

How the Spirit of Prophecy Met a Crisis:

Memories and Notes of the "Living Temple" Controversy

[The Alpha Apostasy]

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Special Guidance in Time of Need

The story of the Advent Movement affords many an example of divine guidance in times when more than human counsel was needed. In the ancient days the Lord led and guided His people of the Exodus movement. In order to speak the special counsels to them, He placed the gift of the Spirit of prophecy in their midst:

"And by a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved." Hosea 12:13.

Just so He has guided in the Advent Movement. According to the Scripture, a world movement was to spread through all the nations in the last days, preaching the message:

"Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come." Rev. 14:7.

The people of the movement were to keep the commandments of God. (verse 12.) In other chapters this commandment keeping people were described as having also "the testimony of Jesus," which is the spirit of prophecy." (Rev. 12:17; 19:10)

The prophecy of Daniel had described the opening judgment scene in the heavenly sanctuary, and fixed the hour—in the year 1844, at the end of the long period of 2300 prophetic days. Surely angels were watching for that hour so long foretold. When it came the Advent people, keeping the commandments of God, appeared in view. And the watching angel cried, "Here are they!" The people of the prophecy, the remnant church, had come at last, at the appointed hour. And in those days of 1844 the Lord was preparing the human agent through whom He was to speak by the Spirit of prophecy in the guidance and preservation of the Advent Movement.

Many a time, when the way was hard to discern, that gift of the Spirit of prophecy pointed the way. It was so from earliest years, when the agent chosen—Mrs. E. G. White—was but a young woman. Not from maturity of human wisdom and experience did the helpful guidance come, but from the counsels of the divine Spirit. Speaking of the early years, in the youth of the human agent, one of the pioneers wrote of the messages of this gift in times of perplexity:

"They reveal the devices of Satan. They warn us against his snares. They have nipped in the bud scheme after scheme of fanaticism which the enemy has tried to foist into our midst. They have exposed hidden iniquity, brought to light concealed wrongs, and laid bare the evil motives of the false-hearted. They have warded off dangers from the cause of truth upon every hand." U. Smith in Review and Herald , June 12, 1866.

As much guidance came in the youthful days of the agent of this gift, so the same sure touch, the same unwavering certainty in counsel attended the gift to the last years, when it might have been thought old age would weaken the service. As a matter of fact, it was in fair old age that we saw this gift doing some of the strongest and most effective work in meeting subtle and intricate situations that threatened peril to the cause.

At the turn of this twentieth century the Advent movement was passing into some years of special difficulty. It seemed as though error, in the most unexpected way, was threatening to come in like a flood. Just there we saw the Spirit of prophecy working, instant on the right hand and on the left, with special power to meet special needs. The promise was surely fulfilled for us:

"When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Isa. 59:19.

Down to the present [1934] there has been no time of greater crises in our work than the time of the pantheism crisis at the turn of the century. For the sake of those who were not observers of those things, it seems as though some of the record should be set down as a memorial to the Lord's guidance.

Forewarnings from Afar

In point of time, the instruction of the Spirit of Prophecy sought to give us forewarnings from afar of subtle dangers that were preparing to spring into action against the Advent Movement. When the peril arose and was recognized as the very thing against which the warnings had been uttered, we realized that truly the Word of the Lord had been fulfilled again, as of old: "Before it came to pass I showed it thee." Isa. 48:5.

It is interesting, also, to note that the specific messages that dealt with an approaching crisis at the old headquarters came from over the sea. The agent of the gift was far remote from any personal contact with circumstance and personalities involved.

At the end of 1891, Mrs. E. White had gone to Australia at the request of the General Conference Committee. It was felt her help was needed in that field, where it was evident a strong over-sea base was to be built up. While there, the messages by the Spirit of Prophecy began to come in greater volume of detail than ever before it seemed, bearing upon the ministry in general, upon the work in North America, and upon the responsibilities of the General Conference executives.

While the human agent in this gift was far away and immersed in the affairs of a growing cause in the new Australasian field, the burden of instruction for the cause at the old headquarters seemed only to be increased.

In a communication from Melbourne (dated February 18, 1892), entitled "An Appeal to Ministers" sent out in leaflet form O.A. Olsen, then president of the General Conference, we were told:

"Prophecies are being fulfilled, and stormy times are before us. Old controversies which have apparently been hushed for a long time will be revealed, and new controversies will spring up; new and old will commingle, and this will take place right early...."

"Intensity is taking possession of every earthly element. While a new life is being diffused and is springing up from beneath and taking fast hold of all Satan's agencies, preparatory to the last great conflict and struggle, a new light and life and power is descending from on high, and taking possession of God's people who are not dead, as many now are, in trespasses and sins." Special Testimonies for Our Ministers," No. 1 (of a series of envelope-size booklets.)

Older workers will well remember the awakening influence of this instruction in those early nineties. But we little realized than how near to us was this revival of "old controversies," and this commingling of "new and old." Nor did we foresee the nature of the peril. True, the phrases suggested just such controversies as disturbed the ancient church in New Testament days. We catch the earnest note of anxious warning against such commingling of new and old in the Apostle Paul's epistle to the Colossians. (In fact in later messages to us from the Spirit of Prophecy we were urged: "Read Paul's exhortation to the Colossians.")

The history of the early church makes very clear what that subtle philosophy was that tried to fasten itself upon the church of apostolic times. These very Colossians, warned by Paul, were face to face with this deceptive commingling of old and new. One historian says:

"We have in Colossae the first appearance of that syncretism [commingling] of Oriental theosophy and Christian faith which in one form or another characterized all the Gnostic systems of the second century. It was not a mere form of Jewish Christianity which Paul attacked in his epistle, but a superimposition of Jewish and heathen elements...upon the Christian faith and life." "History of Christianity in the Apostolic Age," p. 369, McGiffert.

This early attack upon the Christian movement was, says another writer, "Christianity perverted by learning and speculation." "Early Church History," p. 73, Gwatkin.

