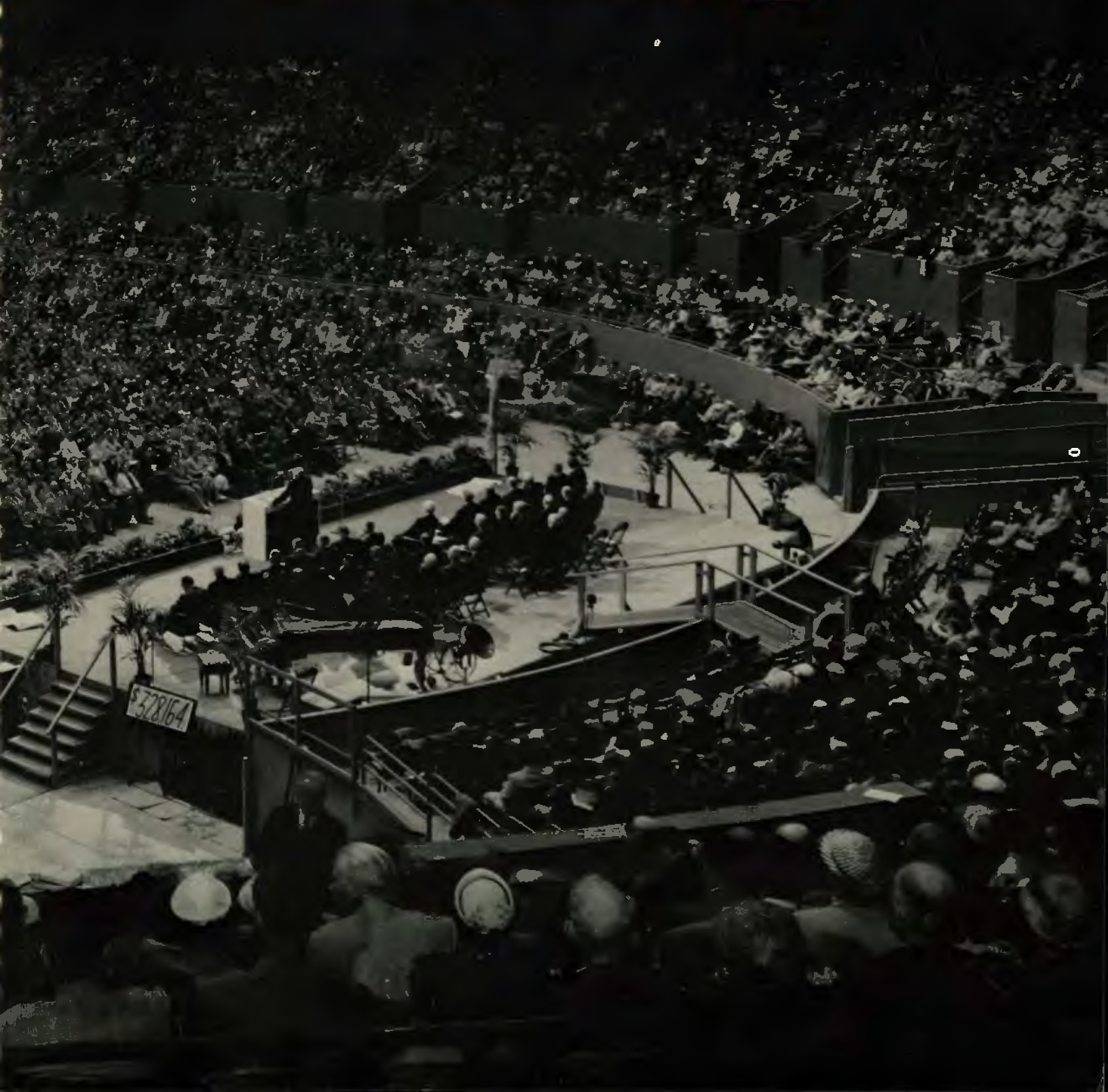


Adventist Heritage

A JOURNAL OF ADVENTIST HISTORY



SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST

GENERAL CONFERENCE

DAILY BULLETIN

VOL. 2.

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., OCT. 23, 1888.

NO. 4.

Fifth Day's Proceedings. GENERAL CONFERENCE.

MONDAY, Oct 22, 1888.

have endeavored to examine the accounts of the year and comparing with the amounts paid our missionaries in 1887, to secure an approximate estimate of next year's expenses, provided we make no addition to our present corps of workers. Our estimate is as follows:

| | | |
|--|------------|------------|
| Australia, 5 native and 4 American laborers..... | \$2,060 00 | \$4,730 00 |
| British, 9 native and 9 American laborers..... | 1,175 00 | 8,361 00 |
| | 3,500 00 | 4,286 52 |

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ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE . . .

EUGENE F. DURAND, Ph.D., is an Assistant Editor of the *Adventist Review*. A trained church historian, he has contributed numerous articles of historical interest to various denominational publications and authored the book *Yours in the Blessed Hope*, a popular biography of Uriah Smith.

JAMES R. NIX, M.Div., MSLS., carries several important responsibilities: he is Chairman of the Department of Archives and Special Collections at Loma Linda University, an Assistant Secretary of the Ellen G. White Estate and an Assistant Editor of *ADVENTIST HERITAGE*. An expert on Seventh-day Adventist history, he regularly conducts tours of early Adventist sites in the Midwest, New York state and New England.

NORVAL F. PEASE, Ph.D., has had a distinguished career as a pastor, educator, administrator and scholar. For over forty years he has made the subject of righteousness by faith the principal theme of his preaching and the subject of his scholarly research and publications. He is the author of seven books including the influential *By Faith Alone*, *The Faith That Saves* and *The Good News*, a large number of articles and several Sabbath School Quarterlies. He is enjoying his retirement with his wife Blanche in Yucaipa, California.

GEORGE W. REID, Ph.D., is currently Director of the Biblical Research Institute of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. He previously served as Associate Editor of the *Adventist Review* and as Professor of Religion at Southwestern Adventist College, in Keene, Texas. As principal researcher and writer of the presidential vignettes he was ably assisted by **WALTER R. BEACH, D.D.**, former Secretary of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, **DOROTHY MINCHIN-COMM, Ph.D.**, Professor of English at Loma Linda University and an Editor of *ADVENTIST HERITAGE*, **WILLIAM J. CORK**, a graduate student specializing in church history at Loma Linda University and **FREDERICK G. HOYT, Ph.D.**, Chairman of the Department of History and Political Science at Loma Linda University.

RICHARD W. SCHWARZ, Ph.D., is the author of the highly acclaimed *Lightbearers to the Remnant* (1979)—a scholarly textbook of the history of the Seventh-day Adventist church—and the biographical study *John Harvey Kellogg, M.D.* A graduate of the University of Michigan, Dr. Schwarz has had a lifelong interest in Adventist history. He is currently Vice President for Academic Administration at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

GERALD W. WHEELER, MALS., and **PAUL J. LANDA, Ph.D.**, have tried to capture the ethos of a General Conference session in their photo essay. Elder Wheeler is Associate Book Editor at the Review and Herald Publishing Association in Hagerstown, Maryland, and the author of six books. Dr. Landa is Professor of Church History in the Division of Religion of Loma Linda University and the Managing Editor of *ADVENTIST HERITAGE*.

Special thanks go to Mrs. **ASTA M. SMITH** of the Art Department of the Review and Herald Publishing Association for her assistance in providing photographs for this issue.

Cover: 1954 General Conference session in San Francisco's Cow Palace.

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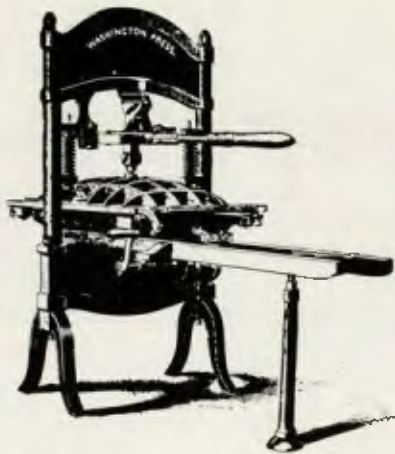
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The



Editor's Stamp

GUEST EDITORIAL

Norman J. Woods, Ph.D.
President, Loma Linda University

On the occasion of the 54th session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Loma Linda University salutes and welcomes the world delegates to New Orleans. Each institution represented and each member in attendance reminds us of the heritage and hope which we treasure. In celebrating this unique heritage and hope, we offer you this special issue of *Adventist Heritage*. May you share the sense of expectation, curiosity, faith and commitment expressed in these pages. We also congratulate the members of the editorial team on a decade of publication.

Although the spirit of our age is one of widespread indifference toward the past, it is imperative for all of us to recall our history. It reminds us of our roots, informing us of what we *are* as Adventists. It gives us a sense of direction for the present and the future, inspiring us toward what we may *become* in the hope of what is yet to be. Recalling our past also gives us a sense of assurance as we see the Lord's leading in our midst. This is why Ellen White exhorted: "The past history of the cause of God needs to be often brought up before the people, young and old."

In our attempt to overcome the present indifference toward the past, we should avoid the tendency to glorify it and to over rely upon it. The present and the future present us with new and ever more complex challenges—challenges for which the past has provided few answers. The pioneers built well. We need to continue and finish what they started. *Adventist Heritage* helps us discover that fine balance between the perils of forgetting our past, at one extreme, and embedding ourselves in tradition, at the other. We will do



well to recall the familiar words of counsel: "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."

As we face our worldwide task, we need to realize that the present is ours alone. We must never forget, however, that this present is flanked by our rich church heritage on the one hand and our unfailing, eternal hope on the other. As we celebrate together at this convocation, may we experience the Christian "wholeness" to which our Lord calls us. May we be assured that our heritage is blessed and that God continues to love and work through each of us.



The delegates to the 1888 General Conference session pose in front of the Minneapolis Seventh-day Adventist Church.

THE TRUTH AS IT IS IN JESUS

THE 1888 GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

Norval F. Pease

The place was the brand new Seventh-day Adventist church in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The occasion was the 27th General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, and the Institute preceding the regular session. The time was Wednesday, October 10, to Sunday, November 4, 1888.

The crowd was not large — fewer than 100 delegates plus visitors. The Seventh-day Adventist denomination was small in those days — only about 27,000 members. Accommodations for delegates consisted of fifteen tents plus a food service tent, pitched near the church.

While no complete records of General Conference sessions were kept at that early date, what happened during the 26-day period when the conference and its pre-session were held can be reconstructed to a large extent by comparing *The General Conference Daily Bulletin*, the accounts of the conference in the *Review and Herald* and *The Signs of the Times*, and the re-

ports of those present, preserved in letters and manuscripts.

The Institute preceding the General Conference meeting convened on the evening of October 10, in the basement of the church. This gathering had been planned for the purpose of discussing doctrinal, biblical, and theological questions regarding which conflicting opinions had arisen. These questions were reflected in the agenda published in the *Review* of October 16:

The subjects proposed to be considered in the hours for Bible and historical study are, so far, A historical view of the ten kingdoms, The divinity of Christ, The healing of the deadly wound, Justification by Faith, How far we should go in trying to use the wisdom of the serpent, and Pre-destination. Other subjects will doubtless be introduced.

It is interesting to note that this agenda listed six subjects for discussion, and left the way open for more. Apparently it was neither anticipated nor intended that this should be a "one issue" session.

GENERAL CONFERENCE
DAILY BULLETIN
 VOL. 17 MINNEAPOLIS,

First Day's Proceedings.

The Twenty-seventh Annual Session of the General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists began at the Severay Adventist Church in Minneapolis, Minn., at 9:30 a. m. Oct. 17, 1888, being called to order by Elder U. Smith, secretary of the conference, the President being detained at his sickness.

Prayer was offered by Elder U. Smith. On motion Elder S. N. Haskell was appointed temporary chairman.

Credentials of delegates, being called for, showed the following list of delegates, with the state or mission-territory represented:

- CALIFORNIA—W. C. White, S. N. Haskell, A. T. H. Jones, E. J. Waggoner.
- COLORADO—E. H. Gates, C. P. Haskell.
- DAKOTA—W. B. White, N. P. Nelson, Valentine L.
- DENMARK—J. G. Matteson.
- ILLINOIS—G. B. Starr, A. O. Tait.
- INDIANA—Wm. Covert, Victor Thompson, R. F. Sam, R. B. Craig.
- IOWA—J. H. Morrison, C. A. Washburn, D. R. J. Wakeham, W. R. Smith, H. Nicola.
- KANSAS—C. A. Hall, L. J. Rousseau, C. McElvey, W. Bagby, S. S. Shrook.

EXPLANATORY.

The readers of our last BULLETIN must have been amazed, annoyed, and confounded by some of the "printers' mistakes," or typographical errors found therein. We will only mention a few of the more important ones.

1. In the first column of the first page, eighth line from the bottom, read "as to" instead of "us to."
2. In second column, first page, second line from the top, read the following instead of the senseless line there found: "for lack of proper encouragement, exhortation, or reproof."
3. In the sixth line from the top on page 2, first column, read "passed over" for "pressed on."
4. In the eighth line of the same column read "lost" for "last."
5. In the thirteenth line of the next paragraph read "A minister never ought to visit a church without counseling with its officers," and the marks of parenthesis should not be there.
6. In same column lower down, for "G. B. Stern" read "G. B. Starr," and in same paragraph read "legislators" for "legislation."
7. Lower down in same column read "J. M. Rees," "C. P. Haskell," and "Capt. Eldridge."
8. In the middle of next column, instead of "our instructor's report" read "The Instructor report."
9. In last line of first column, page 3, read "Sabbath schools" instead of "Sunday schools."
10. In the tabulated report of S. S. work on page 4, in column headed "To State Society" the space opposite Switzerland should be left blank and the item 63 33 be carried up one line to Pennsylvania, and so with each item above to California, leaving no blank opposite Colorado. There are other mistakes which we will not notice. This is enough; we want no more.

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST
 GENERAL CONFERENCE
DAILY BULLETIN
 VOL. 2. MINNEAPOLIS, MINN., OCT. 23, 1888. NO.

Fifth Day's Proceedings.
 GENERAL CONFERENCE.

MONDAY, Oct 22, 1888.

The fifth meeting of the conference was held at 10:30 a. m. Prayer was offered by Elder Wm. Covert. The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved after which a portion of a letter from Elder George L. Butler, the president, was read by the secretary. The condition of Elder Butler's health was reported by himself to be somewhat improved. Elder W. C. White continued his report, giving statistics concerning the condition of the work in the various foreign missions. From the written report furnished by Brother White, we glean the following facts and figures.

have endeavored to examine the accounts of the year and comparing with the amounts paid our missionaries in 1887 to secure an approximate estimate of next year's expense provided we make no addition to our present corps of workers. Our estimate is as follows:

| | | |
|---|-------------------|--------------------|
| Australia, 5 native and 4 American laborers..... | \$2,060 00 | \$4,750 00 |
| British, 9 native and 9 American laborers..... | 1,175 00 | 6,861 00 |
| Central European, 37 native and 5 Am. laborers..... | 3,800 00 | 4,288 00 |
| Scandinavian, 7 native and 5 American laborers..... | 1,551 00 | 5,127 46 |
| South Africa, 2 native and 4 American laborers..... | 1,02 00 | 1,320 50 |
| Total..... | \$9,611 00 | \$22,315 22 |

To this may be added:

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Annual loss on Present Truth, (16-page semi-monthly)..... | \$1,200 |
| Rent on British Mission office, saleroom and A. M. School..... | 1,300 |
| Loss on the French and German journals, pub. at Basel..... | 1,800 |
| Loss on Scandinavian journals, pub. at Christiania..... | 800 |
| Expense of maintaining the missionary ship, with a crew of 5 men, and 4 competent laborers..... | 3,500 |
| Total..... | \$8,000 |

To this might be added the probable expense of some of the most important enterprises which we ought to engage in at once:

| | |
|--|------------|
| A city mission and canvassing school in Hamburg..... | \$2,000 00 |
| For ship mission work..... | 1,000 00 |
| To send and maintain 2 laborers to B..... | 1,000 00 |

MISSION SECRETARY—
 TUED.
 report we see that there are

Anyone who makes a study of the 1888 General Conference and the Institute preceding it is impressed by the fact that this meeting was important, not for what was done, but for what was said. The actions of this session were few, and of limited consequence. The talks, sermons, studies, and discussions were of far reaching importance, however. The following excerpts from a devotional presented by Ellen G. White on the first day of the Institute (Thursday, October 11) convey the spirit of the meetings. Speaking on the topic "A Living Connection with God," she exhorted:

We want the name of Jesus to break down the barriers between our souls and God and then the peace of Christ will abide in our hearts by faith: . . . We want less of self and more of Jesus. We want to learn how to believe. . . .
 Have faith in God. This faith will enable us to have a perfect trust and to look upon every movement of God's own light. . . .

Despite many typographical errors, the now rare Daily Bulletins provide invaluable information of the 1888 General Conference meetings.



Prominent roles were played at the 1888 Bible Institute and General Conference by Alonzo T. Jones (Above left), Ellet J. Waggoner and his first wife Jessie (Above right) and Uriah Smith (Right). Jones and Waggoner, co-editors of the *Signs of the Times* were eloquent proponents of the doctrine of righteousness by faith; Smith, editor of the *Review and Herald*, opposed the new trend emphasizing grace and faith. Adventist Heritage Collection

You should have a clear apprehension of the gospel. . . . If the Spirit of God works with our efforts, we shall be called out not only to present repentance in its true light but pardon also, and to point to the cleansing fountain where all pollution may be washed away. . . .

The mystery of revelation challenges investigation, for there are mines of truth to be opened to God's people. We must put off self-righteousness, we must reach loftier heights. God will direct the soul action if we seek the righteousness of Christ so that God can be pleased with our efforts. We want none of self and all of Jesus.

Alonzo T. Jones, co-editor of *The Signs of the Times* and a dynamic preacher, spoke three times during the first full day of the Institute. One of his major concerns was the identity of the ten kingdoms of Daniel's prophecy. There was an ongoing argument between Jones and Uriah Smith as to whether the Alemanni or the Huns should be listed among these ten kingdoms. This argument produced tensions that militated against a full appreciation of more important themes discussed later in the session. Later the same day, Ellet J. Waggoner, the other editor of *The Signs of the Times*, spoke on the duties of church officers.



The *Review* of October 23 records that a sermon was preached by Ellen White on October 13, the first Sabbath of the Institute. This was a very "upbeat" discourse, based on 1 John 3:1: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not because it knew him not." A few quotations reveal the burden of the speaker:

We cannot appreciate God unless we take into our souls the great plan of redemption. . . .

After the transgression of Adam in Eden it was Christ whom God gave to us, not that we might be saved in our sins, but that we might be saved from our sins. . . .

We may see our wretchedness, and we should pray that He will reveal Himself to us as a sin-pardoning Redeemer. . . .

While we are worshiping God there will be no hatred, no envy, no evil surmising. Brethren, we have no time for these. We cannot think of them. There is something else before us. It is the eternal weight of glory, the plan of salvation. We ought to understand it from beginning to the close, *that we may present it justly to the world.* . . .

What is our work? *To reveal Christ to the world.* . . . How is Christ to be revealed to the world, unless it is through those who take hold of His merits, who believe in Jesus Christ, to the saving of their souls (emphasis added).

The italicized portions in the two previous paragraphs reveal an emphasis often overlooked. The "everlasting gospel," as stressed at the 1888 conference, was not just for the edification of preachers and church members. The message that was to be preached *to the world* was "the truth as it is in Jesus." Every doctrine was to be proclaimed in the context of the cross. A pure gospel of salvation was to rescue people, transform them, and redeem them.

The Institute agenda was not completed during the week allotted it. According to the *Review* of October 23, "A portion of the time of the conference each day will be occupied with the questions till all who wish have spoken upon them."

As the meetings progressed, tensions kept growing. George I. Butler, the president of the General Conference, was unable to attend because of illness. He was very concerned about the doctrinal teachings of Waggoner and Jones, and he was particularly upset when he learned that Ellen White seemed to be supporting these two young ministers. Butler wrote a 39-page letter to her in which he attributed his five-month-long illness largely to tension and concern he experienced on account of her refusal to condemn Waggoner for his views on the law in the book of Galatians—views which were in direct conflict with her own and those of Uriah Smith. The depths of Butler's concern became evident when he dispatched his famous telegram urging all to "Stand by the old landmarks."

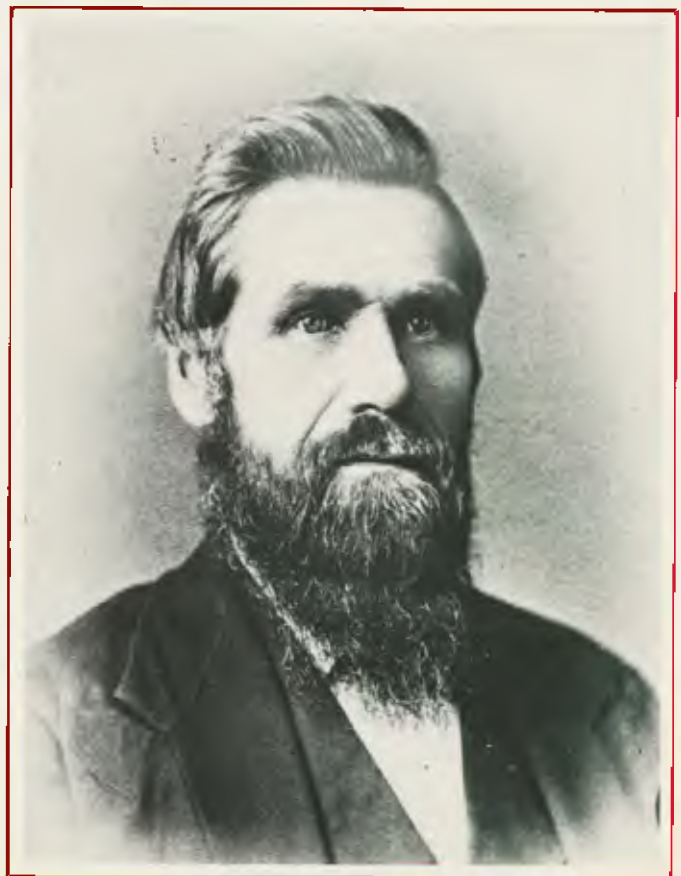
Elder Stephen N. Haskell served as temporary chairman of the General Conference session in the absence of ailing president George I. Butler. Adventist Heritage Collection

The General Conference session convened on the morning of Wednesday, October 17. Stephen N. Haskell was the temporary chairman in Butler's absence. Following the opening services, a meeting was held during which Uriah Smith again discussed the "ten kingdoms" in the book of Daniel. That afternoon, Waggoner discussed the law of God and its relation to the gospel of Christ. His talk was based on Paul's epistle to the Romans.

The next day, Thursday, Waggoner "gave another lesson on the law and the gospel." His series of studies continued until Thursday, October 25. They were edited some time later by the author himself and published by Pacific Press, beginning in October, 1890.

There is a prominent Christological theme in these presentations which stress the deity of Christ at a time when some were propounding Arian views. Though not totally free from a subordinationist Christology, Waggoner was gradually moving away from it because of his clearer understanding of the doctrines of the atonement, justification and sanctification. In his summary of Waggoner's sermons at the 1888 General Conference session, Leroy Froom, in his book *Movement of Destiny*, has captured the true essence of these messages: "Christ in all the fullness of the Godhead—must be set forth as the foundation of all genuine, adequate, and effective righteousness by faith."

A few quotations from Waggoner's *Christ and His Righteousness*, will help the reader in catching the spirit of the message which he endeavored to present:



Ministers of the Gospel have an inspired warrant for keeping the theme, Christ, continually before the people, and directing the attention of the people to Him alone (page 5).

It is only by continually and prayerfully considering Jesus as He is revealed in the Bible, that we can keep from becoming weary in well-doing, and from fainting by the way (page 7).

There is a text . . . which briefly sums up all that Christ is to man, and gives the most comprehensive reason for considering Him. It is this: "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" 1 Cor. 1:30. We are ignorant, wicked and lost; Christ is to us wisdom, righteousness, redemption. What a range! From ignorance and sin to righteousness and redemption (pages 7, 8).

The sinner's surety of full and free pardon lies in the fact that the Lawgiver Himself, the One against whom he has rebelled and whom he has defied, is the One who gave Himself for us (page 45).

It matters not how much a person boasts in the law of God; if he rejects or ignores implicit faith in Christ, he is in no better state than the man who directly assails the law. The man of faith is the only one who truly honors the law of God (page 95).

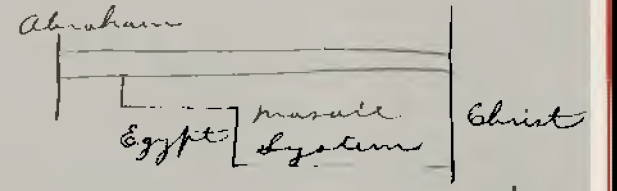
One may ask, "Why should any Christian object to sentiments like these?" There seemed to be a fear on the part of many of Waggoner's listeners that he was undermining the Law of God. One reason for this fear was his view on the meaning of the law in Galatians. While Waggoner was giving his studies, a blackboard was brought into the auditorium on which were written



Tuesday

After Smith is done, we are no longer under the lawmaster. What this means is that we cannot appreciate the fullness of the law. Acts 13:38 I was expected you through the law of Moses. regarded as a means, not an end.

