

CHAPTER SEVEN The Maturing of Sadler

Sadler's experience in San Francisco matured him. He no longer looked upon Ellen White as representative of an infallibility, nor upon John Harvey Kellogg as a man with integrity. Within a few months after his return from San Francisco he terminated his relationship with Kellogg. We have no record of association, affiliation, or connection with Kellogg after that time.

But he did not give up faith in the *Testimonies* of Ellen White. They had been the source of his religious experience. He believed in them, and continued to do so, until he received other light. But he always held to the belief that the *Testimonies* were more than mere invention out of her human mind; he felt she had divine guidance in spite of her human fallibility.

He did not resign in despair nor did he become despondent. He did not immediately give up faith in the Church. It was another ten years before he left the Church. But by that time other events transpired which caused him to completely rethink the sources of divine inspiration, and the foundations of religious faith.

He firmed up his mind, and made decisions to take his life beyond the Seventh Day Adventist organizations. He would no longer devote his energies to the Church with its acrimonious inner warfare. He would devote himself to his fellow Gentile mortals. By April, 1904 he was sure of his path.

The influence of Willie White on his mother, and on her doctrinal writings in her later years, were a matter of deep concern to many ministers, as well as suspicions to many others. In his September, 1960 interview with Schwarz, Sadler agreed that . . . *Dr. Kellogg was himself guilty of the attempted 'manipulation' of which he accused others, and the doctor tacitly admitted that this was correct.* Sadler then had good cause to question the authenticity of Ellen White's later visions. Before the San Francisco experience he accepted the *Testimonies* without question; henceforth he examined them with intellectual and spiritual rigor.

The Whites and many others within the Church were well aware of Sadler's wide influence. He was a prominent member. In two letters in which Sadler is explicitly addressed, along with several other leaders, EW attempted to persuade him and those others through the authority of her visions. Refer to the tabulation in Appendix D, and the letters of Aug 1, 1904 and March 30, 1906. By some quirk, perhaps by the manipulation of Willie White, Sadler did not receive a personal copy of the latter. Perhaps Willie was hoping Sadler would not discover his mother's letter. Sadler's reply is in the celebrated pleading letter of April 26, attached below. In that letter he forthrightly and honestly lays out his heartfelt concerns about the authenticity of her writings, and the influence upon them by

others. Sadler is no longer under any illusion about their divine authority.

But his relationship with Willie White remained cordial. On several occasions Willie urged him to return to medical work within the denomination. On each occasion Sadler rejected those invitations.

In a letter dated Feb 10, 1904 Willie asked Sadler if he could show his most recent letter to Church leaders. Willie respected Sadler's views because of Sadler's sincerity and honesty.

A few days later, in a letter dated Feb 14, 1904, Willie offered financial support to Sadler for continued medical studies. When Sadler explained the offer from Johns Hopkins, Willie saw it as an opportunity to expand Mission work into that region. He knew Sadler would do an excellent job as a devoted SDA believer.

Two years later, in a letter dated April 11, 1906, when he realized Sadler and Lena were about to graduate from medical school, he again urged Sadler to join Church work, this time at the Paradise Valley Sanitarium in California. *It is far from turmoil, and needs the very work that you and Sister Sadler could do.*

But Sadler was firm. He no longer would participate directly in Church operations. He set his own path outside the denomination.

Sadler was not disfellowshipped, not in the 1907 events which saw the removal of John Harvey Kellogg from the denomination, nor at any other time. When he left the Church it was a voluntary act on his part, and later than 1913. I cite the following evidence:

- Sadler and Willie White continue to exchange letters into 1912. They address each other as "Brothers" and in friendly terms.
- Sadler had earlier inquired of White his opinion concerning a publisher for his book *Health and Healing*. Should it be submitted to one of the SDA publishing houses? White replied in a letter dated Dec 13, 1907 that he felt it would be better submitted to an outside publisher, but *If you think best to submit the MS. to Pacific Press, I shall raise no objection, and shall rejoice if they decide to print it.* Obviously he considered Sadler in good standing within the Church, after the earlier disfellowshipping events of that year, and continued to hold Sadler in high regard.
- As I mentioned above, in several letters between 1903 and 1907 White pleaded with Sadler to return to Church work and suggested several alternate geographical locations. In a letter dated July 13, 1906 he stated to Sadler: *I wish, Brother Sadler, that you could now go at once to New England or come to the Pacific Coast, and get entirely away from old surroundings and the old controversies which seem to center at Battle Creek and in Chicago.* White goes on to display his optimistic outlook: *No, my brother, these controversies will never drive you out of the denomination.*
- In a letter to Willie White dated Nov 6, 1910 Sadler still regarded himself as a Seventh Day Adventist, although he is much isolated from the denominational family.

The Birth of a Divine Revelation

- In another letter to Willie dated Dec 18, 1910 he made two remarks which explicitly show his continued participation in denominational affairs:

While I recognize just as clear as can be that my efforts have, for the time being, been separated from our organized work, nevertheless, I was anxious to see Dr. Paulson with his talents keep in connection with the work.

Now Bro. White, you know I have acted open and above board and square in all my dealings with my brethren.

Here Sadler clearly identified himself with Church work, even if “organized” Mission activities. He also clearly recognized members of the Church as “brethren.”

