*Idem*.

Thus provision was made that the State conferences and the General Conference should be representative bodies in every sense of the term.

On various occasions, efforts have been made to do away with the election and recognition of delegates to general assemblies. Some have urged that all church members in attendance at general meetings, should be recognized as delegates. But plain counsel has been given through the Spirit of prophecy:

"God would have His people an understanding people. He has so arranged matters that chosen men shall go as delegates to our conferences. These men are to be tried and proved. . . . The choosing of delegates to attend our conferences is an important matter. These men are to lay the plans that shall be followed in the advancement of the work; and therefore they are to be men of understanding,

* This ratio has been changed, at sundry times, to meet changing conditions.

able to reason from cause to effect.”—“*Testimonies for the Church*,” Vol. IX, p. 262.

THE PREVALENCE OF UNITY

Harmony prevailed throughout the four days the brethren spent together. Uriah Smith, the secretary, in a *Review* editorial descriptive of the meeting, testified:

“Perhaps no previous meeting that we have ever enjoyed, was characterized by such unity of feeling and harmony of sentiment. In all the important steps taken at this conference, in the organization of a General Conference, and the further perfecting of State conferences, defining the authority of each, and the important duties belonging to their various officers, there was not a dissenting voice, and we may reasonably doubt if there was even a dissenting thought. Such union, on such points, affords the strongest grounds of hope for the immediate advancement of the cause, and its future glorious prosperity and triumph.”—*Review and Herald*, May 26, 1863.

REPRESENTATIVE MEN IN THE FIELD

IN the early days of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, two or three men could easily supervise the entire field of effort each season. Even after the formation of the General Conference in 1863, the one chosen as leader could personally attend every important meeting, besides carrying special burdens such as those connected with the publishing work.

During the third annual session of the General Conference, in 1865, the delegates passed a formal resolution declaring that in their judgment it was "highly important for the well-being of the cause that the president of the General Conference should attend the session of each of the State conferences."—*General Conference Minutes, May 17, 1865, published in Review and Herald, May 23, 1865.* A year later, the delegates made provision for the sharing of this burden by the other two members of the General Conference Committee. (See *Review and Herald, May 22, 1866.*) And the following year the policy was broadened to the extent of permitting some one appointed by this committee to represent the General Conference at State conference sessions. (See *Id., May 28, 1867.*)

For many years after the organization of the General Conference, it was possible for the three members of its executive committee to cover the field, attending practically every large gathering of believers throughout the

land. Thus the officers of the General Conference kept in close touch with the local conference workers and with the people.

“The efficiency of our system of organization,” wrote J. N. Andrews in a last-page editorial note in the *Review*, dated October 28, 1873, “depends very much upon the existence and the action of this committee. During the interval from one conference to another, the general management of our affairs as a people is in their hands. They constitute an executive board to carry into effect the measures which are determined upon by the conference. Without their action, much of the conference business would end in mere talk. By their means we are able to act as a body, and at all times are represented by those who are authorized to act for us.

“This committee is selected annually with especial reference to the important and responsible work to be done. It is but just to say that our present committee in the general performance of their responsible duties have acted with great wisdom and prudence. Upon them have devolved very great labors, and these have been performed with diligence and faithfulness. . . . It is certainly duty for every one to aid in strengthening the hands of those who stand in this place of chief responsibility. I am glad to believe that there is an increasing disposition on the part of our people to do this.”

At the time these lines were written, Elder Andrews was not a member of the committee.

IN MISSION TERRITORY

During the fourteenth session of the General Conference, held in 1875, the brethren chose as their committee:

James White, with headquarters in Battle Creek, Michigan; J. N. Loughborough, of Oakland, California; and J. N. Andrews, of Switzerland. Commenting on this action, the secretary, Uriah Smith, wrote:

“The conference committee are chosen from widely distant localities. This seems to be very appropriate.

“The message which Seventh-day Adventists are giving is a world-wide message; and the General Conference Committee have the oversight of the work the world over. How fitting, then, to the nature and extent of the work, that they should be stationed in different fields in different parts of the world.

“One in Europe, one on the Pacific Coast, and the other vibrating in all sections of the field between them, looks to us like a most appropriate arrangement. We can think of but one step more in the way of improvement on this matter, and that would be to add a fourth member to the committee, and locate him in Australia.*

“This links all parts of the work together, and by means of the steam and telegraph lines of this rapid age, they can easily confer with one another in regard to the wants of the wide harvest field, of which personal labor and supervision will enable them more correctly to judge.”—*Review and Herald*, Aug. 26, 1875.

AN ATTEMPTED CHANGE OF POLICY

The value of having the General Conference Committee made up largely of men who were actively engaged in work that would bring them into close touch with the rank and file of the people throughout the field, was lost sight of,

* This was written at a time when no worker had been sent to Australia. Nearly ten years later missionary operations were begun there; and Elder Smith lived to see the day when the General Conference adopted the policy of stationing one of its executive committee permanently in that field.

for the moment, during the seventeenth session of the General Conference, in 1878. A delegate who was occupying a position of responsibility in a large institution, urged that the committeemen should be chosen from those having to do with the three chief lines of departmental work—the publishing interests, the medical work, and the educational work. The nominating committee gave favorable consideration to this plea, and recommended that the men standing at the head of the three leading denominational institutions be chosen as the General Conference Committee for the ensuing term. Accordingly, Elder James White, Dr. J. H. Kellogg, and Professor S. Brownsberger were elected to this position.

But before the conference closed, Mrs. White came before the delegates, and told them that during the night season the angel of the Lord had appeared before her with words of counsel, and that a mistake had been made in making the General Conference Committee less truly representative than formerly. She had been instructed that there were decided advantages in keeping in close touch with the people in the field, and that loss would be sustained by the church at large through the proposed change of policy concerning the personnel of the committee.

The brethren accepted this counsel, the two whose local work would have circumscribed their usefulness as general laborers declined to serve, and others more representative of the entire field were chosen.*

THE EUROPEAN GENERAL COUNCIL

As conferences multiplied, and missions were established in many new fields, the three men chosen from year

* The records of this experience are very meager, but some of the facts are reported in the *Review and Herald*, October 17, 1878. The official minutes in the archives of the General Conference are identical with this report in the *Review*.

to year to act as the official representatives of the General Conference between sessions, found it increasingly difficult to cover the entire field. Elder Andrews' failing health made it impossible for him to serve longer on the committee, and thus, for long seasons at a time, the brethren in Europe were far removed from those to whom they naturally looked for counsel. This led them to resort to a new form of organization to meet the demands of a rapidly developing work.

In September, 1882, while S. N. Haskell, one of the members of the General Conference Committee, was visiting the principal mission stations in Europe, the leading workers from conferences and missions organized in Scandinavia, Great Britain, and Switzerland met with him in Basel, and there organized an ecclesiastical body to include all the European conferences and missions, but to be subordinate to the General Conference in America. Having no precedent to follow, the brethren named their new organization the European Conference, in which was to be embraced "all the Seventh-day Adventists of the Old World." Elders Haskell, Andrews, and Loughborough united in formulating a simple constitution. In this were mentioned the name, the object, and the membership; and provision was made for an executive committee of three, a secretary, and a treasurer. The object of the European Conference was stated to be "to promote the missionary work by establishing more intimate relations between the brethren of the different nations of Europe, and also between them and the brethren in America." (See *Review and Herald*, Oct. 10, 17, 1882.)

Elder Andrews, in his report of the organization, stated that the brethren voted to request the General Conference

that the annual meetings of the European Conference be attended by "some member of the General Conference Committee."—*Review and Herald, Nov. 14, 1882.*

In planning for a working body with the powers that were vested in the European Conference, the brethren secured to the work in that field many of the advantages that have since accrued to other important portions of the field through the organization of union conferences. But the plan proposed in 1882 for the safeguarding and furtherance of all the interests of the cause of present truth in Europe, was so unlike anything that had hitherto been devised, that a few weeks later, during the 1882 session of the General Conference, the whole matter was taken under advisement by a special committee.

After considerable study of the new plan, a favorable report was rendered, whereupon the General Conference passed the following resolution:

"*Resolved*, That while we endorse the organization of the European Conference, we recommend that its name be changed to . . . European Council of Seventh-day Adventist Missions, according to the object stated in its constitution."—*Id., Dec. 26, 1882.*

Two years later, in 1884, during a visit by George I. Butler, the president of the General Conference, to the missions in Europe, the European Council met for its second session. The chairman, Elder Butler, in setting before the brethren the necessity of perfecting the organization formed two years before, told them that "the General Conference Committee, burdened as they are with work and cares in America, and being at such a distance from the different fields of labor in Europe, cannot take immediate charge of such matters as directing laborers in

their work, disbursing funds, and other local questions.”
—*Id.*, June 24, 1884.

One of the important steps taken during the progress of the meeting, as reported by Elder Butler to the readers of the *Review*, “was the perfecting of a plan of organization, so that responsibilities should rest upon all the leading workers there.”—*Idem.*

Article IV of the constitution was amended to read: “The officers of the council shall consist of an executive committee of three, a secretary, a treasurer, and a missionary board of three in each mission, whose chairman shall be a member of the executive committee of the council, these officers to be elected by the council at its annual meetings. These missionary boards shall take supervision of the wants of the cause in their respective mission fields, and shall attend to the disbursement of funds under the counsel of the General Conference Committee, to whom they shall report from time to time the condition and wants of their fields.”—“*Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists,*” p. 110 (1886 edition).

Commenting on this plan, the president of the General Conference wrote:

“We trust this arrangement will bring the best judgment of all our missionaries to bear upon the work to be done, and that all will thus feel mutually responsible, and will be interested to look after the work, more than if it was all left to the decision of one person in each mission.”
—*Review and Herald*, June 24, 1884.

Those in charge of the work in Europe also recognized the advantages to be derived from the perfected plan for placing responsibilities upon many men engaged in work

in the various fields. "The action of the council in the adoption" of this plan, they declared, "was in itself an important step toward more thorough system and organization in the work in all the missions. The appointment of a general executive committee of three, composed of brethren selected from the different missions, would serve to unite the work, and, so far as possible, give all the benefit of the experience which might be gained by the workers in each field. This would . . . help all to feel responsible for the advancement of the common cause."—*Historical Sketches*, p. 110.

"The third session of the European Council convened in the meeting hall of the new publishing house at Basel, Switzerland, September 15, 1885."—*Id.*, p. 113. The General Conference was represented by one of the members of its executive committee, W. C. White, and by Mrs. E. G. White, both of whom remained in Europe for about two years to assist in establishing the work in that field.

MOLDING INFLUENCES

It was during her attendance at the third session of the European Council in September, 1885, that Mrs. White met with the workers morning by morning, and delivered the series of practical addresses that were later published as a section of "Historical Sketches of the Foreign Missions of the Seventh-day Adventists" (pp. 119-158). Among the themes presented, the principles underlying gospel order were clearly outlined. "Love and Forbearance Among Brethren," "Unity Among Laborers," "Unity Among Different Nationalities," were some of the subjects discussed.

Reporting from Basel to Elder Butler, the president of the General Conference, under date of October 1, 1885,

concerning these practical addresses to the workers, Mrs. White wrote:

"I have felt urged by the Spirit of God to keep before them the necessity of being teachable, easy to be entreated; that it is entirely out of place for Christ's servants to be self-sufficient and independent. I have tried to impress upon them that we are individually bound together in the great web of humanity, and . . . any one man is not a whole. It is not safe to follow one man's mind and one man's judgment. We are to be helps to one another, but never to be the shadow of any man. God would have us think and act as free moral agents, gathering light from Him to reflect upon others, while we must be willing to be entreated of our brethren, and to gain wisdom from men of experience."—*Ellen G. White Letter 2, 1885.*

The principles emphasized by Mrs. White at the very beginning of her labors in Europe, brought great blessing to the workers in attendance at the European Council, and helped them to lay plans for the development of the cause of present truth along broad lines. The value of these early efforts to establish unity and at the same time to give leeway for individual initiative, can never be fully estimated.

COMMITTEEMEN AS COUNSELORS

Another molding influence in Europe during the formative period of its development, was the continuous presence there, from the beginning of our missionary operations in that field, of brethren of varied experience. In J. N. Andrews the General Conference gave of its best; and the brethren that followed had borne responsibilities in the home field, and were qualified to strengthen the hands of their associates wherever they might be placed.

The enlargement of the General Conference Committee from three members to five in 1883 (see S.D.A. Year Book, 1884, p. 37), and from five to seven in 1886 (see *Id.*, 1887, pp. 32, 33), made possible the stationing of a member of the General Conference Committee in Europe almost continuously, beginning with the year 1885, when W. C. White was sent there, and continuing through the years given to the European work by O. A. Olsen. During the time spent by these workers in Europe, they endeavored to labor, not as executives in the lesser matters pertaining to local fields and handled by the mission committees, but as counselors and helpers to the brethren upon whom had been placed the responsibility of the various missions and institutions throughout the field. Thus many were trained to bear burdens, and to share in the responsibilities of management; and later some of these in turn have been chosen as members of the General Conference Committee, to stand as counselors and helpers. Thus the work in Europe has advanced from strength to strength, until today it has developed into a division conference * ranking in importance with the North American Division Conference, and carrying its full share of the responsibility of preparing the inhabitants of earth, and especially those of heathen lands, for the coming of our King.

* Since this was written, in 1925, the work has so developed that the European field is now composed of three large world divisions, excluding Russia.—EDITOR.

COUNSELS AND WARNINGS—1874-1888

WHEN we became a fully organized body," wrote Mrs. E. G. White in 1874, "and several men were chosen to act in responsible positions, then it was the proper time for my husband to cease to act longer as one man to stand under the responsibilities and carry the heavy burdens. This labor devolved on more than one."—*Testimonies for the Church*, Vol. III, p. 501.

"God would not have us take the responsibilities or bear the perplexities which belong to others. We may stand as counselors, and help . . . with our influence and our judgment. We may do much if we will not be induced to get under the load and bear the weight which others should bear, and which it is important for them to bear in order to gain a necessary experience."—*Id.*, p. 503.

In an address to the delegates assembled at the 1883 General Conference, Mrs. White outlined at length the principles having to do with the sharing of responsibilities by many in all parts of the field, rather than the placing of too many burdens on any one man, whatever his position.

STEPS IN ADVANCE

Soon after the close of the 1885 session of the European Council, Mrs. White began sending communications to the brethren in responsibility in America, placing before

them anew the necessity of taking counsel one with another, and of giving room for the workings of the Holy Spirit upon the minds of the individual workers.

In a letter written October 25, 1885, from Orebro, Sweden, to two of the leading members of the General Conference Committee, she said:

“My prayer is that the Lord may be with you in great power during the coming conference. Some may be absent that you might wish were present; but Jesus is your helper. I sincerely hope and pray that those who bear responsibilities in Michigan, New England, Ohio, Indiana, and other States, will take broader views of the work than they have done. I hope Michigan will take a step in advance. I feel to regret the fact that there is such a dearth of breadth of mind and of farseeing ability. Workers should be educated and trained for the fields of labor. We need missionaries everywhere. We need men and women who will give themselves without reserve to the work of God, bringing many sons and daughters to God. . . .

“Too many have marked out a prescribed line which they wish others to follow in the work. Workers have tried to do this with blind faith, without exercising their own judgment upon the matter which they had in hand. If those who were placed as directors were not present, they have followed their implicit directions just the same. But in the name of Christ, I would entreat you to stop this work. Give men a chance to exercise their individual judgment.

“Men who follow the leading of another, and are willing that another should think for them, are unfit to be entrusted with responsibility. . . .

INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVE

“Our leading brethren have made a great mistake in marking out all the directions that the workers should follow, and this has resulted in deficiency, in a lack of a care-taking spirit in the worker, because they have relied upon others to do all their planning, and have themselves taken no responsibility.

“Should the men who have taken this responsibility upon themselves step out of our ranks, or die, what a state of things would be found in our institutions! Leading men should place responsibilities upon others, and allow them to plan and devise and execute, so that they may obtain an experience. Give them a word of counsel when necessary, but do not take away the work because you think the brethren are making mistakes. . . .

“I think I have laid out this matter many times before you, but I see no change in your actions. We want every responsible man to drop responsibilities upon others. Set others at work that will require them to plan, and to use judgment. Do not educate them to rely upon your judgment. . . .

“Do not think that these men who do follow out your ideas are the only ones that can be trusted. You have sometimes thought that because they do your will to the letter, they were the only ones in whom you could place dependence. If any one exercised his own judgment, and differed with you, you have disconnected from him as one that could not be trusted.

“Take your hands off the work, and do not hold it fast in your grasp. You are not the only man whom God will use. Give the Lord room to use the talents He has en-

trusted to men, in order that the cause may grow. Give the Lord a chance to use men's minds. We are losing much by our narrow ideas and plans. Do not stand in the way of the advancement of the work, but let the Lord work by whom He will. Educate, encourage young men to think and act, to devise and plan, in order that we may have a multitude of counselors."—*Manuscript, a portion of which is published in "Special Testimonies for Ministers and Workers," No. 6, pp. 61-65.*

EXCLUSIVENESS AMONG LABORERS

In an article published in the *Review* in April, 1866, Mrs. White bore further testimony as follows, concerning the principles impressed upon her mind anew at that time:

"It is important that those who engage in the work of God be constant learners in the school of Christ. Indeed, this is absolutely necessary if they would labor with acceptance in the great, the solemn work of presenting the truth to the world. If self is kept out of sight, and the workers labor with humility and wisdom, a sweet spirit of harmony will exist among them. . . .

"The Lord does not apportion to any one man some special territory in which he alone is to labor. This is contrary to His plans. He designs that in every place where the truth is introduced, different minds, different gifts, shall be brought in to exert an influence upon the work. . . .

"Because a person has ability in one direction, it is no sign that his judgment on all other subjects is perfect, and that the wisdom of some other mind does not need to be united with his.

“Those who do labor together should seek to be in perfect harmony. And yet no one should feel that he cannot labor with those who do not see just as he sees, and who do not in their labors follow just his plans. If all manifest a humble, teachable spirit, there need be no difficulty. God has set in the church different gifts. These are precious in their proper places, and all may act a part in the work of preparing a people for Christ’s soon coming.

“‘He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.’ Eph. 4:11-13. . . .

“This is God’s order, and if men expect success, they must labor according to His arrangement. Oh, how much the workers need the spirit of Jesus to change and fashion them as clay is molded in the hands of the potter! When they have this spirit, there will be no spirit of variance among them; no one will be so narrow as to want everything done his way, according to his ideas; there will be no inharmonious feeling between him and his brother laborers who do not come up to his standard.

“The Lord does not want any of His children to be shadows of others; but He would have each one be his own simple self, refined, sanctified, ennobled by imitating the life and character of the great Pattern. The narrow, shut-in, exclusive spirit which keeps everything within the compass of one’s self, has been a curse to the cause of God and always will be wherever allowed to exist.

AN IMPRESSIVE DREAM

“During the recent conference at Basel I had an impressive dream concerning those who were engaged in the work of God. A tall, noble-looking man was examining a book of records. Drawing near with a number of others, I saw the reports of labor for 1885, and was told that every man’s work was accurately recorded there.

“According to this record, some had done considerable labor. They had not saved themselves, they had worked harder and done more than was required of them. Others had not given themselves a living sacrifice. . . .

“There were also registered in this book the names of workers who appeared to be humble, but who were self-sufficient and egotistical. The work must go according to their ideas or not at all; and yet they made no efforts to teach others how to work, to patiently instruct them in every branch of the work which they themselves understood. Instead of this, they selfishly retained this knowledge to themselves. None are excusable for this exclusiveness, for thus confining their work to a small compass.

“The cause of God, not only in Europe, but in America, has suffered greatly because of these narrow ideas of labor. Much talent which is now lost to the cause might have been seen and made use of; many might have been educated, and today be useful laborers in the cause of God, had it not been for these exclusive, these narrow ideas.