All the two husbands. never done to the law in that sense. as the 2nd husband is under the same law as death of the first Gal 2:18, 19



One family could easily be kept separate. The nation of millions required this law to keep them separate. In beginning God gave a law that could give life.

Keep the two laws. Israel's law according to nature when Isaac grew. Israel was cast on the law.

I recognize in S of P I because of it having easy to be understood. A man holding the other view, in a Campbellite, and had to resort to this position.

Sample of the notes taken by William C. White during the studies on the books of Galatians and Daniel. Courtesy Ellen G. White Estate

J. H. Morrison, a delegate from Iowa, sharply disagreed with Waggoner on the subject of the law in the book of Galatians. Loma Linda Heritage Room

the following propositions:

1) "Resolved—That the Law in Galatians is the Ceremonial Law."

(Signed) J. H. Morrison

2) "Resolved—That the Law in Galatians is the Moral Law."

(Signed)

Waggoner was asked to sign the second proposition but he refused, saying he had not come to debate—that righteousness is not obtained by keeping *either* law, but by faith alone. It is obvious that feelings were running very high with the delegates who opposed or questioned Waggoner's preaching on righteousness by faith. They regarded themselves as *savers* of the denomination, reasoning that by devaluing the role of the Moral Law, it would ultimately be knocked out of the Bible itself. This would compromise the Sabbath truth and would sound the death knell of Seventh-day Adventism.

Several years later, Ellen White put her finger on the real issue when she wrote: "In the scripture [Gal. 3:24] the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. . . . An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren Waggoner and Jones."

Of the approximately twenty talks and sermons given by Ellen White during the Institute and the Conference, ten have been preserved. These can be found in Albert V. Olson's *Thirteen Crisis Years, 1888-1901*. Reference has already been made to her morning talk and sermon given during the week of the Institute. Of importance for our study were her presentations on October 18, 19, and 20, the introductory days of the General Conference session. These three talks seem to be related. They include appeals for spiritual growth, advancement in Christian experience, and deeper understanding of the meaning of salvation.

A few sentences from her first message on "The Need of Advancement" help us catch the burden on her mind:

I hope that at the beginning of this meeting our hearts may be impressed with the positive statement of our Savior, "Without me ye can do nothing." We have a great and solemn truth committed to us for these last days, but a mere assent to the belief in this truth will not save us. The principles of the truth must be interwoven with our character and life. . . . There are many who are content with superficial knowledge of the truth. The precious truths for this time are brought out so clearly in our publications that many are satisfied, and do not search the Scriptures for themselves.

In this talk, Ellen White was quite critical of some members of the ministry. She was concerned that some men were inducted into the ministry without considering "whether their lives [gave] evidence that they [had] a saving knowledge of Christ." Regarding such ministers, she declared, "Christ is not abiding in their hearts

by faith," and "There are too many Christless sermons preached." It was evident that she was concerned about spiritual insight and Christian commitment on the part of the ministry.

On Friday, October 19, she gave another morning talk entitled "Have Light in Yourselves." In this homily, she used the statement that she repeated several times during the Conference: "God desires that we shall have a thorough understanding of *the truth as it is in Jesus*" (emphasis added). She also said, "We need to grow in our knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

The Sabbath sermon on October 20 was entitled, "Advancing in Christian Experience." Her scripture lesson was 2 Peter 1:1-12, which includes "Peter's Ladder"—"Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." The speaker exhorted her listeners: "You cannot be a fruitful Christian and have knowledge of our Lord and Savior unless you are a practical Christian, unless you are making progress all the time in the divine life."

This long sermon, full of the gospel of salvation, was delivered in typical sermonic style:

The human race is accepted in the Beloved. His long human arm encircles the race, while with His divine arm He grasps the throne of the Infinite, and He opens to man all of heaven. . . .

Man comes to Christ, and God and man are united at the cross, and here mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and truth have kissed each other. . . .

We have a wonderful friend in Jesus, who came to save His people from the transgression of the law. What is sin? The only definition of sin is that it is the transgression of the law. Then here in Jesus Christ, who comes right in and imparts His righteousness to us; we cannot overcome in our own strength, but by faith in Him. If you will believe on Jesus Christ you will have Him today. You must believe that He is your Savior *now*, and that He imputes to you His righteousness because He has died, and because He has been obedient unto every requirement of that transgressed law of God. If you do this, you will have a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

The text of four additional talks and sermons given by Ellen White between Sunday, October 21, and Wednesday, October 24, reveal that the Minneapolis Conference was not a "one-issue" meeting—at least for her.

On October 21 she declared, "There is no power in the law to save or to pardon the transgressor." Later the same day she talked about the power of "kindly words and deeds." In the same sermon she advocated practical common sense: "He [God] desires us to use our reason and experience, by their help adapting methods and plans which, under the existing circumstances, are for the benefit of the church and the schools and the other institutions which have been established." She stressed the importance of Christian

love, and she appealed for patience: "We see individuals committing errors, and we are pained because their lives are not in accordance with the Bible standard of righteousness. But we are not to become impatient. . . ." And there was repeated emphasis that those who endeavored to impart the grace of Christ must first receive it.

Two days later — Tuesday, October 23 — Ellen White talked about missionary work. Among her comments was the following exhortation:

I want to know why we should not as Christians who profess to believe the most solemn truths that God ever gave to mortals, why we should not have works correspond to our faith. . . .

We want to be the very best and most intelligent workers that there are anywhere. . . .

But the first work is a personal consecration to God.

A morning talk on Wednesday, October 24, expressed concern about the conflict that was reaching a crescendo at the session. The depth of Ellen White's feelings at this time is reflected in her statement, "I never was more alarmed than at the present time." Her appeal was "Now, do let us have common sense," and "Now brethren, we want *the truth as it is in Jesus*." Again she stressed the evangelistic significance of a proper understanding of the gospel: "I have seen that precious souls who would have embraced the truth have been turned away from it because of the manner in which the truth has been handled, because Jesus was not in it."

Her final thrust at the session was a manuscript entitled "A Call to a Deeper Study of the Word" written on November 1. It was addressed, "Dear Brethren Assembled at General Conference," and *may* have been read to the assembly on the closing Sabbath, November 3. Here are some excerpts from this important presentation:

Dr. Waggoner has spoken to us in a straight-forward manner. There is precious light in what he has said. Some things presented in reference to the law in Galatians, if I fully understand his position, do not harmonize with the understanding I have had on this subject; but the truth will lose nothing by investigation, therefore I plead for Christ's sake that you come to the living Oracles, and with prayer and humiliation seek God. . . .

The fact that he honestly holds some views of the Scripture differing from yours or mine is no reason why we should treat him as an offender, or a dangerous man, and make him the subject of unjust criticism. . . .

I see the beauty of truth in the presentation of the righteousness of Christ in relation to the law as the doctor has placed before us. . . . If our ministering brethren would accept the doctrine which has been presented so clearly — the righteousness of Christ in connection with the law — and I know they need to accept this, then prejudices would not have a controlling power, and the people would be fed with their portion of meat in due season. . . .

The truth must be presented as it is in Jesus. . . .

The debating spirit has come into the ranks of Sabbath keepers to take the place of the Spirit of God. They have placed finite men where God should be, but nothing can suffice for us but to have Christ dwell in our hearts by faith. The truth must be ours. Christ must be our Savior by an experimental knowledge. *We should know by faith what it is to have our sins pardoned, and to be born again. . . .*

Ask God to lead you into all truth. Tell Him that you want *the truth as it is in Jesus*. . . .

Has the truth as it is in Jesus been received into your heart? (emphasis added).

Every minister and member could profit by reading and re-reading this manuscript. (It may be found in

A series of instructive lectures has been given on "Justification by faith" by Eld. E. J. Waggoner. The closing one was given this morning. With the foundation principles all are agreed, but there are some differences in regard to the interpretation of several passages. The lectures have tended to a more thorough investigation of the truth, and it is hoped that the unity of the faith will be reached on this important question.

From the General Conference Daily Bulletin, October 26, 1888.

Olson's *Thirteen Crisis Years*, pages 303-311.) It is a masterpiece in crisis management. It is almost certain that Waggoner's presentations would have been rejected and Waggoner himself would have been repudiated had he not had the "unparalleled endorsement" of Ellen White. As it worked out, he had the opportunity of participating with her in a series of revivals extending over several years. This cooperative venture kept the issue of righteousness by faith in Christ alive, and resulted in a deeper spiritual experience for many people.

The long-range results of the Minneapolis Conference are not easy to evaluate. Three schools of thought have developed during the intervening years. One group sees the 1888 session as a great turning point in the direction of a fuller acceptance and understanding of the Gospel of Salvation on the part of Seventh-day Adventists. Another group takes an opposite view, pointing to the evidences of hostility toward the doctrine of righteousness by faith. They feel that the return of Jesus was delayed, and that the church today must repent for the mistakes of nearly a century ago. A third group surveys the evidence, and sees both positions and negative factors about the 1888 conference and its aftermath. They see some accepting and being blessed. They see other doubting and obstructing. They hear Ellen White rejoicing over victories and mourning over defeats.

William C. White and his wife Mary Kelsey White.

Courtesy Review and Herald Publishing Association



Ambivalence over the results of the conference became obvious as soon as the meeting closed. William C. White wrote the following comment to a friend:

This has been a very interesting conference, and although not accompanied with all the peace and harmony that sometimes has been manifest, it is perhaps as profitable a meeting as was ever held, for many important principles were made prominent, and some conclusions arrived at, that will be of great value as they may influence our future work. Many go forth from this meeting determined to study the Bible as never before, and this will result in clearer preaching.

Shortly thereafter, Ellen White wrote a letter to Mary White, William C. White's wife, in which she commented: "I have spoken nearly twenty times with great freedom and we believe that this meeting will result in great good. We know not the future but we feel that Jesus stands at the helm and we shall not be shipwrecked. My courage and faith have been good and have not failed me, notwithstanding we have had the hardest and most incomprehensible tug of war we have ever had among our people."

During the decade following 1888, Ellen White, Jones and Waggoner preached and wrote on the subject of salvation by faith. It was during this decade that the books *Steps to Christ* and *The Desire of Ages* were written. Some who opposed the message of the General Conference session changed their views. The church never formally rejected the doctrine of righteousness by faith. Many members were greatly blessed by it—others remained indifferent. Some learned the secret of spreading the Adventist message in the context of the bounteous grace and love of our Lord, while others struggled on proclaiming a legalistic Adventism.

There was a revival of interest in this subject in the 1920's, encouraged by Elder Arthur G. Daniells. The General Conference session of 1926 sent strong messages to the church on grace, faith, repentance, and salvation. It was a contrast to the session of 1888 in that the leading officers of the church were at the forefront in proclaiming the "good news."

During the past few decades, many books, chapters in books, articles, and sermons have championed the doctrine of salvation by faith in Christ. Three of the thirteen points in our baptismal certificate deal with this doctrine directly. Yes, Seventh-day Adventists unequivocally believe in salvation by faith. We believe that through God's grace, accepted by our faith, we *become* Christians, we *grow* in stature as Christians, and someday we will have a home in the place Jesus went to prepare for us.

We do not believe that we are saved by observing law, but we do believe that if we are saved, we will seek to follow our Savior's directions for living. We would agree with David E. Wells, a contemporary Evangelical author, who wrote: "Salvation is a past event, a continuing process and a future hope."

Reorganization

RICHARD W. SCHWARZ

*1901 General Conference Session
Battle Creek, Michigan*

and Reform

The more than 200 delegates heading toward Battle Creek during the last days of March, 1901, came with a mixture of apprehension and hope. Their apprehension grew out of the experiences of the preceding decade, especially the increasing tension and estrangement between General Conference President George A. Irwin and Dr. John Harvey Kellogg, determined leader of the church's rapidly expanding medical missionary work. Hope centered on the fact that, for the first time since 1891, Ellen White would once more be in attendance at the session.

Many changes had taken place in the thirty-eight years since representatives from six local conferences, all in the upper Midwestern United States, had organized the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Battle Creek in the spring of 1863. At that time there were only an estimated 3,500 members; by 1901 there were that many *workers* employed by the church and its institutions. Six local conferences had grown to fifty-seven — with an additional forty-one organized missions scattered around the world. Total membership approached 80,000 in over 2,000 local congregations.

Organizational refinement had not kept pace with numerical growth and geographic spread. Sometimes traditions develop quickly, and the strong personalities of James White and George I. Butler, who between them presided over the new church for twenty-one of its first twenty-five years, quickly accustomed Adventists to heavy dependence on the General Conference president. Many of Adventism's ablest converts



All out-of-state delegates passed through the Battle Creek railroad station on their way to the 1901 General Conference session. Courtesy The Willard Library



*Dr. John
Harvey Kellogg*
Adventist Heritage Collection



*Elder George A.
Irwin*
Adventist Heritage
Collection

NOTICE 1

In harmony with Article V, Section 1, of the General Conference Constitution, notice is hereby given that the thirty-fourth session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists will be held at Battle Creek, Mich., U. S. A., April 2-23, 1901. The meetings will be held in the Seventh-day Adventist Tabernacle, beginning Tuesday, April 2, at 9 A. M. The membership of the Conference is defined in Article III of the Constitution.

G. A. IRWIN,
Pres. Gen. Conf.

streamed into Battle Creek to operate the church's premier publishing, medical and educational institutions. This small American city became the focal point of Adventism. Although ministers and laity alike would have been horrified at the thought, Battle Creek was fast becoming a Seventh-day Adventist "Rome," the center to which all matters of doctrine, policy and operations were referred for decision.

Since 1889, delegates to the biennial General Conference sessions had struggled half-heartedly to decentralize decision making. Beginning in 1897 they sought to spread their president's responsibilities among the heads of the Foreign Mission Board and the General Conference Association. Mission Board offices had even been relocated to Philadelphia in an effort to break up the Battle Creek "ring." Yet these well-meaning efforts brought confusion rather than progress. The unity needed by the struggling church if it was to accomplish its herculean mission seemed sadly lacking. "There is a prevailing feeling," wrote General Conference Association President Irwin H. Evans to Ellen White in 1898, "that every man should do as he pleases."

The 1899 General Conference session, meeting in South Lancaster, Massachusetts, reverberated with complaints concerning denominational policies, organization and leadership. Yet no concrete steps were taken to rectify the situation. There was common recognition of the major problems, but no consensus as to their cure. Hence it was not strange that by the spring of 1900 Ellen White, in far off Australia, became increasingly convinced that she must return to the United States before the next General Conference session.

Originally Mrs. White intended to leave Australia in November, 1900, but with the General Conference scheduled to meet in Battle Creek in February, 1901, she advanced her departure to August. Even though a major reason for her return had been to attend this meeting, Ellen White shrank from the long trip to Battle Creek in mid-winter. In an effort to accommodate her advancing years, church leaders tentatively rescheduled the session to meet in Oakland, California.

Then the Battle Creek "rumor mill" went into operation. Ellen White was informed that Dr. Kellogg thought she was "trying to crush him." With the conference in Oakland, sanitarium, college and publishing house workers could not attend except at great expense. Kellogg would see this as a scheme to divest him of support and might perhaps sever his ties with the denomination. In Australia, Mrs. White had already heard the rumor alleging that she was scheming to bring her son, William C. White, and Arthur G. Daniells into the top church leadership posts. Therefore, she informed the General Conference Committee, she was prepared to come to Battle Creek. The brethren made one concession to Mrs. White's flat statement that mid-winter was "not the proper time to hold a conference"; the session, though held in Battle Creek, was delayed until April 2-23, 1901.

Dr. Kellogg invited Ellen White to stay at the Sanitarium throughout the convocation and the Publish-

ing Convention that preceded it. Later he offered accommodation for her and her helpers in his spacious home. Although Ellen desperately wanted comfortable, secluded surroundings, others also begged her to stay with them. She knew that, wherever she stayed, it would be alleged that her hosts were talking to her, "telling her about the state of the church. That is why she talks as she does." And so, she hesitated. Then during a Friday evening worship in mid-February, she felt impressed to accept Kellogg's invitation. She would be an encouragement to him and her presence in his home would give dramatic testimony to the unity so badly needed. For this she carried a very strong burden.

Five days before the scheduled opening of the Conference session, Ellen White had opportunity to share her concerns with many church leaders assembled for the Publishing Convention.

"I feel an intense desire that at this meeting we shall come into right relation with God," she began. Human ambition and activity were useless without God's Spirit, which He was anxious to provide so that Christ could abide in the delegates' hearts. Speaking plainly of God's desire for those assembling, Mrs. White continued:

He wants you at the beginning of this meeting to lay off whatever of controversy, of strife, of dissension, of murmuring, you have been carrying. What we need is a great deal more of Christ and none of self.

A number of church leaders decided that a preliminary meeting should be held in which Ellen White could share with them the insights she had received from God. A meeting of the General Conference Committee, the Foreign Mission Board, local conference presidents and leaders from the major church institutions was arranged for the Battle Creek College Library on the afternoon of April 1. At this gathering, and again at the conference's opening session the following day, Mrs. White stressed the need for reorganizing the denominational machinery. Although she did not give the delegates detailed instruction on how this should be accomplished, she emphatically presented basic principles which must be applied to the church's structure: "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." There was to be no continuation of the idea that all aspects of denominational work in every area of the world field must be referred to the General Conference leadership for approval or disapproval. Church activities between the biennial General Conference sessions should be under the direction of an enlarged executive committee which would include representatives from all lines of the work — publishing, educational and medical as well as evangelistic. Mrs. White specifically condemned the "manipulating" activities that had dominated conference sessions for the preceding decade and a half. She noted that the selfish attitudes on the part of some who were demanding high wages, especially in the publishing houses, were "contemptible" in God's sight.

Two other areas of concern loomed large in Ellen White's hour and a half address in the College library. She wanted delegates to immerse themselves in the

Bible and to seek out its principles rather than quoting her. She was also vitally concerned about the uniting of the medical work with the gospel ministry. She saw medical missionary work as "the breaking-up plow" to open new fields. Noting that many had been slow to follow Dr. Kellogg's lead in promoting health reform, she stated flatly that "God wants every soul to stand shoulder to shoulder with Dr. Kellogg."

When the conference officially opened on April 2, it was soon evident that President Irwin did not plan to dominate the session. Following the roll call of delegates, the admission of four new local conferences to the General Conference, and a relatively brief review of progress during the preceding two years, Irwin opined that the delegates were participating in "a momentous occasion." "If a willingness quickly to yield individual opinions and ideas to the manifest leading of the Holy Spirit shall characterize the delegates and members of this conference," the president stated, "all will be well." He then yielded the floor to Mrs. White, who for the next hour re-emphasized much of what she had said to the smaller group of leaders the preceding day.

Hard on the heels of Ellen White's remarks, Arthur G. Daniells asked to speak. During the previous decade he had been closely associated with Mrs. White and her son Willie in developing the work in Australia. At 43, Daniells was in his prime—a vigorous man known to be a good speaker and careful organizer. He now came forward to suggest suspension of customary rules and precedents for organizing the Conference. Instead, Daniells moved the formation of a broadly based General Committee which would decide the nature and

In behalf of the meeting that I have referred to, I wish to introduce the following motion:—

"I move that the usual rules and precedents for arranging and transacting the business of the Conference be suspended, and that a General Committee be hereby appointed, to consist of the following persons: The presidents and secretaries of the General Conference, of the General Conference Association, of the European and Australasian Union Conferences; of the Review and Herald, Pacific Press, and Echo Publishing Companies; of the Foreign Mission Board, Medical Missionary and Benevolent Associations; and the following persons as may be deemed important and connected with the same to be appointed by the committee when organized, and this committee to constitute a general or central committee, which shall do such work as necessarily must be done in forwarding the work of the Conference, and preparing the business to bring before the delegates."

Elder Arthur G. Daniell's sweeping motion which led to the establishment of a large working Committee on Counsel that contributed major recommendations for the restructuring of the denomination.

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE BULLETIN

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Enter

DAILY PROGRAM OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE.

5:30-6:30 A. M., Social-meeting.
 7:00 A. M., Breakfast.
 9:00-10:00 A. M., Bible Study.
 10:30-12:20 A. M., Business Proceedings.
 1:00 P. M., Dinner.
 3:00-5:00 P. M., General Business.
 6:00-6:50 P. M., Divisional Prayer-meeting.
 7:00-8:15 P. M., Preaching.

The days were long and busy for the delegates who attended the 1901 General Conference session.



Courtesy Loma Linda University Heritage Room

order of business to be presented to all the delegates. This large committee, subsequently called the Committee on Counsel, included the leaders of all the conferences, publishing houses, colleges, the Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association and such "old timers" as John N. Loughborough, Stephen N. Haskell, Alonzo T. Jones and William W. Prescott. The committee was to have power to add any persons needed to make certain that all the important enterprises and interests of the church, worldwide, were represented.

Daniells' motion was immediately supported by Elder Haskell. Initially, however, not all of the delegates were certain that this was the way to proceed. Ellet J. Waggoner thought the conference to be "in great danger of going over the same road in a different rut." Perhaps the entire conference should act as a "committee of the whole" and set its own agenda and organization. In any event, Waggoner was concerned that before anything could be accomplished "there should be a seeking of the Lord, a praying to the Lord, to know what is the right thing to be done."

Although not opposed to prayer, Mrs. White wanted "everyone to be careful how he throws in a block—'not now, wait, wait, wait, wait.' We want to know what the right thing is and move right away." At this point the delegates suspended their discussion for an earnest session of prayer led by W. C. White, S. N. Haskell, O. A. Olsen, E. J. Waggoner and W. W. Prescott. A minimum of discussion followed, after which the delegates unanimously agreed to the committee Daniells had proposed.

Then, under Daniells' leadership, the Committee on Counsel organized itself and prepared recommendations. Meanwhile, the remainder of the delegates listened to Bible studies, progress reports from various geographic areas, and participated in legal meetings of the Review and Herald Publishing Association and the Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association. Behind the scenes, the Committee on Counsel divided into sub-committees on education, canvassing and colporteur work, publishing, sanitariums, missionary work, religious liberty, and perhaps most important, organization. This last sub-committee, chaired by W. C. White, included two men who had served as General Conference president (Ole A. Olsen and George A. Irwin) and one who would soon do so—A. G. Daniells. Other strong members were J. N. Loughborough, W. W. Prescott, A. T. Jones, J. H. Kellogg, I. H. Evans, S. H. Lane, and R. M. Kilgore.

One week after the conference opened, the Committee on Organization presented a resolution calling for union conferences to be organized in the six geographical districts first established in North America in 1889. This organization was to take place "as rapidly as possible during this session." Five days earlier, anticipating this recommendation, delegates representing the Southern District petitioned the conference to approve their organization into a union conference. They also pressed their fellow delegates to implement immediately the decision made four years before at Lincoln, Nebraska, to organize union conferences in Europe and America "as soon as deemed ad-

visable." This action had never been put into practice in spite of Australia's pioneering the union conference concept in 1894.

Evidently many in Battle Creek were not overly impressed by the union conference model established so far from headquarters. They saw this as an effort to curtail their influence and determined that if Australia was bent on becoming self-governing it could also be financially self-supporting. This latter policy was not designed to hasten the move to self-government, nor did it win the approval of Ellen White. Elder Daniells reported that when she heard this decision she exclaimed, "Who made such a ruling as that? He had better been saying his prayers."

Both Daniells and Ellen White strongly supported the efforts to organize the nine southern states into a union conference. Although Mrs. White acknowledged that originally the plan was for the General Conference to "extend over the whole world," she now said, "But this is not in God's order." It would be healthier for conferences to be organized in different localities, but "this does not mean that we are to cut ourselves apart from one another, and be as separate atoms." Each geo-



The Battle Creek Tabernacle where the 1901 General Conference session took place. Bottom right photograph shows Ellen G. White addressing the conference. Courtesy Loma Linda University Heritage Room

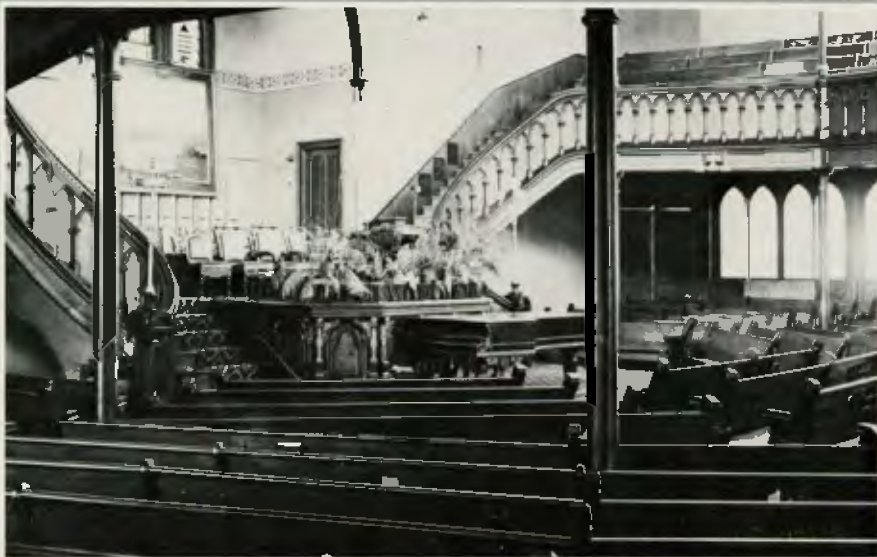
graphic area would know best how to promote the work in its area. Such an increased measure of self government should have been instituted "years ago."