- In still another letter to Willie, dated Jan 23, 1911, he continued to use the phrase *some of our brethren*. He also made a remark that directly showed his continuing adherence to Church doctrines. He still believed in the Third Angel’s Message, a fundamental tenet of Seventh Day Adventism. As he stated in that letter:

I became convinced several years ago that it was a wicked neglect of duty for those of us who know the Third Angel’s Message to sit idly by and permit Dowie (?) and Mrs. (Mary Baker) Eddy and their kin to deceive the world in wholesale fashion. I made up my mind the best way to combat these errors was to deliver the truth on the other side. So I have very earnestly striven to present to the public the plain facts concerning the effect of the mind upon the body, while I have secured for my sections on The Physiology and Psychology of Faith and Fear the indorsement of the most eminent psychologists and physiologists in this country.

- Bulletins of the General Conference show that Sadler was invited as a medical expert to Church Medical Conferences in Tacoma Park in 1909 and again in 1913. He would not have been accorded that honor if he had been disfellowshipped or had resigned from the Church.

After 1913, associations with the Church, and correspondence with White, are no longer on record. Therefore, I assume he made a decision about that time to disassociate from the Church. In 1911 Sadler made major changes in his life objectives; he left a lucrative practice as a surgeon and entered into the uncertain work of psychiatry. 1913 was also the year he moved from La Grange, Illinois to north Chicago, where he remained the rest of his life.

Sadler’s April 26, 1906 response to Ellen White is so important to show the maturity he had reached I shall draw out some of the points of that letter. It truly is an indictment against the mendacity and political manipulations within the Church. It was also an indictment against any claim Ellen White may have tried to maintain about the divine inspiration of her later *Testimonies*.

Sadler was an organized and disciplined person. He stated ten or twelve years previously, about 1895, when he was twenty years old, that he had made a systematic study of the EW writings and a large index of all her published works, going back into the 1850's. This effort indicates the analytical rigor he used in all matters of import in his life. As he said, his *soul was ablaze with their value and power*. He conducted frequent public studies at the Battle Creek Sanitarium, at camp-meetings, and before churches. He was a strong believer. But all that changed.

The first indictment Sadler brought against Ellen White was her inconsistency about her *Testimonies* and her letters. She had claimed that "*these letters which I write, in the Testimonies I bear*" she was presenting to others what the Lord had presented to her, and hence of divine authority. Sadler questioned if this was true. Some years before, while she was in Australia, and hence removed from immediate contact with events on the American continent, EW had written to Dr. Kellogg expressing her concerns over the building of new facilities in Chicago without Church approval — which she thought had actually been built. She condemned Kellogg for this effrontery. Unfortunately, the buildings were mere talk, and took solidity only in her mind. Therefore, she could not claim divine guidance about an action which never took place. This imaginary scenario, and her "divine" guidance about it, created a furor within the Church. She brought upon herself serious doubt about her divine inspiration. She displayed thoroughly human attempts at control of Church operations.

Her justification for this remarkable error was that she prevented the construction of facilities which the Lord was against, and that their actual existence was irrelevant. Hence Sadler was forced to ask if this principle applied to all her "letters and *Testimonies*." How was anyone supposed to determine which was anticipatory, or actual? In other words, her inspiration was not divine; she exhibited purely human desires in her efforts to impose her will above that of Dr. Kellogg or others. She exposed herself as commanding the policies of the Church, and its future direction, out of purely human judgments. The contests then going on between the "Church" and the "Organized Mission Work" devolved to contests of human will. Inherent in this process was inevitable political struggle among human personalities for the satisfaction of human desires. Although Sadler brought the indictment he was unwilling to carry forward in his letter with the explicit ramifications. He continued to respect her. Nevertheless, the shadow of it lay between himself and Ellen White and the Church for all future time.

In a second count he showed that she brought false accusations against David Paulson, whom Sadler had known for more than fifteen years, and with whom he had worked intimately for many of those years. How could she again be in such error if she was divinely inspired?

In a third count Sadler faulted her for accusations brought against his wife Lena. They both had heard EW state clearly in her chambers at St. Helena that she was not a prophet, but simply a messenger with a message. When Lena repeated this to someone it got back to Willie White, who received it with dismay. Such rumors would detract from his mother's authority. The size of his concern,

and the potential influence the Sadlers had upon the Church, may be estimated by the fact that he then wrote a letter to the Sadlers which was hand delivered to them when they stepped off the train in Battle Creek Christmas Day, 1903.

The same contradiction of position about her authority was evident in a recent issue of the *Review*. She had publicly stated in the tabernacle in Battle Creek that she was not a prophet, yet the same issue that published her speech also published an article by the editor that stated the very opposite. What was anyone supposed to believe about her authority?

This episode caused Sadler to draw out the influence of Willie upon his mother in a fourth count. Willie's brother, J. E. White, stated directly to Sadler in Battle Creek that he was prevented by Willie from talking with his own mother, for fear she would make remarks to him that would damage her authority. This obvious manipulation of EW by Willie had brought J. E. White to the belief that her powers would be taken from her for two possible reasons: a) in order that Willie could no longer use it for his own purposes, and b) that other men could not pervert it. J. E. White felt that it would be necessary to expose his brother, and others who were doing these things.

In a fifth count Sadler again opened the controversy created by J. H. Kellogg's book, *The Living Temple*. Sadler quoted passages from her writings which suggested that she also believed in the general spirit of God pervading human mortals. He cited page 161 of *Desire of the Ages*, and Vol 1. page 205 of the *Testimonies*. Such belief was a major point of trouble for Church doctrine, since it would deny God's actual presence at a specific location within the heavenly Sanctuary. To maintain the latter the former had to be denied, even though EW herself had quoted passages from the Apostle Paul which supported such doctrine. In drawing out this contradiction Sadler showed the difficulty of accepting Church doctrines based on her writings, from the implication that they could not be divinely inspired, since divine authority would not be subject to such contradiction.