The perversion of the terms of Christianity itself in the systems of error that sought to take over the control and teaching in the church made the attack the more dangerous. The very phrases and truths of the gospel were perverted, and that, too, in the name of Christianity. To quote only one more writer on this period

"If indeed the tumult in men's minds had been of a nature wholly hostile to the Gospel, they might perhaps have allowed it to exhaust itself by its own struggles; but that which rendered it peculiarly dangerous was the false appearance it assumed of relationship to the Christian movement. Christian truth was imperiled by the inability of many minds to distinguish the radical difference in the two currents of ideas." "History of Christian Theology in the Apostolic Age," Vol. 1, P. 326, Reuss.

This was the mixture of spiritualistic heathen philosophy with Christian truth that sought to capture a dominating place in the early apostolic church. And now to our own church of the nineties, there came these earnest warnings that old, old controversies, long silent, would be revived, new controversies were to spring up; "new and old will commingle, and this will take place right early."

What face this revival of old controversies would present we knew not. We could only pray that while new life and power were springing up from beneath, we might be sharers in the "new light and life and power" descending from on high to prepare God's people for the times before us. There was an awakening power in these messages to ministers and people and to General Conference leaders in those years. As one of the young men at headquarters, as secretary of the Mission Board, I well remember how the leading brethren of that time called us to consecration and earnest preparation for a time of crisis that was drawing near for the advent movement.

In those same years also, the message was read to us in the Battle Creek tabernacle, in 1893, earnest instruction came from over sea, saying that the Lord was in earnest about the repeated counsels that had been given concerning so many believers moving in about the general headquarters. This tendency to gather in centers was contrary to the gospel plan of diffusing the light. No more Jerusalem centers did the Lord want on earth we were told, but a devoted people living the truth in many places where the light was needed. We were told that the presence of so many not needed at the institutions there, was imperiling the very institutions; and if it continued, the Lord would allow the institutions themselves to be laid in ruins.

So, in the early nineties, came very earnest and definite counsels from over the sea. We were to see the meaning of these cautions in the years to come. We were to see our two largest institutions in ruins, and round that same time, also, we found ourselves involved in conflict with old controversies revived.

A Closer View of the Approaching Crisis

In 1899 the General Conference session was held in South Lancaster, Massachusetts. Into that session the mail from Australia brought messages regarding the peril that was wrapped up in subtle teachings knocking at our doors.

At that time, so far as I know, no one connected up these messages of caution with the warnings against the revival of old controversies, and the mingling of new and old, which had come to us in the message of 1892:

"Old controversies which have apparently been hushed for a long time will be revived, and new controversies will spring up; new and old will commingle, and this will take place right early."

To this 1899 Conference came ringing messages to be on guard, especially in our educational plans, against the commingling of true and false. Of the consequences of partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in our work and teaching, the message said:

"We can not consent, at this period of time, to expose our youth to the consequences of learning a mixture of truth with error."

This exhortation continued:

"Satan, in a deceptive garb, still lurks in the tree of knowledge. The words of God, spoken at creation, 'But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it,' come sounding along the line of ages to us today; for 'they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.'" Bulletin," 1899, P. 158.

In a message entitled, "Reform in our Educational Work," it was said:

"The Bible has been brought into our schools to some extent; but teachers and students have depended largely upon books, containing ideas and sentiments that are misleading. When the light of truth for these last days came to the world in the proclamation of the first, second, and third angel's messages, we were shown that a different order of things must be brought in; but it has taken much time to understand what changes should be made in lines of study in our schools.

"It is most difficult to practise right principles after having been so long accustomed to the practices of the world; but reforms must be entered into with heart, and soul, and will. Errors may be hoary with age; but age does not make error truth, nor truth error....The Lord would now have every idea that is false, put away from teachers and students. Above all other books the word of God must be our study book, the basis of all our education....Its living principles woven into our lives like threads of gold will be our only safeguard in trials and temptations....Teachers are to bring this instruction into their class work, yoking up with Christ, the great Educator."

Our educators of the time heard in these and many further messages a clarion call to weed out the worldly elements from the educational program. They began anew in dead earnest to build up the system of Christian education for which we thank God today, though still our school men tell us they are strugglers toward yet higher standards.

To this General Conference of 1899, also, came definite warning against ancient systems of error that we hardly thought could ever press dangerously upon us. But from far off Australia, the trans-ocean mail had brought into the South Lancaster Conference, as it sat in session, a message entitled, "The True Relation of God and Nature." In earnest words it set forth the truth of a personal God in heaven. We had known, of course, that the ancients made of Him a mystical personality pervading all nature—an error that seemed far from touching us in this advent movement. But like a sudden flash of light out of the blue came these messages insisting on the true view. Old controversies, remember, were to be revived,

as we had been forewarned some years before, "and this will take place right early." Now, in greater detail came the admonitions to beware of ancient error:

"The ancient philosophers prided themselves upon their superior knowledge, but God has said of them: 'Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, ... and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator..."

"Christ came to the world as a personal Saviour. He represented a personal God. He ascended on high as a personal Saviour, and He will come again as He ascended to heaven—a personal Saviour. We need carefully to consider this; for in their human wisdom, the wise men of the world, knowing not God, foolishly deify nature and the laws of nature...."

"The Father in heaven has a voice and a person which Christ expressed. Those who have true knowledge of God will not become so infatuated with the laws of matter and the operations of nature as to overlook or refuse to acknowledge the continual working of God in nature."— Id. P. 157.

It is not God Himself in plant and tree, but the "working of God in nature," in the things that are made. Over and over was stressed the fact of a personal God in heaven, with Christ the "express image" of the Father's person. The power of God, whose throne is in heaven, works in the things of nature—"Vegetation flourishes because of the agencies employed by the great and mighty God. He sends the dew and the rain and the sunshine, that verdure may spring forth."

He is not in person in the dew and the rain; He sends the dew and rain to cause the plants to spring forth. That seems so self-evident that one might wonder why it should be so stressed in a communication sent to the General Conference in session, in South Lancaster, in the year 1899. What could it mean to those brethren?