"Remember that God can give wisdom to those who handle His work," Sister White assured the delegates. "It is not necessary to send thousands of miles to Battle Creek for advice, and then have to wait weeks before an answer can be received. Those who are right on the ground are to decide what shall be done." Besides there needed to be "a scattering from Battle Creek." It was time to go out and possess new territory, putting trust in the "Lord God of Israel."

Delegates from the other districts were soon following the lead of the southern states and organizing union conferences. They were also following the Australian model in disbanding the separate associations (Sabbath School, Tract and Missionary Society, Religious Liberty) and substituting a departmental secretary employed by the conference. As Daniells reported, "We understood from the light given, that we must simplify our organization so as to have as little machinery as possible. Instead of having so many men at work running the machinery, we were to keep them in the field."

On April 6, the first Sabbath of the conference, Ellen White spoke to a capacity crowd of nearly 3,500 in the Tabernacle. An additional 1,000-1,500 persons who could not be accommodated there chose between listening to Prescott in the College chapel, Waggoner in the Review and Herald chapel or John O. Corliss at the Sanitarium. Mrs. White spoke to her hearers on the responsibilities of tithe paying. Church finance was a concern in 1901; the previous December the General Conference had ended the year with only \$32.93 in the treasury! Its expenditures during the preceding biennium had exceeded income by over \$15,000. Small wonder that the Committee on Organization recommended that the new union conference constitutions provide that only necessary administrative funds be retained in the local union with the rest being forwarded to the General Conference for its expenses and for aiding weaker conferences.

The Committee on Finance expressed a similar concern. Their report, adopted on April 9, called for a second tithe to be paid by each conference to the General Conference to support mission work (A tithe of each



FINANCIAL STATEMENT Of the General Conference Association for Year Ending Dec. 31, 1900.

RESOURCES.

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Real and Personal Estate..... | \$267,725.85 | |
| Bills Receivable..... | 78,718.27 | |
| Gen. Conf. Office Fixtures..... | 2,089.28 | |
| General Conference..... | 13,112.34 | |
| Review and Herald (bank)..... | 1,306.71 | |
| Int. Tract Society Ltd..... | 79.31 | |
| Central European Mission..... | 15.07 | |
| Echo Publishing Co..... | 3,072.98 | |
| Australian Tract Society..... | 1,661.69 | |
| New Zealand Tract Soc..... | 4,359.23 | |
| Battle Cr'k Tent Mfg. Co..... | 6,047.35 | |
| Huntsville School..... | 10,965.16 | |
| General Conf. Pub. Co..... | 10,657.20 | |
| General Conf. Library..... | 518.38 | |
| General Conf. Building..... | 724.56 | |
| Gen. Conf. Ass'n Library..... | 30.75 | |
| Christiana Pub. House..... | 8,479.05 | |
| Texas School..... | 5,347.44 | |
| Denmark School..... | 3,217.05 | |
| Walla Walla School..... | 33,753.51 | |
| Milton Academy..... | 7,900.55 | |
| Union College..... | 10,483.55 | |
| Graysville Academy..... | 2,139.53 | |
| Michigan Conference..... | 168.44 | |
| Battle Creek Church..... | 207.28 | |
| Accounts Receivable..... | 1,748.50 | \$492,600.05 |
| Cash in hand..... | 50.97 | |

LIABILITIES.

| | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Bills Payable..... | \$198,002.43 | |
| South African Conference..... | 487.17 | |
| Australasian Union Conf..... | 40.25 | |
| Pac. Pr's Pub. Co. Oak P'd..... | 642.58 | |
| Foreign Mission Board..... | 2,971.31 | |
| Claremont Sanitarium..... | 216.64 | |
| General Conf. Bulletin..... | 263.28 | |
| Accounts Payable..... | 907.18 | |
| Individual Depositors..... | 4,971.66 | |
| Stock, or Present Worth..... | \$284,097.55 | \$492,600.05 |

S. H. LANE, President.
L. A. HOOPES, Secretary.

REGARDING THE LATE MOVEMENT
IN INDIANA.

Article Read by Mrs. E. G. White before
the Ministers, April 17, 1901.

INSTRUCTION has been given me in regard to the late experience of brethren in Indiana and the teaching they have given to the churches. Through this experience and teaching the enemy has been working to lead souls astray.

The teaching given in regard to what is termed "holy flesh" is an error. All may now obtain holy hearts, but it is not correct to claim in this life to have holy flesh. The apostle Paul declares, "I know that in me [that is, in my flesh] dwelleth no good thing." Rom. 7:17. To those who have tried so hard to obtain by faith so-called holy flesh, I would say, You can not obtain it. Not a soul of you has holy flesh now. No human being on the earth has holy flesh. It is an impossibility.

If those who speak so freely of perfection in the flesh, could see things in the true light, they would recoil with horror from their presumptuous ideas. In showing the fallacy of their assumptions in regard to holy flesh, the Lord is seeking to prevent men and women from putting on his words a construction which leads to pollution of body, soul, and spirit. Let this phase of doctrine be carried a little further, and it will lead to the claim that its advocates can not sin; that since they have holy flesh, their actions are all holy. What a door of temptation would thus be opened!

The Scriptures teach us to seek for the sanctification to God of body, soul, and spirit. In this work we are to be laborers together with God. Much may be done to restore the moral image of God in man, to improve the physical, mental, and moral capabilities. Great changes can be made in the physical system by obeying the laws of God and bringing into the body nothing that defiles. And while we can not claim perfection of the flesh, we may have Christian perfection of the soul. Through the sacrifice made in our behalf, sins may be perfectly forgiven. Our dependence is not in what man can do; it is in what God can do for man through Christ. When we surrender ourselves wholly to God, and fully believe, the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin. The conscience can be freed from condemnation. Through faith in

conference's receipts was already being sent to the General Conference to meet its expenses). Another section of the report called upon conferences able to do so to send and support some of their own workers in mission fields. Each Adventist was also encouraged to contribute ten cents per week as a "First Day Offering" to support the Foreign Mission Board's endeavors.

At her early morning devotional on April 9, Ellen White urged closer collaboration of all with medical missionary work. She also noted that "the most selfish thing mortals can do is to establish centers, neglecting to plant seeds of truth in the destitute portions of the vineyard. . . . Remember that Battle Creek is not the world." Since at that time, one out of every twenty-five Adventists lived in Battle Creek, the warning seems justified.

By April 10, the Committee on Organization was ready to reveal its plan for a reconstituted General Conference Committee. Its size would be increased from 13 to 25—chosen from "representative men connected with the various lines of work in the different parts of the world." This committee would take the place of "all

Ellen White provided important counsel on the doctrine of "holy flesh" which she condemned as an "impossibility" and an "error." Courtesy Loma Linda University Heritage Room



present boards and committees, except in the case of essential legal corporations." Six members were chosen by the Medical Missionary Association, five more were to be selected with reference to their special abilities to encourage evangelistic outreach and were to be freed from "any special business cares." Union Conference presidents were to hold membership on the General Conference Committee, which was given power to organize itself.

This last provision gave rise to considerable discussion. H. C. Basney of Maine suggested that in organizing itself, the General Conference Committee would in effect elect the General Conference president and thus more, rather than less, power would be concentrated in a few hands. W. C. White was not worried. He believed it was quite possible that the Committee would not want to name anyone as chairman for longer than twelve months at a time. Thus the president would be limited by natural means.

Some delegates also opposed granting the Medical Missionary Association the right to select six members of the General Conference Committee. Was this not favoritism? Elder Prescott replied, "If this conference were properly constituted, so that the various lines of work could be proportionately represented in this body, the recommendation . . . would be unnecessary." The Committee on Organization believed this to be only a "temporary provision to bridge a present difficulty." Eventually, it was assumed, the medical work would become a department of the conference just as was proposed with the Sabbath School work. Although not clearly articulated, the committee seemed to expect that each of these departments would be represented on the General Conference's executive committee. Satisfied, the delegates voted the plan for organizing the General Conference Committee as recommended.

Ten days into the session, on April 12, the first move was made to lower the concentration of Adventists in Battle Creek. In three successive votes, first the stockholders in the Seventh-day Adventist Educational Association, then the delegates to the General Conference and finally all the observers present, voted to sell the buildings and grounds of Battle Creek College and re-locate the school outside Battle Creek "as soon as possible." Two purposes would be served by such a move: (1) a rural location would make it easier to follow Ellen White's original counsel on development of the college and (2) the troublesome college debt could be liquidated through the sale of the Battle Creek property.

Later that same day, conference delegates considered the Committee on Organization's proposal that would gradually lead to an absorption of the Foreign Mission Board into the General Conference Committee. Some delegates feared that the preponderance of North American members on this committee would lead to the use in the homeland of money intended for overseas expansion. Arthur Daniells did not consider this probable. He believed that the organization of union conferences would relieve the General Conference Committee of so

much detail work that its primary concerns would be with mission work. "If I thought there was anything wrong in these recommendations that would hurt the foreign fields," Daniells avowed, "I would smite it as hard as possible." With this assurance, the delegates adopted the suggestions.

April 13 marked the second Sabbath of the Conference. A. T. Jones occupied the pulpit in the Tabernacle, with Haskell, Waggoner and L. C. Sheafe (leading Afro-American evangelist) addressing audiences in the chapels of the various institutions. The afternoon, devoted to a symposium on needs of the mission fields, established a soon-to-be-familiar feature of future General Conference sessions. The next day Dr. Kellogg and the Sanitarium hosted the delegates and their wives to a bountiful vegetarian banquet.

Not until April 17, however, did the Nominating Committee report its recommendations for the new General Conference Committee. The Medical Missionary Board had named Doctors J. H. Kellogg, D. Paulson, H. F. Rand, J. C. Ottosen, and A. J. Read along with Professor W. W. Prescott as their representatives. With space reserved for eight union conference presidents, the remaining members, all elected unanimously, were S. N. Haskell, J. N. Loughborough, A. G. Daniells, A. T. Jones, E. J. Waggoner, I. H. Evans, W. C. White, S. H. Lane, Dr. D. Kress, E. A. Sutherland and F. Griggs. The last two represented the church's educational work.

Within the next several days, as authorized, the General Conference Committee organized itself. Arthur Daniells was selected both as permanent chairman and chairman of the Foreign Mission Board respectively. H. M. Mitchell, not a committee member, became General Conference Treasurer, and W. A. Spicer, corresponding secretary of the Mission Board. Spicer also chaired the committee selected to promote Sabbath School work. A. T. Jones occupied a similar position for sub-committees set up for education and for religious liberty. The influential Finance Committee was headed by Dr. Kellogg, while Professor Prescott was assigned to head a Pastoral Committee.

Toward the end of the conference, Ellen White asked to speak to all the ministers in attendance. The burden of her remarks concerned the fanatical teaching on "holy flesh" or the "cleansing message" that had swept the Indiana Conference during the preceding two years. From contacts with Pentecostal Protestants, conference evangelist S. S. Davis had absorbed much of their emotional quest to receive the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The 1900 Indiana campmeeting reverberated with shouts, clapping and band music as individuals sought cleansing from sin and sinful tendencies. President R. S. Donnell and the entire Indiana Conference Committee had joined the movement.

In her meeting with the ministers, Mrs. White lost no time in branding the teaching regarding "holy flesh" as an error. "All may now obtain holy hearts," she said, "but it is not correct to claim in this life to have holy flesh." Carrying this teaching to its logical conclusion, she reasoned, "will lead to the claim that its advocates cannot sin. . . . What a door of temptation would thus be opened!" Sin is forgiven in this life, but holy flesh is

not received prior to the second advent. The Indiana leaders accepted Mrs. White's rebuke and publicly renounced their errors and asked forgiveness of their brethren.

Although the 1901 General Conference is remembered largely for its reconstructing of church organization, the delegates were also challenged by many spiritual messages. Ellen White addressed the delegates formally at least ten times, including both the opening and closing Sabbath church services. Her first early morning devotional on April 3 had pointed her fellow believers to God as the source of all knowledge and wisdom. She urged trust in God's "naked promise," regardless of feelings. No dependence could be placed on human beings. As she often had done before, she urged love for the brethren. "Forget yourself, your bruises and wounds and difficulties," Mrs. White concluded. "Praise God and He will receive you."

On other occasions, Sister White urged her hearers not to "measure" their fellow workers. Since not all are constituted alike, not everyone will see alike in all things. She urged study of the union Christ called for in John 17. Do not recount the mistakes of others, she urged, but bury them "in the depths of the ocean." She appealed repeatedly for unity with the medical work. "God . . . wants those who have felt it their duty to circulate discouraging reports about Dr. Kellogg and the medical missionary work to be converted."

In addition to Ellen White's ministry, many sermons and Bible studies were presented by both E. J. Waggoner and W. W. Prescott. The burden of Elder Waggoner's messages was the indwelling Christ, whom he saw as the only answer to selfishness and the only power that could bring the gospel commission to completion. Of Christ, Waggoner said, "We are to be possessed by him, possessed by the Spirit of God, so that his mind is our mind; as he thinks we act." Returning to his 1888 theme, Waggoner stressed the impossibility of salvation by works, although he admitted men could be *lost* by their works. "Our part," he maintained, "is simply to give up, and say that this wicked thing must be taken away from us."

The last days of the Conference were filled with voting new assignments for many workers. Former President Irwin was sent to Australia, O. A. Olsen to South Africa. A new constitution was accepted unanimously. And then came April 23, the final day of the session. It turned into a testimony service, one that had to be continued until 10 p.m. to allow all to speak. Ellen White particularly indicated that "the angels of God have been working among us. . . ." The happy turn events had taken, she affirmed, was ". . . not our work. God has brought it about."

A few days later the new General Conference President, A. G. Daniells, reported in glowing terms to an old associate in Australia:

I doubt whether any such meeting has been held since apostolic times. For 21 days 216 delegates and something like 700 visitors deliberated over many perplexing questions, and during the whole time not one

unkind or discourteous word was spoken at the Conference. Not one word was uttered that needed to be retracted. . . . I never saw anything like it.

Yet the euphoria of the conference lasted only a little more than a year. True, the structural changes initiated held, for the most part, and they proved their worth in succeeding decades. Still, the hoped-for unity between the evangelistic and medical branches of the work did not last.

A rapid deterioration set in. A General Conference session had to be called in Oakland, California, in 1903. Bitterness, acrimony and controversy scarred the gathering. Well-meaning workers failed to overcome innate selfishness. As the delegates insisted on their own viewpoints, Ellen White's final words to the 1901 session seemed to become only a sad echo: "Press together, press together. Let us be united in Christ." The years would demonstrate that such Christian unity required a daily, even hourly, commitment.

CONFERENCE ECHOES

THE meeting which has just closed in Battle Creek, possessed some characteristics that are worthy of more than ordinary notice. We refer to the harmony of feeling, the unanimity of sentiment, that prevailed during the whole session. Day after day, the delegates assembled in the Tabernacle, which was crowded with friends and visitors (wholly unlike previous gatherings of this kind), and gave their attention each day to a large variety of matters, involving almost interminable interests, on which it was clearly apparent that friction and conflict of opinion might arise; yet nothing of this kind appeared; and through all the meeting, not one word was spoken, either on the floor of the house or out of meeting, so far as we are aware, that could be construed to be an attack upon a brother, or an unkind reflection upon any of his views or positions. The paramount desire seemed to be to come together in a permanent understanding with one another, and view all things with the same feelings, and in the same light. If anything was not understood, an explanation was kindly, earnestly, and sincerely asked, and given, and thus every query was cleared up, that all the subject might be fully understood, and all agree in the conclusions reached. In this course there was no room for disagreement; and so there was a drawing together, not a discordant note being heard in all the deliberations. The pervading influence, which was so strong as to be almost sensibly felt, was for "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." This state of things is what has been held in view, for years, as the desirable and ideal condition to be reached, but never so fully approached as on this occasion. This manifestation of a desire for a spirit of harmony and co-operation, was a great source of gratification and rejoicing to all present, so much so that the

Despite the many changes which were voted at the 1901 General Conference session, it was a gathering characterized by "harmony of feeling" and "unanimity of sentiment."

Courtesy Loma Linda University Heritage Room

Proceedings of the Thirteenth Annual Meeting
of the Gen. Conf. of S. D. Adventists.

CONFERENCE convened according to ap-
pointment on the Camp-ground, Battle
Creek, Mich., Aug. 10, 1874, 9 A. M.

The President, Geo. I. Butler, in the
chair. Prayer by J. N. Andrews. The
President stated some reasons for the call
of the Conference, and requested delegates
to present their credentials. The following
responded:—

U. Smith, J. S. Wicks, R. J. Lawrence,
Ira Abbey, S. H. King, and D. R. Palmer,
Michigan.

Harrison Grant, Minnesota.

P. Z. Kinne and J. N. Andrews, New
York.

Eld. James White, California.

James Harvey, Indiana.

A. A. Hutchins, Ohio.

Henry Nicola, Iowa.

As Iowa is entitled to three delegates,
and as other Conferences had no represen-
tation, the notice being too short to allow
the appointment of delegates in due form,
by vote of the Conference the following
persons were appointed to act as delegates
from those not fully represented:—

S. N. Haskell, New England.

A. S. Hutchins, Vermont.

Benn Auten and W. P. Andrews, Iowa.

S. Howland, Maine.

A. Vuilleumier, Swiss Mission.

By vote all brethren of good standing
were invited to engage in the deliberations
of the Conference. Minutes of twelfth ses-
sion read and approved. Delegates from
other religious bodies were called for.

Bro. L. C. Rogers, delegate from the S. D. 12, 9 A. M.

President, Geo. I. Butler called the meet-
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APPOINTMENTS.

GENERAL CONFERENCE AT
BATTLE CREEK.

It is deemed advisable to hold a General Conference
at Battle Creek, to commence on sixth-day, at 6 P. M.,
September 28, 1869.

The church at Battle Creek will esteem it a privilege
to entertain all who wish to come, and all are cordial-
ly invited. Yet that there may be more equality in
bearing burdens, we recommend to all that can, and es-
pecially to those who reside near Battle Creek, to bring
provisions with them, after the manner of the last
Conference. It is hoped that all will endeavor to get
to the place of meeting in season to find a place to stay
during the Conference, and be ready for the evening
meeting at the going down of the sun.

We would give an especial invitation to brethren in
the ministry, and request churches in other States to
send delegates, as important business will be con-
sidered.

J. N. ANDREWS.

URIAH SMITH.

J. H. WAGGONER.

JAMES WHITE.

Loma Linda University Heritage House

Reporting the Big Even

Adventist and Non-Adventist Perspectives on Selected General Conference Sessions

EUGENE F. DURAND

Press coverage of Seventh-day Adventist
General Conference sessions has grown im-
pressively through the years, just as the
denomination itself has grown. Church re-
porting of these events has always exceeded by
far that of the daily newspapers, but there has also
been significant news coverage in the non-Adventist
press. As members of a small church with distinctive
beliefs, Adventists have been sensitive about any nega-
tive press. While the church has hoped and strived for
good "public relations," the non-Adventist press has fo-
cused occasionally on the denomination's shortcomings.
Indeed, Adventists themselves could only learn of cer-
tain controversial developments at General Conference
sessions by reading the daily newspapers. By and large,
however, the reporting in *The General Conference Bul-
letin*, the daily issues of *The Review and Herald* (now
The Adventist Review) and various secular newspapers
provide fascinating and important spiritual and social
history, beginning with the last quarter of the
nineteenth century.

The year 1874 proved to be a momentous one for Seventh-day Adventism. In that one year the church sent out its first missionary, established its first college, produced the first issue of *The Signs of the Times*, and incorporated its Educational Society. These historical events were reflected in the deliberations of the thirteenth annual General Conference session, held August 10-15 of that year in Battle Creek, Michigan.

Besides the new venture into education, the publishing work rated the most attention. James White reported on his efforts in California. In response, the session hailed with joy "the cheering reports of the progress of the work on the Pacific Coast," and approved Elder White establishing a paper there. Elder George I. Butler would meet with the California Conference in October regarding the establishment of "a branch office of publication, on the Pacific Coast." Delegates decided that, instead of establishing a paper on the Atlantic coast as well, *Review and Herald* pages would be "stereotyped" and one plate would be sent to each coast where two more editions could be published.

In addition the session voted to organize a "General Conference Tract and Missionary Society of Seventh-day Adventists" in order to secure "uniformity of action." This society would raise means for its activities and supply publications to members and inquirers throughout the world. Each conference society would send delegates to the annual meeting at the time of the General Conference session. Its board would appoint agents and colporteurs, and assist them in their work.

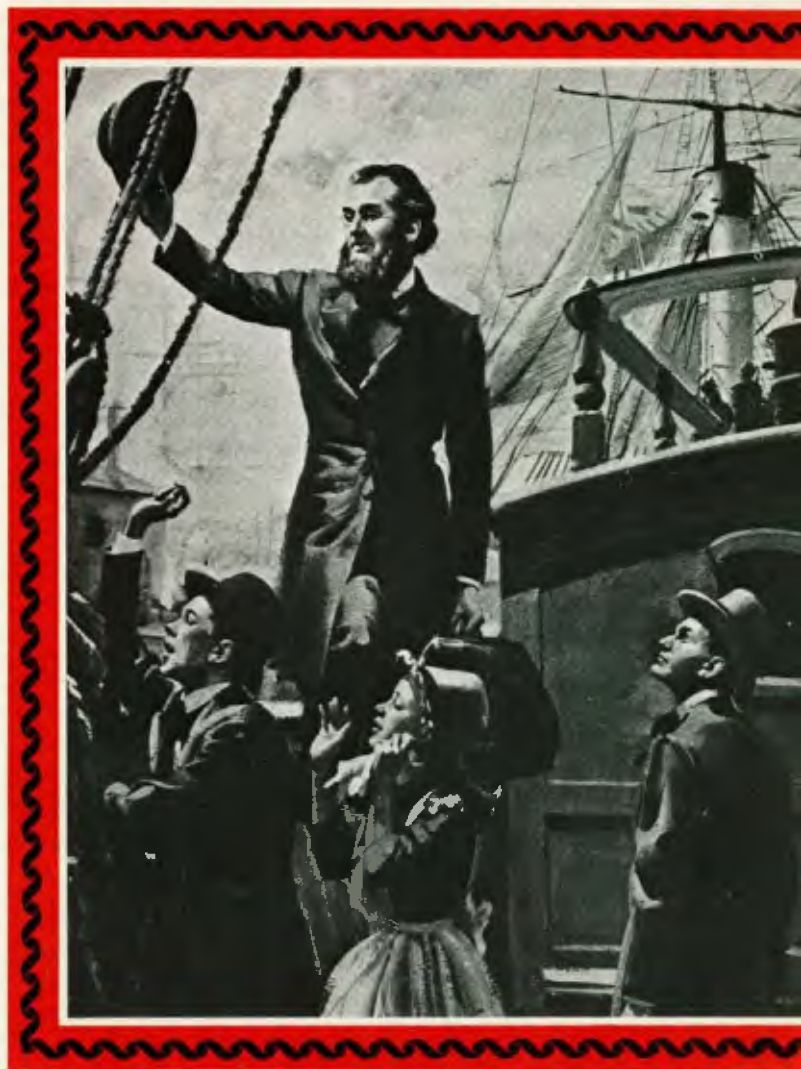
In an action that had the most far-reaching consequences, delegates voted "that the General Conference, feeling the same interest in the Swiss Mission that has been expressed in former sessions, instruct the Executive Committee to send John N. Andrews to Switzerland as soon as practicable." Immediate action on this recommendation was urged since Elder Andrews was about to leave for Switzerland, the matter evidently already having been decided. He left the next month.

Reports of the 1874 session in the *Battle Creek Daily Journal* covered even less space than the one page in the *Review*. This paucity of newspaper coverage was doubtless due to several factors: meetings were annual or oftener, always in Battle Creek (familiarity breeds indifference), and the church was small, with no overseas work to report on as yet.

The *Journal's* three articles on the meeting highlighted its social aspects rather than the actions voted. Note was taken of the 100 tents pitched on the campground two miles west of the city and the 1,500 in daily attendance and 5,000 on Sunday, most of whom were residents of Michigan with a few from Wisconsin and Iowa. The sermons delivered seemed of interest to the press, which reported the messages given by Stephen Haskell, James White and Ellen White.

One account closed with the information that "at 7:30 P.M. Elder James White delivered a short discourse, which was followed by exhortations from a number in the congregation. Many came forward for prayers, and the religious interest seems to be increasing."

The 1882 session broke new ground in that it was the first held outside Michigan. All previous meetings had been called for Battle Creek, except for two in Lansing.



John N. Andrews and his children Charles and Mary embarking for Europe on September 15, 1874.

Courtesy Review and Herald Publishing Association

Why the change to Rome, New York, for the 21st session?

The 1881 school year had proved to be a turbulent one for Adventists in Battle Creek. A sharp conflict involving the president, teachers, students, and parents at the College led to the closing of that institution for the next year. At the 1882 General Conference session, delegates heard an explanation of the closing and voted to endorse that action of the Board of Trustees. At the end of the session, President George I. Butler reported that the experiment of holding the meeting away from Battle Creek had been a success because "there were none present to make trouble or circulate evil reports." The situation in Battle Creek got so bad that twenty years later President Arthur G. Daniells declared, "You cannot do a thing in that place without being criticized or made the subject of wild rumors that are believed as reported." He wished that not only the General Conference meeting could be moved, but the entire headquarters. It was, the next year.