In a sixth count Sadler showed the mendacity of many within the Church. In order to accept plain contradictions in doctrine and in her writings he stated that he was advised to lay low and not raise the issues. But he was a man of integrity. He must meet God before the judgment bar. He wanted to be right. He deeply desired to emerge from the darkness of uncertainty to the clear daylight, and then stand as a man in defense of that which he knew to be right. He could not possess a double personality in these matters, as he believed many were doing. He was unable to clearly ascertain the truth in these matters. He remained quiet for many years because he truly believed in the *Testimonies*. But now he was being pressed on all sides concerning his attitude about them. EW had not given him confidence in the position he should take.

To further indicate his spiritual confusion, he went on to illustrate yet another count. Could EW offer an explanation for the wide rumors that changes were made in the *Testimonies* even as they were going to Press? He would not be a hypocrite. He could not say he believed all these things unless he really did, and he could take such position only if he went to the very bottom of every feature of the current misunderstandings.

Sadler continued with his indictment, in count after count, all leading to the troubling and unalterable conclusion that purely human elements entered into Church doctrines and beliefs, and that the supposed divine inspiration of much of her *Testimonies* had no support through the witness of the world of reality.

Ellen White did not respond directly to each count of Sadler's long indictment. She could not afford to. He had exposed the hypocrisy which lay at the foundation of Church theology and operations. He did not bring the accusations vengefully; he did so pleadingly. He truly wanted to know; these supreme difficulties threatened the roots of his religious belief.

When Sadler and Lena returned to Battle Creek they did so with great concern and heartfelt conviction for the future of the Church. They followed Ellen White's admonition to help the body of believers and the Church; Sadler attempted to bring John Harvey Kellogg to a state attuned to the spiritual needs of the Church. Sadler's early 1904 letters show the great efforts he made at the Sanitarium and in the schools for a revival in the Church, and his attempts to change the attitudes of those at Battle Creek. But Battle Creek had a momentum of its own. It was off on a mission that had the dedication of its staff and working people, a dedication to Kellogg and the work he was doing. While everyone listened with respect to Sadler he was ineffective in bringing the revival he so sincerely desired.

Within four months Sadler was back in Chicago. He left the Battle Creek scene and never returned. He recognized the futility of inducing any real change in Kellogg, or in the attitudes which there prevailed. He came to the realization that he was following the path suggested by another individual, someone he highly respected for all her faults, but was not following his own common sense. He made the decision to continue his medical education within a religious environment away from Battle Creek, not the secular environment of Johns Hopkins or other worldly schools. He definitely wished to maintain his religious life and belief.

Thenceforth he would seek a career in service to others but it would not be within the Church. As he stated in a letter to Willie White on February 19, 1906, he was then considering self-supporting medical missionary work in some new field. As he plaintively stated to Willie, he did not *consider such a course until all of our recent troubles*.

Sadler had matured; he no longer would be led along paths of religious belief merely out of the consensus of a general body of believers, who could not agree, either on theology, or the divine inspiration of the sources of their faith.

Sadler was now prepared, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually for further religious growth. It was not short in coming. He had been made ready for a far greater service to God than he or any other person suspected.

The Celebrated Ellen White Letter

This letter is well known within Seventh Day Adventist scholarly circles and also within the Urantia community. The background of the relationship between Ellen White and William Sadler is not so well known.

Ellen White, disturbed by the general unrest within the SDA community, used personal techniques in an attempt to bring about more loyal devotion from outstanding leaders. The following letter displays her methods.

Sanitarium, Calif.,
March 30, 1906

TO THOSE WHO ARE PERPLEXED REGARDING THE TESTIMONIES RELATING TO THE MEDICAL MISSIONARY WORK: —

Recently in the visions of the night I stood in a large company of people. There were present Dr. Kellogg, Elders Jones, Tenney, and Taylor, Dr. Paulson, Elder Sadler, Judge Arthur, and many of their associates. I was directed by the Lord to request them and any others who have perplexities and grievous things in their minds regarding the *Testimonies* that I have borne, to specify what their objections and criticisms are. The Lord will help me to answer these objections, and to make plain that which seems to be intricate.

Let those who are troubled now place upon paper a statement of the difficulties that perplex their minds, and let us see if we can now throw some light upon the matter that will relieve their perplexities. The time has come for the leaders to state to us the perplexities of which they have spoken to the nurses and to their associate physicians. Let us now have their reasons for talking with the students in a way that would destroy their faith in the messages that God sends his people. Let it all be written out, and submitted to those who desire to remove the perplexities.

If statements have been made that there are contradictions in the *Testimonies*, should I not be acquainted with the charges and accusations? Should I not know the reasons of this sowing of tares of unbelief?

Some who have gone to Battle Creek have spent many hours with nurses, presenting objections to the *Testimonies*. Such ones would be able to spend more of their precious God-given time in the study of the Word of God if with humble hearts they would follow the directions Christ has given, and present to me their grievances before they tell them to others. Men do not glorify God in spending so much time in long talks, which sometimes extend late into the night, in an effort to weaken the faith of those who are called to Battle Creek supposedly to be educated in medical missionary lines, and fitted to go forth into any place where duty may call them.