“O that those laboring in all parts of the vineyard of the Lord might see how their record appears, when self is mingled with everything they do! O that they might see the importance of submitting their wills and ways to God, and of being in harmony with their brethren, of one mind, of one judgment! As soon as they do this, God will

work through them to will and to do of His good pleasure.”
 —*Review and Herald, April 13, 1886.*

UNSWERVING ALLEGIANCE TO GOD

In a manuscript addressed in 1886 to brethren in responsibility, occur the following words:

“God says to every man to whom He entrusts responsibilities, ‘Put not your trust in man, neither make flesh your arm.’ Look to God. Trust in His infallible wisdom. Regard as a sin the practice so common, even among Seventh-day Adventists, of becoming the echo of any man, however lofty his position. Listen to the voice of the Great Shepherd, and you will never be led astray. Search the Scriptures for yourself, and be braced for duty and for trial by the truth of God’s word. Let no friendship, no influence, no entreaty, let not the smiles, the confidence, or the rewards of any man, induce you to swerve from the path in which the Lord would lead you. Let Christlike integrity and consistency control the actions of your life. The man who sits most at the feet of Jesus, and is taught by the Saviour’s spirit, will be ready to cry out, I am weak and unworthy, but Christ is my strength and my righteousness.”
 —*Ellen G. White Manuscript 15, 1886.*

RIGHT RELATIONS

One of the plainest of all the communications sent to brethren in positions of responsibility by Mrs. White is the following:

“Men, fallible men, are not to think it is their prerogative to control, to mark out, or to prescribe the labors of their fellow men. When God works upon the human instrumentality, let men be very careful how they intermeddle. . . .

“The work of God has often been hindered by men considering that they had power to say, ‘Go here’ or ‘Go there,’ ‘Do this’ or ‘Do that,’ without consulting the individual himself, or respecting his convictions as a laborer together with God. God has promised His presence to every believer; and let those who are in positions of authority, presidents of conferences and board councils, and every one who has to do with the human mind, respect the individuality of mind and conscience. These workers are in copartnership with Jesus Christ, and you may interpose yourself so as to interfere with God’s plans; for the human agent is under His special authority and dictation.

“When men composing boards and councils are themselves walking at a distance from God, of what value is their discernment and wisdom to decide in reference to the work of God’s delegated servants? The human mind is open to jealousies, evil surmisings, and selfish considerations, and God’s plans are often turned aside by the caprice and by the plans of unconsecrated men. If the door is not closed to the enemy, he will enter and will figure largely in human inventions. The Lord requires the men who have a directing influence in His work, to be wholly consecrated to Him. He wants them to have hearts of flesh, and not of steel. . . .

“Christ is our example, and every soul placed in a position of trust, needs the subduing influence of the Spirit of God upon his heart day by day. Christ wept with those that wept. In all their afflictions He was afflicted, and was touched with the feeling of their infirmities. He is a tender and faithful high priest. He considers the cases of the tempted and tried ones as verily His own, and He ministers unto them. These weak ones of

the flock are to be carefully nourished with the manna Christ has supplied. They are to be educated not to look to men and trust in men, whatever may be their calling.

“God would have all such confederacies broken, . . . and remodeled upon Christlike principles. The foundation stone must be mercy. Human minds are not to be trammelled, and harnessed up and driven by human hands. The Lord Jesus must hold the reins in His own hands, pierced to bring peace and comfort and hope to every soul who will believe on Him. He gives to the purchase of His blood the guardianship of His grace; they shall move in His light, clad in the robes of His righteousness. To every man is given his work; and while souls are brought into church capacity, work is assigned them of God. They are to move as minds that are under the controlling influence of God.

“Men are educated to look to men, to be dependent on men. One man, by virtue of his position, exercises authority over them as if they were to be led by lines, this way and that, as dumb animals. God has not directed in this way. God is our chief, God is our instructor, and to Him we must look. We must ask the Holy Spirit’s guidance, and expect to be led and controlled by it.

“The church organization is to be respected, but it is not to be made in any way a galling yoke. Men are not to assume the prerogative of God, and think to rule and coerce and oppress the souls of God’s purchased possession. All heaven is indignant at what man, with complacency, will do to his fellow men, claiming at the same time to be a representative of Jesus Christ. . . .

“Christ has found His pearl of great price in lost, perishing souls. He sold all that He had to come into

possession, even engaged to do the work, and run the risk of losing His own life in the conflict. How then should man regard his fellow men? Christ has demonstrated the way. He says, 'A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.' John 13:34.

"When these words are heeded and obeyed in the spirit and in the letter, we will be doers of the word, and not hearers only. When these words are practiced by those who claim to have wisdom to guide the sheep of the Lord's pasture, they have far less selfishness, far less boasting, far less putting forth the finger and speaking vanity.

"Jesus is to superintend all events in the present and future of His church. John was instructed to write the things which he had seen, 'and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter; the mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in My right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.' Rev. 1:19, 20.

"O that men would revere the great Head of the church, and would manufacture less human methods, bringing down spirituality to the very dust with human inventions! God has been left out, and the church is not prepared to advance to the conflict under the banner of Jesus Christ. It is not doing the work for suffering souls, which Christ owns as if done to Himself. But the church, defective as it is, and enfeebled with so much chaff, is the only object on earth upon which He bestows His highest regard. In His estimation, the church in heaven and the church on earth are identical. He has promised to come personally into the midst of His church. He says to every

one holding a position of trust, '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.' Matt. 11:29, 30.

"Men in official positions must realize that their position gives them no license to be unkind or uncourteous, no license to be oppressive, and to let their tongues, which should be sanctified, speak words which will open a door of temptation, and help the great adversary in his work of discouraging souls. God has given us a work to do in saving souls from the companionship of Satan."—*Ellen G. White Manuscript 43, 1895.*

NO RESTRICTION IN GOD'S WORK

"If our workers are going forward in any place, do not put up the bars, and say, 'Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther.' I feel sad that you have closed up the school at ——. I see that the brethren sent to look after this enterprise have not taken measures to advance the work by soliciting donations from men who could give. There are rich men in the conference who have made complaints about the debt that has been incurred, who ought to have sustained these workers. While reproach and discouragement have been cast upon the workers, the impression has been left upon those who have means that they have a perfect right to question every enterprise that calls for money.

"God does not require you to take such a course that the workers in ——— or anywhere else shall not feel at liberty to make advance movements unless they can consult you, and ask what your judgment of the matter is before they advance. I cannot sanction the idea that you

must have a personal oversight of all the details of the work. If I did, the result would be that no worker would dare to exercise his own judgment in anything. The workers would have to rely upon one man's brain and one man's judgment, and the result would be that men would be left in inefficiency because of their inactivity. There are altogether too many of this class now, and they amount to next to nothing. I write this because I feel deeply on this point. We are not doing one half that we ought to do. . . .

"I cannot see that you have gained anything in making the move that you have, nor can I feel that it is in accordance with God's order. It will work nothing but injury, not only to those that have complained about the debt, but also to the workers. Men who have property, and could have helped this enterprise, will breathe more freely. These moneyed men will be encouraged not to do more for the cause than they have done, but to do less. They will feel at liberty to complain concerning anything that calls for an outlay of means. . . .

"Unless those who can help in ——— are roused to a sense of their duty, they will not recognize the work of God when the loud cry of the third angel shall be heard. When light goes forth to lighten the earth, instead of coming up to the help of the Lord, they will want to bind about His work to meet their narrow ideas. Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning.

"There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direc-

tion of the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world. God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness.

“Those who are accounted good workers will need to draw nigh to God, they will need the divine touch. They will need to drink more deeply and continuously at the fountain of living water, in order that they may discern God’s work at every point. Workers may make mistakes, but you should give them a chance to correct their errors, give them an opportunity to learn caution by leaving the work in their hands.”—*Portion of a letter addressed to the president of the General Conference, dated Oct. 1, 1885; published in “Testimonies to Ministers,” pp. 297-300.*

DISTRICT AND UNION CONFERENCES

—1888-1901

THE counsels regarding the distribution of the burdens of conference management, which were given through the Spirit of prophecy in the 70's and 80's to brethren in responsibility, received some consideration at the time of the Minneapolis General Conference in 1888. During that meeting it was proposed that the General Conference territory in the United States and Canada be broken up into several portions. Each portion was to comprise a few local conferences and missions, with an advisory committee to look after the various interests of the cause lying within the prescribed boundaries.

The plan proposed was somewhat similar to that which had been adopted by the brethren in Europe for the strengthening of their field work. The local conference organizations and the mission fields in Europe had all been united into one general organization, known as the European Council. This ecclesiastical body had recommendatory and supervisory powers, but was itself closely linked with and subject to the General Conference.

The practical workings of the European Council had brought great benefit to the cause in that part of the field. Some of the brethren of the General Conference Committee had had the privilege of laboring for a considerable length of time in Europe while the representatives of the various local conferences and missions there were meeting

annually for counsel. These brethren, realizing the value of such a plan, urged that a similar arrangement be adopted for the conduct of the work in America. Thus the combined wisdom of many minds in close contact with local conditions and needs, would be brought to bear upon the problems peculiar to some particular portion of General Conference territory. Many of the burdens that had hitherto rested upon a few men at the head of the work, would be distributed to various parts of the fields and borne by responsible men in these different sections of General Conference territory.

PRELIMINARY STEPS

The proposal did not meet with general favor at the time, and other matters pressed in; so no action was taken. After the close of the session, the General Conference Committee, in a meeting held November 18, 1888, adopted as a temporary arrangement the division of the territory in the United States and Canada into four large districts. Over each of these one of the members of the General Conference Committee was asked to take general supervision as a "special counsel." R. M. Kilgore was given the oversight of the work in the South; R. A. Underwood, in the East; E. W. Farnsworth, in the Central States and the Middle West; W. C. White, in Colorado and the Pacific Coast. (See General Conference Minutes, Nov. 18, 1888.)

In accordance with a recommendation passed by the General Conference Committee later on, the brethren in charge of these fields prepared "concise reports in writing of the work in their respective fields." (See *Id.*, July 14, 1889.) These earliest reports of district superintendents were presented before the General Conference in 1889.

(See *General Conference Bulletin*, pp. 23-25, 32, for full account.)

DIVISION OF THE TERRITORY INTO DISTRICTS

It was during the 1889 session of the General Conference, that the president, Elder Olsen, in his annual address, called attention to "the propriety of districting the territory covered by the General Conference in this country, and placing a district under the special charge of a member of the General Conference Committee; such member to have the special oversight of his district in the conducting of institutes, general meetings, camp meetings, and other work."—*Year Book, 1890, p. 148.*

This recommendation was taken under advisement by the Committee on Judiciary, and reported upon favorably, whereupon the General Conference passed a resolution providing for the division of the territory in the United States and Canada into six districts,—the East, the South, the Central States, the Northwest, the Southwest, and the Pacific Coast. (See *Daily Bulletin of the General Conference, 1889, p. 90.*) These were to be known as "District No. 1," "District No. 2," and so on, and at the head of each was to stand, in the order named, A. T. Robinson, R. M. Kilgore, O. A. Olsen, E. W. Farnsworth, E. H. Gates, R. A. Underwood.

DUTIES OF GENERAL SUPERINTENDENTS

The duties of the heads of these districts were not clearly defined until after the close of the conference of 1889, when O. A. Olsen, W. C. White, and R. A. Underwood were appointed by the General Conference Com-

mittee to consider this matter. (See General Conference Minutes, Dec. 28, 1889.) This subcommittee brought in as their report the following recommendations, which were adopted:

"1. That the member of the General Conference Committee having charge of a General Conference district, be called a general superintendent.

"2. That it be the duty of each general superintendent to attend the annual State conferences held in his district.

"3. That the general superintendent have the oversight of all ministerial institutes and annual conventions held in his district; that he attend these, as far as possible, and provide for the attendance of competent teachers, leaders, and counselors, at all these meetings.

"4. That it be the duty of the general superintendent to become acquainted with the officers of the State conferences, tract societies, and Sabbath school and health and temperance associations in his district, and ascertain the efficiency of their methods of labor; and to counsel, caution, and instruct them, as the state of their work may demand. Also to report to the corresponding secretary of the General Conference any irregularity or inefficiency that endangers the prosperity of the societies of which he has the oversight.

"5. That it be the duty of the general superintendent to have a special care for weak conferences and mission fields in his district, and for such portions of the territory as are being neglected; and to bring to the attention of the General Conference Committee, the condition and wants of such fields."—*Id.*, 1891, p. 56.*

* This report was adopted January 2, 1890, during the eighth meeting of the General Conference Committee.

For five years the district superintendents limited their activities largely to the duties outlined in these recommendations.

SATISFACTORY RESULTS

"The plan has worked well," reported Elder Olsen in his address to the delegates assembled at the opening of the General Conference of 1891. "As far as we have learned," he added, "the arrangement is very satisfactory to the State conferences, and should be continued."—*General Conference Bulletin, 1891, p. 4.*

And it was continued. At the end of another biennial period, in an address at the opening of the 1893 General Conference, Elder Olsen was able to report:

"The division of the General Conference territory in this country into districts, and placing a superintendent over each, is proving of much advantage. The most serious difficulty met has been that several of the superintendents of districts, being presidents of local conferences, have been laden with the responsibilities of local work. The district superintendent should be free to give his whole attention to the work in his district. This point should be borne in mind in the General Conference and State conference appointments."—*Id., 1893, p. 278.*

A PROPOSAL TO FORM DISTRICT CONFERENCES

In this same address, Elder Olsen outlined clearly the value of perfecting the organization of the districts into conferences intermediate between the General Conference and the State conferences. "It will be important at this conference," he urged, "to consider the question of further organization. This is made necessary in order to meet the

demands of our enlarging work. We would recommend that this conference provide for district conferences, formed of local conferences, composing the General Conference districts in this country, and that the sessions of the said district conferences be held in the alternate years between the sessions of the General Conference.

“This same plan should also be extended to the work in other lands. Conferences in such fields could be grouped into districts, and granted their necessary prerogatives under the General Conference. These conferences might hold meetings alternately with the General Conference, as before stated, and there should be full delegations composing the districts, with representatives from the General Conference. Each district conference would be expected to consider and plan for the work in its own district, at its sessions, and also to provide, by the election of delegates, for representation at the General Conference.

“Another consideration which makes the organization of district conferences necessary, is the requirements of our financial work. Proper provision must be made for the legal holding of property set apart for the use of the cause of God, and the legal transaction of such business as may be connected with the cause in its various departments. The General Conference Association, which has met the requirements in this direction for a few years, will be unable to do so in the future. It has already nearly reached its limits as to the holding of real estate, and should not be made to carry more responsibilities in that and other directions. Organizations designed to serve the purpose of the General Conference Association, should be organized in the districts. These organizations would be amenable to the district conferences, and on account of the

direct connection which these conferences sustain to the General Conference, the work of said legal organizations would be connected with the work as a whole.”—*Id.*, p. 285.

PRINCIPLES EMPHASIZED ANEW

In the councils of the brethren in attendance at the General Conference of 1893, much time was given to a consideration of the value of organization. Several communications on the subject from the pen of Mrs. E. G. White were read, including that which is reprinted in the introduction of this compilation. One of the manuscripts read was entitled, “Formality, Not Organization, an Evil.” (See *Id.*, p. 21.)

In another, dated December 27, 1892, Mrs. White declared:

“As we near the final crisis, instead of feeling that there is less need of order and harmony of action, we should be more systematic than heretofore. All our work should be conducted according to well-defined plans. I am receiving light from the Lord that there should be wise generalship at this time more than at any former period of our history.”—*Ellen G. White Letter 27a, 1892.*

And in a message dated January 9, 1893, occurred the familiar statement:

“Our work is plainly laid down in the word of God. Christian is to be united to Christian, church to church, the human instrumentality cooperating with the divine, every agency to be subordinate to the Holy Spirit, and all to be combined in giving to the world the good tidings of the grace of God.”—*General Conference Bulletin, 1893, p. 421.*

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION ABROAD

Before the close of the meeting, definite action was taken looking toward the perfecting of district organization by the setting apart of the Australasian territory as District No. 7, and of the European field as District No. 8. The resolutions adopted read thus:

“WHEREAS, In view of the growth and extension of the work in Europe and other parts of the world,

“52. *We recommend*, That the arrangement of General Conference districts be extended also to those fields, and that the Australian and New Zealand Conferences be known as District No. 7, and Europe as District No. 8.

“53. *We recommend*, That the presidents of the conferences and the General Conference districts in connection with the General Conference Committee arrange for council meetings to be held the alternate year with the General Conference, and to be known as district conferences, at which time ministerial institutes can be held, and plans for the work in the districts, and such other questions considered and arranged as pertain to the development and advancement of the work within the limits of the district.”
—*Id.*, p. 478.

BIENNIAL SESSIONS

Further action was taken by the executive committee after the close of the conference session as follows:

“That district conferences be held in each General Conference district, as far as practicable, in the years alternating with the biennial sessions of the General Conference; that the representation of such conferences consist of State conference committees, the presidents and

secretaries of State tract societies and Sabbath school associations, and the State canvassing agent of each State or Territory, in the district; that the district superintendent be the presiding officer of the district conference, a secretary being selected at the first meeting of each session; that the object of the district conferences be to counsel concerning the interests of the cause in the territory of the conference, and for planning for the extension of the work in all the various lines, no action being taken on matters which have not been considered in principle, at least, by the General Conference; and that devotional exercises and meetings for Bible instruction be held each day of the session."—*Year Book, 1894, p. 85.*

The recommendations concerning the formation of new territory into district conferences and the holding of biennial sessions alternating with the General Conference, were carried into effect.

THE FIRST DISTRICT CONFERENCE MEETING

In the report concerning the holding of the first district meeting where representatives of all divisions of the work from each State conference in the district were present, Elder J. N. Loughborough, the superintendent of the district, wrote:

"The first district conference for District No. 3 was held, according to appointment, in Battle Creek, October 10-15. The delegation to the conference consisted of the conference committees, the presidents and secretaries of the several State tract societies, the State Sabbath school associations, and the State canvassing agents of the four States comprised in the district. The superintendents of the six General Conference districts of the United States,

and the educational secretary of the denomination, were present. As this was the first conference of the kind, they were desirous to attend, deeming that it might aid in planning for similar conferences in their respective districts. . . .

“This gathering being of a different character from any previously held, we had considerable anxiety as to its success. . . . Although much prayerful thought had been bestowed for the success of the meeting, not one had any definite program for the conference. All, however, expressed their confidence that the Lord would guide in our study of the present situation, and in the planning of ways and means for our people to work, which plans could be carried to our people in the State and church institutes that were immediately to follow the conference. . . .

“Some of the superintendents who had questioned whether the people in their respective districts would deem it advisable to hold district conferences, expressed themselves that such conferences were indispensable in every district, especially as a means of instructing and preparing laborers for the work of holding State and church institutes.”—*Review and Herald*, Oct. 24, 1893.

In the official minutes of this conference, F. D. Starr, the secretary, reports:

“The first two days of the meeting were devoted to a council of the presidents of the four conferences of District No. 3, comprising the States of Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. In this council, the best plans for conducting the exercises of the remaining days of the conference were considered; and a program was, after much thought and prayer, and counsel with Professor W. W. Prescott and other

members of the General Conference Committee, finally made out. It was thought that the time should largely be spent in considering the present features and developments of the message, and receiving any advance light the Lord might have for us."—*Idem*.

The list of delegates from local conference organizations to this first district conference meeting included the names of G. A. Irwin, I. H. Evans, Allen Moon, and others who in later years have borne heavy burdens in connection with the general work.

While an organization was formed at this meeting which was afterward known as District Conference No. 3, yet in reality this organization was not a union conference as the term is understood today. Very little had been attempted in the way of granting powers now vested in union conference organizations, and the district conferences held during the winter of 1893-94 were devoted largely to Bible work. The first district conference "was immediately followed," writes Elder Loughborough, "by State institutes in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. These State institutes held from seven to ten days each, and afforded opportunity for all the laborers in each to receive instruction in the lines considered in the district conference.

"From the State institutes a number of laborers went out to the churches, to carry on the same work among them, especially infusing in the minds of all, the importance of the words, 'Arise, shine,' by living out the truth, and working for the relief of the poor and needy around them, not only spiritually but physically. Great good was accomplished as a result of this line of meetings and labor."

—*Year Book, 1894, p. 55.*

OTHER DISTRICT MEETINGS IN 1893-94

The organization of all the other districts in the United States followed along the same lines as those adopted by District No. 3. At the conference held in District No. 4 (the territory now included in the Northern and Central Union Conferences), instruction was given "on the points of our faith, health and temperance, methods of work, the relations that the different organizations should sustain to each other, and other important subjects."—*Review and Herald*, Nov. 14, 1893. "The question of how the work should be carried on in new fields, as well as church work, received special attention."—*Id.*, Jan. 23, 1894.