But the fact was, in just a short time, the brethren were to meet the very subtleties of ancient pantheistic error—the doctrine of a personality in the blade of grass and plant and tree—and all in the name of the third angel's message. Strange it was that with this development just before us, this warning message should come from far across the sea. None understood the reason then, but we were to understand the need of this instruction a little later, to the full.

At this time, in 1899, I was living and working in old India, The General Conference Bulletin with this insistence on the true view of God and nature came to us in a field where we were daily face to face with the erroneous view. We were of necessity stressing this truth of the personal God in heaven, working by the Word of His power in the things that are made, as opposed to the idea of deity or personality in the things. All about us in India was the idea of the worship of a divine personality in animals and plants.

In the country, especially, one saw on every side signs of worship of plant and tree. The deity was supposed to be in the grass, in the plant, the "imaginary personality," as writers on the animistic philosophy described it.

But down in India these mystical ideas of the old heathen philosophy carried not the remotest suggestion, in our minds, of anything that could take troublous form among us. And we in India had no more idea of the meaning to us of this urgent message on the relation of God to nature than had our brethren in the South Lancaster session, in 1899. It was later that we understood the timeliness of this stressing of the fundamental truth of a personal God in heaven, sending forth the word of His power to work in creation. For we came face to face with the insistent teaching among us of the idea of a personality in grass and tree.

We had not the slightest idea that we were anywhere near facing such issues at our own door. How was it that away across the Pacific, a sister burdened with close contact with a growing work in a new field, could turn aside and pen such instruction regarding an issue soon to press upon the brethren at the general headquarters? There is but one answer—the Spirit of Prophecy.

Reorganization and a Basis for Closer Cooperation

(A review of a situation preceding the development of a crisis.)

The 1901 General Conference session saw quite a reorganization in our plans of work. A much larger and more representative General Conference Committee was elected; the union conference plan, which had been worked out in Australasia, was introduced to take many administrative burdens from the central committee; and a better working arrangement between medical and evangelistic departments promised a basis for cooperation. All this holds with us still, and time has shown that right moves were made.

Early in the Conference Mrs. White had said: "Brethren, before we have finished, we shall know whether or not God is handling this Conference." "Bulletin," 1901, P. 24.

When it was over, she wrote:

"During the General Conference the Lord wrought mightily for His people. Every time I think of the meeting, a sweet solemnity comes over me and sends a glow of gratitude to my soul." "Review and Herald," Nov. 26, 1901.

A basis laid down in the reorganization for the growing work to hold closely together, medical, evangelistic, publishing, educational and all the rest. In actions and in counsels special attention was given that the medical missionary interests might be drawn closer as a very part of the organization in all fields. Nothing was to be working apart, but all interests were to be joined in one harmonious effort to get the message to the world.

For two or three years before the Conference, messages had come through the Spirit of prophecy especially counseling against centralization, and expansion in the larger institutions at headquarters. The growth of the sanitarium work was not to lead to larger and larger equipment. The Lord's plan was to be diffusion; the prosperity given in older centers to be turned to increasing plants in other parts. There was caution against over-expansion of the medical arm, which was not to be made body of the work. And further with the judgment hour message to give to all nations, it was not desirable to swing efforts and means so largely toward relief work for the poor and depressed in city missions. There was a bit of tenseness over these issues as the 1901 session was approaching. Mrs. White had but recently returned from Australia. She told the brethren that she had been perplexed as to just where to stop in Battle Creek during the session, not wishing any one to have occasion to say she was being influenced in her counsels by her associations. The veteran leader in our medical work had placed quarters in his home at the disposal of herself and her helpers. While she was hesitating and paying for guidance, she told the conference, "A voice said to me, 'Respect the courtesy of Dr. Kellogg. I have appointed him as my physician, and I will be his helper if he will trust wholly in me. You can encourage him.'" "Bulletin," 1901, p. 204

Thus the Lord wrought to bring all interests close together on a basis to encourage mutual trust and cooperation. The medical leadership of the time was given prestige before the workers, and the reorganization was started off with nothing of past differences to hinder full cooperation. The newly elected general officers were counseled emphatically to stand by the medical work and to uphold the hands of its leaders.

Of the general fitting together of all parts of the work for a new order of efficiency and harmony, Mrs. White wrote after the Conference:

"I was never more astonished in my life than at the turn things have taken at this meeting. This is not our work. God has brought it about. Instruction regarding this was presented to me, but until the sum was worked out at this meeting, I could not comprehend this instruction." "Review and Herald," May 7, 1902.

So, off to the task for another two year term, the workers went forth at home and abroad. In February, 1902, came the burning of our large sanitarium and hospital buildings at Battle Creek. Then, in December of the same year, the Review and Herald printing plant was laid in ashes. Nine years before, we had heard the reading of the message from Australia telling us that if the gathering of believers to the old headquarters continued, the Lord would allow some of our institutions to be laid in ruins. We had seen the work fulfilled. And following the loss of the publishing house, many felt a conviction that these events meant that our general headquarters should be moved elsewhere. The Spirit of Prophecy gave that counsel definitely. So the removal of the General Conference and the Review and Herald from West to East came about in 1903. Out of these apparent great losses, we saw the providence of God work great gains to the cause. The work was given a new impetus. Institutional plants increased. We saw again "that all things work together for good to them that love God."

Immediately following the loss of the sanitarium, in early 1902, counsels were held between the board of that institution and the available members of the General Conference Committee looking toward plans for rebuilding. To help in rebuilding, it was agreed that a medical book should be written, on popular lines to be sold by our people for the benefit of sanitarium work, as Mrs. White's book, "Christ's Object Lessons," had been sold for the benefit of our schools.

It was agreed that the leader of the medical forces should write the health book. It was out of the teaching of this book that a crisis developed that touched many phases of the work, raising issues not only about teaching, but about church organization and unity of the advent movement, and the integrity of the Spirit of Prophecy which had been a counselor in the movement and a guide since the days of 1844.