I am praying for you all, and praying for our youth. It is time that we understood who is on the Lord's side. I ask that the leaders in the medical work at Battle Creek, and those who have been associated with them in gathering together criticisms and objections to the *Testimonies* that I have borne, shall open to me the things that they have been opening to others. They should certainly do this, if they are loyal to the directions God has given. We should also have a clear statement of facts from those with whom physicians and ministers have been at work, to undermine their confidence in the Bible, the Messages, and the *Testimonies*. If there is in your minds the thought that Sister White's work can no longer be trusted, we would be glad to know when and

why you came to this decision. It may be that some matters that seem to you very objectionable can be explained. This will be better than to leave these matters until the great future investigation, when every man's work will appear as it is, with the reasons that underlie their course of action.

I am now charged to request those who are in difficulty in regard to Sister White's work to let their questions appear now, before the great day of judgment comes, when every work shall be made to appear with the motive underlying it, when the secrets of all hearts shall be made known, and every thought, word, and deed shall be tested by the Judge of the whole world, and each one will receive sentence according as his works have been.

There is a class who need to look well to the course of action they were pursuing, and to do the diligent work that is essential. *"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need to nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and with white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness does not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."* As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent. *"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."*

Signed (Ellen White)

Sadler's Response

38 Calendar Ave.
La Grange, Ill.
26th April, 1906

Mrs. E. G. White
Sanitarium, California

Dear Sister White:

A few days ago I saw a communication from you in which my name was mentioned, and in which your invited those who had difficulties regarding the *Testimonies* to write direct to you.

There are many things that have come up recently that perplex me; many things which I find myself unable to explain to those who are perplexed; so while I do not have doubts concerning the *"Testimonies,"* I do have many difficulties.

I have not written to you concerning this matter before, for the reason that I held to the position that if the Lord had spoken, it was not proper for me to question and criticize, even though I might be wholly unable to understand or comprehend the message. But since you have asked for those who have difficulties to present them direct to you, and inasmuch as my name was mentioned directly, I now feel at liberty to write you fully respecting my difficulties.

In order to correctly state my present attitude, it will be necessary for me to go back ten or twelve years, to the time when I had just finished a systematic study of your writings, having made a large index of all your published works, including your articles which appeared in the *Review*, *Signs*, and other papers, from back in the fifties

(1850's). The study of your writings did wonders for me; my soul was ablaze with their value and power, and I conducted frequent public studies at the Sanitarium, at camp-meetings, and before the churches concerning the subject.

It was while conducting such a series of studies with the South Side Church in Chicago, taking the position that all your writings were from the same divine source, in harmony with what you state in Volume 5, page 67 —

“You might say that this communication was only a letter. Yes, it was a letter, but prompted by the Spirit of God, to bring before your mind things that had been shown me. In these letters which I write, in the Testimonies which I bear, I am presenting to you that which the Lord has presented to me. I do not write one article in the paper expressing merely my own ideas. They are what God has opened before me in vision, the precious rays of light shining from the throne.” —

and was earnestly presenting these matters to the church at that time, that an older minister questioned the soundness of my position. But I read the passage above quoted, and took my stand firmly on that. So for years I have been holding that all communications from you were “*Testimonies*.” Was I right? Or, as it is claimed, are some “letters” and only refer to and deal with that which is Testimony?

A short time after this, your letter to Dr. Kellogg concerning the building in Chicago, came, and of course it troubled me; but I took this position, — ‘I know that the *Testimonies* come from a source that is higher than human; therefore, although I have now encountered a thing that I cannot explain, a thing which I do not understand, a matter which even appears to me to be without foundation, I will hold unswervingly to my position.’

Later, I heard from you the explanation of this matter, which, so far as I was concerned, satisfied me, but left my mind in this trouble, which I now ask you to help me to understand. Since the Lord showed you those buildings in Chicago, and since you supposed they had been erected, and it afterwards developed that they had not, and that the representation was made merely to prevent their being, may this not be applied to other representations that have been made to you? That is, that the Lord gives you these views of things that are not, but which are likely to occur, for the express purpose of preventing their occurrence, as in the case of the Chicago building above referred to?

Accordingly, I find myself in a quandary, when I seek to understand certain things that you have recently written. I am often at a loss to know how to choose between the following two positions —

(1) Am I to acknowledge the conditions or accusations which are stated in the *Testimony* as true, and as conditions which really exist at the present time, even though after prayerful search and careful inquiry I am still unable to recognize that these things do exist?, or

(2) Is this another instance like the Chicago buildings, in which you presented a thing that does not really exist, but which the Lord is seeking to forestall?

With these two positions before me, concerning some matters, I do not know how to choose, and therefore have held the entire matter in abeyance, in my mind, watching and praying for light.

For instance, I recently read a communication from you to Dr. Paulson and his wife. From reading this, I would suppose that at the present time, Dr. Paulson was

completely under Dr. Kellogg's influence; yet, having been associated with him very closely for years, especially since my return from California; I have not seen this; in fact, it had appeared to me that Dr. Kellogg exercises less influence over Dr. Paulson in recent years than over any other of his former colleagues and present associates. I could write at great length to show how in many important matters Dr. Paulson has, during the past two and a half years, stood stiffly by his convictions of right, and been unyielding to the end in various matters respecting Dr. Kellogg.

These matters I have not given serious attention to until recently, for I had settled it in my mind that I believed the *Testimonies*; I had a personal experience in and with them; and, so far as I knew my heart, I had settled it that I believed them so well that I did not think anyone could unsettle my faith in them. But during the last few months such a denominational issue has been made out of your writings, and I have been so sorely pressed for a statement of my position, that I saw it was necessary for me to go to the bottom of these difficulties, and, if possible, reach some definite position.