THE AUSTRALASIAN UNION CONFERENCE

While the districts in America were carrying out the recommendations adopted during the 1893 session of the General Conference, a similar work was going on in the newly formed District No. 7, comprising all General Conference territory in Australasia. The brethren in that field were unable to attend the first district meeting in the United States and therefore could not use for a model the district conferences in America; and so they attempted to carry out the General Conference recommendations according to their conception of what a district conference should be.

They had the advantage of the presence of the General Conference president, O. A. Olsen, who united with his brethren in giving much thought to the organization of the work in that distant part of General Conference territory. Among the others present were W. C. White, the district superintendent; A. G. Daniells, president of the Australian Conference; M. C. Israel, president of the New

Zealand Conference; J. O. Corliss and W. A. Colcord, just arrived from America; Robert Hare, George B. Starr, W. L. H. Baker, Mrs. E. G. White.

“In closing the session, Elder Olsen remarked that it had afforded him great pleasure to be present and participate in the deliberations of the meeting. He believed that all could see that the Australasian Union Conference had a most important work to do in this part of the world.”
—*The Bible Echo*, Feb. 26, 1894.

In his report of the meeting to the readers of the *Review*, Elder Olsen wrote:

“We feel assured that these district conferences will be of great service to the work in general, especially in these far-distant fields.”—*Review and Herald*, March 27, 1894.

In the report prepared for insertion in the Year Book, W. C. White, the first president of the Australasian Union Conference, gave an outline of the objects and aims of the conference, as follows:

“The object of this conference is to unify and extend the work of the third angel’s message, under the general direction of the General Conference, in the Australasian field. . . . In the organization of the union conference, these local conferences will be brought together for counsel and instruction in the work, and for mutual encouragement, and development of the important interests carried forward by the denomination, in that field.

“The officers of the conference are: A president, a vice-president, a secretary, a treasurer, and an executive committee. The president of the conference will always be the superintendent of the district, appointed by the General Conference.”—*Year Book*, 1894, p. 61.

The development of the Australasian Union Conference into a working body, with a strong and representative executive committee, and fully organized departments representing the publishing, educational, medical, and religious liberty interests, was outlined to the delegates assembled at the 1901 General Conference by A. G. Daniells, at that time the president of the union; and by W. C. White, the former president. (See *General Conference Bulletin*, 1901, pp. 89-93.) It was largely upon the model of this union conference, as developed through the years from 1894 to 1901, that the district conferences in America and elsewhere were reorganized into union conferences.

A PROPOSAL TO STRENGTHEN DISTRICT ORGANIZATIONS

During a council meeting held with the delegates assembled at the General Conference of 1895, O. A. Olsen, the president, urged "the necessity of increased efficiency in the matter of carrying forward the work of the denomination." To this end he recommended that the organization of the district conference be strengthened.

"Some of these divisions," declared Elder Olsen, "now contain more members, more laborers, and more institutions than our General Conference contained a few years ago, and hence the importance of properly caring for and nourishing all these interests. As our work increases in magnitude and our enterprises enlarge, it will be very natural for us to pay close attention to some things and neglect others. This should not be.

"The plan of organization which was introduced into our work at the beginning was of God, and should be preserved in every particular."

The plan that suggested itself to his mind was "that

the presidents of the conferences composing the districts, together with the superintendents, should form a sort of district conference committee or council, and that many matters pertaining to the work in the district, and to the mutual interest of the various conferences, be considered by this council, such as the interchange of laborers, the appointment of camp meetings, and many other subjects of mutual interest. This is becoming more desirable and necessary now that the General Conference is held but once in two years. We could not think of going back to the old plan of holding these large meetings annually. But there is need of brethren often counseling together with reference to the work for our mutual benefit, and for the best interest of the cause.

“During 1893-94, conferences were held in all but one of the districts, and in every case were productive of much good.

“For twenty-five years much has been said in the Testimonies upon the point of dividing the responsibilities and avoiding giving the work a one-man mold. The idea that a few men should compose the large body of all our committees and boards is not as the Lord would have it. More men should share these burdens and by experience gain a fitting up for greater responsibilities.”

The speaker believed that “we should make more of our district conferences. Some lines of work,” he said, “must always be left to the General Conference, for here every interest of the cause unites, but much of the detail work that has heretofore been done by our General Conference can now be taken up by the district conferences to better advantage. While the dividing up of these responsibilities will be a salutary movement, we must be

careful to avoid confusion, and we must exercise great care to observe the plan which the Lord has given for His people.

“After the sanctuary had been prepared and its materials brought together and everything was in shape, there was still one thing lacking, and that was the vital thing. It would have been but an empty shell without the presence of God. So it is with our work. No arrangement could possibly make up for the lack of God’s presence. No remodeling of the sanctuary, moving of furniture, or readjustment of the curtains would bring back the presence of God. And yet we sometimes make the mistake that when we are conscious of the lack of God’s presence, we think the matter may be remedied by remodeling and reshaping the work; whereas the vital trouble is that God is not with us, and no readjustment will do us any good unless we humble our hearts and obtain God’s presence and His blessing with us.

“It would seem that the perfecting of the organization of these districts would be to follow on in the same lines which have been marked out by the testimonies of the Spirit of God in the beginning of our work. Its effect will be to unify and strengthen the work, and to bring all parts into harmonious action. By forming the councils which have already been mentioned, composed of the presidents of the conferences, with the district superintendent as chairman, the responsibility will be divided, and there will be less liability to mistake. The word has often come to us that we should counsel together; and ‘in the multitude of counselors there is safety.’ Prov. 11:14. By thus bringing the united judgment and experience of these brethren together, the work will become more firmly

established and will not bear the mold of any individual.”
—*General Conference Bulletin, 1895, pp. 185, 186.*

In his address at the opening of the conference of 1895, Elder Olsen made the following recommendations concerning district conferences:

“The question of the authority of these conferences and the business to be transacted in them, should be further defined, especially for the benefit of those more remote from the center of the work.

“Many responsibilities are placed on these district superintendents, and their position and work should meet with proper recognition. It seems to us that arrangements could be made for the presidents of the local conferences to form a committee, with the superintendent of the district as chairman. This committee could be called together for counsel and action by the superintendent, whenever there were important questions involving the interests of the work in the district. On such occasions many questions could be considered which would otherwise have to go before the general body. To avoid confusion, it would be well for the president of the General Conference to attend these meetings as far as possible. In cases where this is not consistent, the decisions of these district committees ought to be presented to him for consideration. In this way a larger number would engage in consultation, the unity of the work would be preserved, and every interest of the cause properly guarded.”—*Id., pp. 151, 152.*

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1897

In a statement concerning “the plan of organization of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination,” prepared and

published by the General Conference Committee in May, 1906, the principal facts concerning the distribution of responsibilities attempted during the General Conference of 1897, are clearly outlined thus:

“The organization adopted by the pioneers of this message for its government and management, we believe to have been in harmony with the mind of God. As the work grew and spread to other countries, it soon became manifest that the scope of the organization should be enlarged.

“Just before the General Conference held at College View, Nebraska, in 1897, communications came from Sister White that changes should be made. There should be a further division of the field, and a division of responsibilities. Prior to this time, the president of the General Conference was president of Foreign Mission Board, president of the General Conference Association, president of the International Tract Society, and president of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association; besides being a member of a number of other committees and boards.

“Acting in harmony with this advice, the conference voted ‘that the presidency of the General Conference Association and the presidency of the Mission Board and the presidency of the General Conference work in North America, be placed upon three different men, instead of upon one man as heretofore.’

“It also recommended ‘that the General Conference territory be divided into three divisions; namely, the Australasian Union Conference, the European Union Conference, and the General Conference territory in North America, and that a European Union Conference be or-

ganized to hold biennial sessions alternating with the General Conference.'

"It was further recommended 'that a Mission Board of nine members be elected, with headquarters and incorporation in some Atlantic State.' The General Conference Committee was increased from nine to thirteen members, being composed of the president of the General Conference, the presidents of union conferences, the superintendents of the six General Conference districts of the United States, the president of the Mission Board, and three other persons; and it was recommended that what was formerly known as General Conference districts in North America, be organized into union conferences.

"Elder G. A. Irwin was elected president of the General Conference at that meeting, and in harmony with the statement of the Testimonies that the president of the General Conference should have a voice in selecting those who should be associated with him as counselors, he requested that Elders —— and —— be associated with him on the committee.

"The headquarters of the Mission Board were removed from Battle Creek, Michigan, to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and a corporation formed under the laws of the State of New York.

EUROPEAN UNION CONFERENCE

"In July, 1898, at a meeting held at Hamburg, Germany, a European Union Conference was organized, with Elder O. A. Olsen as president. In the winter of 1897-98, general meetings were held in the six districts of the United States, but no formal organizations were effected. The carrying out of the recommendations of the General

Conference, and consequent division of territory and separation of funds that had been formerly controlled under one management, consumed time and entailed many perplexities that were unforeseen and unprovided for by the conference when in session.

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1899

"In February, 1899, the General Conference convened at South Lancaster, Massachusetts, when formal reports made by the officers, of the work of the biennial term, were presented and adopted without dissent. No objection was raised to the form of organization, or to the official acts of the men having the work in charge.

"During the session of the General Conference, however, testimonies were read showing that wrong principles of dealing had permeated the entire cause, and before God could send prosperity, these things must be corrected. God's Spirit accompanied the reading of these testimonies, and a spirit of confession came upon the people, the members of the General Conference Committee taking the lead. . . .

"The South Lancaster Conference endorsed the policy of the administration, and expressed its confidence in the officers, by reelecting all of them, with possibly one exception. . . .

"During this conference, a number of people were sent abroad, means were raised to assist Australia, and other advance moves made.

"The heavy indebtedness of the General Conference and the failure of the Christiania Publishing House during this term, brought perplexity that consumed much of the time and energy of the officers. A message from Sister

White, calling upon ministers and workers to reduce their salaries for a time, and thus take the lead in a spirit of sacrifice which the Lord would be pleased to have all the people make, was proclaimed to every conference in the United States.

“Efforts were also being made to right the wrongs pointed out by the testimonies. The efforts of the committee in this direction did not in every instance meet with that hearty cooperation that might be expected. . . . The unfriendly and criticizing attitude of — toward the administration made the work of the committee very hard. For these and other reasons, the work of further organizing and perfecting the union conferences was not carried forward as it should and otherwise might have been.”—*“A Statement,” published by the General Conference Committee, May, 1906.*

Thus matters stood when the brethren met once more in General Conference, in 1901.

THE REORGANIZATION OF 1901

DURING the General Conference of 1901, held at Battle Creek, Michigan, counsels were given through the Spirit of prophecy that the time had fully come for a further distribution of responsibility among the working forces of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination throughout the world. In these counsels, the evils of centralization were dealt with in a most earnest, positive manner, and a change of policy was called for.

A CALL FOR DECENTRALIZATION

The first public talk given by Mrs. White along these lines in 1901, was in the Battle Creek College library, the day preceding the formal opening of the conference. In attendance at this council meeting were workers from many lands, including General Conference Committee members, State conference presidents, business managers, editors, physicians, and heads of training schools. Before this representative group of men, Mrs. White expressed herself freely concerning the burden resting on her heart. She pleaded that the brethren introduce, without delay, a change of policy in the management of conference and institutional affairs. She said, in part:

“The work has been increasing; it has been growing. The light that I have had from the Lord has been expressed over and over again, not to as many as there are here today, but to different individuals. The plans which God wishes us to work upon have been laid down.

“Never should the mind of one man or the minds of a few men be regarded as sufficient in wisdom and power to control the work and say what plans shall be followed. The burden of the work in this broad field should not rest upon two or three men. We are not reaching the high standard which, with the great and important truth we are handling, God expects us to reach.

“Over and over again men have said, ‘The voice of the conference is the voice of God; therefore everything must be referred to the conference. The conference must permit or restrict in the various lines of work.’ As the matter has been presented to me, there is a narrow compass, and within this narrow compass, all the entrances to which are locked, are those who would like to exercise kingly power. But the work carried on all over the field demands an entirely different course of action. . . .

“We have heard much about everything moving in the regular lines. When we see that the ‘regular lines’ are purified and refined, that they bear the mold of the God of heaven, then it will be time to endorse these lines. But when we see that message after message given by God has been received and accepted, yet no change has been made, we know that new power must be brought into the regular lines. The management of the regular lines must be entirely changed, newly organized. There must be a committee, not composed of half a dozen men, but of representatives from all lines of our work, from our publishing houses, from our educational institutions, and from our sanitariums, which have life in them, which are constantly working, constantly broadening. . . .

“God desires that His work shall be a rising, broadening, enlarging power. But the management of the work

is becoming confused in itself. Not that any one wishes to be wrong or to do wrong; but the principles are wrong. These principles are so foreign to God's principles that God cannot bless those who work upon them. What must be done is to bring in other minds. . . .

"God calls for a decided change. Do not wait till the conference is over, and then gather up the forces to see what can be done. Let us see what can be done now. Find out what power and intelligence there is that can be brought into the conference. Let all unite in taking hold of the work intelligently. This is what is needed.

"Every institution should have a voice in the working of the cause in which they have an interest. God wants us to come to the place where we shall be united in the work, where the whole burden will not be laid on two or three men. . . .

"When the cause was younger, my husband used to counsel with men who had sound judgment. The work was much smaller than it is now, but he did not feel able to manage it alone. He chose counselors from among those bearing responsibility in all parts of the work. And after counseling together, these men would go back to their work feeling a still greater responsibility to carry the work forward in right lines, to uplift, to purify, to solidify, so that the cause of God might move forward in strength."
—*Ellen G. White Manuscript 43, 1901.*

STRENGTHENING THE COMMITTEES

The following day, immediately after the formal opening of the conference, Mrs. White spoke at some length, and toward the close of her discourse, referred to the

necessity of bringing about a further distribution of responsibility:

“Here are men who are standing at the head of our various institutions, of the educational interests, and of the conferences in different localities and in different States. All these are to stand as representative men, to have a voice in molding and fashioning the plans that shall be carried out. There are to be more than one or two or three men to consider the whole vast field. The work is great, and there is no one human mind that can plan for the work which needs to be done. . . .

“According to the light that has been given me—and just how it is to be accomplished I cannot say—greater strength must be brought into the managing force of the conference. . . .

“God has not put any kingly power in our ranks to control this or that branch of the work. The work has been greatly restricted by the efforts to control it in every line. Here is a vineyard presenting its barren places that have received no labor. And if one should start out to till these places in the name of the Lord, unless he should get the permission of the men in a little circle of authority, he would receive no help. But God means that His workers shall have help. If a hundred should start out on a mission to these destitute fields, crying unto God, He would open the way before them. Let me tell you, if your heart is in the work, and you have faith in God, you need not depend upon the sanction of any minister or any people; if you go right to work in the name of the Lord, in a humble way doing what you can to teach the truth, God will vindicate you. If the work had not been so restricted by an impediment here, and an impediment

there, and on the other side an impediment, it would have gone forward in its majesty. It would have gone in weakness at first, but the God of heaven lives; the great Overseer lives. . . .

“There must be a renovation, a reorganization; a power and strength must be brought into the committees that are necessary.”—*General Conference Bulletin, 1901, pp. 25, 26.*

THE VALUE OF UNION CONFERENCES

A few days later, when it was proposed to organize the Southern field into a strong union conference, Mrs. White, in another talk before the delegates, said:

“From the light given to me by God, there should have been years ago organizations such as are now proposed. When we first met in conference, it was thought that the General Conference should extend over the whole world. But this is not in God’s order. Conferences must be organized in different localities, and it will be for the health of the different conferences to have it thus. This does not mean that we are to cut ourselves apart from one another, and be as separate atoms. Every conference is to touch every other conference, and be in harmony with every other conference. God wants us to talk for this, and He wants us to act for this. We are the people of God, who are to be separate from the world. We are to stand as representatives of sacred truth. . . .

“In regard to the work in the South, the arrangements which are being made for that field are in accordance with the light which has been given me. God desires the Southern field to have a conference of its own. The work there must be done on different lines from the work in any other field. The laborers there will have to work on peculiar

lines; nevertheless the work will be done. The Southern field must be organized into a conference. . . .

“We want to understand that there are no gods in our [General] Conference. There are to be no kings here, and no kings in any conference that is formed. ‘All ye are brethren.’ Matt. 23:8. Let us work on the platform of humility, seeking the Lord earnestly that His light may shine into our hearts, and that the arrangements we make may be after God’s order. . . .

“New conferences must be formed. It was in the order of God that the union conference was organized in Australasia. The Lord God of Israel will link us all together. The organizing of new conferences is not to separate us; it is to bind us together. The conferences that are formed are to cling mightily to the Lord, so that through them He can reveal His power, making them excellent representations of fruit bearing.”—*Id.*, pp. 68-70.

ADMINISTRATIVE CHANGES

Immediate and decided steps were taken by the delegates to carry out these counsels. At the first meeting of the session a large and representative committee was chosen, and this committee studied the needs of the cause in all parts of the broad field, and brought before the conference such plans for reorganization and advancement as were agreed upon. As a result, plans of reorganization in harmony with the principles outlined through the Spirit of prophecy, were adopted and set in operation.

The most important of the changes wrought at that time were enumerated by A. G. Daniells:

“1. The organization of union conferences and union mission boards in all parts of the world where either the

membership or the staff of workers make it advisable.

"2. The transfer of the ownership and management of all institutions and enterprises of the cause to the organizations with which they are by location directly connected.

"3. Making all the leading lines, such as the Sabbath school, educational, medical missionary, religious liberty, and publishing work, departments of the General Conference, and placing the chairmen of these departments on the General Conference Committee.

"4. Enlarging and strengthening all conference committees and mission boards by placing on them men especially qualified to represent the evangelical, educational, medical missionary, and publishing interests of the cause.

"5. Placing the responsibility of attending to the details of the work in all parts of the world, upon those who are located where the work is to be done.

"6. Arranging an organic connection or union of all the parts of our organization and field by placing on the union conference committees the presidents of local conferences who are elected by the local churches; and further by placing on the General Conference Committee the presidents of union conferences, the superintendents of union mission fields, and the chairmen of all department committees. Thus every church, every department of work, and every institution in the denomination, is represented in local and union conferences, and in the General Conference as well."—*Review and Herald, March 29, 1906.*

INTERRELATIONSHIPS

During a discussion of the principles underlying the reorganization of 1901, by the delegates assembled in the

General Conference of 1903, W. C. White contrasted the workings of the plan of organization adopted in 1897, with the results attained through the changes made in 1901, as follows:

“We were operating then [1897-1901] under the plan of strong departmental organizations, each one seeking world-wide control. We had our General Conference; we had our International Tract Society, our International Sabbath School Association, our International Medical Missionary Association, and various lines of departments, each one seeking world-wide control in its branch of the work, and there was no ample provision made for union. There is where the complication largely came in. It was through this world-wide departmental work. What was the remedy proposed?—That every leading enterprise should be represented on the General Conference Committee, and that the field be divided so that every line of workers in every field would link their hands and hearts and interests in one community of work in that locality.”

To illustrate: “In the church we have the elders, and deacons, and librarians, and Sabbath school secretaries, and nurses. We have different lines of work in the church. They receive suggestions; they get information from any source from which they can receive it; but they meet together and counsel together as a body of workers for that locality, and then they work in that locality under the counsel of one another. That makes a unity of work. And what a contrast it is from the work when we were under the departmental management!

“In the olden day the Sabbath school held itself as independent from the church; frequently there was conflict between the church officers and the Sabbath school

officers; the medical workers, receiving direction from headquarters, and not realizing their relation to other workers in the church, carried on their work independently. And so, while we worked under the departmental plan, there was continual confusion in the local work. But reorganization, you see, means self-government. Each individual is to become intelligent, and to be able to work in many lines of work. Each church is to become a unit, and every worker, elder, deacon, Sabbath school worker, officer, colporteur, nurse, whoever it is in that church, is to unite with the other workers in that church in planning, and then the work is to be a united work.

“So, then, we go to the conference, and the expert workers in the conference are to receive counsel from whomsoever they can receive it. They are to receive education from whomsoever is capable to give them the education. But when they come to work, instead of working, each one, from orders of a departmental head that is outside of his conference, they meet together as a company; . . . they counsel together; they plan together; and they prepare to go into the field. They are a unit; the whole conference is a unit in spirit and in its work.