Through the years General Conference sessions have been held not only in many places, but during every one of the twelve months of the year. The first seven sessions met in May, but then every month got its turn. The 1882 meeting took place for two weeks in the middle of December at the Adventist church in Rome, New York. Obviously our pioneers did not mind winter weather in the north, as we seem to today with our summer sessions in the south! Nor did they mind lengthy gatherings; the annual meetings had by then grown from several days to several weeks.

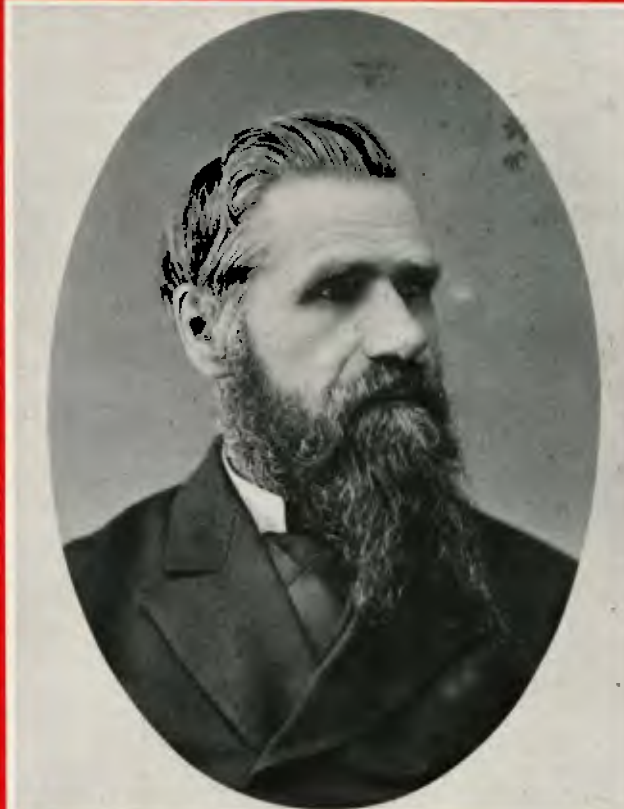
Forty-three delegates (all men) represented twenty-one of the twenty-four conferences (all but Kentucky, Tennessee, and North Pacific), at the 1882 convocation. Twenty-three of the conferences were in the United States, and one in Quebec. At the meeting, Colorado became the twenty-fifth conference, with its three churches and 164 members. The nominating committee still had only three members, but the auditing committee increased by four to include six laymen. It would appear that all but one layman present served on that committee, since thirty-six of the forty-three delegates were ministers. The treasurer's report had become a bit more complex; it now showed a balance of \$8,038.42. Virginia and North Carolina remained "mission fields," but a committee was appointed to consider their needs. George I. Butler accepted the presidency for another year.

Uriah Smith read a report from John N. Andrews regarding the work in Switzerland, and "Elder Haskell related some very interesting experiences with Sabbathkeepers in Europe." He stated that a strong feeling against anything American meant that papers published in America could not accomplish what those published in Europe could. When he revealed that Elder Andrews was very feeble and needed help, delegates voted to send New York Conference President Buel L. Whitney and family to his aid. They were to publish a German paper in addition to the one in French.

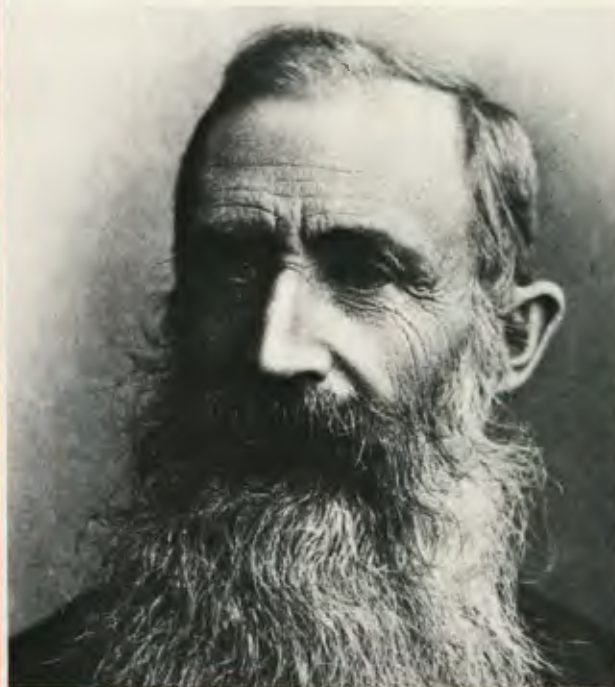
The session voted to organize a European Council of Seventh-day Adventist Mission, and to receive Sweden, with its 150 members, as a conference. The brethren also decided to prepare a report of foreign mission work containing an appeal for donations that would be read in the churches, a kind of in-house Ingathering Appeal.

In the field of education, besides considering the Battle Creek College closing, delegates heard a report from Goodloe H. Bell on the new academy in South Lancaster, Massachusetts, of which he had just become principal after leaving Battle Creek as a casualty of the College fracas. Bell talked on true education versus popular education, and described the work-study program at his new school. The session also received a report on a new college at Healdsburg, California, that eventually became Pacific Union College. Since many conferences were anxious to open new schools, the brethren voted that conferences should consult with the General Conference before opening any more colleges or academies.

A motion to increase the General Conference Committee from three members to five stirred what Elder Butler called a "warm debate." Uriah Smith referred to



Elder Stephen N. Haskell reported on the difficulties faced by the fledgling Adventist church in Europe in 1882. Adventist Heritage Collection



Goodloe Harper Bell, in 1882, was principal of the newly established South Lancaster Academy, in Massachusetts. Adventist Heritage Collection

a marked difference of opinions on this point, as opposed to unanimity on other points. The vote came out 24 to 18 in favor, but the motion failed to pass, since a three-fourths majority was required. Smith felt it would soon be adopted.

On the subject of publishing, several actions were passed. Delegates agreed to recognize God's hand in repealing a California Sunday law that would have threatened the work of the church's publishing house there. They decided to print a Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook that would contain proceedings of the General Conference and other matters deemed appropriate. A motion passed to publish some selections from Ellen White's writings in Danish and Norwegian, and another to "express unabated confidence" in the Testimonies.

Six years prior to the 1888 session, Uriah Smith reported in the *Review* that Joseph H. Waggoner gave an especially fine sermon on "Justification by Faith." He concluded that there had been both freedom of speech and cordiality of feeling at the meeting.

This evaluation was echoed by President Butler, who commented, "I have never attended a General Conference where better feelings prevailed, and more union of spirit was manifest." He cited missions and education as the topics receiving most attention.

Now that Battle Creek had lost its monopoly on General Conference sessions, the Illinois, Iowa, and Ohio Conferences all invited the General Conference to hold the next convocation in their areas. But the next four years found the meeting back at headquarters as usual, as the school crisis had subsided by then.

Elder and Mrs. Alonzo T. Jones. He was of the opinion that the Adventist church should do away with the "color line." Adventist Heritage Collection

The second General Conference session held outside Michigan, and the first in California, took place November 13-27, 1887, in the Oakland Seventh-day Adventist church. According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, delegates met in the basement of the unfinished building. This meeting was notable also for being the first for which a separate *General Conference Bulletin* was published. All previous such meetings had been reported in the pages of the *Review and Herald*.

Sixty-nine delegates represented twenty-three conferences and the Brooklyn Mission in the United States, besides Scandinavia (Ole A. Olsen), Central Europe (William C. White), Australia (John O. Corliss), Hawaii (Abraham LaRue), and the Pacific Islands (John I. Tay). These delegates promptly voted to receive Norway (245 members in four churches) and West Virginia (150 members in five churches) as new conferences.

They also re-elected as their president Elder George I. Butler, who in his opening address noted among other things the "growing sentiment in favor of Sunday legislation," and the paper in the Dutch language just started. He then appointed five committees that would function during the session.

Ellen White declared that she would not vote for Butler's re-election as president unless he could be given help with routine detail work in the form of a corresponding secretary to handle accounts and reports from the field, a home missionary secretary to work with city missions, and an education secretary to work with the schools. The same plan, she said, should obtain at the conference level. "If this plan had been carried out in the past, men who are now in their graves would be aiding us with their counsel." Doubtless she was refer-



ring to her husband, for one. The Conference promptly voted to add the suggested secretaries, choosing Sister Jessie F. Waggoner as corresponding secretary.

As indicated in Butler's opening address, Sunday laws were a hot topic in the 1880s. Alonzo T. Jones addressed the Conference on this religious liberty issue. Our people, he said, must protest Sunday legislation. The delegates expressed a need to aid members in trouble for breaking such laws in Arkansas and Tennessee. Ellet J. Waggoner pointed out the importance of working to avoid passage of Sunday laws in view of the strength of the National Reform Sunday movement. A committee of nine was chosen to study the matter, and brought back a recommendation that Sunday laws be opposed by every proper means; that a pamphlet on the question be prepared for circulation; that no Adventist feel obligated to obey such laws, though care must be taken not to offend unduly. Action on these recommendations was postponed, however, after "animated discussion."

Another lively discussion centered around the denomination's attitude toward "the color line." Elder A. T. Jones advocated that no color line be recognized, that is, that no racial prejudice be allowed in the church. A minister from Tennessee, however, responded that if a pastor in his State should try to mix the races in church, he would end up with no white members. Another minister offered a resolution "That this Conference recognize no color line." "An animated discussion followed" pro and con. One opinion held that "we should take things just as we find them, not arousing any unnecessary prejudice, . . . leaving the Spirit of God to obliterate the color line in the hearts of those who may be converted by the truth." The *Chronicle* reported adoption of a resolution to receive colored members on an equality with whites. The usual Adventist solution followed when a committee consisting of Uriah Smith, Ellet J. Waggoner, and Archibald R. Henry was appointed to study the question.

After conferring with those who had worked in the South and finding them unanimously agreed that our work could be done without creating a disturbance or neglecting the colored people, the committee saw no need for the Session to legislate on the matter and recommended that no action be taken, "and that all reference to this question be omitted from the minutes." The recommendation was adopted, but the matter was not laid to rest, for it would surface again at the 1962 session.

Regarding mission work, delegates voted to give all Sabbath School mission offerings for 1888 to the London City Mission (after deducting expenses and ten percent for the local conference Sabbath School association). They also voted to purchase or build a missionary ship for the Pacific Islands for not more than \$20,000 to be ready for use by the next year. The eventual voyage of the *Pitcairn* was delayed, however, when the committee advised waiting later for lack of money, since the offerings for 1888 were going to London.

Delegates from the conferences and mission fields reported on the work in their areas. The report from Florida revealed that yellow fever was hindering the cause there. The session voted a new approach in

evangelism: tent meetings should include Sunday Schools that would eventually become Sabbath Schools.

In the field of education, President Butler revealed a gain in school enrollment during the past ten years of 800, from 177 to 977. He spoke of "the necessity of choosing only such teachers as are thoroughly consecrated, and have ability to teach the knowledge of Christ." Easier said than done!

Ellen White arrived from St. Helena and talked in favor of temperance work, charity work, and manual training at our schools. The church's Education Association meeting voted to include health and hygiene in the school curriculum, to which Dr. John H. Kellogg responded that the *Testimonies* should be the authority in that field and that he would undertake to show the "scientific basis for every position ever taken by Sister White bearing upon this subject." A. T. Jones suggested that such a textbook be prepared, and the report was adopted, along with a request that Ellen White prepare a book on the subject.

The publishing work also received a boost from her when she stated that the *Signs of the Times* should be the only missionary paper and that ministers must see that every family had the *Review* and the *Signs*. If any could not afford the *Signs* and the church would not help them, she would. It was voted that Tract and Missionary Society agents should work with local church agents to see that every family received the *Review*, and that the General Conference Committee appoint an agent to promote the canvassing work in the United States.

Another vote gave Dr. Kellogg permission to build a hospital for charity patients in connection with Battle Creek Sanitarium. Some questioned his motives, but Ellen White rose to his defense.

The *Oakland Tribune* followed the Conference in considerable detail, with foreign mission reports receiving extensive coverage in an article titled, "Adventists Proselyting in Europe and Australia. Inducing Converts to Keep Holy the Seventh Day." The paper described Louis R. Conradi's success in curing discouraged workers in Europe by exhibiting strong leadership; the difficulty of the work in Italy owing to apathetic Waldenses and their pastors who "crush out anything like a division of their flocks"; the doubling of membership in Denmark in spite of Sabbath work problems and "German scepticism"; and even greater success among the more religious people of Norway and Sweden.

The *Tribune* noted Dr. Kellogg's endeavors to establish a charity Sanitarium with Mrs. White's support, citing the opinions of both that "charity patients are the hardest to get along with." It also took note of the yellow fever problem in Florida.

Quite an interest was shown by the press in Adventist education. A story told of 400 pupils at Battle Creek College, 100 of whom "were learning to be printers," while others had to take tentmaking or carpentry, and of "a new boarding house" that would accommodate 300 persons. It was reported that Mrs. White spoke on manual labor in the schools:

She said that there is not enough hard work given the students of the present day. There is too much brain work and not enough labor given to the youth of either

THE ADVENTISTS,

Proselyting in Europe and
Australia.

Inducing Converts to Keep Holy
the Seventh Day.

Health Retreats of the Church—The

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SABBATH LAWS.

The Opinion of the Seventh Day Adventists.

A Sunday Law Described as
Persecution.

An Elder Announces That He Was
Stoned and Shot at for Preach-
ing on the Seventh Day.

The sixth meeting of the General
Conference of the Seventh Day Advent-
ists, yesterday afternoon, was devoted
to the discussion of resolutions pre-
sented on Wednesday afternoon. El-
der A. Smith offered a prayer. The
ninth resolution was read and Elder A.
E. Jones spoke to it at length.

The resolution is as follows:

Resolved, That a standing committee of
five be appointed by the Chairman, to con-
fer with other committees which should
be appointed in the various conferences,
in reference to the defense of those who
may suffer persecution under oppressive
Sunday laws, and also to direct in efforts
that may be needed in various States to
oppose the passage of such Sunday laws.

Mr. Jones said: I am glad that this
resolution has been presented. I think
it is most timely. The resolution
speaks of "oppressive Sunday laws,"
and that we shall "oppose the passage
of all such laws." But knowing, as we
do, the spring, the nature, and the
operation of Sunday laws, we know full
well that there are no Sunday laws but
oppressive ones. Therefore this pledges
us to oppose the passage of all Sunday
laws. There is danger of our consent-
ing to the passage of Sunday laws, if

Oakland Tribune, November 16 and 17, 1887

sex. The woman of the present day can do nothing ex-
cept read novels and story books. She stays in bed
while her family goes to rack and ruin. Good hard work
in connection with the schools would lessen the amount
of crime and fraud in this world.

Sunday law discussion at the session occupied most
of another *Tribune* article headed "Sabbath Laws . . .
A Sunday Law Described as Persecution. An Elder An-
nounces That He Was Stoned and Shot at for Preaching
on the Seventh Day." The latter point was doubtless de-
signed to sell a few more papers. Alonzo Jones' obser-
vations that Adventists must not accept Sunday laws
even when they are exempt, and his reply to Dudley
Carright that they do not favor Saturday laws were re-
ported, along with Ellet Waggoner's claim that "Sunday
laws would drive many to the ranks of the Seventh Day
Adventists," and that "laws against Sunday saloons are
not temperance laws," as was proven when Adventists
suffered under such a law in Arkansas. A certain Elder
Rees was revealed as the non-drinker who was
"stoned."

The newspaper picked up from the Tract and Mis-
sionary Society meeting the information that a hand-
book would be prepared in "every European language"
to give to immigrants "that will give full directions how
to reach California, and how to avoid the swindlers on
the route." It was also noted that new secretaries had
been added to the General Conference staff to lighten
the president's burden, and that "The Committee on
Color Line made a report recommending that the con-
ference take no action in the matter."

The 36th General Conference session
was the first held in Washington, D. C.,
following the move from Battle Creek. From
May 11 to 30, 1905, delegates met and lived
in tents on the grounds of the new Washing-
ton Training College (now Columbia Union College).

Reports of the meetings appeared in the pages of the
Review and Herald rather than in separate bulletins. To
acquaint members around the nation and the world
with the setting of the church's new headquarters, these
pages carried many photographs of scenes around the
nation's capital, such as buildings and monuments. In
addition, there were published favorable comments by
delegates regarding the new location, and an article
titled "A Glimpse of Takoma Park" that raved about the
beauties of nature in Takoma, an Indian word for "a
high or exalted place." The General Conference and Re-
view and Herald offices still operated from rented quar-
ters in the area.

Among her numerous talks at this session, Ellen
White spoke on the new work in Washington. She re-
vealed that had Adventists come to that city a year or
even six months later, a Sunday bill would have passed;
but by being on the spot they were able to thwart it.
She expressed gratitude for the neat, economical build-
ings already erected on campus, and for the beautiful
forest of trees. She called for a small sanitarium to be
erected there, and for those yet in Battle Creek to scat-
ter to other places. Her talk contained the well-known
description of her part in the formation of Adventist
doctrine at the early Sabbath Conferences and the oft-

(Right): Rented quarters in Washington, D.C., temporarily housing the General Conference and Review and Herald offices in 1905

(Below): The General Conference encampment in Takoma Park.

(Bottom): The delegates pose for the photographer in the big tent.

Photographs courtesy of the Review and Herald Publishing Association.



quoted warning against removing the pillars of the faith, especially the sanctuary doctrine. The latter reference obviously alluded to the then-current teachings of Elder Albion Ballenger, with their unique interpretation of the sanctuary.

In summing up this session President Daniells noted that it had resulted in more firmly settling our doctrines. In an editorial written at this time *Review and Herald* editor William W. Prescott declared that delegates did not look favorably on "the so-called 'New Theology.'"

A forty-man delegation representing each area of the Adventist world work took advantage of the location to meet personally with President Theodore Roosevelt. They presented him with a message of greeting and well-wishes (that were printed in the newspapers and in the *Review*), and spent more time with him than expected, finding him very cordial. This visit aimed to show the President of the United States the church's respect for civil government and religious liberty.

The 1905 session voted to ask the General Conference to devise a plan for raising \$15,000 to assist in the erection of buildings for the *Review and Herald* Publishing Association in Takoma Park. Land for the *Review* and the General Conference had already been purchased on Carroll Avenue along the District line. Said J. S. Washburn in a paper before the Religious Liberty Department, "We felt . . . that it was the Lord's will that our headquarters should be actually within the city limits of the capital, that here the voice of freedom and the protest against persecution and tyrannical laws should be heard, not simply by the State Legislature of Maryland, but by the central government of the United

States." He reported on successful opposition by Adventists to a Sunday law for the District of Columbia before the Congress and a law promoting the teaching of religion in the District's public schools. The delegates voted to establish religious liberty departments in each union and state conference in North America.

The greatest excitement at these meetings centered around a "\$100,000 Fund" that had been started for a Washington "Surprise Party," in which delegates from all over the world brought donations to help the work in Washington and in mission fields. The idea began in California and spread around the globe. At the May 12 morning meeting, the delegates laid the money their fields had collected on the table: \$87.55 from the Colored Training School in Huntsville, Alabama, "out of poverty and need;" \$600 from Germany; a \$5.00 gold piece from Fiji. Donors were listed in the church paper. Said Arthur G. Daniells, "Nothing before has so united our people." By June 22 the goal had been reached.

A report to the delegates estimated that in the United States members were paying less than half of a full tithe, and an appeal was made to correct this situation. The General Conference voted five annual offerings in all churches: two for foreign missions, one for religious liberty, one for the colored work in the United States, and one for the orphans of the Haskell Home and similar institutions. Another vote declared that an effort must be made to place the *Review* in every Adventist home, while yet another decided that members would sell the book *Ministry of Healing* by Ellen White to reduce debts on sanitariums, as had been done with her work *Christ's Object Lessons* for the benefit of schools.

In his opening address, A. G. Daniells indicated that

Delegates and participants at the 1909 General Conference session had their picture taken in front of the newly opened Washington Adventist Sanitarium.



The Advent REVIEW And Sabbath HERALD



WASHINGTON, D. C., THURSDAY, JUNE 1, 1905

General Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists
Washington, D. C. May 22, 1905.

To His Excellency President Roosevelt:-

The world's Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists is now in session, at Takoma Park, in this city. From this body we have the honor of being a deputation chosen to extend to you the greetings of our people.

While our Saviour is the King of kings and Lord of lords, still, as Christians, we recognize that Civil Government is of Divine ordinance; and, while, in accordance with His commands, we render to God the things that are God's, we also, according to the same command, cheerfully "render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's." As Protestants, we believe in the American idea of Civil Government. The principles upon which this national government was founded are our principles. We therefore honor the names of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Lincoln, and others of your predecessors who stood for the great principles of Civil and Religious Liberty, and approve your own position on the side of the rights of the people.

We wish you long life, and success in all that makes for the glory of God and for the peace and prosperity of this nation and of the world.

four of the twenty delegates at the first General Conference session in 1863 were "still living and identified with this cause." They were John N. Loughborough, Isaac Sanborn, Charles O. Taylor, and Washington Morse. Ellen White had not been a delegate at that first session, but she and Loughborough were present at this 1905 meeting. On the last Sabbath George I. Butler preached the sermon and Loughborough related pioneer experiences of sacrifice. Daniells compared the church in 1863 to that of 1905 by way of illustrating its tremendous growth.

This Conference voted to hold General Conference sessions every four years in the future instead of every two, giving as reasons the growing work, greater expense, and the new Union form of organization that made for better administration and less need for consultation with headquarters. Furthermore Union men now met every two years at Washington.

In his closing report President Daniells rated the gathering one of the most important ever held because it was the first in the nation's capital, the first in the summer and in a camp since sessions had become large, there was more world-wide representation than ever, and it "laid the foundation for a broad, progressive work."

Milton C. Wilcox added that the Conference demonstrated the greatest missionary spirit of any he had attended going back to 1883. State conferences were now sharing tithes with mission fields. Other comments on the session: "the most harmonious . . . for many a year," "the best I ever attended" (J. N. Loughborough); "The most hopeful . . . I ever attended" (W. C. White); "the most encouraging" in a quarter century for finishing the work. Missions worldwide had been the main emphasis, and many commented on the missionary spirit and the effect on foreign fields.

The Washington Times welcomed the denomination to its new headquarters with the headline, "Adventists here From Every Clime—Delegates of Every Race." The tent city, the number of people, and their worldwide origins impressed newspaper writers. "Delegates from every State in the Union, as well as from Europe, India, South Africa, and China are now quartered in tents and other temporary quarters. Every train brings in more delegates," one exclaimed, noting that by the first meeting there were 130 tents and 500 in attendance, with meetings held in a tent 70 x 110 feet that seated 1,500. *The Times* story remarked about the large number of women and children present, adding, "At the camp one can see people of every nationality under the sun, from the almond-eyed Chinaman to the thoroughbred American."

The custom of Sabbathkeeping also intrigued the papers. The Sunday edition of the *Times* headlined, "Adventists Hold Saturday Sabbath—Yesterday Spent in Prayer and Service—Sunday School in Morning." Just how one could hold a Sunday School on Saturday was not explained! But the story described in some detail how the Adventists conducted their Sabbath School, which was attended by 738 persons who heard Elder Asa T. Robinson "review the school" on the lesson subject, "Angels and Their Ministrations," and contributed to a closing collection.

As had the *General Conference Bulletin*, the paper reported that "the foreign delegates to the conference brought a pleasant surprise with them when they arrived. The surprise was in the way of substantial donations to the furtherance of the work at Takoma Park." It noted donations of \$600 from Germany, more than \$400 from India, and upwards of \$3,000 from Australia and New Zealand, adding, "Other foreign delegations made similar reports."

The Times carried one story that did not make the *Bulletin*: "Case of Smallpox in Adventists' Camp." It seems that one Amelia Nelson, of Wisconsin, was stricken with the disease while stopping at the home of a Mr. Appleby on Carroll Avenue. Fortunately she "had not been near the Adventists' camp since she began feeling badly." After being taken to the Adventists' infirmary, at Iowa Circle, it was determined she had smallpox, and she then went to the "District pesthouse" with two nurses from Takoma, where all three were quarantined. The mayor of Takoma Park told the paper that "all persons exposed to the disease will be vaccinated. The Appleby house is being thoroughly fumigated, there is no alarm among the people of our town, though there were numerous wild rumors afloat last night."



ADVENTISTS HERE
FROM EVERY CLIME

Thirty-sixth Congress in
Session.

DELEGATES OF EVERY RACE

Elder Daniel Makes His Address as
President—His Long Speech Ex-
hausts All Matters of Interest.

Promptly at 11 o'clock this morning
the Thirty-sixth session of the General
Conference of Seventh Day Adventists

District health officials were inclined to believe that more cases would result from what they feared to be a general exposure. "As the camp is just beyond the District line, however, the District officials are powerless to do anything to guard against a spread of the contagion from that direction. . . . Unless the delegates are quarantined, there is no way of preventing them from coming across the District line."

The 38th General Conference session marked the 50th anniversary of such meetings when it met May 15 to June 8, 1913 in Washington. The *Review* noted the milestone by printing a brief description of the first gathering in 1863, accompanied by a picture of Uriah Smith, the first General Conference secretary, who recorded that event.