You must know, therefore, my joy when having reached this conclusion, I received this letter from you inviting me to come direct to you with my difficulties. I know your invitation is extended in good spirit, and I believe you will receive this letter as the questions of one who is honest, although perplexed.

Another matter which I find is perplexing many, is your words to Dr. Kellogg at the General Conference five years ago in which you stated that you had probably written too strongly to Dr. Kellogg. If you wrote too strongly concerning any matter which the Lord presented to you, might you not also write too weakly? Again it is asked, if you wrote too strongly then, how are we to know that you are not writing too strongly now? The part of your talk referred to, is as follows —

“I thank God that Dr. Kellogg has not sunk into despondency and infidelity. I have been afraid of it, and I have written some very straight things to him; and it may be, Dr. Kellogg — if he is here — that I have written too strong, for I felt as though I must get hold of you, and hold you by the power of all the might I had. But I have seen the work, and I have seen the work that has been carried on, and how can anybody see it and not see that God is at work? That is a mystery to me, I cannot understand it; I cannot explain it.”

Are all of the things specified in your writings actually in existence, or are some things prophecies of the dangers that are ahead, and which we are to avoid?

I can't afford to be wrong, whichever way this is: I must be right, and I expect the Lord to help me into the light of all these matters, although they seem very perplexing now, and they seem more perplexing as I continue to investigate. I turned a deaf ear to these things for years, but now, since our attitude on the *Testimonies* is becoming a test throughout the denomination, I realize that I must go to the bottom of all these things, and know just where I stand on all these points.

Some four years ago, when my wife and I were having one of those pleasant and profitable occasions in your upper chamber at St. Helena, you stated to us that you were “not a prophet,” but simply “little Ellen White, a messenger with a message.” On returning to San Francisco, my wife and I had a considerable prayer and discussion concerning this. I had always supposed you were a prophet, but I could not maintain that you were after hearing from your own lips that you were not. However, I resolved to say nothing about this to anyone. My wife, however, did tell someone about your statement, and in some way it was told by Sr. Rouf that Sr. Sadler had made this statement; so, upon returning to Battle Creek, the first thing that was handed to us on

alighting from the carriage at the Sanitarium, was a letter from Bro. W. C. White, criticizing Mrs. Sadler for having made this statement, and stating that such an idea would greatly hinder your work; and that if it really had been stated, it would be necessary of him to issue a denial.

This greatly perplexed my wife. She knew she had heard you say it, and she did not see any reason why it should be denied; but her perplexity was relieved at the time you stated in public in the tabernacle in Battle Creek, that you were not a prophet, and it was subsequently published in the *Review*; but, in the same *Review* there was an article by the editor directly contradicting your statement, and proving that you were a prophet.

Now, Sr. White, what am I to believe? Until I get more light from you, I shall take your word. I have confidence that you know more about your gift than anybody else in the world. My personal contact with you and your work at St. Helena and in California, satisfied me, not only of the gift which God has given you, but of your sincerity and earnest faithfulness; and I have therefore purposed in my heart that no man or any set of men, shall explain to me what you meant when you said you were not a prophet. I will take an explanation from no one but you.

Another matter: that is, Willie's influence over the *Testimonies*. I came into this truth about 20 years ago, and just before I was baptized by Elder Wm. Covert, (about 18 years ago) I thoroughly made up my mind concerning the *Testimonies*. In short, I accepted them; but from that day to this, especially the last ten years, and more especially since your return to this country from Australia, I have been hearing it constantly, from leaders, ministers, from those sometimes high in Conference authority, that Willie influenced you in the production of the *Testimonies*; or as they would often designate it, the "letters" you sent out.

This talk made little or no impression on me. I resolutely refused to believe it, year after year. I have been given a copy of the communication written by you under date of July 19th 1905, addressed to brethren I. H. Evans and J. S. Washburn, and I have since then not known what to do or say concerning this matter. I refer to the following quotation:

"After seeing this representation, I awoke, and I fully expected that the matter would take place as it had been presented to me. When Elder Haskell was telling me of the perplexity that they were in to carry forward the Southern work, I said, 'Have faith in God; you will carry from this meeting the five thousand dollars needed for the purchase of the church.'

"I wrote a few lines to Elder Daniells suggesting this be done, but Willie did not see that the matter carried through thus, because Elder Daniells and others were at that time very much discouraged in regard to the condition of things in Battle Creek. So I told him that he need not deliver the note. But I could not rest. I was disturbed, and could not find peace of mind."

Please won't you help me to understand this? It is the most serious of all the difficulties I have encountered in my experience concerning the *Testimonies*; and I have it frequently presented to me, and I don't know what to say in answer.

Until recently, I had but little difficulty in answering all the objections I ever met against the *Testimonies*, but I am now encountering things which I am not fully able to meet.

When I returned to Battle Creek from California, I brought with me a large number of your recent communications, to read to the family there. In the course of my

reading I read a statement reprimanding the Managers of the Battle Creek Sanitarium for making their workers sign contracts. Then I was immediately confronted with the communication from you stating that the Managers should place workers under contract. In this case, I refer to the communication found in the General Conference Bulletin (1893) pages 162, 163, which says:

“Before persons are admitted to our Missionary Training Schools, let there be a written agreement that after receiving their education they will give themselves to the work for a specified time. This is the only way our missions can be made what they should be.”