“Then we go to the union conference, and we have the same condition. Every branch of the work is represented on the union conference committee. When the union conference committee comes together for counsel, every branch is represented,—publishing, educational, medical, Sabbath school, religious liberty; these are all branches. What is the head? What is the body? you may say, the heart? Why, the evangelical work is the work of the conferences, and all these branches are auxiliary to the evangelical work; so far they are parts of the body.

“Then you pass from the union conference to the General Conference, and in the General Conference Committee you have all the departments represented. All meet together in counsel; plans are made; and these are carried out by all members of the committee. . . .

“An appeal has been made to hold to the principles presented to us two years ago. In harmony with those principles, it was agreed that all departmental organizations should be effected by the General Conference Committee, and that those departmental organizations should be advisory to the committee, and not executive.

“Now we come up to this year, and we have a proposition from the publishing brethren that this publishing department be constituted differently, and that it be so constituted that it can work without reference to the General Conference Committee. We have a proposition from the educational committee that its department be constituted in a different way, so that it may stand more as an independent, self-governing, world-wide department.

“It seems to me that we must watch this thing, and that we . . . should bear in mind that the remedy for our confusion is not to come through the organizing of strong departments, and giving them independent—yes, largely independent—authority to operate throughout the world; but the remedy for our confusion is to strengthen the union in every locality, strengthen it in my individual heart, strengthen it in my church, strengthen it in my conference, strengthen it in my union conference. . . .

“The following is an extract from a letter written [by Sister White] in 1902: ‘The division of the General Conference into district union conferences was God’s arrangement. In the work of the Lord in these last days there

should be no Jerusalem centers, no kingly power. And the work in the different countries is not to be tied up by contracts to the work centering in Battle Creek, for this is not God's plan. Brethren are to counsel together; for we are just as much under the control of God in one part of His vineyard as in another. Brethren are to be one in heart and soul, even as Christ and the Father are one.'

"I want to suggest, brethren, that there can be kingly power exercised in a departmental organization just as much as in a General Conference organization. And when you get two or three kings operating in the same territory, you are a lot worse off than when you have one. . . .

"I will read further: 'The kingly power formerly exhibited in the General Conference at Battle Creek is not to be perpetuated. The publishing institution is not to be a kingdom of itself. It is essential that the principles that govern in General Conference affairs shall be maintained in the managements of the publishing work and the sanitarium work. [I understand that the principle referred to is the organization of the work into union conferences.] No one is to consider that the branch of the work with which he is connected is of vastly more importance than other branches.'"

"Jerusalem centers are referred to. Brethren, does not that mean . . . that we are to make the Sabbath school work strong in every union conference? that we are to make the educational work strong in every union conference? that we are to make the publishing work strong in every union conference? that we are to make the medical missionary work strong in every union conference?"—*General Conference Bulletin, 1903, pp. 157, 158.*

A STATEMENT AND A REVIEW

The changes in administrative affairs brought about through the reorganization of 1901 were clearly outlined in a formal statement issued by the General Conference Committee in 1906. In this document the entire field of reorganization is carefully reviewed, and the principles underlying gospel order are emphasized anew. To quote:

“It is now time for our people to get a clear understanding of just what the called-for reorganization was, and just what response has been made to that call. First of all, we wish to state very clearly that the call that came to us at the General Conference of 1901 to *re-organize* was not a call to *dis-organize*. Nor was it a call to abandon the original purpose and general plan of organization adopted by the pioneers of this cause. We accept the assurance that has been given us through the Spirit of prophecy, that the Lord led and guided the leaders of this cause who were called to form the original plans of organization for this world-wide movement which we are carrying forward.

“Instead of being counseled at the 1901 conference to abandon the primary purpose and essential features of our original plan of organization, we were instructed to adjust and develop the details of this plan in harmony with the growth and development of our cause. This is a most important consideration at this time. It is one that should be very clearly understood by our people.

“Another important question is, What response did the General Conference make to the instruction given? Did it carry out the suggestions? and is it still doing so? or has it repudiated the work of reform and reorganization entered upon at that time? This can easily be determined

by a careful study of the instruction given by the Spirit of prophecy, and the changes made by the General Conference at the time, and by its history since. The information required on these points can be obtained in the issues of the *General Conference Bulletin* of 1901 and 1903, and the report of the session for 1905.

"We here give a brief but complete summary of the counsel given to the General Conference, and the changes made in response thereto. The following are the changes called for:

"1. 'What we want now is a reorganization.'

"2. 'We want to begin at the foundation, and to build upon a different principle.'

"3. 'This work must be carried on in a very different manner to what it has been in the past years.'

"4. 'God has not put any kingly power in our ranks to control this or that branch of the work. The work has been greatly retarded by the efforts to control it in every line.'

"5. 'There are to be more than one or two or three men to consider the whole vast field. The work is great, and there is no one human mind that can plan for the work which needs to be done.'

"6. 'Greater strength must be brought into the managing force of the conference.'

"7. 'Men who are standing at the head of our various institutions, of the educational interests, and of the conferences in different localities and in different States,' are to 'stand as representative men, to have a voice in molding and fashioning the plans that shall be carried out.'

"8. 'When we first met in conference, it was thought that the General Conference should extend over the whole

world. But this is not God's order. Conferences must be organized in different localities, and it will be for the health of the different conferences to have it thus.'

"9. 'This does not mean that we are to cut ourselves apart from one another, and be as separate atoms. Every conference is to touch every other conference, and be in harmony with every other conference.'

"10. 'New conferences must be formed. It was in the order of God that the union conference was organized in Australasia. The Lord God of Israel will link us all together. The organizing of new conferences is not to separate us; it is to bind us together.'

"Any one who will read the addresses given by Sister White as recorded in the *General Conference Bulletin* of 1901, will see that the quotations given above cover the whole range of suggestions made concerning reorganization. And from a careful study of these quotations any one will readily see what the wrongs were, and the course to be taken to correct them.

"There were too few men connected with the administrative affairs of the cause. This resulted in centralizing responsibility, control, and management in a narrower circle than was demanded for the rapid, strong, and efficient development of the work throughout the world. And this naturally forced the few in charge of affairs to assume authority which is called kingly. The remedy pointed out was to bring greater strength—more men of experience and talent—into the management of the work. And this was to be done by organizing more conferences, especially union conferences, throughout the world, thus distributing the responsibilities centered in a few headquarters. The placing of responsibilities and interests in

local fields upon those located where the work is to be done, lessens the tendency for a few to assume undue authority.

“This is the reorganization called for at the 1901 conference. Now we may ask, Did the General Conference reorganize in harmony with these suggestions? And has it adhered to the changes made? The following facts * will answer:

“1. Before that conference closed, the General Conference Committee was increased from thirteen to twenty-five. It has since been increased to thirty-two.† The members now represent the field in all parts of the world, as well as all the leading departments of our work. The chairmen of the Sabbath school, educational, medical, religious liberty, publishing, and foreign departments are all members of the General Conference Committee.

“2. Before the close of that conference, steps were taken to organize five union conferences in the United States, and one in Europe, increasing the number from two to eight. Seven more have since been added, making the present number fifteen.‡ These conferences are located in the United States, Canada, Europe, South Africa, South America, and Australasia. These new conferences have added about one hundred and forty persons to the administrative staff of this cause.

“3. Since the conference of 1901, thirty or more local conferences, and many local mission boards, have been

* As this statement was prepared in 1906, the figures are in harmony with the denominational statistics of that year. The years that have followed have witnessed remarkable progress in the further distribution of responsibility.

† The Year Book for 1938 shows nearly 200 members of the General Conference Committee, more than half of whom are permanently stationed in fields outside of North America.

‡ Increased to 69 union conferences and union missions by the close of the year 1937.

organized in all lands. These have added some three hundred and fifty more persons to our managing force.

“4. Besides these regular organizations, there are the department committees in charge of the leading phases of the work. The Sabbath school has ten members; the educational, twenty-two; the medical, twenty-two; the publishing, twenty-one; the religious liberty, ten; and the foreign, seven; or a total of ninety-two members.

“Thus there have been many new conferences, and departments, and local mission boards organized. In this way the managing force has been strengthened by the addition of over five hundred of the most experienced and capable persons that could be selected.

“5. In addition to this, five colleges have been added to the twelve then operating; twenty-eight academies and intermediate schools have been started in addition to the four then in operation; and thirty-six sanitariums and treatment-room establishments have been opened and added to the nineteen that previously had been established. These institutions have added many more to the administrative staff of this work.

“6. In addition to this work of organizing, the natural work of distribution or decentralization has followed. All the institutions formerly held by the General Conference have been transferred to the union conferences in which they are located. And all the details of administration that can be pressed back upon union and local conferences and mission boards, are distributed; so that at the present time the General Conference does not own or manage a single institution in all the world.

“It is very doubtful whether any delegate at the 1901 conference had any true conception, at the time, of the

marvelous changes that were to follow the simple steps then taken in harmony with the counsel given. These changes have given new life and strength to our organized work in all lands. We have proved that the distribution of administrative responsibilities, and the transfer of the ownership and management of institutions from the General to union and local conferences, does not mean disorganization. We have proved that all these changes do not 'cut ourselves apart from one another,' and make us separate, independent atoms. On the contrary, they unify and bind together. This is the testimony borne by scores of men bearing official responsibilities in all parts of our great field.

"According to these facts, all of which can be fully confirmed by official documents, the General Conference has been steadily and resolutely working *away* from a 'centralized order of things,' to an administrative policy that is as wide as the world—one that establishes local ownership and control of institutional properties, and full administrative responsibility in all departments of the work.

"We wish here to express our appreciation of the counsel given by the Spirit of prophecy to reorganize. No mistake was made in that counsel. The great benefits that have come from decentralization, from distributing responsibilities in harmony with the counsel given at the 1901 conference, have been seen and felt in our cause from the headquarters to the remotest conference and mission station in the great field of our operations. It has been a pleasure to the General Conference Committee and other committees and boards that have taken part in this work, to arrange and adjust the administrative affairs of this

cause in harmony with the counsel given. And the transfer of financial responsibilities and many details of the work to others, has brought great relief to the General Conference Committee, and has made it possible to give more attention to general interests."—"*A Statement,*" published by the General Conference Committee, May, 1906, pp. 19-24.

A RECOGNITION OF REFORMS EFFECTED

In view of the serious conditions which were so clearly pointed out through the Lord's messenger in connection with the opening of the session of the General Conference of 1901, and the clear call for marked changes, even to the effecting of a reorganization of the General Conference work, it is cheering to note that the changes which were made and the steps that were taken were recognized by Mrs. White as being in harmony with the Lord's will for His people. She referred to this subsequently on several occasions. In one instance, in a personal testimony of reproof to one of our workers who was following a course which was unjustifiable because of a failure to recognize the reforms that had taken place, she wrote:

"Your course would have been the course to be pursued if no change had been made in the General Conference. *But a change has been made*, and many more changes will be made and great developments will be seen. No issues are to be forced. . . . It hurts me to think that you are using words which I wrote prior to the conference. Since the conference great changes have been made. . . .

"A terribly unjust course has been pursued in the past. A want of principle has been revealed. But in pity to His people, *God has brought about changes*. . . . The course

of action which before the conference might have been a necessity, is no longer necessary; for the Lord Himself interposed to set things in order. He has given His Holy Spirit. I am confident that He will set in order the matters that seem to be moving wrong.”—*Ellen G. White Letter 54, 1901. (Italics mine.)*

REORGANIZATION, NOT A NEW ORGANIZATION

At some length, there has been pointed out in this chapter the steps which were taken to bring about the reorganization of the work of the General Conference called for in 1901. The counsel given was earnestly studied and followed, and assurance was given that the changes made were pleasing to God. As a result, great blessings have come to the advancing work of Seventh-day Adventists.

Nevertheless, there have been some, from time to time, who have made the charge that the messages of counsel and warning sent by God to guard His church, constituted a notice of rejection and doom of the church, and that the call for reorganization was in reality an appeal for a new organization—the establishment of an entirely new order. While the facts in the case indicate that such a conclusion is entirely without justification, it is of interest to note the following words penned by Mrs. White in 1905, in a manuscript bearing title of “Steadfast Unto the End:”

“The Lord has declared that the history of the past shall be rehearsed as we enter upon the closing work. Every truth that He has given for these last days is to be proclaimed to the world. Every pillar that He has established is to be strengthened. We cannot now step off the

foundation that God has established. We cannot now enter into any new organization; for this would mean apostasy from the truth.”—*Ellen G. White Manuscript 129, 1905.*

DIVISION CONFERENCES

THE General Conference of 1913 saw a further development of the organization of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, in the provision made for the formation of division conferences, made up of groups of union conferences and union missions in continental districts where the work has prospered and become practically self-supporting.

The probability of having to take such an advance step had been foreseen a score of years before. Even prior to the time the first union conference was formed, O. A. Olsen, in a stirring address before the delegates assembled in General Conference in 1893, outlined the need for divisional organization. He said:

“Our work is extending in foreign lands with wonderful rapidity. It will soon be impracticable to attempt to get delegates together from all the fields in foreign lands. Groups of conferences in distant fields must be formed for the purpose of holding district conferences, which conferences can elect delegates to the General Conference. At such conferences there can be representatives from the General Conference, and the work can be made to blend in all parts of the world. We would ask, What can be the objection to organizing district conferences for the convenience of foreign lands? . . . It would seem that the problem of unity of effort in many distant fields, such as Australasia, South America, etc., could not be solved so

well in any other way as to provide such fields with district conferences.”—*General Conference Bulletin, 1893, pp. 24, 25.*

A MEMORIAL FROM EUROPE

For nearly twenty years after this prophetic forecast by Elder Olsen, the work in Europe, under the prospering hand of God, advanced from strength to strength. Conference after conference was formed, and union after union was developed, until the time seemed ripe for the creation of an ecclesiastical body embracing all the unions in that great division of the field, with legislative and executive authority, for the conduct of the work in the future. Accordingly, in 1912 the members of the General Conference Committee having charge of the union conferences and union missions in the European field, prepared a memorial, which was spread before the Fall Council of the General Conference Committee at Washington, D.C., in 1912. Their views are clearly expressed in the paragraphs that follow:

“To the Brethren Assembled in the Autumn Council of the General Conference Committee (1912): Greeting! . . .

“Any one who studies the divine plan of organization will find that it is one of natural growth, and that it must keep pace with the steady development of the world-wide work.

“Seventh-day Adventists existed nearly twenty years ere the first conferences were organized. Then, as there came to be several conferences, the need was seen, as early as 1863, of the General Conference organization. Thirty-one years passed before it was felt necessary to introduce a new factor of organization, the union conference, be-

tween the General Conference and the local conferences. Today there are twenty-three union conferences. Beginning with January, 1913, there will be twenty-five union conferences and four union missions. Nearly thirty union organizations have been created in the short period of eleven years.

“Another want, however, has made itself felt, and different solutions have been tried to remedy it. In North America, where the General Conference has its headquarters, and where the General Conference can deal directly with the union and local conferences, this want is not felt so keenly as in Europe. Councils of European workers were held as early as 1884. As the fields were far apart, however, and the difference of languages raised natural obstructions, it was soon found that even the union system was not fully adequate to the needs of the field. The European General Conference was the first suggestion, but the term chosen caused just misapprehension. In 1903 the General Conference at Oakland created as a remedy the vice-presidents in Europe and North America, with the right to meet with their respective union presidents, and thus as a committee supervise the division. In 1909 the Asiatic Division was added, and thus ninety-five thousand members, in fields having about one thousand million of population, are already comprised in the divisional arrangement. But this new factor was only in name, as far as the constitutional basis for action by the people of a division is concerned.

“To give the European workers more generally the possibility of meeting in a council to consider the immediate and the peculiar needs of this great division, the General Conference Committee held its biennial session

in 1907 at Gland, and in 1911 at Friedensau. But the last meeting especially only demonstrated that, while these meetings were a great factor in binding the workers together and in bringing spiritual blessing to thousands of our people who could not attend the General Conference session in the United States, yet one apparent lack was manifest,—a proper organization of the division as such. All could see the need of such a divisional meeting, but the representative and constitutional basis for it was lacking.

“Feeling this, the European members, . . . in their last session, decided to kindly ask the General Conference Committee at its autumn session to take into consideration such a divisional organization, and, if favorably reported, to appoint a committee which could do the necessary preliminary work, and introduce a well-considered plan by the time of the next General Conference session.

“Europe’s needs today will be the needs of South America, Asia, and other parts of the world tomorrow. It can be only a matter of time until the world, as such, will have to be comprised fully in this divisional organization. . . .

“Hoping sincerely that the appeal of the European members of the General Conference Committee, will receive a due hearing at this Fall Council, we would humbly submit this memorial to the members present.”—*Id.*, 1913, pp. 50, 51.

RESPONSE TO THE MEMORIAL

The General Conference Committee gave careful study to the main features of this memorial, and recommended that the proposed plan be fully considered at the next General Conference.

During the 1913 General Conference, the committee on plans and resolutions recommended—

“1. That, in response to the memorial submitted by the European brethren to the Fall Council, 1912, we adopt the general plan of organizing important territories and groups of union fields into General Conference divisions, and that this form of divisional organization be effected in the various fields as the conditions of the work require.

“2. That the numerical basis of representation from the division conferences and division missions to the General Conference be that called for by the General Conference Constitution.

“3. That the general mission funds of the division be reported quarterly to the treasurer of the General Conference, and that they be included in the financial statements of the General Conference.

“4. That steps be taken at this conference for the organization of the European Division Conference, with a constitution in harmony with the provisions of the General Conference Constitution.”—*Id.*, p. 91.

With this report, the committee on plans submitted a form of constitution and bylaws for the European Division Conference; and the committee on constitution submitted a report recommending changes in the General Conference Constitution which opened the way for the formation of division conferences and division missions.

All these reports and recommendations concerning the creation of division conferences and missions, were spread before the delegates on May 21, 1913, just fifty years to a day from the time the General Conference itself was organized in 1863. This was an undesigned coincidence; and when the conference delegates were apprised of the fact by

J. N. Loughborough, who had participated in the day's proceedings half a century before, some wished to act upon the reports at once, in order that the European Division Conference might be formed on the jubilee anniversary. While the general sentiment was in favor of providing for division conferences, the delegates decided to defer final consideration of the reports, so as to give ample opportunity for all to study the proposals carefully. "The very fact that we are fifty years old today," suggested W. T. Bartlett, of the British Union delegation, "is a good reason why we should not be moved by sentiment."—*Id.*, p. 101.

THE EUROPEAN DIVISION CONFERENCE

The discussion of the reports and recommendations, the following day, resulted in favorable action on all the measures proposed.

One of the delegates raised the question, "If these divisions are organized, does it not take away from the General Conference a large amount of work that it is now doing? Will not a large proportion of the work that the General Conference is now doing, be handed over to the European Division Conference?"

In reply, the president of the General Conference reviewed the part the General Conference organization had acted from the beginning, and would continue to act, in unifying all branches of the cause of God. He said, in part:

"The organization of either a local conference or a union or a division conference does decentralize detail work. It distributes it. If we had no conference at all, except a central body, then of course our duties would be many. We should then have to look after churches, and

all that. But when we organize a local conference, that steps in between the central body and the church, and looks after those details.

“When we organized the union conference, we distributed many duties of a detail character that the General Conference Committee was looking after. The interests of local conferences and those cares were then thrust upon the union conference officers. But in doing that, brethren, we did not take out of the hands of the central body the general administration of affairs of the denomination.

“We found many a question that passed by the local conference to the union conference, and had to go on to the General Conference; and I think our General Conference sessions have been as greatly pressed with affairs of large character as ever passed before a union conference organization. Instead of legislating regarding matters pertaining to local conferences, we have been able to lengthen our vision with reference to great missionary enterprises. We have been able to make the General Conference a little more educational. We have been able to give more attention to the departments of work than we could have done without the union conference organization.

“Now when we organize the division conference, we do not cut off the interests of Europe from this central body. There are great questions of administration, departments of work, institutional interests, all of which will always have to go under the general legislative work of the General Conference. If you should organize North America into a division conference, there would still come to the General Conference many important questions relating to administrative, institutional, and departmental work. You do not cut those things off. You cut off details, but not

the great, important problems that are always arising.”
—*Id.*, p. 111.