Nothing that developed in the crisis affected the fact that a good platform had been laid down in the 1901 General Conference session, and a basis for cooperation in every department of the work, including the health phase of the message. It was this interfusing of all phases that set the health and medical work on vantage ground; so that even though the crisis developed out of this department, the health movement stood unmoved from its original foundations, and swept on in its good work with increasing power. So, though the perplexing issues developed so soon after 1901, no observer could question the happy note about that Conference that was sounded by Mrs. White at the time:

"During the General Conference the Lord wrought mightily for His people. Every time I think of the meeting, a sweet solemnity comes over me and sends a glow of gratitude to my soul."

Out of this comforting assurance that the Lord had led onward for strong advance in all the world, the brethren found themselves facing a real crisis.

Teachings Strange to Us Appear

In the early summer of 1902 the chairman of the General Conference Committee, A. G. Daniells, had gone to Europe for summer conferences. Just before this time a message had come to the General Conference officers, by the Spirit of Prophecy, cautioning them that they should not be led to accept every suggestion that might come from the leadership in the medical work. They were to be on guard.

I recall it well; for it troubled me. "How is this?" I felt in my heart: A year ago we were urged to stand by, to uphold the hands engaged in a good work and a strong work. Now come cautions to be on guard against some suggestions that might come. I said nothing, but I surely murmured in my tent, as we are told some in the camp of Israel murmured at times when they did not understand. Very soon we were to learn why the cautions had come.

Early in the summer the health book that was to be sold for the benefit of the sanitarium work had been practically finished. The author had gone to Europe for a time. Assistants were seeing the book into type. Proofs of the great portions of the matter had been placed in the hands of W. W. Prescott, Field Secretary of the General Conference, who was acting executive while the chairman was in Europe. He was troubled by some of the expressions in various chapters. It seemed to him readers might get wrong ideas of the relation of God and nature from certain portions. I was at the headquarters as one of the younger men in those days, as secretary of the Mission Board, and Professor Prescott called my attention to two or three chapters, which I read from the proofs.

In talking with one of the author's medical associates, I mentioned my feelings that wrong ideas might be obtained from the language in certain portions of the forthcoming book. My medical friend looked the matter over, and wrote me of his convictions that the matter questioned was right and in harmony with our message, however differently truths might be expressed from the scientific standpoint. He felt we ought to be ready to accept advancing light. To reflect our puzzled situation, as we were feeling our way along, I quote as follows from a letter I wrote to my friend in reply (dated June 5, 1902). I said:

"This is the point. A book to be used as it is purposed that this shall be, in order to pay debts on our sanitariums, must be altogether above question and controversy. It is not a question as to whether our people ought to take advanced light or not, but simply a question as to rallying everybody to undertake what at best will be a very difficult problem. "It will take all the energy the leaders can summon to secure anything like success without spending any energy in defending the book. I certainly should not ask the author to take out any vital portions of the book, for I do not consider the objectionable chapters vital. In fact, I think they weaken the book very much. There is no necessity for getting into the region of speculative theology, where one man's philosophy is pitted against another's and where the language is not the language of scripture but of science. These things are not necessary to the popular study of the health question, and, right or wrong, have no place in a book which aims to strike a popular chord, and the success for the circulation of which demands that the rank and file of our plain people shall take the book to their plain neighbors....

"I believe the author means better than he says, but I confess I do not like the terms he uses. It is easy to give people the impression that reason and philosophy are sound guides. We must pull the other way. I know the author is the other way, but the use of terms necessary to discuss the philosophic side of the nature of mind and matter are very liable to a misinterpretation. I like the advice given the old Brahmins, who gave their time to the threshing out of questions concerning mind and matter, "Seek not with words to measure the immeasurable; Drop not the line of thought into the unfathomable; Who asks doth err; who answers, errs. Say naught."

"I enclose a copy of suggestions which Professor Prescott wrote out for the author's benefit, and sent him in London."

(It is to be understood that this letter was in no wise official, but merely a personal note to a friend. As secretary of the Mission Board, I had no authority to pronounce about books or policies. But I am giving, necessarily, my own memories of a crisis in which each one had to get his own bearings as issues developed. And I must tell it as my own personal contacts gave me a view of the crisis our cause passed through.)

Very shortly the author of the forthcoming book returned from abroad. Possibly my medical friend had given him some hint of my feeling about the book, as expressed in the above abbreviated extract. At any rate, I received from the author a line requesting that I call. We spent the whole Sabbath afternoon in the interview.

Sitting down with no thought that there could be any differences of a really controversial nature, and with the heartiest of friendly feelings personally, I was at once in the midst of a discussion of the most controversial questions. Instead of things in the book being inadvertently overdrawn because of employment of scientific terms, unfamiliar to most of us, I learned that the teaching was conservatively stated in the book; that the teaching was really of intent to signify that God was in the things of nature. "Where is God?" I was asked. I would naturally say, He is in heaven; there the Bible pictures the throne of God, all the heavenly beings at His command as messengers between heaven and earth. But I was told that God was in the grass and plants and in the trees (with motions to the grass and trees about us, as we sat on the open veranda.) Where is heaven? I was asked. I had my idea of the center of the universe, with heaven and the throne of God in the midst, but disclaimed any attempt to fix the center of the universe astronomically. But I was urged to understand that heaven is where God is, and God is everywhere in the grass, in the trees, in all creation. There was no place in this scheme of things for angels going between heaven and earth, for heaven was here and everywhere. The cleansing of the sanctuary that we taught about was not something in a far-away heaven. The sin is here (the hand pointing to the heart), and here is the sanctuary to be cleansed. To think of God as having a form in the image of which man was made, was said to be idolatry.

By any understanding I had of language, I was listening to the ideas of the pantheistic philosophy that I had met with in India. In fact, I was told that pure pantheism, as the early teachers conceived it, was indeed right—God was in the things of nature. A personality was in every blade of grass and in every plant.

Trying to get the import of it all, I seemed to me these ideas set all earth and heaven and God swirling away into mist. There was in it no objective unity to lay hold of. With scripture terms and Christian ideas interwoven, it seemed the old doctrine of the Hindus, all nature a very part of Brahma, and the Brahma the whole.