Delegates gathered once again in tents on the campus of the college. The session was a long one—twenty-five days, as compared with the three days of some previous gatherings and the ten days customary today. A separate *Bulletin* contained a full report of the Conference, which marked the midway point in the long presidency of Arthur G. Daniells.

Elder John N. Loughborough, now 82 and with 61 years "in the message," had been present at the organi-

zation of the General Conference 50 years earlier. He offered the opening prayer at this meeting. Stephen N. Haskell, 60 years in the same message, followed with another prayer. Elder Isaac Sanborn, past 90, was the only one still living besides Loughborough who had attended the 1863 gathering. During the meetings, on May 24, he died in Ontario, reminding one of Thomas Jefferson's and John Adams' deaths on the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Elder Augustin C. Bourdeau addressed the church on his own 58 years as an Adventist. Loughborough and Haskell were still fit enough to present several Bible lectures during the session.

Not well enough to attend, 85-year-old Ellen White sent a written greeting that included the well-known statement, "I have been deeply impressed by scenes that have recently passed before me in the night season. There seemed to be a great movement—a work of revival—going forward in many places. Our people were moving into line, responding to God's call."

In addition, Mrs. White sent her last message to a General Conference session, which was printed in full, calling for renewed soul-winning endeavors, courage, and consecration. She reported on recent writing efforts: "I am thankful that the Lord is sparing my life to

ADVENTISTS HOLD SATURDAY SABBATH

Yesterday Spent in Prayer
and Service.

SUNDAY SCHOOL IN MORNING

Elder Farnsworth, of Australia,
Preaches Sermon in Afternoon.
Funds for Buildings.

The delegates to the Seventh Day
Adventist conference, held at their
headquarters, were . . .

Headlines from The Washington Times, May 11, 14 and 17, 1905.

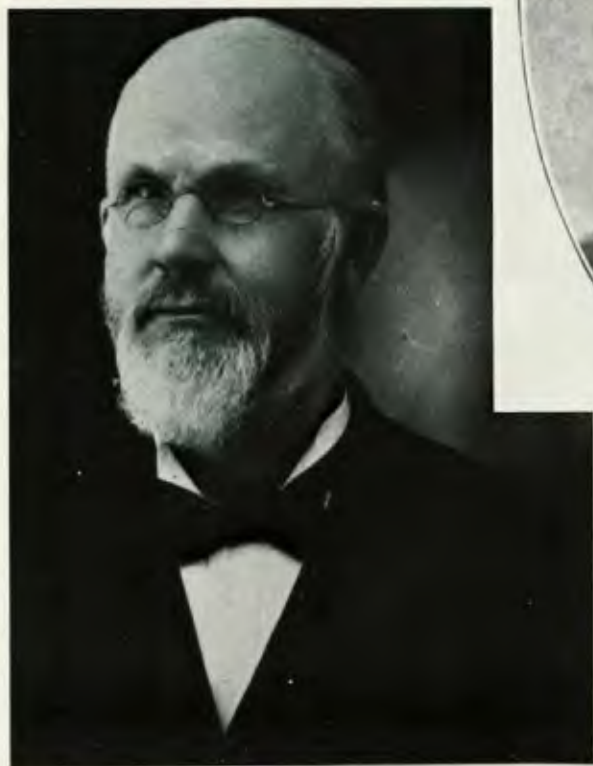
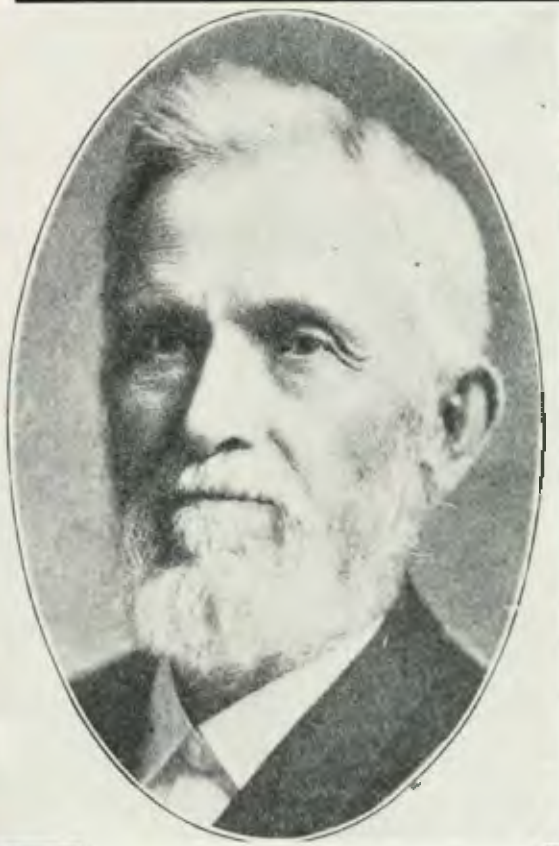
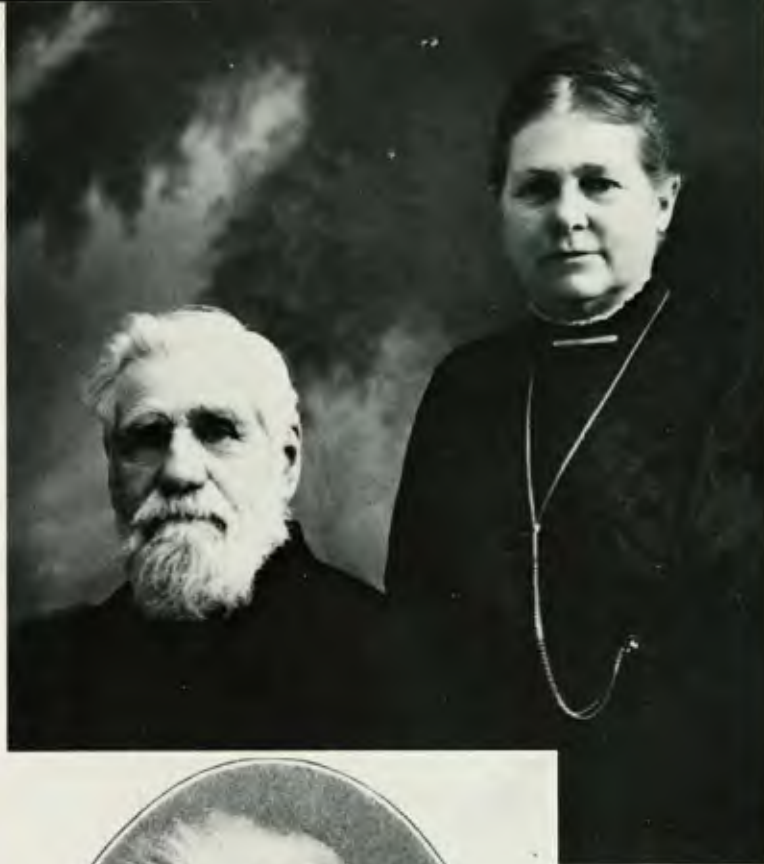
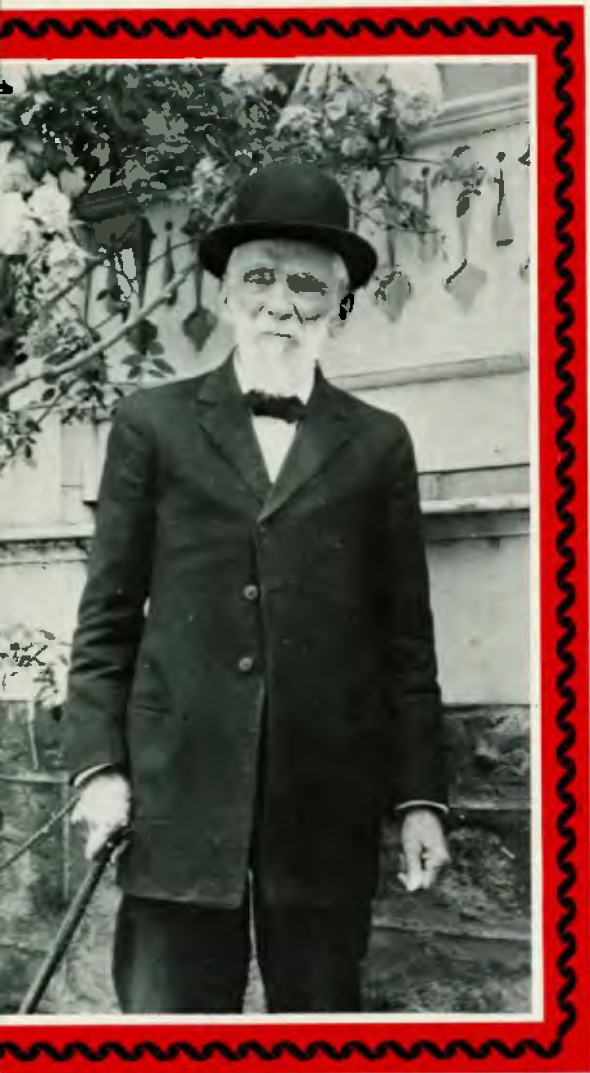
**CASE OF SMALLPOX
IN ADVENTISTS' CAMP**

No Way For District to
Take Precautions.

STATE OFFICIALS INFORMED

Amelia Nelson, of Wisconsin, Taken
From Appleby Home, Takoma Park,
Stricken With Disease.

Smallpox has . . .



Adventist Pioneers in attendance at the 38th General Conference session in Washington, D.C., in May 1913 (from top clockwise): Stephen N. Haskell and his second wife Hetty; (center) Isaac Sanborn; George I. Butler, John O. Cortiss and John N. Loughborough. Adventist Heritage Collection

work a little longer on my books." It was her desire that "those grown gray in the Master's service shall continue to bear their testimony." The pioneers were not to be made to feel there was nothing more for them to do, for these aged ministers could still be a blessing to the church.

The old pioneers responded to the reading of this message — J. N. Loughborough, S. N. Haskell, J. O. Corliss, and G. I. Butler. Said the latter, "Some thought that as she grew older her writings would be less powerful, but it seems to me that her later writings are the best. God is with that dear woman."

Again a delegation visited the president of the nation, this time Woodrow Wilson, bringing him greetings from the church. John Corliss spoke for them, and a letter from Arthur Daniells and William Spicer was presented to him encouraging him to defend religious liberty.

On that front, Religious Liberty secretary William W. Prescott told of a futile attempt to keep post offices open on Sundays. During 1912, a leaflet titled "Seventh-day Adventists and the Roman Peril: Some Information Concerning the Plans and Purposes of the Roman Catholic Church in America; What These Things Mean to Those who are Giving the Final Message," was distributed at nearly all campmeetings with a letter urging subscriptions to *Liberty* and *The Protestant Magazine*, both edited by Prescott. Three Sunday bills had been introduced in Congress, but failed to pass. Many such bills met a similar fate in State legislatures. Prescott expressed fear of "the invasion of Protestant lands by Rome" and a program "to make America Catholic," based no doubt on mass immigration.

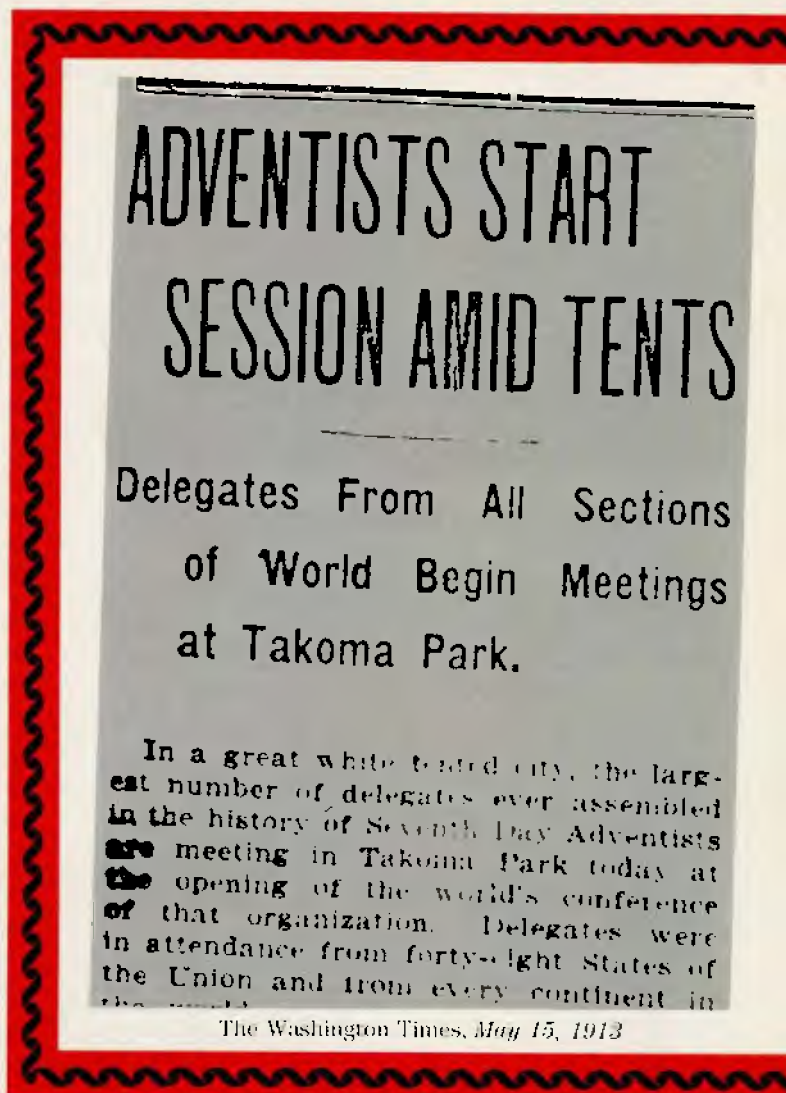
A large part of the *Daily Bulletin* consisted of the usual business of the session (constitution and by-laws, recommendations, resolutions, finances, plans, and nominations) and mission reports complete with photographs. A vote affecting missions directed that steps be taken to organize a European Division from the existing European unions, and that the same be done for North and South America. In addition, the standard goal for the weekly mission offering climbed from 15 to 20 cents in North America, with 20 percent of the total offering to be used to liquidate debts of schools and sanitariums whose liabilities exceeded 25 percent of assets. Delegates also passed a plan that the 13th Sabbath offering go to a definite project each quarter.

The North American Foreign Department reported on its work for Germans (109 churches, 4,300 members), Swedes (37 churches, 1,600 members), Danes and Norwegians (64 churches, 2,400 members). We then had a Danish-Norwegian School in Minnesota, a German Seminary in Missouri, and a Swedish Seminary in Illinois. The North American Negro Department reported 2,400 members as compared with 50 in 1894. Membership had more than doubled in the past four years since the department was organized.

Considerable discussion centered on Loma Linda's need of clinical facilities. Delegates strongly supported the school, referring fund-raising plans to the General Conference and the North American Division finance committees. In a related decision, the Conference decided that nurses were to receive evangelistic training and Bible courses, while graduates were to be used in

evangelistic efforts.

The need was expressed for ministers to receive more education. Candidates for the ministry were to be encouraged to take a course of study at one of our schools. Ministers should concentrate on soul-winning, letting laymen attend to business matters.



The Press Bureau rendered its first report since its organization the previous year. Secretary Walter L. Burgan had attended Union sessions around the country and written reports thereof for the press. These were well received, in spite of competition at the Columbia Union meeting from news of the sinking of the S. S. *Titanic*! Burgan instructed delegates on writing for the papers, showing them stories from all 48 states regarding Adventists. The General Conference Press Bureau had sent out prepared stories on the Eastern Question, a proposed Sunday law for the District of Columbia and other church news. The new secretary showed "an immense scrap-book, containing thousands of clippings from newspapers, reporting features of our work. He stated that already reports had come in from thirty-three states in which newspapers had given notices of this Conference session."

The Washington Times did its share, reporting the convocation on a nearly daily basis. The opening-day story, "Adventists Start Session Amid Tents," began, "In a great white tented city, the largest number of delegates ever assembled in the history of Seventh Day Adventists are meeting in Takoma Park today at the opening of the world's conference of that organization. Delegates were in attendance from forty-eight States of the Union and from every continent in the world." The paper covered President Daniells' opening address in which he told of a great increase in offerings for missions and outlined topics to be discussed at the meetings, with the warning, "busy activity cannot take the place of the Holy Spirit."

On the session's fourth day, the biggest, boldest headlines given any Conference story shouted: "Adventists Tell Wondrous Tales, Varied and Unusual Experiences Related by Delegates to Conference at Takoma Park — Cannibal Eats Wife — Occupation and Status of Geisha Girls." These two stories were printed in breathless detail along with others about war in the Balkans, and missionaries sent to Siberia. Mention was also made of the eschatological impulse that motivated Adventist missions.

Church growth also intrigued reporters: "The membership has more than doubled in foreign lands in the last four years," leading to "stirring accounts by foreign mission leaders." For example, Adventists had been more active in the Balkan states during the past two years than ever before, "despite the ravages of the Balkan war, the bitter persecutions due to mobs led by fanatical priests, and general opposition to Christianity." Organization of the European Division also received due emphasis and the launching of a correspondence school in Washington, D. C., was also noted.

The General Conference met in session for the 40th time during seventeen days in May of 1922. The Civic Auditorium in San Francisco welcomed the delegates for the second time. They had gathered there in 1918 and would do so again six more times, making that city the favorite location since the 32 sessions in Battle Creek.

Pioneer Stephen N. Haskell was present for his last General Conference, but John N. Loughborough could not make it on account of "the rigors of our San Francisco climate." Elder Smith Sharp came, however, having attended the first session in 1863, though he was not ordained until 1876.

Proceedings appeared once more in a separate *Bulletin*, the bulk of which contained reports from every Union in the world, running to a page or more, plus accounts of a dozen or so meetings of each General Conference department. This resulted in the largest *General Conference Bulletin* ever, 384 pages.

President Warren G. Harding's sister Caroline addressed the Conference. Connected with the U. S. Public Health Department, she was also the wife of Elder Herber H. Votaw, who at that time was superintendent of federal prisons. As might be expected, he spoke on the needs of prisoners.

If the 1882 and 1905 sessions had been among the most harmonious, the 1922 gathering must rank as perhaps the most stormy, or at least the most emotional. Elder Daniells, who had been president since 1901, the longest term in the church's history, was replaced by William A. Spicer (who had been General Conference secretary since 1903, the longest consecutive term ever). Daniells became secretary for the next four years, as the two traded places.

The Washington Times, May 17, 1913.

ADVENTISTS TELL WONDROUS TALES

Varied and Unusual Experiences Related by Delegates to Conference at Takoma Park—Cannibal Eats Wife—Occupation and Status of Geisha Girls.

Tales of cannibals who eat their wives along with the vegetables they pluck from their gardens; vivid pictures of Balkan war scenes, where the Servians played wild dance music for the delight of a general whom a private had shot and carried away during the war; a majority of them generally end in the great district, licensed by the government.

Fierceness of War.

Vivid pictures of the utter ferocity with which the Balkan allies fought were painted by Elder F. I. Hucner, who did not attend the last session in Hungary, who did

General Conference PROCEEDINGS

SEVENTEENTH MEETING

10:45 A. M., May 23, 1922

The meeting was opened by singing the hymn, "Nearer, My God, to Thee."

A. G. Daniells in the chair.

The conference was led in prayer by Professor C. W. Irwin.

A quartet of mixed voices, consisting of Mrs. Kurtichanov, Mrs. Schell, L. C. Metcalf, and John Ford, rendered in a beautiful and impressive manner the song, "Why should I fear, when my Father is near, and I am held by His hand?"

J. L. Shaw: I would present the names of Dr. H. G. Westphal, Dr. A. D. Butterfield, and G. H. Baber as delegates, and move that they be seated as delegates

tions, especially the election of a president. Everybody in this house knows it has been going on in this building since this conference convened; for hundreds have come to me and to others to protest against it.

I have said, "Let us wait until the time comes to speak, and we will do it." Now, my friends, I want to tell you that the relation between Elder Spicer and me has been cordial, brotherly, and that of Christian fellowship for twenty-one years. We have been associated together.

We have viewed great world problems from different angles, of course. That is true of every member of our committee, and every man exercises his individual

... either David or which, in my as- man whom I love

can be put back by a sweeping majority." I replied, "But you must not do it." One brother wanted me to allow him to put the question before the house. "No," I said, "you must not do it. I cannot go in on a wave of excitement. That is not the right way." And I refused to permit the question to be put.

Then yesterday, brethren wished to submit a motion to continue me in the same office, not as objecting to Brother Spicer, but as vindication, or a rebuke to this thing. But I begged them to allow me to decline to put the motion that would send me back as president. Now that is just about how I have tried to hold on to this office, my friends; and I state this because it is due these hundreds of people who have been perturbed by these reports in the reception room.

I am happy to bring before you to-day Elder Spicer [who was not present in the morning meeting] as president of the General Conference. From a full heart, I am glad that he has taken my place. I feel like a bird let out of a cage. For twenty-one years, this work has pressed upon my mind and heart and my nerves and all my physical forces day and night.



Elder and Mrs. Arthur G. Daniells.

Courtesy Review and Herald Publishing Association.

According to *The San Francisco Examiner*, the transition had not been a smooth one. Headlines charged, "Veteran Chief of Adventists Attacks Foes," and spoke of an "Acrid Debate." "A. G. Daniells Ousted," "Charges of 'Dirty Politics' Hurlled by Religious Workers at Meet," they claimed. One story read, "Charges of vilification and propaganda carried on in person and through the mails for some months past, with the purpose of destroying confidence of the workers and members of the Adventist denomination in his leadership were hurled by President Arthur Grosvenor Daniells, of the general conference of the Seventh Day Adventists, into the faces of the delegates at a special secret session that lasted four hours Sunday afternoon."

The article explained that the nominating committee had voted for Spicer, 29 to 20, but that the "popular general secretary" had refused to accept the position because of the "political entanglements brought about

by the present disruption," and pleaded for a younger man who could satisfy both factions. Delegates insisted that Spicer's popularity made him the best choice to unify the church.

The paper went on:

In defending his administration President Daniells spoke bitterly of the attacks that had been made upon him by certain delegates. Shaking a handful of written documents, which he said were proofs of his charges of propaganda and vilification, he told of his years of tireless and successful work, and said that the attacks were entirely unjustified and unwarranted, and condemned the introduction of politics into a church preaching the Gospel of Christ.

Daniells denounced the electioneering, the gossiping and spreading of rumor in corridors and the backbiting overheard by his friends. . . .

His voice trembled and the tears rolled down his cheeks as he defended his leadership. At the close of his talk he withdrew his name. . . . No names of those implicated in the propaganda against Daniells were mentioned.

A later edition of the *Examiner* concluded the story:

After a fight that shook the world conference of Seventh Day Adventists to its very foundations and threatened disruption in the ranks of its workers a compromise on the two chief officers was effected yesterday. . . . The compromise was not reached, however, until after the voicing of much acid criticism and bitter denunciation of the "dirty politics" which President Daniells and some of his supporters said had been going on for months in the campaign to bring about a change of presidents.

Pioneer members of the organization in speaking for a resolution condemning political methods in church affairs termed the conference now in session "the worst" from the standpoint of the use of political practices since the beginning of the Adventist movement and its first general conference in 1863.

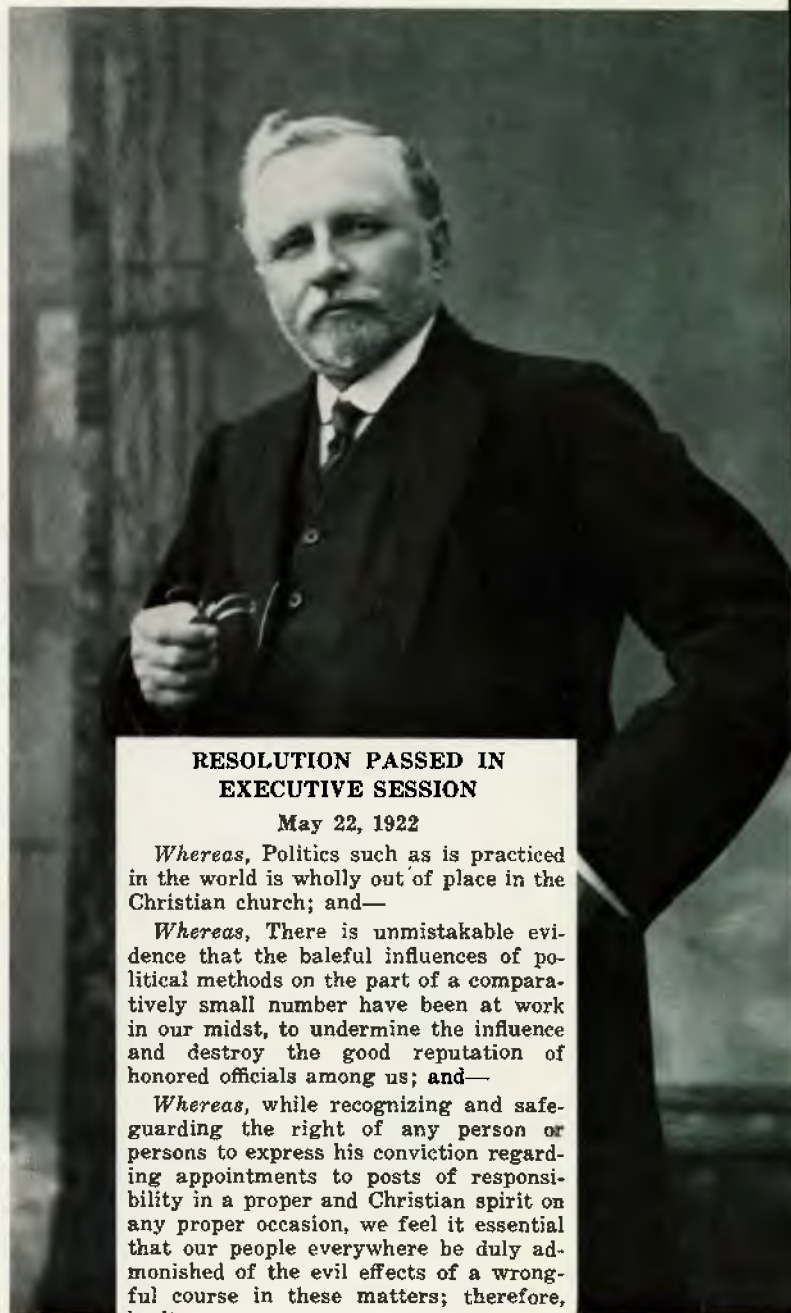
The newspaper went on to cite W. C. White as speaking a word in defense of the forces demanding a change: "No man has a right to re-election if it is not the will of his brethren." Also noted was an observation by Dr. George A. Harding (brother of President Warren G. Harding) that not all those opposing Daniells' re-election were playing dirty politics: "There must be no muzzling of honest conviction . . . the expression of a belief that a change of administration is for the good of the cause. . . . For some time I have heard the expressed wish among ministers for a change of leadership, and we medical missionaries have been wondering for years how long we would have to wait for a change and someone who could see our work as we see it." The article then printed the Conference's resolution against politics in the church.