Final action was taken, authorizing the accredited delegates from the union conferences of the European field to organize the European Division Conference, and then the brethren united in singing,

“Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love!”

The delegates from Europe and adjacent territory proceeded immediately to the organization of the European Division Conference, adoption of constitution, and election of officers, as reported in the columns of the *General Conference Bulletin*.

OTHER DIVISION CONFERENCES

Before the close of the 1913 General Conference, the North American Division Conference was formed, and provision was made for the organization, “at such time and place as they [the General Conference Committee] may deem advisable,” of the South American Division. The General Conference territory in the Far East was organized into the Asiatic Division Mission.

ENLARGING THE BORDER

Commenting on this development of the denominational organization to meet the demands of a growing work, F. M. Wilcox, in a *Review* editorial, wrote:

“The month of May, 1913, marked the fiftieth anniversary of the organization of the General Conference. It is interesting indeed to contemplate the many changes that have taken place in our work in organization during this period, and it is not only interesting, but most encouraging as well.

“Fifty years ago this movement had but a meager following. The work had reached that stage that only several State conferences had been organized. Our system of institutions in printing houses, schools, and sanitariums which we possess today, had no existence. Our work had not extended outside of the American border.

“At the present time, in its various ramifications, this movement encircles the earth. There have been called to the standard of truth more than one hundred thousand loyal believers, representatives of many of earth’s nationalities. Surely we can exclaim, in view of this, ‘What hath God wrought!’ But even with all that has been gained, we cannot cease our efforts. The voice of an onswEEPing Providence speaks to us, ‘Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes.’ Isa. 54:2.

“We have now not only a General Conference in the sense in which that term was understood five decades ago, but a world conference with divisions one thousandfold more important in the interests they embrace than was the whole General Conference at the time of its organization.

“This meeting has witnessed the organization of what is known as the European Division of the General Conference, also the North American Division of the General Conference. Then there will be the great mission fields of India, of China and Japan, of South America, the organized work in South Africa, the West Indies, and Australasia. These in time, as strength and membership increase, no doubt will be organized into divisions, the same as has been done for North America and Europe.

“These changes in our work are inevitable. They

come as a result of the added volume and strength and widespread influence of this movement. It is the firm conviction of all that the important changes made at this meeting will greatly make for the strength of our work in coming years.

“The Lord is doing a great work in the earth. Let us be true and loyal to Him, and to the part He gives us to act.”—*Review and Herald, June 5, 1913.*

NOTE.—Since the year 1913 the organization of our work in Europe has been further divided. It is now, in 1938, composed of three division conferences, with assigned mission territory in various parts of the world as a special responsibility for each division.—EDITOR.

PROSPERITY THROUGH CONCERTED ACTION

PERHAPS the severest and most practical test that has come to the system of organization adopted in the early days of the third angel's message, is the use Seventh-day Adventists have been able to make of it in their efforts to extend a knowledge of the gospel throughout the world. On this point James White bore witness a decade after the formation of the General Conference, in these words:

"As numbers have increased, and missionary fields have opened before us, we have all come to prize our simple, and, to human view, complete organization. The history of our cause bears a decided testimony in favor of our system of organization. The men who framed it, and introduced it, felt the importance of their work. The Guiding Hand was with them, which is the reason why the lapse of more than ten years has not revealed defects demanding changes. We unhesitatingly express our firm convictions that organization with us was by the direct providence of God."—*An Earnest Appeal to the General Conference Committee,* p. 12 (published in 1873).

On this same point, Mrs. White has also borne testimony. Thirty years after the General Conference was organized for the purpose of bringing about concerted action in all parts of the Master's vineyard, she addressed the 1893 General Conference thus:

"We engaged in the work of organization, and marked prosperity attended this advance movement. As the de-

velopment of the work called us to engage in new enterprises, we were prepared to enter upon them. . . . We have moved under the order of the Captain of our salvation. God has blessed our united efforts. The truth has spread and flourished. Institutions have multiplied. . . . The body has been 'compacted by that which every joint supplieth.' Eph. 4:16. As we have advanced, our system of organization has still proved effectual. . . .

"In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what God has wrought, I am filled with astonishment and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history."—*General Conference Bulletin, 1893, p. 24.*

EARLY CONCEPTIONS

The system of organization adopted in 1861-63 was not chosen because of its special value in the conduct of a world-wide work; for in those times none of the brethren had any clear conception of the future development of the cause of God into an all-embracing, world-wide movement.

At times in the earlier years of Seventh-day Adventist history, those who planned for the extension of the gospel into unentered fields caught glimpses of a broadening work which would embrace many nationalities. (See, for example, *Review and Herald*, May 27, 1858, p. 13.) But it was not until the early 70's that the leaders of the advent movement began to comprehend that theirs was a mission to the whole world. Even as late as in 1872, the scripture, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the

world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come," was regarded simply as a "prominent sign of the last day," meeting fulfillment in the extension of Protestant missions. Its complete fulfillment was in no way associated with the spread of the advent movement throughout the world. (See *Review and Herald*, April 16 and July 16, 1872.) But in 1873 a marked change of sentiment began to appear in the utterances of leaders among Seventh-day Adventists regarding their duty to warn the world. (See *Id.*, Aug. 26, 1873.) By the close of the year 1874, this transformation of sentiment seems to have been effected almost completely.

OVERRULING PROVIDENCES

One of the most potent of the contributing causes of this change of view was the successful propagation of the truths of the third angel's message among the foreign-speaking peoples in the United States. Through a series of remarkable providences, the message was spreading rapidly at that time among the Danes in America, and was being received by some from among other nationalities. The Sabbath truth had also been carried into Central Europe, where some had accepted it.

It was at this time that the brethren in responsibility were impressed with the importance of providing facilities for the training of consecrated young men and young women, and others who were older in years and experience, as gospel workers for mission fields at home and abroad. "Shall we have a denominational school," they inquired in their first announcement of the project, "the object of which shall be, in the shortest, most thorough and practicable way, to qualify young men and women to act some

part, more or less public, in the cause of God?"—*Review and Herald, April 16, 1872.*

Prompt action was taken. The management was soon placed in the hands of the General Conference Committee, and June 3, 1872, was set as the time of opening the school. "The chief object," they reiterated, is to "aid those who contemplate becoming public laborers in the cause of truth."—*Id., May 14, 1872.* "A mighty field is opening before us," wrote George I. Butler, who was then the president of the General Conference. May God "give us as a people a proper sense of the importance of His work, and a will to do our part of that work faithfully." Elder Butler further urged that the school enterprise be conducted along liberal lines. "This, like other institutions among us," he declared, "must be started and grow up to the position God has designed for it."—*Id., June 4, 1872.* In a later article he suggested that in this school some of the modern languages be taught; for "this truth must go to all the nations around us, and to those who come among us, especially."—*Id., July 30, 1872.*

James White urged that the guardians of the institutions at Battle Creek should be "men and women of experience, firmness, and zeal;" and it was at this time that he proposed to encourage earnest, faithful men to move to Battle Creek, there to stand as "picked men" sharing the responsibilities of management. (See *Id., Aug. 6, 1872.*)

A WORLD-WIDE MOVEMENT

This was a time of changing conceptions regarding the heralding of the third angel's message in broadening fields. James White, in his inspiring address delivered early in the General Conference session held in the spring of 1873,

defined anew the position and work of Seventh-day Adventists. Carefully reviewing the scope of the three angels' messages, he declared of the final proclamation of gospel truth symbolized by the third angel, that it is "a world-wide message." The angel was seen flying "in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." Rev. 14:6.

"When I see how God is raising up men of different nations," the speaker continued, "who are coming together in harmony on the truth, their hearts all in sweet union with those who were the pioneers of the cause, and who labored in the English alone for nearly a score of years, my heart is quickened, and I say to myself, We are treading hard upon the very borders of the period of the loud cry of this last message, which is to ripen the harvest of the earth!

"Is this our position? My soul says, It is! I look at the simple facts relative to its being the truth, I look over the ground on which the evidence rests, and I say, My soul is satisfied. And then I look at the providence of God that has favored this work, as it has been proclaimed in the English language, and I say again, This certainly must be the work of God! And then when I look and see what has been done almost without our efforts, certainly with but little effort on our part, and what is now being done to reach people of other tongues, my soul says, We have the truth! This is the work of God! . . .

"The time is come, my brethren, not merely for this work to be carried on by accident and special providences, but for those whom God has made the guardians of His truth to take immediate action; and all I plead for here is

that we may act consistently and harmoniously with the solemn and awful position that we take, namely, that we are far advanced in the last merciful message, which is to ripen the harvest of the earth. . . .

“When we consider the small beginning, and in how obscure a manner this work commenced, the rapidity and soundness of our growth, the perfection and efficiency of our organization, the great work it has already accomplished, . . . in bringing out men and women of other tongues, qualified to teach it to their countrymen; when we see in what union we stand, and the means we have at our command, such as our publishing facilities, our system of supporting the cause, and our organization, which experience has shown to be so complete, but which was an experiment only about a dozen years since (for this meeting is only the eleventh annual session since we became an organized body);—when we look at all these things, and see how God has prospered us, we that are connected with the work can say, ‘What hath God wrought!’ We can say that He, in His providence, has given us all we want.”—*Id.*, May 20, 1873.

FACING A STUPENDOUS TASK

In the 70's, the task of extending a knowledge of the third angel's message into all the unentered regions of the habitable globe, appeared to the brethren in responsibility as something almost beyond their ability to accomplish. They realized that such a task could never be undertaken and carried forward successfully to completion, in cooperation with heavenly agencies, without the most thorough organization of all the working forces in the church. Would the simple principles of gospel order that had been adopted

for the purpose of facilitating the progress of the cause of God in the United States and Canada, prove adequate for the greater and more complicated problems of the future?

On the necessity of "concerted action" and "organized effort," Uriah Smith wrote in the fall of 1874, soon after the sending out of J. N. Andrews as our first missionary to Europe:

"We profess to believe that the burden of the work of proclaiming to the world the last message of mercy is committed to our hands. How much is involved in this? This world, though small in comparison with other worlds, is nevertheless to human beings quite a large place. Though three fourths of it is under water, there is still a vast expanse of territory left. Its inhabitants are numbered by the hundreds of millions. How much labor will it take to convey instruction on the present truth to all of these who are entitled to receive it? How many men will be wanted? What kind of men? The world's talent will be arrayed against the truth. Somebody must be prepared to meet it. How many books will be required? How many thousand tons of periodicals? How much means to carry on the work? Can it be done without concerted action? without organized effort? Can it be accomplished by individual or shortsighted labors that are calculated only for the day? . . .

"What more will be needed, we perhaps do not now clearly see. We only know that this work is the cause of God, and it will be accomplished. It cannot go back. The omnipotent hand of the God and Christ of our blessed hope is behind it. We know that that cause which represents in the earth the closing truths of the word of God, and the finishing of the work of salvation among men, is

no sham and slipshod affair, and will not be done in a corner. There are thousands of localities to be lightened with its presence, which do not yet so much as know of its existence. There are thousands of men to be raised up for the work of the harvest. There are tons of books to be produced. There are hundreds of thousands of dollars to be expended. Perhaps our present facilities must be doubled or quadrupled.”—*Id.*, Dec. 15, 1874.

THE TEST OF TIME

The system of organization adopted in the early days of the third angel’s message has not brought disappointment to those who have entered into the labors of the pioneers. In 1877 James White expressed his faith in the overruling providence of God, thus: “When we take a view of the past, the present, and the future, as far as we can look forward through the prophetic word, we are impressed that God has been leading in the preparation for our great work, and that we are now entering upon it in its length and breadth.”—*Id.*, June 7, 1877.

Concerning the application of the principles of organization adopted as the divinely appointed means for bringing about concerted action, W. A. Spicer testified in 1907, in his pamphlet on “Gospel Order:”

“As was shown John in the Revelation, Christ Himself walks among the seven candlesticks, the churches, and holds the seven stars, the messengers of the churches, in His own right hand. His presence and guidance are promised ‘even unto the end of the world.’

“He has been the leader in this advent movement, and by the counsels of His word and through the Spirit of prophecy the divine principles of order and organization

have been developed and applied to present-day needs and conditions. Every principle in the organization of our work today is found in the word of God. As one united people, let us devote all our powers to the world-wide proclamation of the everlasting gospel and the finishing of the work.”—*“Gospel Order: A Brief Outline of the Bible Principles of Organization,”* p. 32.

“With our lines extending throughout the whole earth, and the enemy ever watching to break up the forces and weaken the hands of the workers, more than ever at any time in the history of God’s work is there need for such thorough organization as will enable the whole body of believers to strengthen one another’s hands in the service. It is one world-wide work, and a united people is to do it. The Old Testament prophets, who in vision saw the final triumph of the church, bear witness to this. ‘Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion.’ Isa. 52:8.”—*Id.*, p. 12.

“In the extending growth of our work,” declared O. A. Olsen during the eleventh council meeting of the 1893 General Conference, “we must cherish organization. The first object of our organization was to connect every member of the church with active work. Can we afford to drop organization now, when the work is so widely extending, and the demand for all to engage in active work is so steadily increasing?”—*General Conference Bulletin, 1893*, p. 211.

In 1907 S. N. Haskell wrote:

“God is the same yesterday, today, and forever. The old ship Zion is sure to enter the port. But he who thinks some other craft has a better appearance will find that it

is rotten in its essential timber. One may trust and be true to the form of the organization, and not have a well-grounded faith in the truth. This will not save any; but the one who walks in the full counsel of the Lord will acknowledge the Lord's organization as revealed in His word."—*Review and Herald, May 30, 1907.*

J. S. Washburn has witnessed to his faith in an organized movement, thus:

"General organization, organized unity, is God's plan and purpose. The whole principle is laid out in what we know of the order of heaven, in the order of Israel, and in the order of the apostolic church. But God has given men brains and common sense to apply the principles of His word to their daily life and the daily perplexities and difficulties which they meet.

"Through much labor and perplexity there has been formed among the people who believe in the near coming of the Lord an organization which has been endorsed from beginning to end by the Spirit of prophecy. Whoever seeks to overthrow it is doing the work of the enemy who sought to bring an independent organization into the family of heaven. No man liveth unto himself; neither does any church live unto itself, or any conference. We are all one, members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones. Let us abide in the body. Let us stay on board the ship.

"Many have arisen in days that are past, and are arising today, preaching independence and false liberty, which is license. The liberty of organized unity, wherein each feels definitely related to every other one of the church of the living God, is true liberty. He who is cut off can no more live, prosper, and bear fruit, than the branch severed

from the vine. If ever there was a time when organization and unity were essential, it is today. A small people, united with God, and welded together as one, can face the divided interests of the world's great Babylon, and win eternal victory."—*Id.*, June 6, 1907.

And J. N. Loughborough testified in 1913:

"As we met at Washington, D.C., in this jubilee year of the General Conference, and heard the reports from all parts of the world, demonstrating what order has accomplished, with God's blessing, in the harmonious advancement of the message, we say this of itself is a proof that the Lord has led in the work. On this fiftieth anniversary year of the General Conference organization it is the unanimous sentiment of thousands of Seventh-day Adventists to push on the work under the same banner of systematic order."—*Id.*, June 26, 1913.

THE SEAL OF GENUINENESS

R. F. Cottrell, the brother in western New York who in the early 60's questioned the advisability of organizing the publishing association and forming churches and conferences, lived to see the work prosper in many lands. Over a score of years after the formation of the General Conference, he wrote an article for the *Review*, entitled, "Unity and Harmony Characterize the Work of God," and in this he bore testimony to his personal conviction that the unity characterizing the work in all lands is an indisputable evidence of the genuineness of the movement and of the value of gospel order. He declared:

"There is harmony in all the work of God. What He has promised, He is sure to perform; and the work which He begins is sure to move onward to its completion. He

chooses human instruments through which to carry forward His work, and always sustains the instruments of His choice as long as He sees best to use them. And if a change becomes necessary, it is made in a way to preserve the unity and harmony of the work. His work is never reversed or revolutionized in its course. No faction can arise and succeed in giving a new shape or direction to the work. Rebellions may arise in the camp, but they will always fail to establish a new lead. The rebellion will fail, and the work will move on. Being the work of the Lord, and not of men, He will preserve its unity and harmony to the end. . . .

“Let us make an application of these known principles to the work of God in our own time. . . . At several points in the brief history of this work, fanatical and factious ones, who claimed a part with us in the work, have attempted to correct the work and improve the plan of operation, by substituting other instrumentalities for those already in the work. They were evidently moved by the same motives which actuated Korah, Dathan, and Abiram; that is, to assume the leadership, and correct what they claimed to be errors and abuses. But each instance of rebellion has proved a failure. The cause has not suffered, but has been relieved, by their departure. The words of Gamaliel have proved true in each case: ‘If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought.’ Acts 5:38. These factions have come to nought; while the message from heaven has moved on without interruption, its divine origin becoming more and more apparent from the fact that it cannot be overthrown.

“As it has been in the past, so it may be in the future. Other factions and fanaticisms may arise, designed by Satan

to impede the work, and bring our cause and name into disrepute. I write this for the benefit of honest souls who may not be aware of Satan's devices. If the work in which we are engaged be the work of the Lord, of which I have no doubt, no attempt against it can prosper. Any faction which steps out and takes a lead against the united wisdom of the body, is not of God; and to join such a faction is to fall into the ranks of the enemy, and to be found fighting against God.

"In conclusion, I would express my gratitude to God for the unity of the work in which we are engaged. The work is one in all the world—throughout the United States, the countries of the Old World, and the islands of the sea. I do thank God for this seal of the genuineness of the work. The evident design of the third angel's message is to bring the remnant of God's people into that state of unity for which Jesus prayed. And He has given to His chosen servants that measure of wisdom and discernment in organizing the work and providing for its increase in all the world, which has secured this result in all nations where the truth has gone or may go. Jesus will return to a united church—such as He left on earth when He ascended to heaven.

"None have claimed infallibility. None have assumed the leadership of God's heritage. The Lord has done the work in fulfillment of His word of promise; and He will finish it gloriously. Unity and harmony will still be more and more its characteristics, till it ends in the preparation of God's people in the finishing touch of immortality, and translation to those mansions which Jesus has gone to prepare."—*Id.*, Nov. 18, 1884.

Selections From the Writings
of Mrs. E. G. White

MOSES, THE LEADER OF ISRAEL

[In every age God has entrusted to human agencies grave responsibilities in connection with His church on the earth. While Christ has ever been the invisible head and leader of the true church, chosen men have occupied positions of trust and influence in the church, and have, under God, stood as counselors and leaders. The Lord has chosen men of resolute minds,—men who were willing to follow His guidance, and who, actuated by heroic principles, accomplished His will in preventing evil and in promoting good. Privations, trials, and hardships discouraged them not; they stand forth as examples of undaunted devotion and Christian integrity.

Prominent among those chosen for the special work of a leader, is Moses, the visible leader of the hosts of Israel at the time of the exodus.—c. c. c.]

AT the court of Pharaoh, Moses received the highest civil and military training. The monarch had determined to make his adopted grandson his successor on the throne, and the youth was educated for his high station. “Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.” Acts 7:22. His ability as a military leader made him a favorite with the armies of Egypt, and he was generally regarded as a remarkable character. . . .

The elders of Israel were taught by angels that the time for their deliverance was near, and that Moses was the man whom God would employ to accomplish this work. Angels instructed Moses also that Jehovah had chosen him to break the bondage of his people. . . .

Moses remained at court until he was forty years of age. His thoughts often turned upon the abject condition of his people, and he visited his brethren in their servitude,

and encouraged them with the assurance that God would work for their deliverance. Often, stung to resentment by the sight of injustice and oppression, he burned to avenge their wrongs. One day while thus abroad, seeing an Egyptian smiting an Israelite, he sprang forward, and slew the Egyptian. Except the Israelite, there had been no witness to the deed, and Moses immediately buried the body in the sand. He had now shown himself ready to maintain the cause of his people, and he hoped to see them rise to receive their liberty. . . .

The whole matter was quickly made known to the Egyptians, and, greatly exaggerated, soon reached the ears of Pharaoh. It was represented to the king that this act meant much; that Moses designed to lead his people against the Egyptians, to overthrow the government, and to seat himself upon the throne; and that there could be no security for the kingdom while he lived. It was at once determined by the monarch that he should die; but becoming aware of his danger, he made his escape, and fled toward Arabia.