Over against this mysticism I found it good to let my mind lay hold of the concrete picture of scripture and of the Spirit of prophecy. I urged that there is a place called heaven; and there God's throne is, and there the personal God is, as He in person is not in all places. There is the Garden of Eden, translated to heaven before the Flood, with trees that once grew on earth, as real and tangible in heaven as when they grew rooted in the soil of Eden on earth. The redeemed, in immortal flesh, can walk in the midst of the garden and go up to the throne and see the Father's face, and they can go from the throne down through the garden. The pictures of little "Early Writings," with their concrete descriptions of the verities of heaven and the New Jerusalem, and the scenes and the redeemed first entering there were a blessing to me [during] that interview.

As I came away, I knew well enough that there was nothing of the Advent message that could fit into such a philosophy. As I had listened, one light after another of the message seemed to be put out. Religious teaching that to me was fundamental was set aside. Looking back upon the experience, I was reminded of a description that I read many years before the interview, of a visit paid to Schopenhauer, the pessimistic philosopher of Germany, by Robert Buchanan, literary man of London. The poet and writer closed his report of impressions at that interview in Frankfort with the words (quoted from my memory of fifty years ago, but fairly accurate):

"As one who walks in gardens of the feast,

When the last guests trip down the lamp-hung walks
To music sadly ceasing in the air,
And sees a dark hand pass from lamp to lamp,
quenching their brightness,
So I seemed listening to his voice of cheerless prophecy.
Turning with a sigh, I left the graveyard of his creed."

That is exactly how I felt as I came away from an interview in which I had seen a hand ruthlessly pass from lamp to lamp turning off one light after another of the shining third angel's message. Then I knew, of course, why the counsel of the Spirit of prophecy had come urging caution. I had murmured about it at the time. But now, it was all too plain that there was indeed cause for caution and carefulness. Anew for my own heart's salvation I went over every feature of the controverted points in the next day or two. I settled it anew in my heart that this advent message was the everlasting truth of God.

But then another perplexity arose. What about those counsels of a year before, urging hearty cooperation? What about those sayings of the Spirit of prophecy concerning the good work and the strong work, with which the Lord would have all hands cooperate? The interview had shown me that the attitude toward the truth which had startled me was not a matter of a few months. The ideas expressed dated back through a series of years. They had evidently been in the brother's mind at the very time when the testimony was telling of the good work and the strong work and urging closest association. How about that? I thought.

But I had learned one thing about the Spirit of prophecy. I had learned to wait. I would not suggest that I had learned it thoroughly, but at any rate I had found that the best thing to do when one did not understand, was to wait and see. One learns by hard experiences that the Lord has many ways of doing things that we poor humans may not foresee. Thus while I wondered at the apparent endorsements of a year before, I waited to see the explanation.

The explanation came, two or three years later. When the issues had come fully into the open, the agent in the work of the Spirit of prophecy sent to the General Conference headquarters in Washington copies of the instruction which, during the preceding dozen or fifteen years, had been written out for the brother concerned. There I found the explanation of my difficulty concerning the instructions of commendation. In the series of communication and their dates it was all made plain. At the very time when associates were being told the strong points, the good points, the splendid work, with which it was to be their duty to cooperate, holding up the hands that were engaged in that important work in which the Lord was aiding, at the very same time, I say, and from long before, communications had been going personally to the one concerned, warning of the tendencies to wrong views, and setting forth the urgency of making changes in plans and policies and sentiments and attitudes.

How plain it all was! If the warnings had been placed before those who were called to cooperate, the very warning would have weakened their hands and unfitted them to give unstinted and whole-hearted help.

One could see in it the long-sustained effort of the Lord to draw a beloved workman of His away from the wrong course to the right way. It helps one better to understand the continual struggle that goes on in heaven for men. There is not one of us but has our strong sides and our weak sides. The Lord, by every agency at His command, is seeking to influence every one of us to repudiate the things of our natural mind and heart and to develop the strong and the good traits planted by grace in every life.

In the light of the facts revealed, it was apparent that there was no ground for perplexity or difficulty over the communications from the Spirit of prophecy. Far from that, there was plainly apparent the touch of more than human planning and discretion and precision in the passing on of counsels. Many

good mothers in Israel have had part in the work of the Advent Movement; but we have never seen them handling intricate matters as we have seen things handled all through the years by the agent called of God to exercise the gift of the Spirit of prophecy.

A Time of Waiting and Perplexity

Late in the summer of 1902 the chairman of the General Conference Committee and others returned from the European meetings. By that time it was apparent that a real issue was developing between the general executives and the leadership of the medical work, not only over teaching, but over administrative organization and finance, and over the counsels of the Spirit of prophecy that had been coming in.

As to the teaching, it seemed at the headquarters' office that warnings should be sounded, to put our workers and people on guard.

But just then came a message from the Spirit of prophecy, from California, telling the brethren to hold still, to be quiet, to wait.

Wait? Keep quiet? It was hard counsel to take. How could we keep quiet when we saw the new-old teaching getting out into the open. We saw friends accept it as something fine and new and advanced. And were we to keep quiet? I recall that it seemed to me I would have to cry out openly against it or deny my own deepest convictions. It was a painful situation. We did not discuss it much among ourselves. It was a time when each one had to feel his way along, not leaning on anyone else.

But as though the Lord knew how painful it was to be told to wait quietly, another message soon came. We were told that we must remember the rebellion in heaven, and how mysterious was the working of evil principles and mystifying error even among the angels. The Lord had to wait, and allow error to develop. Had He acted at once, angels would not have understood. There would have been greater loss still in the family of heaven. That thought of delay in heaven, waiting for error to work out, brought wonderful relief. And when, a year or two later, the issues involved were brought fully into the open, and workers and people had had an opportunity to see for themselves what was involved, the crisis was fully met with much less confusion and loss than would likely have followed had we at once started in to sound warning to all.