Now, what could I do to explain this? I did say that this might be an instance similar to that in the scriptures where Christ told His disciples at one time, to take no purse nor provision, and in another He told them to take scrip and a cover of raiment. I said, “*Maybe the conditions have changed, therefore the instruction changes.*” What is your explanation of this?

I would like to see from your pen a statement of what you mean in your writings along the line of God in Nature, etc. I refer to the following passages, and others:

“Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. No man can of himself cast out the devil throned that have taken possession of the heart. Only Christ can cleanse the soul temple. *Desire of Ages*, 161.

“They have taken a rigid course, and lived so very plain that their health has suffered, disease has strengthened in the system, and the temple of God has been weakened.”

Testimonies, Vol 1, p. 205.

I know many honest souls who are in confusion respecting these passages, in view of your recent writings.

Another thing I want help on, is with reference to the use of the *Testimonies*.

(1) Do you approve of sending personal *Testimonies* which the Lord has given for men, broadcast to other people?

(2) Is it not the Bible rule that when we have any criticism of a brother, it should be presented to him, then afterwards to two or three, and then, if he reject it, to the church? That is why I am now writing direct to you. Does the Lord follow a different rule from this with regard to the *Testimonies*?

For instance, the letter to which this is an answer, although it has my name on it, I have not received personally. It was shown me by one who did receive it, but whose name is not mentioned in it at all; and I have in mind many instances of this kind. It does not seem right to me that personal *Testimonies* should be multiplied and scattered broadcast unless they have been rejected by the individual to whom they were given, and further, that they were of general interest to the church. Am I right in this?

Again, is it right for me to use a Testimony given to Bro. A. In my efforts to get Bro. A. to do the thing I think is referred to in the Testimony which the Lord sent him? Are the *Testimonies* for men to use upon the souls of their fellow men; or are the messages from God for the Holy Spirit to send home to the human heart with convict-

ing power? I had supposed the Lord intended the latter to be the case; and it has been a great trial to me to see the public and private use that has been made of your writings during this present difficulty between the General Conference and the Medical Missionary Work.

Another matter that has bothered me since it happened, although it did not at the time, is that during the Conference at Berrien Springs, when Prof. Prescott was preaching against Pantheism, you sent for Dr. Paulson and me one morning, to come and see you; and during our conversation you presented to us many things that had been shown to you during the night, and gave us to carry away a copy of a letter addressed to Bro. Prescott, forbidding them to make these public attacks, etc.

We read this, and supposed the matter would stop, but that evening and the following, things continued as they were and when the matter developed further, it appeared that you had given the Testimony to Willie to give to Bro. Prescott, and that he had failed to do so, as he publicly stated before the Conference, thinking that the purpose of the Lord would be better served by his withholding it, and allowing matters to proceed as they were. I have never been able to fully see through this. Do you give the directions as to when, how, in what order, and to whom your writings shall be sent, or is it left for others to decide?

Near the close of this meeting at Berrien Springs, I was talking with Bro. J. E. White, concerning the unpleasantness that had arisen there, and he spoke very positively against his brother Willie and his relation to you, and how Willie was seeking to manage things in his way, and make them come his way, by his influence over you. When I asked him what this all meant, he answered that it meant one of three things:

- (1) That you would be removed from the midst of this confusion, so that your gift could not be used to further the purpose of your son Willie and others; or,
- (2) That the gift would be taken from you, because men were perverting it; or,
- (3) That it would be necessary for him to expose his brother, and others who were doing these things.

He further told me that it was almost impossible for him to see you alone, in California, when he went to see you; that Willie denied him the privilege of a private interview with his own mother.

I have since learned, Sister White, that this was told to many others besides myself, and can you wonder at the trouble and confusion that is abroad in the land, when your own son takes such a view of the matter?

I don't know what to make of such as this, but since you asked me to come direct to you with all that is bothersome, I could not be a Christian man and could not pray with my eyes upturned to heaven, unless I told you the whole story. I am writing in this letter all that bothers me personally, and in addition, these other things that I am constantly meeting, and don't know how to explain.

Are the letters you write to the leaders in our work, in answer to letters they write, *Testimonies*? Must I receive everything you write, as from the Lord — just as it is, word for word, or are there communications you send out which are your personal letters — personal communications from Sr. White? In view of all that has happened and is happening before my eyes, I am becoming unsettled with reference to this, and I ask for word direct from you that will clear up this confusion, and state exact facts and truth.

In this connection, I will explain why I have never written to you or consulted you on any matter, even when so near you in California. I have wanted to, scores, yes hundreds of time, but years ago I took the position — and I know you will be free to tell

me where I am right or wrong — that men had no business tampering with God's messenger. I observed that when David went to Nathan seeking information concerning building the temple he was told to build a temple. He knew Nathan was a prophet; he had confidence in the message he gave. But immediately after, Nathan was instructed by the word of the Lord to forbid David's building the temple. From this, I concluded that God's messengers were for God to use, and not man; they were not to be used as Intelligence Bureaus, Courts of Appeal, or anything of that kind; therefore, I had no right to go to you for information. If it were human information and counsel I sought, I had better be on my knees seeking counsel from God; and if it were divine counsel I wanted, I reasoned that I would get it anyway, without going to you for it; for when the Lord had showed you aught for me, you would write it out, and send it to me, without my writing to you. That is why, altho I have so highly appreciated your counsel and advice, which you often gave me in California, and which I can never forget, — I say, this is why, though often perplexed, I did not write to you for advice. I have often written to Bro. W. C. White, asking him if he knew anything that had been shown you along a certain line, and if he knew you had any light along that line, to send it to me; and occasionally he has sent me manuscripts and copies of your writings, in answer to such requests.