The Lord directed his course, and he found a home with Jethro, the priest and prince of Midian, who was also a worshiper of God. After a time, Moses married one of the daughters of Jethro; and here, in the service of his father-in-law, as keeper of his flocks, he remained forty years.

In slaying the Egyptian, Moses had fallen into the same error so often committed by his fathers, of taking into their own hands the work that God had promised to do. It was not God's will to deliver His people by warfare, as Moses thought, but by His own mighty power, that the glory might be ascribed to Him alone. Yet even this rash act

was overruled by God to accomplish His purposes. Moses was not prepared for his great work. He had yet to learn the same lesson of faith that Abraham and Jacob had been taught,—not to rely upon human strength or wisdom, but upon the power of God for the fulfillment of His promises. And there were other lessons that, amid the solitude of the mountains, Moses was to receive. In the school of self-denial and hardship he was to learn patience, to temper his passions. Before he could govern wisely, he must be trained to obey. His own heart must be fully in harmony with God before he could teach the knowledge of His will to Israel. By his own experience he must be prepared to exercise a fatherly care over all who needed his help.

Man would have dispensed with that long period of toil and obscurity, deeming it a great loss of time. But infinite Wisdom called him who was to become the leader of His people, to spend forty years in the humble work of a shepherd. The habits of caretaking, of self-forgetfulness and tender solicitude for his flock, thus developed, would prepare him to become the compassionate, long-suffering shepherd of Israel. No advantage that human training or culture could bestow, could be a substitute for this experience. . . .

In all who have been chosen to accomplish a work for God the human element is seen. Yet they have not been men of stereotyped habits and character, who were satisfied to remain in that condition. They earnestly desired to obtain wisdom from God, and to learn to work for Him. Says the apostle, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James 1:5. But God will not impart to men divine light, while they are content to

remain in darkness. In order to receive God's help, man must realize his weakness and deficiency; he must apply his own mind to the great change to be wrought in himself; he must be aroused to earnest and persevering prayer and effort. Wrong habits and customs must be shaken off; and it is only by determined endeavor to correct these errors, and to conform to right principles, that the victory can be gained. Many never attain to the position that they might occupy, because they wait for God to do for them that which He has given them power to do for themselves. All who are fitted for usefulness must be trained by the severest mental and moral discipline; and God will assist them by uniting divine power with human effort.

Shut in by the bulwarks of the mountains, Moses was alone with God. The magnificent temples of Egypt no longer impressed his mind with their superstition and falsehood. In the solemn grandeur of the everlasting hills he beheld the majesty of the Most High, and in contrast realized how powerless and insignificant were the gods of Egypt. Everywhere the Creator's name was written. Moses seemed to stand in His presence, and to be overshadowed by His power. Here his pride and self-sufficiency were swept away. In the stern simplicity of his wilderness life, the results of the ease and luxury of Egypt disappeared. Moses became patient, reverent, and humble, "very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3), yet strong in faith in the mighty God of Jacob.

As the years rolled on, and he wandered with his flocks in solitary places, pondering upon the oppressed condition of his people, he recounted the dealings of God with his fathers, and the promises that were the heritage of the

chosen nation, and his prayers for Israel ascended by day and by night. . . .

Leading his flocks one day near Horeb, "the mountain of God," Moses saw a bush in flames, branches, foliage, and trunk, all burning, yet seeming not to be consumed. He drew near to view the wonderful sight, when a voice from out of the flame called him by name. With trembling lips he answered, "Here am I." He was warned not to approach irreverently: "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. . . . I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." It was He who, as the Angel of the covenant, had revealed Himself to the fathers in ages past. "And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God." . . .

As Moses waited in reverent awe before God, the words continued: "I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; and I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey. . . . Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt."

Amazed and terrified at the command, Moses drew back, saying, "Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" Ex. 3:11. . . .

The divine command given to Moses found him self-distrustful, slow of speech, and timid. He was overwhelmed with a sense of his incapacity to be a mouthpiece

for God to Israel. But having once accepted the work, he entered upon it with his whole heart, putting all his trust in the Lord. The greatness of his mission called into exercise the best powers of his mind. God blessed his ready obedience, and he became eloquent, hopeful, self-possessed, and well fitted for the greatest work ever given to man. This is an example of what God does to strengthen the character of those who trust Him fully, and give themselves unreservedly to His commands.

A man will gain power and efficiency as he accepts the responsibilities that God places upon him, and with his whole soul seeks to qualify himself to bear them aright. However humble his position or limited his ability, that man will attain true greatness who, trusting to divine strength, seeks to perform his work with fidelity. Had Moses relied upon his own strength and wisdom, and eagerly accepted the great charge, he would have evinced his entire unfitness for such a work. The fact that a man feels his weakness, is at least some evidence that he realizes the magnitude of the work appointed him, and that he will make God his counselor and his strength.—“*Patriarchs and Prophets*,” pp. 245-255.

SHARING BURDENS

Not far distant from where the Israelites were . . . encamped [at Rephidim] was the home of Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses. Jethro had heard of the deliverance of the Hebrews, and he now set out to visit them, and restore to Moses his wife and two sons. The great leader was informed by messengers of their approach, and he went out with joy to meet them, and, the first greetings over, conducted them to his tent. He had sent back his

family when on his way to the perils of leading Israel from Egypt, but now he could again enjoy the relief and comfort of their society. To Jethro he recounted the wonderful dealings of God with Israel, and the patriarch rejoiced and blessed the Lord, and with Moses and the elders he united in offering sacrifice, and holding a solemn fast in commemoration of God's mercy.

As Jethro remained in the camp, he soon saw how heavy were the burdens that rested upon Moses. To maintain order and discipline among that vast, ignorant, and untrained multitude, was indeed a stupendous task. Moses was their recognized leader and magistrate, and not only the general interests and duties of the people, but the controversies that arose among them, were referred to him.

He had permitted this, for it gave him an opportunity to instruct them; as he said, "I do make them know the statutes of God, and His laws." But Jethro remonstrated against this, saying, "This thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone." "Thou wilt surely wear away," and he counseled Moses to appoint proper persons as rulers of thousands, and others as rulers of hundreds, and others of tens. Ex. 18:16, 18. They should be "able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness." These were to judge in all matters of minor consequence, while the most difficult and important cases should still be brought before Moses, who was to be to the people, said Jethro, "to Godward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God. And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do." Verses 18-20.

This counsel was accepted, and it not only brought

relief to Moses, but resulted in establishing more perfect order among the people.—*Id.*, pp. 300, 301.

CHOOSING WISE COUNSELORS

God Himself directed the Israelites in all their travels. The place of their encampment was indicated by the descent of the pillar of cloud; and so long as they were to remain in camp, the cloud rested over the tabernacle. When they were to continue their journey, it was lifted high above the sacred tent. A solemn invocation marked both the halt and the departure. . . .

A distance of only eleven days' journey lay between Sinai and Kadesh, on the borders of Canaan; and it was with the prospect of speedily entering the goodly land, that the hosts of Israel resumed their march, when the cloud at last gave the signal for an onward movement. . . .

As they advanced, the way became more difficult. Their route lay through stony ravine and barren waste. All around them was the great wilderness,—“a land of deserts and of pits,” “a land of drouth, and of the shadow of death,” “a land that no man passed through, and where no man dwelt.” Jer. 2:6. The rocky gorges, far and near, were thronged with men, women, and children, with beasts and wagons, and long lines of flocks and herds. Their progress was necessarily slow and toilsome; and the multitudes, after their long encampment, were not prepared to endure the perils and discomforts of the way.

After three days' journey, open complaints were heard. These originated with the mixed multitude, many of whom were not fully united with Israel, and were continually watching for some cause of censure. The complainers were not pleased with the direction of the march, and

they were continually finding fault with the way in which *Moses* was leading them, though they well knew that he, as well as they, was following the guiding cloud. Dissatisfaction is contagious, and it soon spread in the encampment. . . .

The heart of *Moses* sunk. . . . In his distress he was tempted even to distrust God. His prayer was almost a complaint. "Wherefore hast Thou afflicted Thy servant? and wherefore have I not found favor in Thy sight, that Thou layest the burden of all this people upon me? . . . Whence should I have flesh to give unto all this people? for they weep unto me, saying, Give us flesh, that we may eat. I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me." Num. 11:11-14.

The Lord hearkened to his prayer, and directed him to summon seventy men of the elders of Israel,—men not only advanced in years, but possessing dignity, sound judgment, and experience. "Bring them unto the tabernacle of the congregation," He said, "that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the Spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone." Verses 16, 17.

The Lord permitted *Moses* to choose for himself the most faithful and efficient men to share the responsibility with him. . . .

The great leader's charge to these chosen men might well serve as a model of judicial integrity for the judges and legislators of modern times: "Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him. Ye

shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's." Deut. 1:16, 17.

Moses now summoned the seventy to the tabernacle. "And the Lord came down in a cloud, and spake unto him, and took of the Spirit that was upon him, and gave it unto the seventy elders: and it came to pass, that, when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, and did not cease." Num. 11:25. Like the disciples on the day of Pentecost, they were endued with "power from on high." It pleased the Lord thus to prepare them for their work, and to honor them in the presence of the congregation, that confidence might be established in them as men divinely chosen to unite with Moses in the government of Israel.

Again evidence was given of the lofty, unselfish spirit of the great leader. Two of the seventy, humbly counting themselves unworthy of so responsible a position, had not joined their brethren at the tabernacle; but the Spirit of God came upon them where they were, and they too exercised the prophetic gift. On being informed of this, Joshua desired to check such irregularity, fearing that it might tend to division. Jealous for the honor of his master, "My lord Moses," he said, "forbid them." The answer was, "Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the Lord's people were prophets, and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them." Verses 28, 29.—*Id.*, pp. 376-382.

THE HEBREW ECONOMY: AN OBJECT LESSON

The government of Israel was characterized by the most thorough organization, wonderful alike for its completeness and its simplicity. The order so strikingly dis-

played in the perfection and arrangement of all God's created works was manifest in the Hebrew economy. God was the center of authority and government, the sovereign of Israel. Moses stood as their visible leader, by God's appointment, to administer the laws in His name. From the elders of the tribes a council of seventy was . . . chosen to assist Moses in the general affairs of the nation. Next came the priests, who consulted the Lord in the sanctuary. Chiefs, or princes, ruled over the tribes. Under these were "captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens" (Deut. 1:15); and, lastly, officers who might be employed for special duties.

The Hebrew camp was arranged in exact order. It was separated into three great divisions, each having its appointed position in the encampment. In the center was the tabernacle, the abiding place of the invisible King. Around it were stationed the priests and Levites. Beyond these were encamped all the other tribes.

To the Levites was committed the charge of the tabernacle and all that pertained thereto, both in the camp and on the journey. When the camp set forward, they were to strike the sacred tent; when a halting place was reached, they were to set it up. No person of another tribe was allowed to come near, on pain of death. The Levites were separated into three divisions, the descendants of the three sons of Levi, and each was assigned its special position and work. In front of the tabernacle, and nearest to it, were the tents of Moses and Aaron. On the south were the Kohathites, whose duty it was to care for the ark and the other furniture; on the north the Merarites, who were placed in charge of the pillars, sockets, boards, etc.; in the

rear the Gershonites, to whom the care of the curtains and hangings was committed.

The position of each tribe also was specified. Each was to march and to encamp beside its own standard, as the Lord had commanded: "Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house: far off about the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch." "As they encamp, so shall they set forward, every man in his place by their standards." Num. 2:2, 17. The mixed multitude that had accompanied Israel from Egypt were not permitted to occupy the same quarters with the tribes, but were to abide upon the outskirts of the camp; and their offspring were to be excluded from the community until the third generation. Deut. 23:7, 8.

Scrupulous cleanliness as well as strict order throughout the encampment and its environs was enjoined. Thorough sanitary regulations were enforced. Every person who was unclean from any cause was forbidden to enter the camp. These measures were indispensable to the preservation of health among so vast a multitude; and it was necessary also that perfect order and purity be maintained, that Israel might enjoy the presence of a holy God. Thus He declared: "The Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp, to deliver thee, and to give up thine enemies before thee; therefore shall thy camp be holy." Deut. 23:14.

In all the journeyings of Israel, "the ark of the covenant of the Lord went before them, . . . to search out a resting place for them." Num. 10:33. Borne by the sons of Kohath, the sacred chest containing God's holy law was to lead the van. Before it went Moses and Aaron; and the priests, bearing silver trumpets, were stationed near. These

priests received directions from Moses, which they communicated to the people by the trumpets. It was the duty of the leaders of each company to give definite directions concerning all the movements to be made, as indicated by the trumpets. Whoever neglected to comply with the directions given, was punished with death.

God is a God of order. Everything connected with heaven is in perfect order; subjection and thorough discipline mark the movements of the angelic host. Success can only attend order and harmonious action. God requires order and system in His work now no less than in the days of Israel. All who are working for Him are to labor intelligently, not in a careless, haphazard manner. He would have His work done with faith and exactness, that He may place the seal of His approval upon it.—*Id.*, pp. 374-376.

JEHOVAH IS OUR KING *

GOD has revealed many things to me which He has bidden me give to His people by pen and voice. Through this message of the Holy Spirit, God's people are given sacred instruction concerning their duty to God and to their fellow men.

A strange thing has come into our churches. Men who are placed in positions of responsibility that they may be wise helpers to their fellow workers, have come to suppose that they were set as kings and rulers in the churches, to say to one brother, Do this; to another, Do that; and to another, Be sure to labor in such and such a way. There have been places where the workers have been told that if they did not follow the instruction of these men of responsibility, their pay from the conference would be withheld.

It is right for the workers to counsel together as brethren; but that man who endeavors to lead his fellow workers to seek his individual counsel and advice regarding the details of their work, and to learn their duty from him, is in a dangerous position, and needs to learn what responsibilities are really comprehended in his office. God has appointed no man to be conscience for his fellow man. It is not wise to lay so much responsibility upon an officer that he will feel that he is forced to become a dictator.

* Read at the Los Angeles (California) camp meeting, Aug. 15-31, 1907, and afterward published in the tract, "Jehovah Is Our King."

A CONSTANT PERIL

For years there has been a growing tendency for men placed in positions of responsibility to lord it over God's heritage, thus removing from church members their keen sense of the need of divine instruction and an appreciation of the privilege to counsel with God regarding their duty. This order of things must be changed. There must be a reform. Men who have not a rich measure of that wisdom which cometh from above, should not be called to serve in positions where their influence means so much to church members.

In my earlier experiences in the message, I was called to meet this evil. During my labors in Europe and Australia, and more recently at the San Jose camp meeting in 1905, I had to bear my testimony of warning against it, because souls were being led to look to man for wisdom, instead of looking to God, who is our wisdom, our sanctification, and our righteousness. And now the same message has again been given me, more definite and decisive, because there has been a deeper offense to the Spirit of God.

AN EXALTED PRIVILEGE

God is the teacher of His people. All who humble their hearts before Him, will be taught of God. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James 1:5. The Lord wants every church member to pray earnestly for wisdom, that he may know what the Lord would have him do. It is the privilege of every believer to obtain an individual experience, learning to carry his cares and perplexities to God. It is written, "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you." James 4:8.

Through His servant Isaiah, God is calling His church to appreciate her exalted privilege in having the wisdom of the Infinite at her command:

“O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for Him: behold, His reward is with Him, and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd: He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

“Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of His hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being His counselor hath taught Him? With whom took He counsel, and who instructed Him, and taught Him in the path of judgment, and taught Him knowledge, and showed to Him the way of understanding? Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, He taketh up the isles as a very little thing. And Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof sufficient for a burnt offering. All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to Him less than nothing, and vanity.” Isa. 40:9-17.

“Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of His understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and

to them that have no might He increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Verses 28-31.

In the forty-first to the forty-fifth chapters of Isaiah, God very fully reveals His purpose for His people, and these chapters should be prayerfully studied. God does not here instruct His people to turn away from His wisdom and look to finite man for wisdom. "Remember these, O Jacob and Israel," He declares; "for thou art *My* servant: . . . O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of Me. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins: return unto Me; for I have redeemed thee. Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself in Israel." Isa. 44:21-23.

"Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the Lord? and there is no God else beside Me. . . . Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to Him shall men come; and all that are incensed against Him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." Isa. 45:21-25.

I write thus fully, because I have been shown that ministers and people are tempted more and more to trust in finite man for wisdom, and to make flesh their arm. To conference presidents and men in responsible places, I bear this message: Break the bands and fetters that have been placed upon God's people. To you the word is spoken, "Break every yoke." Unless you cease the work of making man amenable to man, unless you become humble in heart, and yourselves learn the way of the Lord as little children, the Lord will divorce you from His work. We are to treat one another as brethren, as fellow laborers, as men and women who are, with us, seeking for light and understanding of the way of the Lord, and who are jealous for His glory.

God declares, "I will be glorified in My people;" but the self-confident management of men has resulted in putting God aside, and accepting the devisings of men. If you allow this to continue, your faith will soon become extinct. God is in every place, beholding the conduct of the people who profess to represent the principles of His word. He asks that a change be made. He wants His people to be molded and fashioned, not after man's ideas, but after the similitude of God. I entreat of you to search the Scriptures as you have never yet searched them, that you may know the way and will of God. O that every soul might be impressed with this message, and put away the wrong!

PAUL'S EXPERIENCE

We would do well to study carefully the first and second chapters of First Corinthians. "We preach Christ crucified," the apostle declared, "unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them

which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." 1 Cor. 1:23-31. The human being who undertakes to become wisdom for another will find himself coming short.

"I was with you," Paul continues, "in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." 1 Cor. 2:3-8.

TAUGHT BY THE SPIRIT

In the next words the apostle brings to view the true source of wisdom for the believer: "God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. . . . Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." Verses 10-13.

These words mean very much to the soul that is trying to run the race set before him in the gospel. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ." Verses 14-16.

Read also the third chapter of this book, and study and pray over these words. As a people our faith and practice need to be energized by the Holy Spirit. No ruling power that would compel man to obey the dictates of the finite mind should be exercised. "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils," the Lord commands. Isa. 2:22. By turning the minds of men to lean on human wisdom, we place a veil between God and man, so that there is not a seeing of Him who is invisible.

In our individual experience we are to be taught of God. When we seek Him with a sincere heart, we will confess to Him our defects of character; and He has prom-

ised to receive all who come to Him in humble dependence. The one who yields to the claims of God will have the abiding presence of Christ, and this companionship will be to him a very precious thing. Taking hold of divine wisdom he will escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust. Day by day he will learn more fully how to carry his infirmities to the One who has promised to be a very present help in every time of need.

This message is spoken to our churches in every place. In the false experience that has been coming in, a decided influence is at work to exalt human agencies and to lead some to depend on human judgment, and to follow the control of human minds. This influence is diverting the mind from God. God forbid that any such experience should deepen and grow in our ranks as Seventh-day Adventists. Our petitions are to reach higher than erring man—to God. “And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us.” 1 John 5:14. God does not confine Himself to one place or person. He looks down from heaven upon the children of men; He sees their perplexities, and is acquainted with the circumstances of every experience of life. He understands His own work upon the human heart, and needs not that any man should direct the workings of His Spirit.

“This is the confidence that we have in Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: and if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.” 1 John 5:14, 15. God has appointed the angels that do His will to respond to the prayers of the meek of the earth, and to guide His ministers with counsel and judgment.

Heavenly agencies are constantly seeking to impart grace and strength and counsel to God's faithful children, that they may act their part in the work of communicating light to the world. The wonderful sacrifice of Christ has made it possible for every man to do a special work. When the worker receives wisdom from the only true Source, he will become a pure channel of light and blessing; for he will receive his capability for service in rich currents of grace and light from the throne of God.—*Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 10, pp. 12-20.*

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY AND CHRISTIAN UNITY *

WE are living in a time when every true Christian must maintain a living connection with God. The world is flooded with sophistries of the enemy, and we are safe only as we learn lessons of truth from the Great Teacher. The solemn work in which we are engaged demands of us a strong, united effort under divine leadership.

The Lord desires His workers to counsel together, not to move independently. Those who are set as ministers and guides to the people should pray much when they meet together. This will give wonderful help and courage, binding heart to heart and soul to soul, leading every man to unity and peace and strength in his endeavors.