Throughout these times of perplexity that followed our first views of the dangers involved, we saw how steady and sure and unhurried was the work of the Spirit of prophecy in giving guidance. The agent of the gift was thousands of miles away, out of personal contact with matters at headquarters. Yet there came surer and more timely counsel than any leader among us could have given, though living in personal contact with affairs.

Late in the summer of 1902, as general representatives were returning from Europe and summer meetings, messages began to come from the Spirit of prophecy that plans for the rebuilding of the sanitarium at headquarters contemplated a larger building than should have been. It was not the Lord's will, for Mrs. White had been shown anew that our people should not erect very large institutions in any place. Counsels of former times were repeated that instead of large institutions in a few places, the funds should be divided and plants made in many places.

In October a group of brethren representing the sanitarium work called at the General Conference office, seriously questioning the attitude of Mrs. White and of the executives of the General Conference. It was interpreted that the instruction meant that the sanitarium now well under way, should have been moved from Battle Creek. But no instruction to this effect was ever produced. The trend of all that was available in the general office was after this order (letter of May 1, 1902):

Do not erect an immense institution in Battle Creek, which will make it necessary for you to draw upon our people for means. Such a building might far better be divided, and plants made in many places. Over and over again this had been presented to me.

On the misinterpretation of the counsels, it was declared that if the General Conference men believed what was written, they should build a sanitarium elsewhere and turn this one over to the board and faculty.

In November of this year, 1902, came the Autumn Council. The matter of General Conference relationship to the Sanitarium enterprise came in for consideration. Attention was also given to the teaching in the book *Living Temple*, which was to have been sold to raise funds for this and other sanitariums. Some things in the book were reviewed by W.W. Prescott. The author made explanations. A. T. Jones appealed that we should read the book "with confidence." The minutes record:

[ATJ]: He had found recognition of Christ as a personal Saviour in at least 23 galleys [proofs] of the work before him, although many chapters are strictly physiological in their nature. This, he believed, should commend the book to our confidence."

There was a strange influence attending dipping into this philosophy of God in nature with a consenting confident attitude toward it. There was a bewitching atmosphere about it. Professor Prescott labored to show how phrases and ideas here and there thrown into the matter of the book seemed to mystify the scriptural view of God. The author told the council that while it was serious, it seemed also absurd—the idea that there was a mysterious something undefined pervading the book. But that was the very fact—there was a spiritualistic mysticism in the ideas that no one could safely delve into with a consenting mind. More than one who went into it in that attitude of approach was taken captive by it.

A subcommittee of four was appointed to go through the proofs together and report. On a later date, the minutes show the majority report was made as follows:

"That, we find in the book, *Living Temple*, nothing which appears to us to be contrary to the Bible or the fundamental principles of the Christian religion, and that we see no reason why it may not be recommended by the Committee for circulation in the manner suggested." A.T.J., J.H.K., D. Paulson.

One member, W.W. Prescott, presented a separate report:

"I am compelled to say that I regard the matter, outside those portions of the book which deal with physiology and hygiene, as leading to harm rather than good; and I venture to express the hope that it will never be published."

In the discussion which followed, the minutes tell us, "The author requested the privilege of withdrawing the book from consideration."

Even those who were not present can well understand how all these issues brought question, and anxiety, and more or less confusion in the field. About a month after the Autumn Council, occurred the burning of the *Review and Herald* office. Troubles certainly abounded. There began a promotion of the idea in the field that these teachings that the general brethren objected to could be taught from the writings of the Spirit of prophecy. So events traveled on toward the General Conference session in the spring of 1903.

At the 1903 General Conference

There was a nervous tension on as the time of the General Conference session came in the spring of 1903. It was held in Oakland, California. The matter of the disputed teachings and questions of

administration were in the background of many minds. No one knew how things would turn in the conference.

For one thing, the General Conference delegation emphatically settled it that the conference in session should elect the leadership. The 1901 Constitution provided for the election of the large representative General Conference Committee, but the committee was to elect its own chairman. On this basis, a movement had been started at the 1902 Autumn Council to change the chairman. It was proposed by those friendly to the new teaching that Elder Daniells give himself to mission interests and that A. T. Jones be the chairman. The delegation at Oakland in 1903 changed the constitution providing again for a president of the General Conference, so that choice of leadership should rest with the general body in session.

The messages from the Spirit of Prophecy to the session were earnest appeals for putting away differences, for unity, for clearing away suspicion and criticism. And there was call to a reformatory work in all the institutions and to loyalty to the message:

Those who stand as teachers and leaders in our institutions are to be sound in the faith and in the principles of the third angel's message. God wants His people to know that we have the message as He gave it to us in 1843 and 1844. We knew then what the message meant, and we call upon our people today to obey the word, 'Bind up the law among my disciples.'" "Bulletin," 1903, p. 32

Especially kind and commendatory words were spoken by Mrs. White concerning the work of the medical leader. His position was not to be made difficult, but all were to stand by the good work he was doing. The medical leader, referring to the new building plans at Battle Creek, said:

"Now if we have made a mistake in erecting this building, the mistake can be corrected. The building can be sold, the entire institution can be sold. There are parties who will be very glad to buy....If this Conference will vote that this enterprise shall be abandoned at Battle Creek, the property can be sold promptly, and the enterprise there can be off your hands." Id., p. 83

As though in answer to this proposition, Mrs. White, in a later message said:

"You were surprised to hear me say that we are not to let the Battle Creek Sanitarium go into the hands of the world; that we are to make another effort to place our institutions on solid ground."

"When the sanitarium is placed on its proper foundation; when our people can see it as it was when it was first established; when they can see that no one man is to have the control of everything in it, then God will help them all to take hold with courage to build it up. Today you do not know just where it is. God wants us to know every timber of the foundation, where it is and what it is; then He wants all to put shoulder to shoulder, and labor understandingly. The Lord wants us to do our duty. He wants us to understand that Dr. Kellogg shall not be pushed out of his place but that he shall stand supported and acknowledged in his God-given work. This he will be if his feet are planted on the truth of the living God. If they are not planted on this truth, specious temptation will come in, through scientific problems and scientific theories regarding God and His Word.