For one, Sister White, I would like to see an earnest effort to get this matter straightened out among us. I know many who will stand up in public and say they believe the *Testimonies*, and try to drive other people into believing them as they do; yet I know from personal conversation with some of these men, they do not believe these *Testimonies*. Some who are now talking so loudly for the *Testimonies*, are the very ones who first told me, in past years, that Willie influenced you, etc., and I see these people eating meat, and engaging in other things that are certainly contrary to the light you have so plainly given in the *Testimonies*. What am I to think?

Moreover, I have frequently been advised to "lay low," and be quiet; to say to the people "These things are all right," and smooth them over; but Sr. White I can't do that. I have got to meet God before the judgment bar. I want to be right. I want to get out of this confusion into the clear daylight, and then stand like a man in defense of that which I know to be right; but I can't possess a double personality in this matter as it seems to me many are doing. I have kept still for many years, for I believe the *Testimonies*, and the only reason I am making a diligent effort to get to the bottom of these things, and get to the bottom now, is that I am pressed on all sides to define my attitude concerning the *Testimonies*, and these difficulties that have arisen.

Another question — I would like to know from you, as a minister, what use I am to make of the *Testimonies* as a test of fellowship? Is it right for me to baptize and receive people into the Church, who have not positively accepted the *Testimonies*? I refer, not to those who have rejected the *Testimonies*, but those who have not yet felt able to take their stand, yet are otherwise in harmony with the Third Angel's message. What is my duty in this respect?

It has been reported to me — in fact was told me by a brother before I left San Francisco — that you sent certain manuscripts to the Pacific Press, to be published, and after they were set up, in type, you recalled and materially changed them so as to give them an entirely different meaning, and they were published. Is this so? I didn't believe it when it was told me. The brother who told me said he could prove it, but I told him I was not looking for that kind of evidence. I have heard this many times since, and would like to know if this is so.

I have no inclination to go into these things, but in the fierce contention that is raging over these matters, it is necessary for me to go to the bottom of these things, in

order to tell my brethren where I stand, that they may know whether they will choose to fellowship me or not.

I will not be a hypocrite. I will never say to my brethren that I believe all these things, unless I do; and I cannot conscientiously nor consistently say I do believe them all, till I have gone to the very bottom of every feature of our present misunderstanding.

This is a matter which circumstance have forced upon me and although it is exceedingly unpleasant, and though I would have much preferred to have gone about my work, and let the Lord work these things out in His own good time; yet I could not do this, in view of the situation in which I find myself, and more especially after you yourself personally addressed me, and straightly directed that all these difficulties should be sent direct to you. I am now fully and honestly complying with that request, and hope to get the desired and much needed light.

Another matter: What shall be my attitude toward those who hesitate in accepting a Testimony, or apparently reject the *Testimonies*? Shall I leave them alone with God and their Bibles, or shall I publicly denounce them, and make war upon them? Or shall I give them a little time in which to be led of God and be convicted by His Holy Spirit?

Another matter — the one that is most confusing of all to me, is your recent writings concerning the Battle Creek Sanitarium. I cannot possibly arrive at a conclusion as to just what you mean with reference to the helpers at Battle Creek, etc. From what the Lord has shown you, is it right of any Seventh-day Adventist to labor in the Sanitarium? Is the institution to be turned over to the world? What attitude should I take toward the situation that I find it in today? I fully understand that young and inexperienced workers are not to go there, and I fully agree with it; but does that mean experienced workers are not to go? I am perplexed to know what really is your present attitude toward the Sanitarium with reference to these matters.

Is it true that your *Testimonies* of recent date are any more of the Lord than older ones? Does a late Testimony abrogate all former communications touching the same theme?

Another thing — with reference to the American Medical Missionary College. The impression is going throughout our ranks that it would be better for students to go to outside medical schools than to this School. Now, Sr. White, I don't believe this. I am willing to be convinced, if I am wrong; but I have been in two outside medical schools and cannot conscientiously advise any of our young people to go to these outside schools; and I have in my possession a communication from you, written 10 or 12 years ago, in which you forbid Dr. Kellogg and others to advise our students to go to Ann Arbor or other worldly medical schools. How am I to understand this former communication in which you forbid students to go to outside medical schools, and later ones which are interpreted as forbidding our people to go to the American Medical Missionary College. Where would you advise me to recommend Seventh-day Adventists young men and women to go to obtain a medical education? In view of what I have seen and heard in worldly medical colleges, I certainly could not conscientiously advise my sister to attend such schools, as long as our medical college is in existence. Now please help me to know what I am to do in this situation. This is just how it looks to me — I am ready to be set right if I am wrong.

Several years ago you sent a Testimony to the Conference concerning the Mt. Vernon Sanitarium, in which you stated that the Conference should not engage in establishing and conducting Sanitariums, yet now I observe that our entire denominational policy is that none but Conference committees and conference organizations

should own and conduct sanitariums. Is it wrong for earnest and well-meaning individuals to engage in private medical missionary work? Can I not be a part of the work of this Message along medical lines unless my work is owned and immediately supervised by the Conference? In view of the Mt. Vernon communication, I took my position on the subject; now, on what grounds am I to change?