The *General Conference Bulletin* reported that the morning after Spicer's election as the new president, Elder Daniells made a speech regarding the newspaper stories of a power struggle for the presidency. He noted that newspaper people sometimes get things twisted and write headlines to catch the eye. If matters were as serious as the papers suggested, the church would indeed be in trouble, but such was not the case, he said. There had been no rivalry between himself and Elder Spicer for the presidency, for their relationship had been cordial for 21 years. The only contention in the meeting thus far had been a strong condemnation of the political wirepulling that had gone on since the Conference convened. "There was determined effort to throw me out, and there was solemn protest against the methods adopted to do it." Daniells stated that ten years earlier he had told Elder Spicer that he would be happy to let him become president, and had told others the same ever since, but they kept re-electing him anyway. This time he finally refused, even though some urged him to accept just to silence his critics. "That is just about how I have tried to hold on to this office." Since Spicer's election Daniells said he felt like "a bird let out of a cage." He expressed the wish, in closing, that such a controversy would never occur again.

The *Bulletin* published a resolution on politics in the church, which said in part:

Politics such as is practiced in the world is wholly out of place in the Christian church. . . . The baleful influences of political methods on the part of a comparatively small number have been at work in our midst to undermine the influence and destroy the good reputation of honored officials among us. . . . We hereby pronounce our decided rebuke upon and repudiation of all unchristian propaganda, insinuation, vilification, and all false charges whatsoever, either for or against any brother, prior to or in connection with this General Conference. . . . We do under God pledge ourselves to full repentance of all these unholy things.

Elder Spicer's thoughts on the matter also appeared, in which he stated, "Your selection of me as president



RESOLUTION PASSED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

May 22, 1922

Whereas, Politics such as is practiced in the world is wholly out of place in the Christian church; and—

Whereas, There is unmistakable evidence that the baleful influences of political methods on the part of a comparatively small number have been at work in our midst, to undermine the influence and destroy the good reputation of honored officials among us; and—

Whereas, while recognizing and safeguarding the right of any person or persons to express his conviction regarding appointments to posts of responsibility in a proper and Christian spirit on any proper occasion, we feel it essential that our people everywhere be duly admonished of the evil effects of a wrongful course in these matters; therefore, be it—

Resolved, That it is the sense of this body that we hereby pronounce our decided rebuke upon and repudiation of all unchristian propaganda, insinuation, vilification, and all false charges whatsoever, either for or against any brother, prior to or in connection with this General Conference; and further,

Resolved, That we do under God pledge ourselves to full repentance of all these unholy things.

Newly elected president William A. Spicer and the resolution on politics in the church passed by the fortieth General Conference session, in 1922.

Courtesy Review and Herald Publishing Association



David Lin, a member of the Chinese delegation at the General Conference of 1946, plays a *Voice of Prophecy* record in Mandarin for the congregation.



Elder J. Lamar McElhany shouldered the burdens of the General Conference presidency during the difficult years of the Second World War.

of the General Conference means that we have reached a time when our work is so big that we do not need big administrators, necessarily at the center." He cited previous presidents as "great administrators" but felt that now the unions and divisions had the greatest role to play. He would have preferred to see a younger man take over and felt that in four years there would be many such ready to step into his place.

Concluded the new president, "It has taken a little time to get used to the brethren's coming and saying they want to shake hands with the new president. That is all right; but you are shaking hands with the same brother you have known all the time. And if I smile at you, do not think I am smiling because I am president; I am smiling because I love you, as I press your hand."

Elder Daniells then appealed to the delegates to put away all differences. The entire congregation stood in response and sang "Bless Be the Tie that Binds," "All to Jesus I Surrender," and "Onward, Christian Soldiers."

The 45th session of the General Conference took place June 5-15, 1946 in the 2,500-seat Sligo church at Takoma Park, Maryland, headquarters.

In his opening address President James L. McElhany noted that when the meetings were last held in Takoma Park in 1913 the church numbered only 100,000 members worldwide using 75 languages. Now there were 600,000 members and 800 languages represented. In another area of remarkable growth, the radio program "The Voice of Prophecy" had increased from 85 stations when it went coast-to-coast in 1942 to 380 stations just four years later. Among the delegates were David Lin and Dr. Herbert Liu from China, from whom little more would be heard until some 35 years later.

At previous gatherings in the nation's capital a delegation had called on the United States president. This time the church decided to reverse the procedure and invite Harry Truman to address the Conference. The president sent a letter of regrets with a "message to the conference" that contained the challenge: "Hold fast to the Christian heritage . . . and . . . uphold the ideal of the Great Exemplar."

Recently-ended World War II greatly influenced this Conference. As during the first World War, the session had been postponed a year, allowing five years between meetings rather than the usual four. In addition this was a smaller gathering than intended, though 687 delegates came representing every country but Germany and Russia.

Elder McElhany spoke of the effect of the war on the church, how many countries had been cut off from headquarters during those years, how missionaries had to be withdrawn from the Far East, and how the Northern European and Far Eastern Divisions had been hampered in their functions. As a result, the percentage of membership gain in North America exceeded that of any overseas divisions during the five preceding years for the first time in the 20th century. Fewer missionaries went out between 1941 and 1945 than between 1936 and 1940: Yet membership had risen from 504,752 to 573,311. And the church reported much activ-

ity in relief work to war-torn areas. William H. Branson gave a "Provisional Division" report. This division came into being for fields cut off from their division headquarters by the war which had to turn to the General Conference for leadership. It included the West African, Middle East, and Ethiopian Unions.

Actions voted at this session included a world monthly edition of the *Review and Herald* "in various languages" that would bring inspiration and unity to other fields and a revision of the *Church Manual* regarding discipline and reasons for the disfellowshipping of members. The delegates went on record expressing gratitude to Adventist servicemen and women for their record of faith and honor during the war, and against a U. S. representative being sent to the Vatican.

A lengthy document covering three-and-a-half pages in the *General Conference Bulletin* contained a statement on "Standards of Christian Living" that was voted to be accepted and published in pamphlet form. Its various sections dealt with Bible Study and Prayer, Community Relationships (being good citizens), Sabbath-keeping (no "secular reading or secular radio broadcasts"), Reverence for the Place of Worship, Health and Temperance (vegetarianism recommended), Dress (must be conservative, no make-up or jewelry, wedding ring allowed "in some countries"), Simplicity (to characterize graduations, weddings, church services), Reading (no fiction or "evil literature" whether fact or fiction), Radio (no "theatrical performances" or "minstrel shows"), Recreation and Amusement (no movie theater attendance—"pueril portrayals of the theater" or dancing or "commercialized amusements"), Music (no "jazz or swing"), Social Relations ("stern guarding of the sacred powers of the body"), Chaperonage (a must), Courtship and Marriage (not unequally yoked), and Divorce (the strict Biblical view).

A story in *The Washington Daily News* captured better than any piece reviewed for this study the flavor and meaning of a Seventh-day Adventist General Conference session, as well as the trials that war had brought to this worldwide church. It is worth quoting at length.

In a sun-baked village on the Indus plain a tight-lipped man of indeterminate age snapped shut the catch on his suitcase, then went to help his wife with hers. The ox-drawn tonga was waiting at the door. At the station they tipped the tonga-wallah two pice, then took their seats in the second-class compartment. All day and night and another day they rode. In Bombay they took a ship.

Simultaneously in a village high in the Andes another couple, strikingly similar, closed the door of their mission school on a shabby side street, walked across the light-drenched cathedral square, with never a sideglance for the cathedral's baroque loveliness and started down a mountain trail on the first leg of a journey.

In a town in the northernmost part of Norway, two missionary doctors gave last-minute instructions to their assistants and checked over the last batch of vegetarian diets they had prepared for their poverty stricken patients. They attended a final service in the little white church and set out together for the airport.

And in a Javanese village, where ragged hungry children still poked at the debris left over from the

Japanese occupation, a sad-eyed Dutch missionary wiped his glasses and packed into his shabby bag a picture of his young wife. She wouldn't be going with him this time, because she had starved to death in an internment camp. He put his glasses back on and left for the waiting steamship.

Simultaneously all over the world the pilgrimage was begun. This week the pilgrims, as dissimilar as a Parisian garbed like a diplomat and a turbaned Indian, a pale North European and a deeply tanned outposter from Central Africa, converged in a quiet Washington suburb, world center of the Seventh Day Adventist Church, for their 45th world conference, their first since war blacked out news of their quiet missionary endeavors. Together some 800 of them climbed the shining white steps of their mammoth new church in Takoma Park, and prayed.

To other Washingtonians some of their beliefs may seem strange: for instance, that the war, strikes and inflation, sun spots and the atom bomb, are all part of the same tremendous portent—the imminent coming of Christ. Likewise, their tabus on smoking, drinking and partaking of the flesh. But all have moving tales of hardship and distress, which they bear uncomplainingly in the calm assurance that their miseries are the fulfillment of prophecy.

The Dutchman Klass Tilstera, who was in the Dutch army till Java fell, then slaved away in a Jap railroad gang, as his wife sickened and died in another internment camp, suffered extraordinarily. But who is to gainsay the sacrifice of Hendrick Eelsing of Arnhem, who bucked the German oppression of The Netherlands? Or the Norsemen, Hakon Uggedal and C. T. Scott, who still labored as missionary doctors after the Germans had taken their medical supplies? Or Eduard Magi, who fled Esthonia after the Soviets nationalized church buildings and holding prayer service even in the streets was unsafe? . . .

In two weeks the delegates will disperse to far places to irritate the consciences of brown men, yellow men, black men and white men after the Adventist fashion, for their soul's salvation.

The nearest the General Conference came to holding a centennial session was in 1962, when delegates gathered at the 49th convocation. San Francisco played host for the eighth time from July 26 to August 4, as delegates shivered in record summer cold. A 232-page *General Conference Reports* volume became the official record of the meetings. Its pages told of Mayor George Christopher proclaiming July 27 "Seventh-day Adventist Day" as he welcomed the delegates the first night. President John F. Kennedy sent a telegram of welcome. Governor Edmund G. Brown received an invitation to address the session, but declined.

Four delegates had been invited from the Soviet Union, but could not come. Ernest Farnsworth was there, however, being the 90-year-old son of William Farnsworth who began keeping the Sabbath in 1844 at Washington, New Hampshire. When introduced to say a few words, he commented that he was a "distant relative" of Eugene William Farnsworth, a well-known worker—"E. W. was father's seventh child, and I am his twenty-first" (he had 22!).

The Conference voted Reuben R. Figuhr to his third

and last term as General Conference president. On the first Sabbath of the session the worldwide church contributed a million-dollar offering for evangelism that was hauled to the bank in a Brink's armored truck. 2,200 women received a cancer screening test, and a cholesterol check-up was available to all delegates, though the latter was not mentioned in the *Reports*.

The most excitement occurred when a group of black Adventist workers called a public press conference to denounce the church for racial prejudice. The story began with an "impromptu press conference" involving a couple whose daughter had been denied admission to an Adventist academy supposedly because she was black. "Adventists Fight Over Segregation" proclaimed the front page of the *San Francisco Examiner*, which featured a large picture of the couple holding the letter of rejection. The paper quoted the father, "We will hold a meeting Sunday and I expect 2,000 people. Then we will ask for an audience with Elder Figuhr." Said the mother, "We are not about to leave the church. We were both born in it. We believe in it. But we believe it is wrong in this matter."

The *Examiner* presented the church's side of the problem: "The sect's leading Negro clergymen confirmed the segregation, but defended it on grounds it is the wish of a majority of Negro church members." It was reported that Elder Figuhr had appointed Frank L. Peterson, associate general secretary of the General Conference, and a black, to "deliver an official reply" to the charge, as a member of the new Committee on Human Relations. "I don't call it segregation. It is the



A floral display in honor of the 49th General Conference session brightens a grassy slope in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park. From the Review and Herald



(Above): General Conference president Reuben R. Figuhr holds the golden key to the city of San Francisco presented to him by the mayor. From the Review and Herald



(Left): San Francisco's mayor George Christopher declares July 27, 1962 "Seventh-day Adventist Day" in San Francisco, while Elder Figuhr looks on. From the Review and Herald

Adventists Fight Over Segregation

A Negro couple whose teen-age daughter was denied admission to an all-white Seventh Day Adventists' high school, announced yesterday they will bring the problems of church segregation to the floor of the world Adventists' conference here.

The sect's leading Negro clergyman confirmed the segregation, but defended it on grounds it is the wish of a majority of Negro church members.

"We will hold a meeting Sunday and I expect 2,000 people. Then we will ask for . . . with Elder . . .

Ohio, "due to our very crowded dormitory conditions."

The letter from G. C. Seiler, registrar of the academy also noted:

"I trust you have given consideration to the excellent school for your people at Pine Forge, Pa."

The final paragraph of registrar's letter read:



best program for the advancement of our cause among colored people," he said. "A conference of our own people will attract our own people more than will an integrated conference."

The next day's paper quoted Elder Figuhr to the effect that the charge of racial discrimination was only "an occasional incident . . . given more publicity than the case warrants. . . . This church believes in the integration of all peoples, . . . and this has been its stand throughout the years." The academy in question denied refusing admittance to the black student in spite of the incriminating letter, pointing out that it had admitted other blacks. Another parent, however, declared that his daughter had been refused also, even though an honor student, because of her race.

Monday's *Examiner* reported that "one thousand Negro Seventh-day Adventists gathered here yesterday to protest racial segregation within their church. . . . But it appeared the protest meeting will have no effect on Adventist governing bodies, meeting in a week-long World Conference." It said that "the chairman of the predominantly Negro Laymen's Leadership Group, accused the church governing body of 'contemptuous indifference to the Golden Rule'" before a "cheering audience in the ballroom of Jack Tar Hotel." He did not seem, however, to force integration through channels outside the church, but to turn attention to the seriousness of the problem without undermining denominational procedure or organization. While reluctant to bring the issue to public attention, church leadership's indifference had forced his hand. "We are using the public press as a sounding board," he revealed. "At least we feel the church leaders will talk to us through the press."

One hundred black Adventist ministers were reported to have met three times and to have signed a secret protest while trying to keep the fight in the family. They repudiated the official church statement that members preferred segregated conferences. "The world conference moved to smooth over the storm . . . with the election the same day of Frank L. Peterson, a 69-year-old Negro leader from Washington, D. C., as one of four general vice presidents. He is the first Negro to hold such a high post. . . . Peterson defended his church's racial policies," citing progress in hiring black administrators. "I don't appreciate their spreading the problems of the denomination before the public. . . . I think it's a wicked thing they're doing. I don't understand it." The story ended by stating that "a peace meeting was held between Negro and white leaders . . . in hope of patching up differences."

"Adventists Will End Segregation" declared the headline of the final newspaper story on the subject. It noted that the Adventist president admitted to some segregation but refused to meet with the predominantly black lay organization to discuss it. Instead, the denomination would move steadily forward through regular

Headlines from The San Francisco Examiner, July 28, 1962, and newly elected General Conference vice president Frank L. Peterson. From the Review and Herald

A Fervent Plea for Adventist Integration

One thousand Negro Seventh-day Adventists gathered here yesterday to protest racial segregation within their church.

They applauded a speech by Frank W. Hale Jr., Negro chairman of the English Department of Ohio Central State College, calling for complete integration within the sect.

And they applauded Hale's plea for a solid Negro front against ecclesiastical segregationists.

uous indifference to the Golden Rule."

"Our message must embrace the simple and elementary principles of human conduct and not unwittingly proclaim to the world that we are merchants of external

The San Francisco Examiner, July 30, 1962.

channels to eradicate discrimination. He chided some black leaders as "misguided," "impatient," and having lost their perspective, and denied that Peterson's election was a move to placate blacks.

Although Elder Figuhr addressed the delegates on the subject of the blacks' demands, no mention of the problem ever appeared in the pages of the *General Conference Reports*, as the bulletins for that session were called. As far as *Review* readers were concerned, the topic had never arisen. Instead, the church paper published Elder Peterson's North American Regional Department report and the Statement on Human Relations from that committee.

In his departmental report, Elder Peterson pointed out that several blacks were serving at the General Conference level and that the Regional work was flourishing. The "Statement," made at a session business meeting, told of the committee's efforts to get the church to employ blacks in its institutions, admit them to all Adventist schools, and conduct workshops on race relations. It reported some success in these areas, calling for continued discussion, education, and implementation. The General Conference was requested not to hold advisory councils in cities where blacks could not find equal accommodations.

In his devotional study at the Tuesday worship hour, as reported in the *Review*, Peterson made no mention of racial problems until his final sentence: "We must stand solidly against the enemy; we must allow no divisions to creep in among us, whether they be national, racial, or doctrinal."

At one meeting, Lawrence Maxwell described the newspaper clippings on the hall bulletin board that reported on the General Conference session. He mentioned some of the headlines and stories, but omitted any reference to those dealing with the racial turmoil. Fortunately the papers had covered various other aspects of the meetings, such as reports of church

growth, Amazon medical launches, Adventist support of the Supreme Court's ban on prayer in public schools, new officers elected, and sermon content. The press even told of a non-member picketing the Conference because his Adventist wife insisted he join the church. He claimed she made him sleep with the dog, so he divorced her, lost his home, and still had to support her. Another newspaper story told how the United Nations credited Adventist aid in the Congo with helping prevent a widespread war, and how an Adventist lady from Brazil won a gold medal in the International Bible Contest. Adventists could rejoice over such news items.

As can be seen from this selective survey, press coverage of Adventist General Conference sessions has fallen into two broad categories. The Adventist press has reported the "family news." Here church members have received glowing reports of progress in the field — tithes and offerings received, departmental growth and missionary outreach. Invariably, these success stories have recalled the harmony and good faith that punctuated General Conference sessions. The non-Adventist press, however, has probed other aspects of Adventist "family life." The strains or quarrels that surface in Adventism seem to make better press for outsiders. Thus, in 1922, at the changing of the guard from Arthur G. Daniells to William A. Spicer the public press reported unattractive politicking. In 1962, the San Francisco General Conference session received full coverage in the local newspapers relative to racial tensions. Neither the *General Conference Reports* nor the *Review and Herald* reported this. Obviously, patting ourselves on the back in the Adventist press feels better than being punched in the eye in the public press. But for complete coverage of these historical convocations, it appears necessary to read both the in-house and the outsiders' reports. Ideally, both kinds of news will be good news, for they speak to us of a growing and maturing church.

Adventists Will End Segregation

The world president of the Seventh-day Adventists admitted yesterday that some segregation exists within his church, but refused to meet with a lay organization comprised predominately of Negroes to discuss it.

President Reuben R. Figuhr said it is the church's purpose to "steadily move forward"

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION

A Celebration of God's People

Gerald W. Wheeler and Paul J. Landa

If a Seventh-day Adventist were asked to explain what a General Conference session is, he would probably reply that it is a special meeting where representatives from around the world assemble to elect world-church officers and to transact denominational business on such matters as organization, belief and practice. But that would be only a partial answer.

In the life of the church the General Conference world session has become more than a business meeting. Indeed, to describe this gathering as "merely" a business meeting would be like defining the Lord's Supper as a light evening meal! The world session has developed into a major act of worship and a celebration of all that the Seventh-day Adventist church is and hopes to be, involving not only denominational leaders but also increasing numbers of lay members. Adventists from around the world come not just to hear reports and learn the names of new officers, but to worship and experience the joy of being a part of the Seventh-day Adventist church. And as they return to their home churches, their talks in Sabbath School or vespers do not discuss slates of officers or financial statistics. Instead, they share a religious experience, as they try to communicate what it is like to be part of God's church assembled together.

The General Conference sessions *did* begin as yearly occasions to elect officers and conduct business. Through the years the meetings have grappled with

such items as organizational structure and doctrinal belief. As issues have become more complex, a world session now takes them up only after preliminary study committees have examined them and made concrete proposals. The General Conference vote is the end of a long, careful process. Thus, the church today would not think of approaching a doctrinal issue in the same way that the 1888 Minneapolis Conference did.

Almost from the very beginning, General Conference sessions have also exhibited the characteristics of grand family reunions. As Adventist missionaries traveled to isolated posts around the world, they came to look upon the world gatherings as opportunities to renew friendships and catch up on news and denominational developments. Thus, the sessions helped cement a far-flung church together.

With the passage of time, an increasing number of national delegates from lands outside North America have been attending, bringing their colorful costumes and making the Mission Pageant a highlight of the convocation. Music—especially from youth ensembles and groups from foreign lands—have enriched the program and intensified the spiritual atmosphere.

General Conference sessions have also provided a time for honoring beloved men and women who have given their lives to the service of the denomination. The meetings have offered occasion to share unusual and dramatic experiences in the life of the church and its members. And delegates and visitors alike have been inspired by the denomination's best preachers.

These aspects have combined to make each General Conference session a religious celebration as much as it is a business meeting. For non-delegates the celebration aspect is even more prominent. They do not come to listen to business proceedings. Instead they take their valuable vacation time and sometimes travel thousands of miles to experience the variety and vitality of their worldwide church. Then they return home reassured in their faith in the church and confirmed in their belief that God is indeed at work in the world.

The General Conference session is a vital element in forging a worldwide family of God. People from every walk of life, culture and language see and experience for themselves the marvelous diversity of the body of Christ. Walking the halls of the convention centers, sitting in the meetings, talking, praying and worshipping with one another, Seventh-day Adventists discover what their spiritual brothers and sisters are like. Sometimes

the cultural contrast can be startling, but all go away with a new sense of oneness. These contacts provide the worldwide church with new insights, perspectives and strengths.

In this context, we see such things as divisional and institutional reports as more than just summaries of statistics and facts. They become reaffirmations of gratitude and expressions of praise to God. They are manifestations of shared joy and confidence. They are ways that God brings us into communion with Him, and with each other.

The General Conference World session, therefore, is not only the church in business meeting, but also the church at worship and celebration. It has become for contemporary Seventh-day Adventists what the Passover and other festivals were for God's people in Biblical times—celebrations of a common heritage and of God's continued leading.

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION is a gathering of the family of God, a large and varied family. All photographs courtesy of the Review and Herald Publishing Association unless noted otherwise.



(Above): 1975 General Conference session in Vienna, Austria.

(Right): Quadraplegic Charles Axelsson of the Northern European Division shares his love for God by painting (holding a brush between his teeth) and translating devotional literature.



(Above): The Adventist family extends to the remotest parts of the world (San Francisco, 1936)

It honors its elders, those veterans who have given their lives in service.

(Right): Orphanage administrator Erna Kruger is honored at the 1980 session in Dallas, Texas, and reunited with two of her former charges.

(Below): Story time in the junior section with Elder Ralph Watts, Jr.



It also embraces its children, the church of the future.



It reunites old friends and creates new ones.



(Above): General Conference President A G Daniells and Secretary W A Spicer take a break from tent erection for the 1913 session and pose with fellow workers

(Right): Informal get-togethers ease the progress of business actions and bind personal and church relationships





THE GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION
 is an occasion to learn of the growth of
 the Advent family around the world.

(Left): The evening reports from the various world Divisions provide unforgettable experiences. Johann Laich of the German Swiss Conference opens his Division's program by blowing his alpenhorn. This is followed by a stirring rendition of Luther's hymn "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" led by delegates dressed as the reformers Hus, Luther, Zwingli and Calvin (Below)



(Above): Booths and representatives acquaint delegates and visitors of the work of the church. The 1980 Inter-America exhibit stressed public evangelism.

(Left): The mission pageant, on the second Sabbath, is both a celebration and a reminder of the purpose of the church on earth.

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION
is the appointed occasion for the church
to transact its most important business.

(Right): The church elects its chief officers at the General Conference session. The delegation from the USSR selects its representative for the nominating committee at the 1980 session.