"Spurious scientific theories are coming in as a thief in the night, stealing away the landmarks and undermining the pillars of our faith. God has shown me that the medical students are not to be educated in such theories, because God will not endorse these theories. The most specious temptations of the enemy are coming in, and they are coming in on the highest, most elevated plane. These spiritualize the doctrines of present truth until there is no distinction between the substance and the shadow. You know that Satan will come in to deceive if possible the very elect. He claims to be Christ, and he is coming in, pretending to be the great medical missionary." "Bulletin" 1903 p. 87.

It was a startling message, as viewed in the light of the new-old teaching that was seeking entrance. As the conference progressed, Mrs. White told the officers of scenes that had passed before her regarding these dangers. She said she must come before the conference and open up the whole issue, so that all might understand. That was good news. We had held still, waiting for such a time. But Sister White came in and spoke on a general theme. Again she said she must open up the whole question; but again she spoke on other themes. Then, on the last Sabbath afternoon or evening, when the Conference was to close the next day, she told the executives that she must take up these matters Sunday morning.

I recall with what expectancy I sat that morning, leaving editing work on the "Bulletin" to go. Now we would surely hear the issues set forth. But again Sister White came in, spoke on a theme of unity and courage and faith, and hurried immediately away to her home in St. Helena.

The conference was to end with the real issues as to erroneous teaching still untouched. Friends of the teaching learned of the situation. It was talked about that three times, under human influence, Mrs. White had proposed to take her stand against the teaching, and the Lord had restrained her.

But to the officers came a message from Mrs. White, saying:

"Under the pressure that came upon me last Sabbath, I felt that the time had come to warn our people against being taken advantage of in any way. But I was admonished that the course I had pursued during the meeting was the right course, and that I must not say anything that would stir up confusion and strife in the Conference. I was forbidden to say the things that I thought I must say on Sunday morning. Light came into my mind, and I was given a subject to present. I was instructed that I must lead the minds of the people away from the difficulties and perplexities around them."

The time to meet the issue had not come, evidently, and when we saw later how Providence was all along preparing the situation for the time when the issue had to be met, we saw the clear guidance of the Lord in the waiting. The friends of the teaching, growing stronger, predicted freely that the course of the general brethren in quietly resisting the teaching and the plans associated with it, was sure to "split the denomination." But the split never came, sad as it was to see some lose the way.

There was no longer waiting for counsel about publishing the book. The Living Temple was brought out and put on sale. It was urged upon the tract societies. The delicate situation involved is indicated by a letter dated Battle Creek, July 23, 1903, sent by the officers to conference presidents:

Dear Brother:

"A number of Conference Presidents have written to the General Conference office, saying that they are being urged to handle a new book, 'The Living Temple,' the proceeds to go to sanitarium enterprises. They ask if the General Conference has made any recommendation in the matter, and what the attitude of the General Conference is toward the proposition. We feel it proper to state the facts to you.

"The General Conference has made no recommendation in this matter, which has come to the attention of its officers only through communications from the conferences. Somewhat over a year ago, a proposition was being considered relative to handling a popular medical book, for the benefit of our sanitariums, when the 'Object Lessons' work was finished. At the last autumn council of the General Conference committee, in 1902, the matter came up for consideration, and proofs of the 'Living Temple' were submitted. The religious teaching of certain portions of the book was very seriously questioned by various members of the Committee who had examined it. They felt that its tendency was to undermine the truth, and that the circulation of such teaching would do no good. After the matter had been thoroughly discussed, it seemed to the Committee that while it was not a proper thing for a General Conference Council to pass formally upon any question of religious teaching, it was likewise not a proper thing to recommend the circulation of literature so seriously criticized. The book was withdrawn by the

author from the consideration of the Committee and the Committee has had no dealings with the matter since.

"Of course, as to the truth or falsity of teachings, every soul must individually know for himself. But we appreciate the fact that our conference brethren have a right to ask whether plans proposed are in harmony with the understanding and plans of the General Conference.

"Personally, in view of the times in which we are living, and in view of the instruction given us at the last General Conference, to the effect that 'Spurious scientific theories are coming in as a thief in the night, stealing away the landmarks and undermining the pillars of our faith,' we feel that each one charged with sacred responsibilities in leading this people in the final work of the message should move surely and understandingly.

"In view of these facts, we do not believe it is right to urge our people to take hold of the sale of the book on the plans proposed.

(Signed) "A. G. Daniells, President "W. A. Spicer, Secretary"

The book was taken to some of the camp meetings by its friends, who read from the writing of the Spirit of Prophecy (and the Bible, of course), interpreting Scripture and phrases and sentences of the Spirit of Prophecy as teaching the same as this book. It was promoted in some of the schools. It was a perplexing situation, but we seemed unable to act. The waiting commission was the order of the day.

Some friend of the aggressive propaganda were saying that the Spirit of Prophecy would not yet "roll the general men in the dust." But we know that the Lord could never set His seal upon a system that said things one way in private only to talk another way in public. That sort of thing could never stand, regardless of our human fallibility and the possibility that we might err in pronouncing on an item of teaching.

Meanwhile the locating committee had found a place for the new headquarters for the General Conference and the Review and Herald office. The Spirit of prophecy had directed to Washington. As plans were under way for moving there was talk among leaders of the new philosophy that it was absurd to talk of moving the headquarters of the denomination. It was said to be like the mayor and a few aldermen of Battle Creek leaving the city and saying they had moved the city of Battle Creek. Why, it was said, the Sanitarium remained the Tabernacle remained, the church remained, and Elder A. T. J. and Elder E. J. W., and others were with them; and we think the headquarters will still be here, it was said.

But it was very soon apparent that as the pillar of cloud of God's providence rose and led forward, the hosts of Israel moved with it, in their hearts. The cause of the living Advent Movement could not be led away into paths unknown and uncharted. In the unions, and conferences and churches the work was being pressed forward; and among workers and believers the removal to the East was seen as a command to go forward.