DIVINE GUIDANCE

Our strength lies in taking our burdens to the great Burden Bearer. God confers honor on those who come to Him and ask Him for help, in faith believing that they will receive. Human help is feeble. But we may unite in seeking help and favor from Him who has said, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Matt. 7:7. Divine power is infallible. Then let us come to God, pleading for the guidance of His Holy Spirit. Let our united prayers

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ascend to the throne of grace. Let our requests be mingled with praise and thanksgiving. . . .

There is a great work to be done, and while it is our privilege to counsel together, we must be very sure, in every matter, to counsel with God; for He will never mislead us. We are not to make flesh our arm. If we do, depending chiefly upon human help, human guidance, unbelief will steal in, and our faith will die.

Frequently I receive letters from individuals, telling me of their troubles and perplexities, and asking me to inquire of God as to what is their duty. To those for whom the Lord has given me no light, I have often replied: I have not been appointed by God to do such a work as you ask me to do. The Lord Jesus has invited you to bring your troubles to One who understands every circumstance of your life.

“What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.” Mark 11:24. . . . I shall not dishonor my Lord by encouraging people to come to me for counsel, when they have a standing invitation to go to the One who is able to carry them and all their burdens.

“It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me. . . . I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” John 6:45-51.

God deals with men as individuals, giving to every one his work. All are to be taught of God. Through the grace of Christ, every soul must work out his own right-

eousness, maintaining a living connection with the Father and the Son. This is a genuine experience that is of value. . . .

COUNSELORS, NOT RULERS

“Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart.” Ps. 27:14. Let us each wait on the Lord, and He will teach us how to labor. He will reveal to us the work that we are best adapted to perform. This will not lead men to start out in an independent spirit, to promulgate new theories. In this time when Satan is seeking to make void the law of God through the exaltation of false science, we need to guard most carefully against everything that would tend to lessen our faith and scatter our forces. As laborers together with God, we should be in harmony with the truth, and with our brethren. There should be counsel and cooperation.

Even in the midst of the great deceptions of the last days, when delusive miracles will be performed in the sight of men in behalf of satanic theories, it is our privilege to hide ourselves in Christ Jesus. It is possible for us to seek and to obtain salvation. And in this time of unusual peril, we must learn to stand alone, our faith fixed, not on the word of man, but on the sure promises of God.

Among all God’s workers there should be a spirit of unity and harmony. The Lord has especially blessed some with an experience that has fitted them to be wise counselors. In our several callings there is to be a mutual dependence on one another for assistance. Of this, Peter says: “Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.” 1 Peter 5:5.

But this does not authorize any one man to undertake the work of ordering his brethren arbitrarily to do as he thinks advisable, irrespective of their own personal convictions of duty. Nor are God's chosen laborers to feel that at every step they must wait to ask some officer in authority whether they may do this or that. While cooperating heartily with their brethren in carrying out general plans that have been laid for the prosecution of the work, they are constantly to look to the God of Israel for personal guidance.

Sometimes a man who has been placed in responsibility as a leader, gains the idea that he is in a position of supreme authority, and that all his brethren, before making advance moves, must first come to him for permission to do that which they feel should be done. Such a man is in a dangerous position. He has lost sight of the work of a true leader among God's people. Instead of acting as a wise counselor, he assumes the prerogatives of an exacting ruler. God is dishonored by every such display of authority and self-exaltation. No man standing in his own strength is ever to be mind and judgment for another man whom the Lord is using in His work. No one is to lay down man-made rules and regulations to govern arbitrarily his fellow laborers who have a living experience in the truth. . . .

While respecting authority and laboring in accordance with wisely laid plans, every worker is amenable to the Great Teacher for the proper exercise of his God-given judgment and of his right to look to the God of heaven for wisdom and guidance. God is commander and ruler over all. We have a personal Saviour, and we are not to exchange His word for the word of any man. In the Scrip-

tures the Lord has given instruction for every worker. The words of the Master Worker should be diligently studied; for they are spirit and life. Laborers who are striving to work in harmony with this instruction, are under the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit, and need not always, before they make any advance move, first ask permission of some one else. No precise lines are to be laid down. Let the Holy Spirit direct the workers. As they keep looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith, the gifts of grace will increase by wise use. . . .

In 1896 I wrote to my brethren in the ministry, as follows:

“I must speak to my brethren nigh and afar off. I cannot hold my peace. They are not working on correct principles. Those who stand in responsible positions must not feel that their position of importance makes them men of infallible judgment.

“All the works of men are under the Lord’s jurisdiction. It will be altogether safe to consider that there is knowledge with the Most High. Those who trust in God and His wisdom, and not in their own, are walking in safe paths.

. . .

“The Lord has not placed any one of His human agencies under the dictation and control of those who are themselves but erring mortals. He has not placed upon men the power to say, You shall do this, and you shall not do that. . . .

“No man is a proper judge of another man’s duty. Man is responsible to God; and as finite, erring men take into their hands the jurisdiction of their fellow men, as if

the Lord commissioned them to lift up and cast down, all heaven is filled with indignation. . . .

“Organizations, institutions, unless kept by the power of God, will work under Satan’s dictation to bring men under the control of men; and fraud and guile will bear the semblance of zeal and truth, and for the advancement of the kingdom of God. . . .

“God will not vindicate any device whereby man shall in the slightest degree rule or oppress his fellow men. The only hope for fallen man is to look to Jesus, and receive Him as the only Saviour. As soon as a man begins to make an iron rule for other men, as soon as he begins to harness up and drive men according to his own mind, he dishonors God, and imperils his own soul, and the souls of his brethren. Sinful man can find hope and righteousness only in God; and no human being is righteous any longer than he has faith in God, and maintains a vital connection with Him.”

SYMPATHY, FORBEARANCE, RESPECT

In 1903, I wrote to the president of a conference:

“By means of one agency, Christ Jesus, God has mysteriously linked all men together. To every man He has assigned some special line of service; and we should be quick to comprehend that we are to guard against leaving the work given us in order that we may interfere with other human agencies who are doing a work not precisely the same as our own. To no man has been assigned the work of interfering with the work of one of his fellow laborers, trying to take it in hand himself; for he would so handle it that he would spoil it. To one God gives a work different from the work that He gives another.

“Let us all remember that we are not dealing with ideal

men, but with real men of God's appointment, men precisely like ourselves, men who fall into the same errors that we do, men of like ambitions and infirmities. No man has been made a master, to rule the mind and conscience of a fellow being. Let us be very careful how we deal with God's blood-bought heritage.

"To no man has been appointed the work of being a ruler over his fellow men. Every man is to bear his own burden. He may speak words of encouragement, faith, and hope to his fellow workers; he may help them to bear their special burdens by suggesting to them improved methods of labor; but in no case is he to discourage and enfeeble them, lest the enemy shall obtain an advantage over their minds,—an advantage that in time would react upon himself.

"By the cords of tender love and sympathy the Lord linked all men to Himself. Of us He says, Ye 'are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building.' 1 Cor. 3:9. This relationship we should recognize. If we are bound up with Christ, we shall constantly manifest Christlike sympathy and forbearance toward those who are striving with all their God-given ability to bear their burdens, even as we endeavor to bear our appointed burdens.

"In our several callings there is to be a mutual dependence on one another for assistance. A spirit of authority is not to be exercised, even by the president of a conference; for position does not change a man into a creature that cannot err. Every laborer entrusted with the management of a conference is to work as Christ worked, wearing His yoke and learning of Him His meekness and lowliness. A conference president's spirit and demeanor, in word and in

deed, reveal whether he realizes his weakness and places his dependence on God, or whether he thinks that his position of influence has given him superior wisdom. If he loves and fears God, if he realizes the value of souls, if he appreciates every jot of the help that the Lord has qualified a brother worker to render, he will be able to bind heart to heart by the love that Christ revealed during His ministry. He will speak words of comfort to the sick and the sorrowing. If he does not cultivate a masterly manner, but bears in mind always that One is his Master, even Christ, he can counsel the inexperienced, encouraging them to be God's helping hand.

"The feeble hands are not to be deterred from doing something for the Master. Those whose knees are weak are not to be caused to stumble. God desires us to encourage those whose hands are weak, to grasp more firmly the hand of Christ, and to work hopefully. Every hand should be outstretched to help the hand that is doing something for the Master. The time may come when the hands that have upheld the feeble hands of another, may, in turn, be upheld by the hands to whom they ministered. God has so ordered matters that no man is absolutely independent of his fellow men."

Among God's people are some who have had long experience in His work, men who have not departed from the faith. Notwithstanding the great trials through which they have passed, they have remained faithful. These men should be regarded as tried and chosen counselors. They should be respected, and their judgment should be honored by those who are younger or who have had less experience, even though these younger men may be in official positions.

We are engaged in a great work, and there are many

opportunities for service in various lines. Let all pray earnestly that God may guide them into the right channels of service. God's workmen should not neglect any opportunity to help others in every possible way. If they seek God unselfishly for counsel, His word, which bringeth salvation, will lead them. They will engage in labor on the right hand and on the left, doing their best to remove from the minds of others every doubt and every difficulty in understanding the truth. The Spirit of God will make their labors effectual.

The Lord calls for minutemen, men who will be prepared to speak words in season and out of season that will arrest the attention and convict the heart. The kingdom of God consisteth not in outward show. Light will not be received by following selfish plans, but by looking unto Jesus, following Christ's leadings, not the suppositions of men. The kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

It often happens that circumstances arise which demand prompt action. And sometimes precious opportunities have been lost because of delay. The one who should have acted promptly felt that he must first consult with some one who was far away and who was unacquainted with the true conditions. Much time has thus been lost in asking advice and counsel from men who were not in a position to give wise counsel. Let all God's workers be guided by the word of truth which points out their duty, following implicitly the directions Christ has given. . . .

HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIPS

The Lord has not qualified any one of us to bear the burden of the work alone. He has associated together men of different minds, that they may counsel with and

assist one another. In this way the deficiency in the experience and abilities of one is supplied by the experience and abilities of another. We should all study carefully the instruction given in Corinthians and Ephesians regarding our relation to one another as members of the body of Christ. . . .

Our ministers and leaders need to realize the necessity of counseling with their brethren who have been long in the work, and who have gained a deep experience in the ways of the Lord. The disposition of some to shut themselves up to themselves, and to feel competent to plan and execute, according to their own judgment and preferences, brings them into strait places. Such an independent way of working is not right, and should not be followed. The ministers and teachers in our conferences are to work unitedly with their brethren of experience, asking them for their counsel, and paying heed to their advice.—*Special Testimonies, Series B, No. 9, pp. 14-32.*

THE CHURCH

IN the record of the conversion of Saul, important principles are given us, which we should ever bear in mind. Saul was brought directly into the presence of Christ. He was one whom Christ intended for a most important work, one who was to be a "chosen vessel" unto Him; yet the Lord did not at once tell him of the work that had been assigned him. He arrested him in his course and convicted him of sin; but when Saul asked, "What wilt Thou have me to do?" the Saviour placed the inquiring Jew in connection with His church, there to obtain a knowledge of God's will concerning him.

The marvelous light that illumined the darkness of Saul was the work of the Lord; but there was also a work that was to be done for him by the disciples. Christ had performed the work of revelation and conviction; and now the penitent was in a condition to learn from those whom God had ordained to teach His truth.

While Saul in solitude at the house of Judas, continued in prayer and supplication, the Lord appeared in vision to "a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias," telling him that Saul of Tarsus was praying, and in need of help. "Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight," the heavenly messenger said, "and inquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, and hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight."

Ananias could scarcely credit the words of the angel; for the reports of Saul's bitter persecution of the saints at Jerusalem had spread far and wide. He presumed to expostulate: "Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to Thy saints at Jerusalem: and here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on Thy name." But the command was imperative: "Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto Me, to bear My name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel."

Obedient to the direction of the angel, Ananias sought out the man who had but recently breathed out threatenings against all who believed on the name of Jesus; and putting his hands on the head of the penitent sufferer, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.

"And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." Acts 9:10-18.

Thus Jesus gave sanction to the authority of His organized church, and placed Saul in connection with His appointed agencies on earth. Christ had now a church as His representative on earth, and to it belonged the work of directing the repentant sinner in the way of life.

Many have an idea that they are responsible to Christ alone for their light and experience, independent of His recognized followers on earth. Jesus is the friend of sinners, and His heart is touched with their woe. He has all power, both in heaven and on earth; but He respects the

means that He has ordained for the enlightenment and salvation of men; He directs sinners to the church, which He has made a channel of light to the world.

When, in the midst of his blind error and prejudice, Saul was given a revelation of the Christ whom he was persecuting, he was placed in direct communication with the church, which is the light of the world. In this case, Ananias represents Christ, and also represents Christ's ministers upon the earth, who are appointed to act in His stead. In Christ's stead, Ananias touches the eyes of Saul, that they may receive sight. In Christ's stead, he places his hands upon him, and as he prays in Christ's name, Saul receives the Holy Ghost. All is done in the name and by the authority of Christ. Christ is the fountain; the church is the channel of communication.—“*Acts of the Apostles,*” pp. 120-122.

LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

As an important factor in the spiritual growth of the new converts, the apostles were careful to surround them with the safeguards of gospel order. Churches were duly organized in all places . . . where there were believers. Officers were appointed in each church, and proper order and system was established for the conduct of all the affairs pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the believers.

This was in harmony with the gospel plan of uniting in one body all believers in Christ, and this plan Paul was careful to follow throughout his ministry. Those who in any place were by his labor led to accept Christ as the Saviour, were, at the proper time, organized into a church. Even when the believers were but few in number, this was done. The Christians were thus taught to help one another, remembering the promise, “Where two or three

are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Matt. 18:20.—*Id.*, pp. 185, 186.

A SAFEGUARD IN TIMES OF PERIL

The church of Christ is in constant peril. Satan is seeking to destroy the people of God, and one man's mind, one man's judgment, is not sufficient to be trusted. Christ would have His followers brought together in church capacity, observing order, having rules and discipline, and all subject one to another, esteeming others better than themselves. Union and confidence are essential to the prosperity of the church. If each member of the church feels at liberty to move independently of the others, taking his own peculiar course, how can the church be in any safety in the hour of danger and peril? The prosperity and very existence of a church depend upon the prompt, united action and mutual confidence of its members. When, at a critical time, one sounds the alarm of danger, there is need of prompt and active work, without stopping to question and canvass the whole subject from end to end, thus letting the enemy gain every advantage by delay, when united action might save many souls from perdition.

God wants His people to be united in the closest bonds of Christian fellowship; confidence in our brethren is essential to the prosperity of the church; union of action is important in a religious crisis. One imprudent step, one careless action, may plunge the church into difficulties and trials from which it may not recover for years. One member of the church filled with unbelief, may give an advantage to the great foe that will affect the prosperity of the entire church, and many souls may be lost as the result.

Jesus would have His followers subject one to another; then God can use them as instruments to save one another; for one may not discern the dangers which another's eye is quick to perceive; but if the undiscerning will in confidence obey the warning, they may be saved great perplexities and trials.—“*Testimonies for the Church,*” Vol. III, pp. 445, 446.

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

As all the different members of the human system unite to form the entire body, and each performs its office in obedience to the intelligence that governs the whole, so the members of the church of Christ should be united in one symmetrical body, subject to the sanctified intelligence of the whole. . . .

God is leading out a people to stand in perfect unity upon the platform of eternal truth. . . .

Many do not realize the sacredness of church relationship, and are loath to submit to restraint and discipline. Their course of action shows that they exalt their own judgment above that of the united church; and they are not careful to guard themselves lest they encourage a spirit of opposition to its voice. Those who hold responsible positions in the church may have faults in common with other people, and may err in their decisions; but notwithstanding this, the church of Christ on earth has . . . an authority that cannot be lightly esteemed. . . .

Every believer should be wholehearted in his attachment to the church. Its prosperity should be his first interest, and unless he feels under sacred obligations to make his connection with the church a benefit to it in preference to himself, it can do far better without him.

It is in the power of all to do something for the cause of God. There are those who spend a large amount for needless luxuries; they gratify their appetites, but feel it a great tax to contribute means to sustain the church. They are willing to receive all the benefit of its privileges, but prefer to leave others to pay the bills. Those who really feel a deep interest in the advancement of the cause, will not hesitate to invest money in the enterprise whenever and wherever it is needed. They should also feel it a solemn duty to illustrate in their characters the teachings of Christ, being at peace one with another, and moving in perfect harmony as an undivided whole. They should defer their individual judgment to the judgment of the body of the church. . . .

If the world sees a perfect harmony existing in the church of God, it will be a powerful evidence to them in favor of the Christian religion. Dissensions, unhappy differences, and petty church trials dishonor our Redeemer. All these may be avoided if self is surrendered to God, and the followers of Jesus obey the voice of the church. Unbelief suggests that individual independence increases our importance, that it is weak to yield our own ideas of what is right and proper to the verdict of the church; but to yield to such feelings and views is unsafe, and will bring us into anarchy and confusion. Christ saw that unity and Christian fellowship were necessary to the cause of God; therefore He enjoined it upon His disciples. And the history of Christianity from that time until now proves conclusively that in union only is there strength. Let individual judgment submit to the authority of the church.

The apostles felt the necessity of strict unity, and they labored earnestly to this end. Paul exhorted his brethren

in these words: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." 1 Cor. 1:10.

He also wrote to his Philippian brethren: "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, 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. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Phil. 2:1-5.

To the Romans he wrote: "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God." "Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits." Rom. 15:5-7; 12:16.

Peter wrote to the churches scattered abroad: "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing." 1 Peter 3:8, 9.

And Paul, in his epistle to the Corinthians, says: "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good com-

fort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." 2 Cor. 13:11.—*Id.*, Vol. IV, pp. 16-20.

EXHORTATION AND REBUKE

The apostle Paul plainly states that the experience of the Israelites in their travels has been recorded for the benefit of those living in this age of the world, those upon whom the ends of the world are come. We do not consider that our dangers are any less than those of the Hebrews, but greater. There will be temptations to jealousies and murmurings, and there will be outspoken rebellion, as are recorded of ancient Israel. There will ever be a Spirit to rise up against the reproof of sins and wrongs. But shall the voice of reproof be hushed because of this? If so, we shall be in no better situation than are the various denominations in our land, who are afraid to touch the errors and prevailing sins of the people.

Those whom God has set apart as ministers of righteousness have solemn responsibilities laid upon them to reprove the sins of the people. Paul commanded Titus: "These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee." Titus 2:15. There are ever those who will despise the one who dares to reprove sin; but there are times when reproof must be given. Paul directs Titus to rebuke a certain class sharply, that they may be sound in the faith. Men and women, who, with their different organizations, are brought together in church capacity, have peculiarities and faults. As these are developed, they will require reproof. If those who are placed in important positions never reprovéd, never rebuked, there would soon be a demoralized condition of things that would greatly dishonor God. But how shall

the reproof be given? Let the apostle answer: "With all long-suffering and doctrine." 2 Tim. 4:2. Principle should be brought to bear upon the one who needs reproof, but never should the wrongs of God's people be passed by indifferently. . . .

God would have His people disciplined and brought into harmony of action, that they may see eye to eye, and be of the same mind and of the same judgment. In order to bring about this state of things, there is much to be done. The carnal heart must be subdued and transformed. God designs that there shall ever be a living testimony in the church. It will be necessary to reprove and exhort, and some will need to be rebuked sharply, as the case demands. We hear the plea, "Oh, I am so sensitive, I cannot bear the least reflection!" If these persons would state the case correctly, they would say, "I am so self-willed, so self-sufficient, so proud-spirited, that I will not be dictated to; I will not be reproved. I claim the right of individual judgment; I have a right to believe and talk as I please." The Lord would not have us yield up our individuality. But what man is a proper judge of how far this matter of individual independence should be carried?—*Id.*, Vol. III, pp. 358-360.

THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE JUDGMENT

In his ministry, Paul was often compelled to stand alone. He was specially taught of God, and dared make no concessions that would involve principle. At times the burden was heavy, but Paul stood firm for the right. He realized that the church must never be brought under the control of human power. The traditions and maxims of men must not take the place of revealed truth. The ad-

vance of the gospel message must not be hindered by the prejudices and preferences of men, whatever might be their position in the church.