(Below left) Many hours are spent by many people in committee meetings. The church takes advantage of the large gathering of denominational representatives in one place to get as much accomplished as possible.

(Below right): Committee recommendations are voted upon by the assembled delegates in general business sessions, as on this occasion, in 1905, in Washington, D C



**It takes the many talents of
dedicated men and women to
keep the conference on course.**

(Right): A team of secretaries records and keeps track of the actions voted and the discussions and debates (Vienna, 1975).





(Above): Modern technology enhances the drama of each session. In 1980, Andrea and Allen Steele narrated the mission pageant over closed-circuit TV while a group of interpreters (right) provided simultaneous translations for the benefit of non-English speaking participants.



(Right): Eric B. Hare could captivate and hold a large audience spellbound with his mission stories (San Francisco, 1962). Courtesy Pacific Press Publishing Association

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION is a time of spiritual renewal — through

Soul-stirring preaching

(Left): H. M. S. Richards proclaiming the Word at the 1950 San Francisco session. Courtesy Pacific Press Publishing Association



WE HAVE THIS HOPE
Theme Song for General Conference Session, 1967

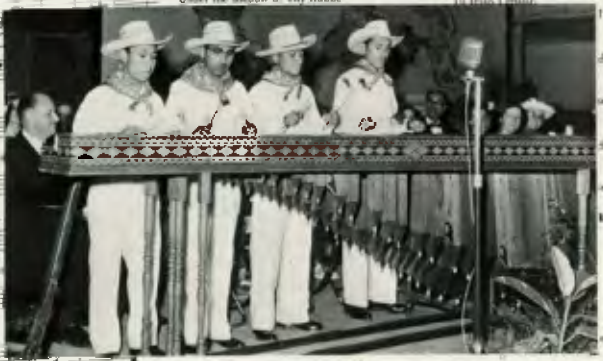
Words by
MUSIC BY

WE HAVE THIS HOPE that turns with-in our heart
com-ing of the Lord
PAITH in the prom-ise of
DRAVING
What the sa-lion. Do
Mal - le - in - jah! Christ is King? WE
burus with-in our hearts. Hope in the con-ling

Copyright 1967, by Hymn Society

GENERAL CONFERENCE HYMNS

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. O GOD, OUR HELP Church Hymnal 81</p> <p>O God, our help in ages past, Our hope for years to come, Ours shelter from the stormy blast, And our eternal home! Under the shadow of Thy throne</p> | <p>3. WHEN MORNING GLIDS THE SKIES Church Hymnal 43</p> <p>When morning glids the skies, My heart a-awake cries, May Jesus Christ be praised! Alike at work and prayer, To Jesus I aspire.</p> |
|---|---|



Thrilling music

(Left): The theme song for each session tries to capture the essence and hope of Adventism. (Insert): A marimba group from Latin America provides harmony and color at the 1954 San Francisco session.
Loma Linda University Heritage Room

(Below left): Youth music groups are a testimony to the fact that the body of Christ is living, ongoing and ever renewing (Vienna, 1975).

(Below right): Brad and Olive Braley have been two of the most popular musicians at General Conference sessions (Atlantic City, 1970).



Open witnessing

(Right): In two weeks, from May 5 to May 19, 1905, this group traveled from Indianapolis to Washington, D. C., canvassing twenty cities and towns, selling 5,520 ten cent magazines.



(Right): Robert Salau from the Solomon Islands shares his faith with an airline stewardess (San Francisco, 1950).

Courtesy Pacific Press Publishing Association

(Below): The 1980 Dallas session included public events in the city's Thanksgiving Square. In the picture, General Conference President Neal C. Wilson addresses the large crowd.



THE GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION provides unforgettable memories, a vision of service, and a call to consecration.

(Left) Those who attend a General Conference session transmit the inspiration and pageantry of the gathering through the pictures they take and the memories and experiences they speak of and share in their home churches.



(Above): Empowered "By His Spirit," church workers and laypeople dedicate themselves to the proclamation of the good news of the soon-returning Savior.

MEET THE PRESIDENTS

Historical Vignettes by George W. Reid, Walter R. Beach, William J. Cork, Dorothy Minchin-Comm, Frederick G. Hoyt

*Thou who art over us,
Thou who art one of us,
Thou who art —
Also within us,
May all see Thee — in me also,
May I prepare the way for Thee,
May I thank Thee for all that shall fall to my lot,
May I also not forget the needs of others,
Keep me in Thy love
As Thou wouldest that all should be kept in mine.
May everything in this my being be directed to Thy glory
And may I never despair.
For I am under Thy hand,
And in Thee is all power and goodness.
Give me a pure heart — that I may see Thee,
A humble heart — that I may hear Thee,
A heart of love — that I may serve Thee,
A heart of faith — that I may abide in Thee.
— Dag Hammarskjöld*

JOHN BYINGTON (1798 — 1887)

General Conference President
20 May 1863 — 17 May 1865

John Byington, first president of the General Conference, was born in Vermont in 1798, the year Napoleon's troops arrested and exiled Pope Pius VI. The year came to have significance to Byington as marking the beginning of the "Time of the End." A cautious man, Byington reserved judgment when he heard William Miller preach in 1844, but eight years later he accepted the Sabbath message and was baptized into the fledgling Adventist movement. It was in his Buck's Bridge, New York, home that his daughter Martha opened the first of what would eventually become a world-wide chain of Adventist schools.

Befriended by James and Ellen White, the Byingtons were persuaded to migrate to Michigan, at that time a raw land just opened to settlement. He supported himself by farming, but his first interest was evangelism, in which he was often teamed with John N. Loughborough.

In 1863 the organizing conference (consisting of twenty delegates from six states) gave birth to the General Conference, selecting James White as president. White declined the post, whereupon the convention turned to Byington, at 65 years of age the oldest Adventist leader. He served two one-year terms.

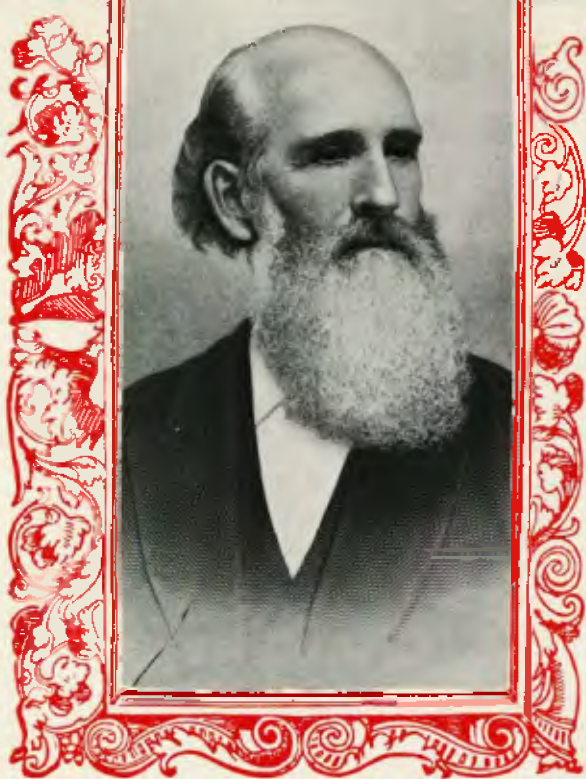
Byington's presidency not only had to deal with the problems of organizing the new church, but also the difficulties imposed by the Civil War. Adventism was confined to the northern states and all were agreed that slavery had to be ended. Byington himself is said to have operated an Underground Railroad station on his Buck's Bridge farm. When Congress, in 1863, initiated the draft, Adventists felt that, though they opposed slavery, they could not take up arms. The church helped its drafted members raise money to purchase exemptions — at \$300 a man, it was beyond what most individuals could afford.

Byington spent much of his time meeting with Adventist



groups, holding evangelistic meetings and baptizing new members, thereby trying to unify and strengthen the church. A man of many talents, he supported himself by selling butter and produce from his farm and, occasionally, fitting dentures.

He retired to his estate after his two terms were ended, but continued to preach regularly and to visit church members. He died in Battle Creek in 1887, at the age of 88.



JAMES S. WHITE
(1821 — 1881)

General Conference President
17 May 1865 — 14 May 1867
18 May 1869 — 29 December 1871
10 August 1874 — 6 August 1880

The eccentricities of James White's later years have been highly-publicized, but we should not allow these to obscure his monumental achievements in building the early Seventh-day Adventist movement. A brilliant man possessed of both energy and zeal, he was the kind of leader needed to bring order to a struggling new movement that seemed plagued by a host of rugged individualists.

The story of James White has been told repeatedly, but whether recounted in popular form for children or in serious studies based on early sources, one feature remains prominent: his wholehearted zeal for the progress of Adventism.

White's eye for order and his vulnerability as legal owner of the church's printing enterprise pressed him to advocate denominational organization, but he refused the presidency when the delegates to the first General Conference urged it upon him. Finally, in 1865, he reluctantly accepted it. Eventually he became the only person ever to serve as General Conference president three separate times (1865-1867, 1869-1871, 1874-1880).

James White is remembered for more than being the husband of Ellen G. White. He not only participated in the development of the church's doctrinal platform, but he also played a role in the shaping of its organizational structure, founded the denomination's first publishing house, and led in the establishment of the first health care institution which, under the direction of Dr. John Harvey Kellogg, developed into the world-famous Battle Creek Sanitarium. White's strong leadership style brought offense to some colleagues but few questioned his ability to get things done.

As founder and nurturer of institutions, James White left an enduring mark on the Seventh-day Adventist church. The hundreds of institutions the denomination operates today bear tribute to the genius of a man who saw what strong institutional centers could offer to stabilize a church whose survival was threatened by the isolation of its scattered members.

JOHN N. ANDREWS
(1829 — 1883)

General Conference President
14 May 1867 — 18 May 1869

John N. Andrews might best be described as a man driven by an overwhelming commitment to spreading the message of Christ's soon return. He is remembered as the most skillful scholar ever to serve in the denomination's presidency. It is less well known that with his election in 1867, at the age of 38, he became the youngest president ever to serve the denomination.

Already, his scholarly work and his writings, especially in the *Review and Herald*, had made him one of the best known and most respected of the church's twenty-eight ministers.

His relatively brief term of service — twenty-four months — came at an opportune time. The bloody Civil War had ended two years before with Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox Courthouse, Virginia. Seventh-day Adventists, located entirely in the northern states, were ready to profit from America's rapid westward expansion and growing prosperity.

Within a year of assuming the presidency, Andrews encouraged John N. Loughborough and Daniel T. Bourdeau, two of the church's most seasoned evangelists, to begin Adventist work in California.

Andrews is also remembered for popularizing the camp meeting among Seventh-day Adventists. Originally a frontier phenomenon, the camp meeting was declining with increasing urbanization. Through Andrews' influence, this religious convocation was adopted by the church whose rural ideals resisted urban encroachment. Though Andrews advocated the camp meeting as an evangelistic tool, it soon became an annual retreat focusing on renewal among church members.

His commitment to evangelism was demonstrated most clearly after he left the presidency, when in 1874 he became the denomination's first missionary, spending the remainder of his life spreading the Adventist message in Europe.



GEORGE I. BUTLER

(1834 — 1918)

General Conference President
29 December 1871 — 10 August 1874
6 October 1880 — 17 October 1888

By one of those coincidences of life George I. Butler was instructed in the Adventist faith by John N. Andrews, and in turn, Arthur G. Daniells accepted the faith in one of Butler's tent meetings. All three would serve as presidents of the General Conference.

Butler's vigor and hard work led to his installation as president of the Iowa Conference in 1865, succeeding B. F. Snook, whose defection seriously divided the Adventist membership in that state. Butler was ordained following two years of service as conference president, and within six more years he was elected to the top leadership post of the church.

His first term as General Conference president was marked by rapid denominational expansion. He spent much of his time traveling from New England to California, holding many evangelistic meetings. The camp meeting flourished, rallying the believers and adding thousands of new members to the church.

Confronted by the problem of inadequately trained workers, Butler sensed the urgent need for an Adventist college. Together with James and Ellen White he actively raised funds for a college in Battle Creek which opened its doors in 1874. He also gave enthusiastic support for the Whites' dream of establishing a new publishing house on the west coast, resulting in the founding of the Pacific Press.

In 1880 Butler was again asked to serve as president. Under his guidance the next eight years witnessed the greatest percentage growth in the denomination's history. Evangelistic teams pitched tents in hundreds of towns, stressing the need to observe the law of God—an emphasis that Ellen White would later say had left the church "as dry as the hills of Gilboa."

Perhaps Butler's most heartbreaking task was dealing with the crisis precipitated by the defection of Dudley M. Carright, one of the denomination's most successful evangelists. As the men were close friends, Butler deeply regretted his inability to bring about a reconciliation.

Butler is also remembered for introducing tithing, a practice which placed the church on a sound financial base for the first time. His relentless work, however, took a toll on his health, and prevented him from attending the fateful 1888 General Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He retired to Florida, and later served the church as president of the Florida Conference and the Southern Union.



OLE A. OLSEN

(1845 — 1915)

General Conference President
17 October 1888 — 19 February 1897

Ole A. Olsen, an immigrant from Norway, was the first General Conference president who was not a native-born American. In fact, when Olsen was chosen to succeed George I. Butler in 1888, he was in Norway holding evangelistic meetings. It was three months before he could return to America to assume his new post, which he occupied for eleven years. Although the spread of the church beyond North America had begun in 1874 with John N. Andrews' mission to Europe, it was Olsen who committed the church to a course of internationalization.

If his selection as president was intended to defuse tensions precipitated by the controversy over righteousness by faith, it failed—though one could hardly have expected otherwise. In fact, Olsen did not participate in the controversy, but as president he inherited the fallout from the church's most serious theological controversy up to that time.

The issue lay as much with method and personality as with doctrine. The long-time leaders of the denomination had seen rapid growth follow their vigorous stress on obedience to the law of God. They saw the new focus on justification by faith alone as criticism of their work which was built upon tears, agony and great personal sacrifice. They were reluctant to admit they had erred.

Olsen's tranquil, kindly temperament seemed fashioned for such a time. He was a proven evangelist, experienced in difficult pioneer work, so his standing could hardly be questioned by the "old guard." Yet he offered openness toward the younger ministers, since he stood outside the old establishment.

The task was formidable, for the controversy raged throughout his term as president. But his was a world vision, and his interest in world-wide expansion left a strong legacy.

Under Olsen's leadership, Adventists launched their first mission work among non-Christians—the Matabeles of Rhodesia. At home in North America nearly a dozen schools took root during the 1890s, laying the foundation for the present system of Adventist colleges.

Although Ole A. Olsen was thrust almost unwillingly into leadership at the head of the Adventist movement, the passage of time has demonstrated both the wisdom inherent in the choice and the hand of Providence at work in setting the church towards its world mission.



GEORGE A. IRWIN
(1844 — 1913)

General Conference President
19 February 1897 — 2 April 1901

George A. Irwin was born five days prior to the Great Disappointment, but 40 years would pass before he became a Seventh-day Adventist. He was a veteran of the Civil War, and had spent seven months as a prisoner of war, enduring the horrors of Andersonville prison, near Macon, Georgia. A man active in church work from the time of his conversion, Irwin was made director in 1885 of the fledgling Adventist work in the South. He had a special interest in helping blacks join the mainstream of American life, and served on the site selection committee for the present Oakwood College.

Irwin was elected to the presidency of the General Conference in 1897. With the theological dispute following the 1888 Minneapolis session in the past, and the church having made it through the financial panic of 1893, he devoted his energies to the expanding world work.

This led him to visit Australia in 1899, where Mrs. White was living and Avondale College was being started. Upon his return to the United States he gave enthusiastic reports of the growth of the work there.

By 1900, the rapidly-expanding church could count more than 75,000 members, but the system of organization assigned heavy responsibilities to a handful of leaders. Irwin's rigorous program of travel, speaking and planning weakened his health, as had happened to so many of his predecessors.

After four years as president, the 1901 General Conference session asked him to return to Australia to replace Arthur G. Daniells as President of the Australian Union. Somewhat hurt, he was tempted to think his efforts were unappreciated, but three years later he returned to the United States as Vice-President of the General Conference. Plagued in later years by poor health, Irwin remained active in church work until his death in 1913.

ARTHUR G. DANIELLS
(1858 — 1935)

General Conference President
2 April 1901 — 11 May 1922

Arthur G. Daniells stands as a towering figure among the presidents of the General Conference. His twenty-one-year term is the longest of any president's. Affected by a speech impediment, but sensing a call to the ministry, he began his work for the church as Robert M. Kilgore's tent master in Texas. When James and Ellen White spent the winter of 1878-79 in Denison, Texas, Daniells and his wife Mary lived with them in their rented home. This began a friendship that resumed when Elder and Mrs. Daniells joined Ellen White in Australia in 1891. It was there that he was chosen as president of the denomination's first union conference, established in 1894.

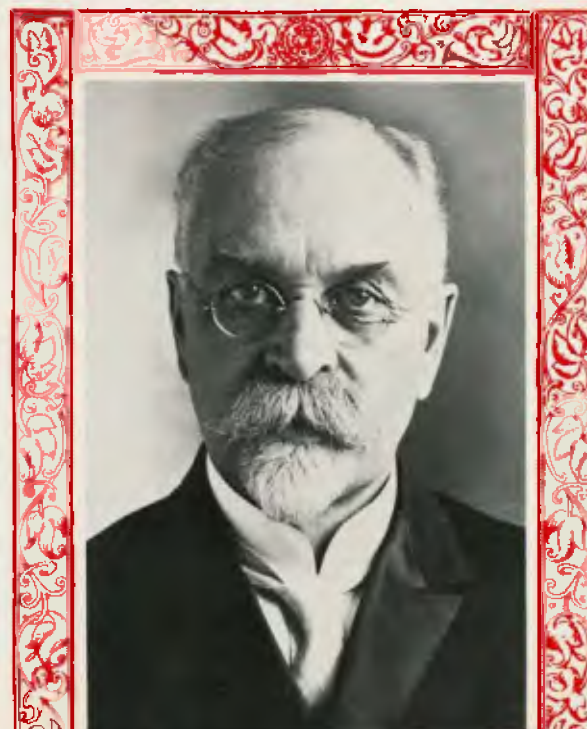
When the 1901 General Conference session recognized the need for reorganization, Daniells seemed the obvious choice to lead in implementing the new plan. Not only did he have the experience of being the President of the Australian union, but he also had the support of Ellen G. White.

Immediately after his election he was inundated with disasters on a grand scale. The Battle Creek Sanitarium, the leading denominational institution, burned in 1902. In addition, Dr. John H. Kellogg became the cause of a major crisis with the publication of his book *The Living Temple*, which reflected pantheistic ideas gaining acceptance in the then-popular Social Gospel movement. Eventually Kellogg left the church, taking with him the rebuilt Sanitarium.

Next the Review and Herald building was also destroyed by fire, and Ellen White called for a transfer of both the Review and General Conference offices elsewhere. Daniells led in the selection of a new location in Takoma Park, Maryland, and presided over a problem-ridden transfer from Battle Creek.

Always an enthusiastic supporter of foreign missions, Daniells pressed forward an expansion that carried the Adventist message into a majority of the world's nations, despite the trauma of World War I.

Forever grateful for the guidance of the Spirit of Prophecy, Daniells routinely credited the success of the movement to God's guidance through Ellen White. Perhaps it is significant that his most enduring and influential book was his last one, *The Abiding Gift of Prophecy*.





WILLIAM A. SPICER
(1865 — 1952)

General Conference President
11 May 1922 — 28 May 1930

When Arthur G. Daniells ended his twenty-one years as president, the question arose, Who can follow him? The choice fell to William A. Spicer, one-time secretary and assistant to Dr. John Harvey Kellogg. Spicer's confidence in the heavenly origin of Ellen White's visions, however, was sealed during the controversy over Kellogg's *The Living Temple*.

Perhaps less endowed with genius than John N. Andrews, Spicer nevertheless came from a cultured family and had the advantage of a superior education. His service to the church included the writing of numerous articles for and editing of various church publications. The General Conference session that selected him also established a working plan for world divisions of the General Conference, much to his satisfaction. One of his goals was to increase the responsibilities of local leaders in various parts of the world in order to allow the General Conference to assume a more general role in guiding the world church. In addition, Spicer's presidency was marked by the beginnings of internationalization within the leadership of the Adventist movement.

The 1920s were marked by vigorous economic development in the western world, particularly in the United States. This provided funds for continuing the dramatic expansion of the church abroad. Spicer's extensive experiences outside America prepared him almost ideally for the task. His travels kept him away from home for a major portion of each year, often because he made it a point to visit remote mission outposts to encourage those working there. Wherever he went his messages were marked by a winsome blend of personal modesty — almost self-effacement — and an optimism that bordered on triumphalism.

His eight years as president were marked by expansion and progress. The maturity of the church, rising educational level of its members, and a solid economic base combined to make the Spicer presidency a time of advance under the watchful care of a dedicated leader who was certain he was about the work of God.

CHARLES H. WATSON
(1877 — 1962)

General Conference President
28 May 1930 — 26 May 1936

The election of Charles H. Watson to the General Conference presidency in 1930 demonstrated two important facts about the Adventist Church: Australia had assumed such importance in the denomination that it could provide leaders of world stature, and the time had come when the church was prepared to choose a president whose heritage lay outside North America. True, Ole A. Olsen — a Scandinavian — had served earlier. But it must be recognized that while his birthplace had been Norway, his development and education were American.

Watson's selection disappointed some, particularly Louis R. Conradi, who had come to the 1930 San Francisco General Conference session with the hope of being chosen, but left confirmed in his decision to leave the church.

In many ways Watson's task was unenviable. Following hard on the heels of fifteen years of prosperity, the Great Depression swept the world, striking hard at North America, the denomination's financial base.

Four years in succession brought dramatic drops in income. Plunging tithe receipts compelled the merger of conferences and a layoff of up to half the total working force. Watson's well-known business acumen and previous experience in leading the Australian Adventist food industry onto stable ground were tested to the limit. Conservative in both theology and finances, he counseled faith in God and the avoidance of debt. His careful guidance spared the denominational institutions from the bankruptcy which plagued many other denominations.

As painful as the process proved to be, it helped renew the spirituality of the church. During Watson's term 90,000 new members joined the denomination, more than 1,000 new church buildings were erected, and missionary expansion continued.

By 1935 the worst was past. Tithe and offerings began an upward climb, and Watson's controversial refusal to borrow funds for operating was shown to have been the wisest way.



JAMES L. McELHANY
(1880 — 1959)

General Conference President
26 May 1936 — 10 June 1950

When James Lamar McElhany assumed the presidency in 1936, prospects for the future seemed improved. The Great Depression was relaxing its grip on the economy, but there was concern in some quarters about Adolf Hitler's militarization of Germany.

For decades a certain mistrust had existed between the organized church and its self-supporting institutions. McElhany's attempts to bridge the gulf led to the creation of an association of self-supporting institutions.

But the major challenge lay in the growing threat of war. By 1940 large portions of the world were cut off from the leadership of the world church. In some countries Adventism was suppressed by totalitarian rulers who insisted upon conformity to the national program. During the next four years many churches and institutions were destroyed, both in Europe and the Pacific. In such times McElhany counseled calm and trust in God's providence.

The war again forced the church to confront the problem of the draft. But this time fewer Adventists had problems obtaining conscientious objector status. And many Adventist medics distinguished themselves by acts of heroism in combat.

When the war ended in 1945, the denomination faced the task of replanting churches and providing places of worship. In addition, thousands of Adventists had become refugees, and the church reached out to help them find homes in new homelands.

The need for reorganization was apparent in some programs, and much of the president's final term was occupied with such tasks. Prominent was the organization of separate regional conferences for black Adventists in North America. By 1950 McElhany felt that many of these tasks were completed, so he stepped aside to lesser responsibilities. Having begun in a depression, he had experienced history's greatest war, and had led the church through a period of major reconstruction.



WILLIAM H. BRANSON
(1887 — 1961)

General Conference President
10 July 1950 — 24 May 1954

William H. Branson was an administrator dedicated to evangelism and the work of missions. Prior to his election he had served in several areas of the world, including the southern United States, Africa, and China. When the General Conference delegates nominated him for the presidency he accepted with the hopes that as leader he could strengthen the soul-winning outreach of the church.

To some degree his hopes were fulfilled. The church had completed at least the most urgent stages of post-war recovery, and in the 1950s the spiritual climate in North America lent itself to public evangelism. Billy Graham's crusades were attracting large crowds, and there was a revival of religious interest throughout the continent. At the same time Adventist evangelists discovered a new openness to the special message they proclaimed, observing that the rigid prejudice that for so many years had held back their work was easing.

The 1952 Bible Conference held in Takoma Park's Sligo Church drew scholars, pastors and administrators from many parts of the world, and brought a renewed sense of unity. Theologically, it was a reasonably tranquil period in Adventist history, enhancing efforts to win new believers. With the revival of interest in evangelism in general coupled with increasing popular curiosity in the Adventist message in particular, the church steadily grew through the early 1950s, both in membership and financial strength.

During Branson's term, action was also taken to establish the B.D. degree (now M. Div.) as the educational standard for persons entering the ministry. Although at first the new standard was widely disregarded by conference administrators, lifting the level of theological education appealed to many leaders in the General Conference. Early steps were taken at this time to merge the seminary with Emmanuel Missionary College creating what today is known as Andrews University.