Concerning the use of the word "denominational," I think there is great misunderstanding on the part of some as to exactly what you mean by this word. You have recently said concerning our medical work that it should be "denominational"; yet I have before me a communication addressed to "*Dr. Kellogg and all who are connected with him in the Sanitarium Board and Council*," date Jan 11, 1899, in which you speak of the medical missionary work as being "undenominational." If some knew just what you mean by the word, and in what sense it was used, I think it would clear up considerable confusion. The passage referred to reads:

"Our brethren in America who are engaged in medical missionary work can, by appealing to the outside people, obtain help, because theirs is not a denominational work."

Concerning Reform Dress and the change of instruction concerning its length, you wrote in the *Review and Herald* that the apparent discrepancy was due to the fact that the objects were presented to you, and you were left to describe them in your own language. Is your position today any different from that which you took then, and which is stated in the articles referred to?

The article I refer to, is an answer to a question asked you, and appeared in the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, October 3, 1867, and is as follows:

"Does not the practice of the sisters in wearing their dresses 9 inches from the floor, contradict the *Testimonies* No. 11, which says that they should reach somewhat below the top of the lady's gaiter boot? Does it not also contradict Testimony number ten, which says that they should clear the filth of the street an inch or two without being raised by the hand?"

Answer:

"The proper distance from the bottom of the dress to the floor was not given me in inches. Neither was I shown the ladies gaiter boot; but three companies of females passed before me with their dresses as follows with respect to length:

"The first were of fashionable length, burdening the limbs, impeding the step, and sweeping the street and gathering the filth; the evil results of which I have fully stated. This class, who were slaves to fashion, appeared feeble and languid.

"The dress of the second class which passed before me was in many respects as it should be. The limbs were well clad. They were free from the burdens which the tyrant, Fashion, had imposed upon the first class, but had gone to that extreme in the short dress as to distrust and prejudice good people, and destroy in a measure their own influence. This is the style of the 'American Costume,' taught and worn by many at 'Our Home,' Dansville, New York. It does not reach to the knee, I need not say that this style of dress was shown to me to be too short.

"A third class passed before me with a cheerful countenance, and free and elastic step. Their dress was the length that I described as proper, modest, and healthful. It cleared the filth of the street and sidewalk a few inches under all circumstances,

such as ascending and descending steps, etc.

“As I have before said, the length was not given me in inches, and I was not shown a lady’s boot, and here I would state that altho I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words that I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be those spoken to me by the angel, which I have always enclosed in marks of quotations. As I wrote upon the subject of dress, the view of those three companies revived in my mind as plain as when I was viewing them in vision, but I was left to describe the length of the proper dress in my own language as best I could, which I have done by stating that the bottom of the dress should reach near the top of the lady’s boot, which would be necessary in order to clear the filth of the street under the circumstances before named.

“I put on the dress, in length as near as I had seen and described as I could judge. My sisters in Northern Michigan also adopted it, and when the subject of inches came up, in order to secure uniformity as to length everywhere, a ruler was brought, and it was found that the length of our dresses range from eight to ten inches from the floor. Some of these were a little longer than the sample shown me, while others were a little shorter.

“Numerous letters came to me from all parts of the field, inquiring the length of the dress shown me. Having seen the rule applied to the distance from the floor of the several dresses, and having become fully satisfied that nine inches comes the nearest to the sample shown me, I have given this number of inches in number 12, as the proper length of the dress in which uniformity is very desirable.

“If it is said that a lady’s boot is not nine inches high, I would say that I wear a boot eight inches high, and when I have walked before my sisters it is covered, as those properly dressed walked before me in the vision, they could not see the top of the boot.”

In your writings you have stated that all the twelve disciples were present at the Last Supper; but in “Christ our Savior” it is stated that but eleven were present; Judas being absent. A number of years ago, I was told that you or your son made this change in the manuscript. Is this so? Does anyone have authority to in any way change your writings? To what extent and in just what way, are the *Testimonies* edited after they leave your pen, before they are crystallized into type?

Now Sister White, this is all I have to write. Of course there are scores of rumors in the air at this time, but I am not concerned with rumors. My wife and I are concerned, either personally or in the case of very dear friends, with all I have written in this letter. The questions I have raised are those which must be speedily settled in our own minds. The situation we find ourselves in demands it. Our souls desire it. But we cannot settle them until we know we are settling them rightly.

I stood unmoved for years in the face of many of these objections, but now the whole matter had taken such a peculiar turn that we find ourselves sorely perplexed, and are so persistently questioned concerning these matters, and in view of your invitation to write direct to you, if we had difficulties, I feel it is now my duty as a Christian and as a minister, to send to you the things which I have noted in this letter, and await from you that which the Lord may direct you to offer us a means of answering, explaining, denying, or otherwise making clear these things; and I shall forever appreciate anything you may do in this direction, and promise to give it careful and prayerful attention.

We have been made sad to learn of the terrible and disastrous earthquake in San Francisco; and just to think, we ourselves lived there but two short years ago! I see many evidences of the approaching end in the earth, not the least of which is the confusion that has come into our own ranks, and the unsettled condition in which I see many minds. I pray the Lord will guide His own people and bring them once more into unity.

It has saddened our hearts to see these difficulties and perplexities descend upon you in your declining years, and we would not add the least thing to your burdens if we could possibly help it, and would not lay these perplexities before you at this time, but for the reasons that you have requested it; that we must have them settled; and that we know of no other way in which they may be explained, and finally disposed of.

Mrs. Sadler joins with me in wishing you much of the sustaining strength and blessed ministry of our Master's good Spirit, and I remain

Most faithfully

Your brother in the Work.

(Signed)

W. S. Sadler