Paul had dedicated himself and all his powers to the service of God. He had received the truths of the gospel direct from heaven, and throughout his ministry he maintained a vital connection with heavenly agencies. He had been taught by God regarding the binding of unnecessary burdens upon the Gentile Christians; thus when the Judaizing believers introduced into the Antioch church the question of circumcision, Paul knew the mind of the Spirit of God concerning such teaching, and took a firm and unyielding position which brought to the churches freedom from Jewish rites and ceremonies.

Notwithstanding the fact that Paul was personally taught by God, he had no strained ideas of individual responsibility. While looking to God for direct guidance, he was ever ready to recognize the authority vested in the body of believers united in church fellowship. He felt the need of counsel; and when matters of importance arose, he was glad to lay these before the church, and to unite with his brethren in seeking God for wisdom to make right decisions. Even "the spirits of the prophets," he declared, "are subject to the prophets. For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints." 1 Cor. 14:32, 33. With Peter, he taught that all united in church capacity should be "subject one to another." 1 Peter 5:5.—"*Acts of the Apostles,*" pp. 199, 200.

The world's Redeemer has invested great power with His church. He states the rules to be applied in cases of trials with its members. After He has given explicit directions as to the course to be pursued, He says, "Verily

I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever [in church discipline] ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Matt. 18:18. Thus even the heavenly authority ratifies the discipline of the church in regard to its members, when the Bible rule has been followed.

The word of God does not give license for one man to set up his judgment in opposition to the judgment of the church, neither is he allowed to urge his opinions against the opinions of the church. If there were no church discipline and government, the church would go to fragments; it could not hold together as a body.

There have ever been individuals of independent minds, who have claimed that they were right, that God had especially taught, impressed, and led them. Each has a theory of his own, views peculiar to himself, and each claims that his views are in accordance with the word of God. Each one has a different theory and faith, yet each claims special light from God. These draw away from the body, and each one is a separate church of himself. All these cannot be right, yet they all claim to be led of the Lord. The word of inspiration is not yea and nay, but yea and amen in Christ Jesus.—*Testimonies for the Church,* Vol. III, pp. 428, 429.

THE REMISSION OF SINS

Before the disciples could fulfill their official duties in connection with the church, Christ breathed His Spirit upon them. He was committing to them a most sacred trust, and He desired to impress them with the fact that without the Holy Spirit this work could not be accomplished.

The Holy Spirit is the breath of spiritual life in the soul. The impartation of the Spirit is the impartation of the life of Christ. It imbues the receiver with the attributes of Christ. Only those who are thus taught of God, those who possess the inward working of the Spirit, and in whose life the Christ life is manifested, are to stand as representative men, to minister in behalf of the church.

“Whosoever sins ye remit,” said Christ, “they are remitted; . . . and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained.” John 20:23. Christ here gives no liberty for any man to pass judgment upon others. In the sermon on the mount He forbade this. It is the prerogative of God. But on the church in its organized capacity He places a responsibility for the individual members. Toward those who fall into sin, the church has a duty, to warn, to instruct, and if possible to restore. “Reprove, rebuke, exhort,” the Lord says, “with all long-suffering and doctrine.” 2 Tim. 4:2. Deal faithfully with wrongdoing. Warn every soul that is in danger. Leave none to deceive themselves. Call sin by its right name. Declare what God has said in regard to lying, Sabbathbreaking, stealing, idolatry, and every other evil. “They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.” Gal. 5:21. If they persist in sin, the judgment you have declared from God’s word is pronounced upon them in heaven. In choosing to sin, they disown Christ; the church must show that she does not sanction their deeds, or she herself dishonors her Lord. She must say about sin what God says about it. She must deal with it as God directs, and her action is ratified in heaven. He who despises the authority of the church, despises the authority of Christ Himself.

But there is a brighter side to the picture. “Whose-

soever sins ye remit, they are remitted." John 20:23. Let this thought be kept uppermost. In labor for the erring, let every eye be directed to Christ. Let the shepherds have a tender care for the flock of the Lord's pasture. Let them speak to the erring of the forgiving mercy of the Saviour. Let them encourage the sinner to repent, and believe in Him who can pardon. Let them declare, on the authority of God's word, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. All who repent have the assurance, "He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." Micah 7:19.

Let the repentance of the sinner be accepted by the church with grateful hearts. Let the repenting one be led out from the darkness of unbelief, into the light of faith and righteousness. Let his trembling hand be placed in the loving hand of Jesus. Such a remission is ratified in heaven.

Only in this sense has the church power to absolve the sinner. Remission of sins can be obtained only through the merits of Christ. To no man, to no body of men, is given power to free the soul from guilt. Christ charged His disciples to preach the remission of sins in His name among all nations; but they themselves were not empowered to remove one stain of sin. The name of Jesus is the only "name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12.—"*The Desire of Ages*," pp. 805, 806.

THE CHURCH MILITANT

FOR years I have borne my testimony to the effect that when any one arises claiming to have great light, and yet advocating the tearing down of that which the Lord through His human agents has been building up, they are greatly deceived, and are not working along the lines where Christ is working.—*Review and Herald, Aug. 22, 1893.*

However weak and compassed with infirmity the people of God may be, those who turn from disloyalty to God in this wicked and perverse generation, and come back to their allegiance, standing to vindicate the holy law of God, making up the breach made by the man of sin under the direction of Satan, will be accounted the children of God, and through the righteousness of Christ will stand perfect before God. Truth will not always lie in the dust to be trampled underfoot of men. It will be magnified and made honorable; it will yet arise and shine forth in all its natural luster, and will stand fast forever and ever. . . .

A PERVERSION OF TRUTH

There will be messages of accusation against the people of God, similar to the work done by Satan in accusing God's people, and these messages will be sounding at the very time when God is saying to His people, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the

earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee." Isa. 60:1, 2.

It will be found that those who bear false messages will not have a high sense of honor and integrity. . . . They misinterpret and misapply that which God has given to the church to warn, counsel, reprove, comfort, and encourage those who shall make up the remnant people of God. . . .

THE SCOPE OF THE GOSPEL MESSAGE

There is a great work to be done in the world, a great work to be done in foreign lands. Schools must be established in order that youth, children, and those of more mature age may be educated as rapidly as possible to enter the missionary field. There is need not only of ministers for foreign fields, but of wise, judicious laborers of all kinds. The Macedonian cry is sounding from all parts of the world, "Come over and help us."

With the responsibility upon us to go and preach the gospel to every creature, there is great need of men and means, and Satan is at work in every conceivable way to tie up means, and to hinder men from engaging in the very work that they should be doing. The money that should be used in doing the good work of building houses of worship, of establishing schools for the purpose of educating laborers for the missionary field, of drilling young men and women so that they may go forth and labor patiently, intelligently, and with all perseverance, that they may be agents through whom a people may be prepared to stand in the great day of God, is diverted from a channel of usefulness and blessing, into a channel of evil and cursing. The great day of God is upon us, and hasteth greatly, and

there is a great work to be done, and it must be done speedily. . . .

TARES AMONG THE WHEAT

The message that has been borne by those who have proclaimed the church to be Babylon, has made the impression that God has no church upon earth. Has God no living church? He has a church, but it is the church militant, not the church triumphant.

Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. . . . So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn." Matt. 13:24-30.—*Id.*, Aug. 29, 1893.

In the parable of the wheat and the tares, we see the reason why the tares were not to be plucked up; it was lest the wheat be rooted up with the tares. Human opinion and judgment would make grave mistakes. But rather than have a mistake made, and one single blade of wheat rooted up, the Master says, "Let both grow together until the harvest." Then the angels will gather out the tares, which will be appointed to destruction. Although in our churches . . . there are those who are faulty and erring, as tares among the wheat, God is long-suffering

and patient. He reproveth and warns the erring, but He does not destroy those who are long in learning the lesson He would teach them; He does not uproot the tares from the wheat. Tares and wheat are to grow together till the harvest; when the wheat comes to its full growth and development, . . . it will be fully distinguished from the tares.

The church of Christ on earth will be imperfect, but God does not destroy His church because of its imperfection. There have been and will be those who are filled with zeal not according to knowledge, who would purify the church, and uproot the tares from the midst of the wheat. But Christ has given special light as to how to deal with those who are erring, and with those who are unconverted in the church. There is to be no spasmodic, zealous, hasty action taken by church members in cutting off those they may think defective in character. Tares will appear among the wheat; but it would do more harm to weed out the tares, unless in God's appointed way, than to leave them alone. . . .

Jesus knew that Judas was defective in character, but notwithstanding this, He accepted him as one of the disciples, and gave him the same opportunities and privileges that He gave to the others whom He had chosen. Judas was left without excuse in the evil course he afterward pursued. Judas might have become a doer of the word, as were eventually Peter and James and John and the other disciples. . . .

FROM WHENCE HATH IT TARES?

Some people seem to think that upon entering the church they will . . . meet only with those who are pure

and perfect. They are zealous in their faith, and when they see faults in church members, they say, "We left the world in order to have no association with evil characters, but the evil is here also;" and they ask, as did the servants in the parable, "From whence then hath it tares?" But we need not be thus disappointed, for the Lord has not warranted us in coming to the conclusion that the church is perfect; and all our zeal will not be successful in making the church militant as pure as the church triumphant. The Lord forbids us to proceed in any violent way against those whom we think erring, and we are not to deal out excommunications and denunciations to those who are faulty. . . . Although there are evils existing in the church, and will be until the end of the world, the church in these last days is to be the light of the world that is polluted and demoralized by sin. . . .

SATAN'S ENMITY AGAINST THE CHURCH

The church who are loyal to Jehovah must engage in no ordinary conflict. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Eph. 6:12. Those who have any realization of what this warfare means, will not turn their weapons against the church militant, but with all their powers will wrestle with the people of God against the confederacy of evil. . . .

Those . . . who, while claiming to be taught and led of God, still make it their special work to tear down that which God has been for years building up, are not doing the will of God. Be it known that these men are on the side of the great deceiver. Believe them not.

They are allying themselves with the enemies of God and the truth. They will deride the order of the ministry as a system of priestcraft. From such turn away.—*Id.*, Sept. 5, 1893.

DIVINELY APPOINTED AGENCIES

God has a church, and she has a divinely appointed ministry. "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ." Eph. 4:11-15. . . .

Jesus loved the church, and gave Himself for it; and He will replenish, refine, ennoble, and elevate it, so that it shall stand fast amid the corrupting influences of this world. Men appointed of God have been chosen to watch with jealous care, with vigilant perseverance, that the church may not be overthrown by the evil devices of Satan, but that she shall stand in the world to promote the glory of God among men. There will ever be fierce conflict between the church and the world. Mind will come into contact with mind, principle with principle, truth with error; but in the crisis soon to culminate, . . . the men of experience are to do their God-appointed work. . . .

Those who are . . . denouncing the church as Babylon, . . . are in opposition to organization. . . . These workers are not bringing greater efficiency to the cause and kingdom of God, but are engaged in a work similar to that in which the enemy of all righteousness is engaged. Let these men who are rising up against the ways and means ordained of God to forward His work in these days of peril, divest themselves of all unscriptural views concerning the nature, office, and power of God's appointed agencies. . . . Those who are laborers together with God, are but His instruments, and they in themselves possess no essential grace or holiness. It is only when they are co-operating with heavenly intelligences that they are successful. . . .

God speaks through His appointed agencies, and let no man, or confederacy of men, insult the Spirit of God by refusing to hear the message of God's word from the lips of His chosen messengers. By refusing to hear the message of God, men close themselves in a chamber of darkness. They shut their own souls away from vast blessings, and rob Christ of the glory that should come to Him, by showing disrespect to His appointed agencies.

A WARNING AGAINST FALSE TEACHERS

God is not the author of confusion, but of peace. But Satan is a vigilant, unsleeping foe, ever at work upon human minds, seeking a soil in which he can sow his tares. If he finds any whom he can press into his service, he will suggest ideas and false theories, and make them zealous in advocating error. . . . Jesus has warned us to beware of false teachers.

From the beginning of our work, men have arisen from time to time, advocating theories that were new and startling. But if those who claim to believe the truth, would go to those who have had experience, would go to the word of God in a teachable, humble spirit, and examine their theories in the light of truth, and with the aid of the brethren who have been diligent Bible students, and at the same time make supplication unto God, asking, Is this the way of the Lord, or is it a false path in which Satan would lead me? they would receive light, and would escape out of the net of the fowler. . . .

False teachers may appear to be very zealous for the work of God, and may expend means to bring their theories before the world and the church; but as they mingle error with truth, their message is one of deception, and will lead souls into false paths. They are to be met and opposed, not because they are bad men, but because they are teachers of falsehood, and are endeavoring to put upon falsehood the stamp of truth.

MISGUIDED ZEALOTS

What a pity it is that men will go to such pains to discover some theory of error, when there is a whole storehouse of precious gems of truth by which the people might be enriched in the most holy faith. Instead of teaching truth, they let their imagination dwell upon that which is new and strange, and throw themselves out of harmony with those whom God is using to bring the people up upon the platform of truth. They cast aside all that has been said in regard to unity of sentiment and feeling, and trample upon the prayer of Christ as though

the unity for which He prayed was unessential, that there is no necessity for His followers to be one, even as He is one with the Father. They go off on a tangent, and Jehu-like, call to their brethren to follow their example of zeal for the Lord. If their zeal led them to work in the same lines in which their brethren who have carried the heat and burden of the day, are working; if they were as persevering to overcome discouragements and obstacles as their brethren have been, they might well be imitated. . . . But men are to be condemned who start out with a proclamation of wonderful light, and yet draw away from the agents whom God is leading. This was the way in which Korah, Dathan, and Abiram did, and their action is recorded as a warning to all others. We are not to do as they have done,—accuse and condemn those upon whom God has laid the burden of the work.

ATTAINING UNTO PERFECTION IN UNITY

Those who have proclaimed the Seventh-day Adventist Church as Babylon, have made use of the Testimonies in giving their position a seeming support; but why is it that they did not present that which for years has been the burden of my message,—the unity of the church? Why did they not quote the words of the angel, “Press together, press together, press together”? Why did they not repeat the admonition and state the principle, that “in union there is strength, in division there is weakness”? It is such messages as these men have borne, that divide the church, and put us to shame before the enemies of truth, and in such messages is plainly revealed the specious working of the great deceiver, who would hinder the church from attaining unto perfection in unity. . . .

ONE IN FAITH AND PRACTICE

“God has a church upon the earth. . . . He is leading, not stray offshoots, not one here and one there, but a people.”—*Id.*, Sept. 12, 1893.

I urge those who claim to believe the truth, to walk in unity with their brethren. Do not seek to give to the world occasion to say that we are extremists, that we are disunited, that one teaches one thing, and one another. Avoid dissension. Let every one be on guard, and be careful to be found standing in the gap to make up the breach, in place of standing at the wall seeking to make a breach. Let all be careful not to make an outcry against the only people who are fulfilling the description given of the remnant people, who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus, who are exalting the standard of righteousness in these last days. God has a distinct people, a church on earth, second to none, but superior to all in their facilities to teach the truth, to vindicate the law of God. God has divinely appointed agencies,—men whom He is leading, who have borne the heat and burden of the day, who are cooperating with heavenly instrumentalities to advance the kingdom of Christ in our world. Let all unite with these chosen agents, and be found at last among those who have the patience of the saints, who keep the commandments of God, and have the faith of Jesus.—*Idem.*

CHOSEN, ELECT, PRECIOUS *

I testify to my brethren and sisters that the church of Christ, enfeebled and defective as it may be, is the only object on earth on which He bestows His supreme regard.

* The paragraphs that follow are taken from a communication addressed to the delegates assembled in General Conference in February, 1893.

While He extends to all the world His invitation to come to Him and be saved, He commissions His angels to render divine help to every soul that cometh to Him in repentance and contrition, and He comes personally by His Holy Spirit into the midst of His church. "If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared. I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in His word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning. . . . Let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption. And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities." Ps. 130:3-8.

Ministers and all the church, let this be our language, from hearts that respond to the great goodness and love of God to us as a people and to us individually, "Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and forever." Ps. 131:3. "Ye that stand in the house of the Lord, in the courts of the house of our God, praise the Lord; for the Lord is good: sing praises unto His name; for it is pleasant. For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto Himself, and Israel for His peculiar treasure. For I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods." Ps. 135:2-5.

Consider, my brethren and sisters, that the Lord has a people, a chosen people, His church, to be His own, His own fortress, which He holds in a sin-stricken, revolted world; and He intended that no authority should be known in it, no laws be acknowledged by it, but His own.

Satan has a large confederacy, his church. Christ calls them the synagogue of Satan, because the members are the children of sin. The members of Satan's church have been constantly working to cast off the divine law, and confuse

the distinction between good and evil. Satan is working with great power in and through the children of disobedience, to exalt treason and apostasy as truth and loyalty. And at this time the power of his satanic inspiration is moving the living agencies to carry out the great rebellion against God that commenced in heaven.

At this time the church is to put on her beautiful garments,—“Christ our righteousness.” There are clear, decided distinctions to be restored and exemplified to the world in holding aloft the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. The beauty of holiness is to appear in its native luster in contrast with the deformity and darkness of the disloyal, those who have revolted from the law of God. Thus we acknowledge God, and recognize His law, the foundation of His government in heaven and throughout His earthly dominions. His authority should be kept distinct and plain before the world; and no laws are to be acknowledged that come in collision with the laws of Jehovah. If in defiance of God’s arrangements the world be allowed to influence our decisions or our actions, the purpose of God is defeated. However specious the pretext, if the church waver here, there is written against her in the books of heaven a betrayal of the most sacred trusts, and treachery to the kingdom of Christ.

The church is firmly and decidedly to hold her principles before the whole heavenly universe and the kingdoms of the world; steadfast fidelity in maintaining the honor and sacredness of the law of God, will attract the notice and admiration of even the world, and many will by the good works which they shall behold be led to glorify our Father in heaven. The loyal and true bear the credentials of heaven, not of earthly potentates. All men shall

know who are the disciples of Christ, chosen and faithful, and shall know them when crowned and glorified as those who honored God and whom He has honored, bringing them into possession of an eternal weight of glory. . . .

The Lord has provided His church with capabilities and blessings, that they may present to the world an image of His own sufficiency, and that His church may be complete in Him, a continual representation of another, even the eternal world, of laws that are higher than earthly laws. His church is to be a temple built after the divine similitude, and the angelic architect has brought his golden measuring rod from heaven that every stone may be hewed and squared by the divine measurement, and polished to shine as an emblem of heaven, radiating in all directions the bright, clear beams of the Sun of righteousness.

The church is to be fed with manna from heaven, and to be kept under the sole guardianship of His grace. Clad in complete armor of light and righteousness, she enters upon her final conflict. The dross, the worthless material, will be consumed, and the influence of the truth testifies to the world of its sanctifying, ennobling character.

“The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord. As for Me, this is My covenant with them, saith the Lord: My Spirit that is upon thee, and My words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth.” “Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.” Isa. 59:20, 21; 60:1-3.

God has in training a people, chosen, elect, precious. They were once the children of disobedience, disloyal to God. But now "ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy." 1 Peter 2:9, 10.

The Lord Jesus is making experiments on human hearts through the exhibition of His mercy and abundant grace. He is effecting transformations so amazing that Satan with all his triumphant boasting, with all his confederacy of evil united against God and the laws of His government, stands viewing them as a fortress impregnable to his sophistries and delusions. They are to him an incomprehensible mystery. The angels of God, seraphim and cherubim, the powers commissioned to cooperate with human agencies, look on with astonishment and joy, that fallen man, once children of wrath, are through the training of Christ developing characters after the divine similitude, to be sons and daughters of God, to act an important part in the occupations and pleasures of heaven.

To His church, Christ has given ample facilities, that He may receive a large revenue of glory from His redeemed, purchased possession. The church, being endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the wealth of His mercy, His love, His grace, is to appear in full and final display. The declaration in His intercessory prayer, that the Father's love is as great toward us as toward Himself, the only-begotten Son, that we shall be with Him where He is, forever one with Christ and the

Father, is a marvel to the heavenly host, and it is their great joy. The gift of His Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant, is to His church as an encompassing wall of fire, which the powers of hell shall not prevail against. In their untainted purity and spotless perfection Christ looks upon His people as the reward of all His suffering, His humiliation, and His love, and the supplement of His glory,—Christ the great center from which radiates all glory. “Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.” Rev. 19:9.—*General Conference Bulletin, 1893, pp. 408, 409.*