REUBEN R. FIGUHR
(1896 — 1984)

General Conference President
24 May 1954 — 16 June 1966

Reuben Richard Figuhr was a native of Wisconsin, the son of German immigrants who had come to the United States from Russia. In time, his family followed the Oregon Trail westward, and he graduated from Laurelwood Academy. At Laurelwood he met May Holt, whom he married just before he went into army training near the end of World War I. In 1922, he received his B. A. in history from Walla Walla College, Washington.

The Figuhrs were called to mission service in the Philippines shortly after his college graduation. They were distinguished by their willingness to take on demanding work loads. Figuhr learned Tagalog, the principal Filipino dialect and, carrying his sleeping mat and mosquito net, he became truly one with the people. This was further shown by his concern to put as much effort into preparing a sermon for six people on the shores of Lake Titicaca, in Peru, as he did for thirty thousand people in San Francisco's Cow Palace at the 1954 General Conference session.

At that San Francisco meeting Reuben Figuhr accepted the presidency of the General Conference. In his inaugural address, he wryly conceded, "I do not suppose for a moment that anyone can satisfy a million people." Then he announced the policy that would mark his administration: "I just want to say that I wish to be found in the middle of the road, walking toward the kingdom of God." Thereupon his little granddaughter exclaimed with genuine concern, "But he'll get run over if he does that, won't he?"

Figuhr saw the need of improving relations between Seventh-day Adventists and other Protestants. Ignorance of the church's teachings had led to much undeserved prejudice which had greatly hampered evangelism. Therefore, when evangelical writer Walter Martin visited the General Conference in preparation for a book on Adventism, Figuhr encouraged church administrators and teachers to cooperate with him. Under Figuhr's direction four Adventist leaders met with Martin to answer his questions, a process which led to the publication of the influential book *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine*.

Figuhr believed that truly constructive work had to be done "from the middle of the road." Cautious and deliberate as a leader, he stressed loyalty to the church and faithfulness to the Biblical principles upon which it was founded.

ROBERT H. PIERSON

(1911 —)

General Conference President
16 June 1966 — 3 January 1979

Robert H. Pierson served as the thirteenth president of the General Conference from 1966 to 1979. The church during this period faced a number of world-wide challenges on which the character, personal talents and experience of the president left an unmistakable imprint.

Pierson's childhood and youth were cradled in the protective care of a mother who was a third generation Adventist (baptized by Arthur G. Daniells), but his father did not share her doctrinal beliefs. The result was a man firmly committed to the Seventh-day Adventist message who rose instinctively to the defense of his church.

His talents in writing and speaking early surged to the front in public evangelism, whether in halls or under the tent. This led him to make evangelism the chief emphasis of his ministry and presidency. Everywhere his service took him evangelism was his top priority—from Collegedale, Tennessee, as a ministerial student to the Georgia-Cumberland Conference (where he was Lay Activities Director), India, Inter-America, Africa, and the General Conference home office. In fact, Pierson's driving dream was to proclaim God's final message to the ends of the earth in his generation.

Pierson's world background made him sensitive to the needs of the world church. This emphasis was applied to developing better understanding of the essentials of the message, to the religious needs of overseas populations, and to the staffing of the church's administration, at home and overseas, with international talent.

A further challenge to the church during Pierson's presidency was theological. Various questions began to be asked concerning Ellen White's role in the church. Other questions, relating to perfection and righteousness by faith, threatened to divide the church in Australia and North America. Robert Pierson struggled courageously with this challenge; but his presidency ended before the results of intramural Adventist theological discussions could be considered conclusive.

His unyielding stand for the basics of church doctrine helped keep the denomination on course. And his emphasis on the prophetic gift manifested in Ellen G. White did lead to a more enlightened view of that gift and of the methods of divine revelation in general.



NEAL C. WILSON

(1920 —)

General Conference President
3 January 1979 —

Neal C. Wilson, the fourteenth president of the General Conference, is a man with a broad international outlook. His parents were missionaries, and as a boy in Africa he learned two languages and translated for other missionaries. He later served in the Middle East for fourteen years, and then spent twelve years as General Conference Vice-President for North America. In 1979 he became President, following Robert Pier-son's retirement.

Wilson is known for his interest in people, remembering names and facts about thousands of them from around the world. He is also known for his dedication to his work, often remaining at his desk through the noon hour, with the brown bag lunch packed by his wife Elinor competing for attention with visitors, piles of papers, and the telephone. Retiring at midnight, he gets but five hours of sleep before arriving at the office at 7:00 a.m. to begin another day's work.

The first years of Wilson's presidency were tumultuous, filled with theological controversy over the sanctuary doctrine and the role of Ellen White, as well as a financial crisis following the bankruptcy of Dr. Donald Davenport, with whom a number of church institutions had invested.

But Wilson has also seen significant triumphs for the church. In 1980 the Dallas General Conference session revised the Fundamental Beliefs of the church for the first time since 1931. And in 1982 a period of One Thousand Days of Reaping was begun, with the goal of adding one thousand new members to the church every day for one thousand days until the 1985 world session in New Orleans.

Wilson's commitment to evangelism was demonstrated when he launched the Thousand Days with a 16-night evangelistic series in Manila, Philippines. This was the final phase of a three-month campaign, at the end of which 1500 people were baptized.

According to Wilson, his greatest challenge is "trying to decide how the Lord would deal with any given situation." Those who observe him function as the chief executive of the Seventh-day Adventist church have chosen certain key words to characterize him: comprehension; relaxed and low-key; superb conversationalist; compassion; respect for the individual; a probing, informed mind; mastery of detail; dedication; intensity. But he might well respond to such a listing with the statement that his constant objective is simply to function more effectively as a *Christian* leader.



*Hold high the torch!
You did not light its glow —
'Twas given you by other hands, you know.
I think it started down its pathway bright,
The day the Maker said: "Let there be light."
And He once said, who hung on Calvary's tree —
"Ye are the light of the world." . . . Go! . . . Shine — for me.
— Author unknown*



(Above) Exterior of San Francisco's Exposition Auditorium where the fortieth session of the General Conference was held, May 11-28, 1922.

Courtesy California Historical Society

(Below) The delegates gathered in plenary business session.

Courtesy Review and Herald



HERILOOM

“No Unselfish Way Out”

The Election of William A. Spicer
as General Conference President in 1922

James R. Nix

“**A**dventists Come to Conclave from All Over the World” announced the *San Francisco Examiner* reporting the opening of the 40th General Conference session in that city on Thursday, May 11, 1922. In 1887 and again in 1903 the General Conference had met across the bay in Oakland. San Francisco itself had hosted the conference in 1918. So attendants at General Conference sessions were used to meeting in the Bay Area. In fact, since 1922 another six sessions of the General Conference have been held in San Francisco, making it second only to Battle Creek, Michigan, in terms of frequency for hosting such meetings.

1922 was the largest one yet. Over 100 more delegates came that year than had been present four years earlier. It would not be until 1936 that another session would have more delegates.

Unless one has been to a General Conference session, it is impossible to fully appreciate the air of excitement that attends the opening of such a conclave. 1922 was no exception. Over 5,000 came to the Civic Auditorium for the opening meeting on Thursday night, including more than 100 delegates from overseas. So many people had not been expected. President Arthur G. Daniells told the assembled audience, “When we were talking of holding this first meeting, I was anxious to go into the hall at the west side which would seat something like a thousand people, hardly thinking that would be full; but some of my counselors advised differently.” He was very glad they had decided to use the main area which seated approximately 14,000. This was



(Above) Looking down San Francisco's Market Street in 1922. Courtesy California Historical Society

(Below) The setting for the 1922 General Conference session. The Exposition Auditorium (Center) is flanked by the City Library (Left) and the City Hall (Right). *Review and Herald*



by far the largest audience to attend an opening session of a General Conference up to that time.

The keynote address was given by Elder William A. Spicer, Secretary of the General Conference since 1903. He entitled it, "The Certainty of Victory." Displaying the same confidence and optimism which characterized everything he did, Elder Spicer stated that there is no way for God's word to fail. Since God had spoken, it was certain that His cause would triumph. The message by the extremely popular General Conference Secretary was very well received. It was a fitting opening for the enthusiastic conference.

During the days that followed, sermons were preached, displays were visited, reports from departments and world fields were given, committees were formed to do their appointed work, and the necessary business of the conference was conducted. But one question stood out above all others: would Elder Daniells be re-elected President of the General Conference—a position that he had held for 21 years since 1901?

Talk about a possible change in the presidents at this session had been going on for months. Various charges and denials had been made between those loyal to President Daniells and those wishing to see a change. It was in this atmosphere that the Committee on Nominations was announced at the close of the Sunday afternoon meeting on May 14. The 49-member committee consisted of one representative from each Union Conference and Union Mission. This meant that the majority represented the overseas fields. Elder Elmer E. Andross, then Vice-President of the General Conference for North America, chaired the group and Elder J. L. Shaw, an Assistant Secretary of the General Conference at the time, served as secretary.

For days the committee bogged down trying to decide on the two top offices—that of President and Secretary. The problem was compounded by the fact that when it became apparent that President A. G. Daniells did not have sufficient votes to be re-elected, Secretary W. A. Spicer did not feel that in good conscience he could accept the nomination. Elder Spicer believed that the very mention of his name as a possible candidate, considering the charged atmosphere at the conference, should exclude him from being considered. The presidency of the General Conference was not something he wanted.

On his way out by train to San Francisco, Elder Spicer had stopped over in Chicago. From there he took a brief side trip up to Kalamazoo, Michigan, to spend the Sabbath with some friends. They told him that the people in that area were for a change of General Conference President; and they thought he would get the job. In a letter to his wife Georgia, who did not attend the session, he commented:

At Kalamazoo they told me this region is for a change of General Conference President. I have avoided talking. They have me down for the job, some of these talkers. But I promise you I will not be, dear Georgia. I only hope I shall not have the embarrassment of having anyone putting in my name. I want to be Field Secretary and have a chance to do editorial work.

Normally Elder Spicer was a frequent correspondent with his family when he was away. This time, however, he would not write another letter to them for three weeks, until *after* his election to the presidency in San Francisco. Much happened in between.

On the first Sabbath of the session, Elder A. G. Daniells preached the 11 o'clock sermon. At its close, Elder Spicer gave the prayer. Knowing the mood at the conference—the rumors that were circulating and the division that existed between the delegates—Spicer



Elder Arthur Grosvenor Daniells

Courtesy Review and Herald Publishing Association

prefaced his prayer with a statement. Part of what he said was a direct appeal to work together: ". . . As secretary of the General Conference, I should really like to say that in our General Conference family, we are in unity of heart and soul and brotherly love for the pushing of this work to the finish. And I would like to give my hand to Brother Daniells before you all (these brethren clasping hands), in token of this unity and service, with no shadow between. I am glad that I don't have to lay anything down this morning to reach that point. But, brethren and sisters, there is but one thing worth our attention in this world, and that is, getting ready to meet Jesus when He Comes."

Doubtless some of what he had heard in the halls of the auditorium and elsewhere prompted him to pray: "Forgive every unkind thought, every impure thought, every selfish thought and Lord, forgive every evil word and every unkind speech, every critical phrase."

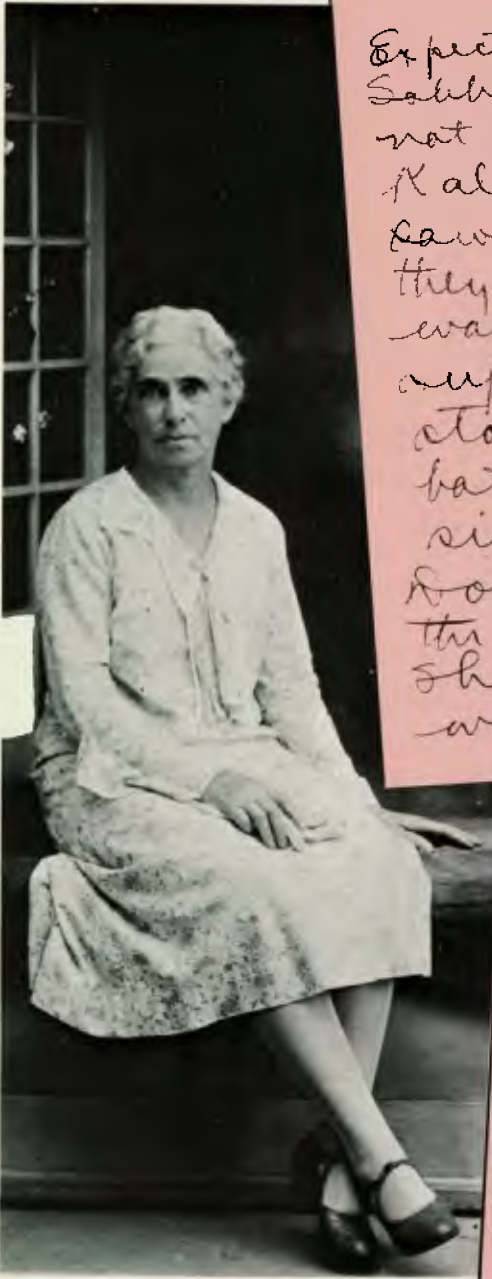
The next day the newspaper reported that when Elder Spicer offered his hand to Elder Daniells, about 8,000 people stood to their feet in support of the good will that Spicer's remarks had engendered.

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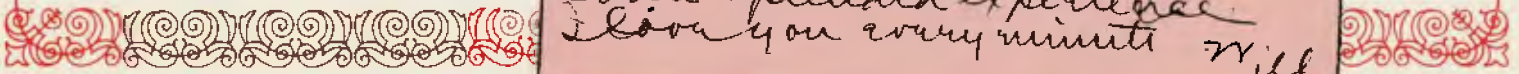
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No. 24

THE GOSPEL TO SALVATIONS

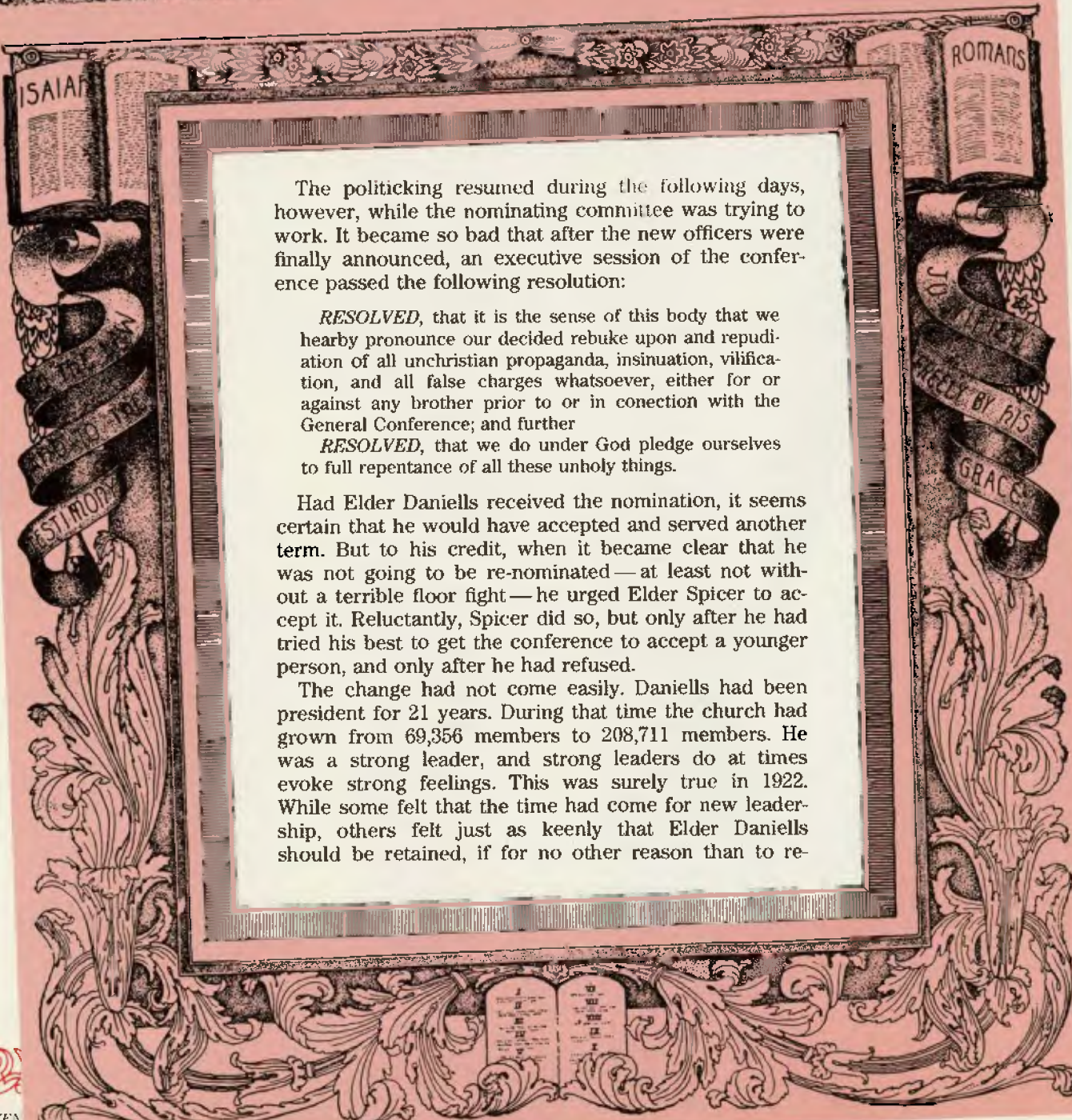
The politicking resumed during the following days, however, while the nominating committee was trying to work. It became so bad that after the new officers were finally announced, an executive session of the conference passed the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that it is the sense of this body that we hereby pronounce our decided rebuke upon and repudiation of all unchristian propaganda, insinuation, vilification, and all false charges whatsoever, either for or against any brother prior to or in connection with the General Conference; and further

RESOLVED, that we do under God pledge ourselves to full repentance of all these unholy things.

Had Elder Daniells received the nomination, it seems certain that he would have accepted and served another term. But to his credit, when it became clear that he was not going to be re-nominated—at least not without a terrible floor fight—he urged Elder Spicer to accept it. Reluctantly, Spicer did so, but only after he had tried his best to get the conference to accept a younger person, and only after he had refused.

The change had not come easily. Daniells had been president for 21 years. During that time the church had grown from 69,356 members to 208,711 members. He was a strong leader, and strong leaders do at times evoke strong feelings. This was surely true in 1922. While some felt that the time had come for new leadership, others felt just as keenly that Elder Daniells should be retained, if for no other reason than to re-



buke the tactics used by some of those wanting him out. The potential for hard feelings which might impact on the mission of the church was very real. For a week the Nominating Committee had been unable to come to a decision. On Sunday, May 21, the question was taken to an executive session of the conference with delegates only present where it was hotly debated for four hours, only to be referred back to the committee. It was not until Monday, the 22nd, that the committee finally made its decision and was able to get Elder Spicer to agree. And it became official when the delegates voted to accept the recommendation.

At the morning session on Tuesday, May 23, Elder Daniells brought the report to the full conference: Elder W. A. Spicer for President and Elder A. G. Daniells for Secretary. After some extended remarks about his support for Elder Spicer, Daniells allowed all present in the congregation to express their endorsement for what the delegates had voted the day before. It was unanimous.

The change had been voted by the delegates and ratified by all those present, but would it work? After the two men had labored together one way for 19 years, how would they relate with their roles reversed? In his report which appeared in the *Review and Herald* entitled "Intimate Glimpses on the Conference," under the date of May 23, E. R. Palmer, General Manager of the Review and Herald Publishing Association, no doubt expressed the feelings of many: "It still seems strange to us to think of Elder Spicer as president and Elder Daniells as secretary of the General Conference. We have become so accustomed to associating these names in another way."

On Wednesday morning, May 24, the new President gave his acceptance speech. It was conciliatory in nature:

I believe it is really a good thing to get our eyes off from men sometimes. God chooses the weak things of this world, that men may understand that all the power in this work is dependent upon our relations to the living God, whose work this is. I have no nervousness as I am called to this position, not because I have the slightest confidence in myself, but because I know that if the thing is done, God must do it. . . .

O brethren, it does not matter where we are, — department workers, church workers, — we are under bond to God and give Him all that we have all of the time, that He may strengthen every gift of ours for ser-

From the Spicer Family album: (Top) William Ambrose Spicer as a young secretary to Dr. John Harvey Kellogg. (Middle) Elder Spicer (c. 1920), Secretary of the General Conference. (Bottom) Elder and Mrs. Spicer enjoying a rare moment together during the days of his presidency.





vice . . . Surely it is not sufficient that we lead our people in activities and plans; we must lead our people in development, in consecration, in prayer, in self-sacrifice and self-denial. . . .

If I knew of a brother in the Conference, or of a person in the world, that had feelings or grudge against me, I would ask forgiveness; but I do not know of one, and I am sure there is no one in the world against whom I carry any ill feelings. I do love my brethren. I want to work with them, and pray with them, and suffer with them, and with them be associated in the splendid work God has given us to do.

Somehow, you know, it does not matter what we do, just so we are in the Lord's work, and giving to God all there is in our hearts for the winning of souls. The biggest work any of us can do is to win a soul. The highest joy any officer in all our ranks can have is the joy of knowing that his own sins are forgiven, and then saving some other sinner. All the rest is but wear and tear and trouble. May God make us winners of souls.

. . . And so, brethren and sisters, as you have called me for this period, I do before you all confess every sin of my life. I take you all to my heart. You are all equally my brethren, I will stand by in God's service.

The change from one president to the other during the remaining days of the conference was gradual. E. R. Palmer commented upon it in his last report in the *Review*:

You should have seen the smooth way in which the administrative leadership shifted from Elder Daniells to Elder Spicer. Elder Spicer held to his work on the (General Conference) *Bulletin*, and Elder Daniells retained the leadership of the Conference; and yet, as the days passed . . . I noticed that gradually Brother Spicer appeared by the side of Elder Daniells, so they might join in for the meetings. . . . A General Conference Committee was called to meet in Polk Hall, and Elder Spicer was in the chair, and Elder Daniells was absent. At the next meeting in the auditorium Elder Daniells was chairman with Elder Spicer supporting him, and so the one administration dissolved into the other with all the strength of both of these men utilized apparently to the utmost. In the final meeting Elder Spicer was fully in charge, and made all announcements of plans for committee meetings and other appointments following the Conference.

The session closed on May 28 with the change fully accomplished. Elder Daniells remained in California for a time while Elder Spicer returned to Washington, D. C. The new President continued to point the church forward, though from extant correspondence it is clear that at least some continued to discuss the change in presidents for a time. Hard feelings die slowly, but Elder Spicer did not let them distract from the mission



(Above) Elder Spicer's beloved "Georgie." (Bottom) The Spicers in Denver, Colorado, in 1949.

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consecrated man doing his best,
and that I will be George dear,
by God's help. Don't worry, dear
George, four years and I will
have my successor ready, you
may be sure. So dear sweet
wife I am just your husband
that loves you and would rather
have the Kingdom of your
heart than any office honors.
There are no jobs of honor
but only of service. Wish
I could say more. Don't
tell anyone what I have
written. From now on I must
be even more careful
I love you, my own dear heart
Your W



ADDRESS
YOUR MAIL
TO
STREET AND
NUMBER

Mrs Georgia Spicer
606 Carroll ave
Taraona Park
Washington, D.C.



EL WHITCOMB
SAN FRANCISCO



he saw for the church.

Less than a month after the session he commented in a letter, "By this time everybody has forgotten there was a change and from sea to sea all hands are pulling in the harness." Spicer went on to mention that Elder Daniells had encouraged him to accept the presidency and had supported him ever since. He concluded by saying, "So all that is past, let us bury [it] deeper than the Red Sea and drive ahead."

Often the most intimate glimpses of an individual are not found in his public pronouncements, but in comments to his family and closest friends. On May 22, the day of his election, Elder Spicer finally had time to write to his wife. It had been over three weeks since he had written to her from Chicago. Then he had promised that he would not allow himself to be elected president no matter what rumors might be circulating. But it had happened.

And so he wrote:

Dearest Georgie, I know you have noticed the gap in my letters, and I have missed the joy of talking to you by letter. But everyday I thought I could give you next mail news that I was coming out all right and not to get heavier burdens . . .

He then told her how he had come to be elected president. He closed his letter by saying:

I begged all to try to think of another way, but after a season of prayer no way seemed open and I could not refuse. I am sorry for you dear Georgie. You would not wish it for me. It is so different from the work I longed to do. But I just couldn't get out of it without selfishness. Don't worry. It does not call for a superman but just for a consecrated man doing his best, and that I will be Georgie dear, by God's help. Don't worry, dear Georgie, four years and I will have my successor ready, you may be sure. So dear sweet wife I am just your husband that loves you and would rather have the kingdom of your heart than any office honors. There are no posts of honor but only of service. Wish I could say more. Don't tell *anyone* what I have written. From now on I must be even more careful. I love you, my own dear heart, Your W.

Elder W. A. Spicer's election to the presidency of the General Conference in 1922 was doubtless a recognition by the delegates of his many years of tireless service to the Adventist church. But it was more than just that. They also felt that with his spirit of humble dedication and total commitment he could heal the wounds that had developed in the months before the change in presidents occurred.

"No posts of honor, but only of service." For Elder Spicer it was not just a phrase, but the tenor of his total life.

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