"MEET IT!"

In early October, 1903, the Autumn Council met for the first time in Washington, in the M-Street Church. The brethren were pressing on with general business as usual; but like a cloud over us again was the shadow of the differences about this matter of teaching. It was painful to see how aggressive planning for the world work was hampered by the confused issue. One day in the Council, when it was being represented by one that it was all really a petty struggle to see who was who, the message of deliverance came—the message by the Spirit of prophecy entitled, "Decided Action to be Taken Now."

If ever a message came timed to the hour—timed almost to the minute, one might say—this testimony of deliverance was so timed. We were deadlocked in the council. It seemed as though nothing could be

done further, when in from far California came the call to decided action. Mrs. White wrote later how it came about that the messages were sent off just at that time:

"Shortly before I sent out the testimonies regarding the efforts of the enemy to undermine the foundation of our faith through the dissemination of seductive theories, I read an incident about a ship in a fog meeting an iceberg. For several nights I slept but little. I seemed to be bowed down as a cart beneath sheaves. One night a scene was clearly presented before me. A vessel was upon the waters, in a heavy fog. Suddenly the lookout cried, 'Iceberg just ahead! There, towering high above the ship was a gigantic iceberg. An authoritative voice cried out, 'Meet it!'

"There was not a moment's hesitation. It was a time for instant action. The engineer put on full steam, and the man at the wheel steered the ship straight into the iceberg. With a crash she struck the ice. There was a fearful shock, and the iceberg broke into many pieces, falling with a noise like thunder to the deck. The passengers were violently shaken by the force of the collision, but no lives were lost. The vessel was injured, but not beyond repair. She rebounded from the contact, trembling from stem to stern, like a living creature. Then she moved forward on her way.

"Well, I knew the meaning of this representation. I had my orders. I heard the words, like a voice from our captain, 'Meet it!' I knew what my duty was, and that there was not a moment to lose. The time for decided action had come. I must without delay obey the command, 'Meet it!'

"That night I was up at one o'clock, writing as fast as my hand could pass over the paper." "Letters to Physicians and Ministers," Series B. No. 2, p. 55.

In the original letter to Elder Daniells in Washington, she told how, for the next day or two she worked continually on the messages, the copyist worked at the task, preparing copies to send forward as early as possible. When prepared, the matter was taken down to St. Helena by a special messenger and put into the train mail. That is how the messages came to Washington, into that session, when the general brethren were at their wits' end to know how to go on with the business, with this matter of teaching making a cleavage in the council. And think of a document like "Decided Action to be Taken Now," being put on paper from one o'clock at night and onward, the pen moving "as fast as my hand could pass over the paper."

As a piece of writing it is a masterly thing—the first document, "Decided Action." And as meeting issue, in phrase and language quite unlike that called for in messages on ordinary topics, it is wonderful piece of work. The writer was far away in California; but not one of the brethren who had been in close contact with this teaching all along could ever have phrased it to so meet the very inwardness of the teaching. The message, "Decided Action," as printed in leaflet form, left out the opening paragraph in order that it should go to the public on the teaching issue alone. That opening paragraph was, as in one of the original copies that I have:

"During the night the Spirit of God has been presenting many things to my mind. The experience that was given us at the General Conference held in Battle Creek, early in 1901, was of God. Had Dr. K. at that time done thorough work, the terrible experience through which we are now passing would never have been."

Then, as to the teaching of the book:

"God has permitted the presentation of the combination of good and evil in Living Temple to be made to reveal the danger threatening us....

"Men have given to our leading physician allegiance that is due to God alone; and he has been permitted to show what self-exaltation will lead men to do. Scientific, spiritualistic sentiments, representing the

Creator as an essence pervading all nature, have been given to our people, and have been received even by some who have had a long experience as teachers of the word of God. The results of this insidious devising will break out again and again....

"I am now authorized to say that the time has come to take decided action.... Few can see the meaning of the present apostasy. But the Lord has lifted the curtain, and has shown me its meaning, and the result that it will have if allowed to continue. We must now lift our voice in warning. Will our people acknowledge God as the supreme Ruler, or will they choose the misleading arguments and views that, when fully developed, make Him in the minds of those who accept them, as nothingness?

"These words were spoken to me in the night season. The sentiments in Living Temple regarding the personality of God have been received even by men who have had a long experience in the truth. When such men consent to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, we are no longer to regard the subject as a matter to be treated with the greatest delicacy. That those whom we thought sound in the faith should have failed to discern the specious, deadly influence of this science of evil should alarm us as nothing else has alarmed us....

"I heard a voice saying, 'Where are the watchmen that ought to be standing on the walls of Zion? Are they asleep? How can they be silent? This foundation was built by the Master Worker, and will stand the storm and tempest. Will they permit this man to present doctrines that deny the past experience of the people of God? The time has come to take decided action.' I was instructed to call upon our physicians and ministers to take a firm stand for the truth."

And there was a lining up for the truth as the real issue was opened to ministers and physicians. That which had been obscure was brought into the light of day. Our people were to be instructed. In the first Review set up after the Council, one of the messages on the issue was printed. Here are two paragraphs:

"I have something to say to our teachers in reference to the new book, The Living Temple. Be careful how you sustain the sentiments of this book regarding the personality of God.... The Speaker held up The Living Temple saying, 'In this book there are statements that the writer himself does not comprehend... and this is not the only production of the kind that will be urged upon the people. Fanciful views will be presented by many minds. What we need to know at this time is, "What is the truth that will enable us to win the salvation of our souls?"

"The sophistries regarding God and nature that are flooding the world with skepticism are the inspiration of the fallen foe, who is himself a Bible student, who knows the truths that it is essential for the people to receive, and whose study it is to divert minds from the great truths relating to what is soon coming upon the world. Let our teachers beware lest they echo the soothsaying of the enemy of God and man." Oct. 22, pp. 8, 9.

It was in repeated messages that the first words of specific warning came, and soon the light was carried out by the Review, and believers and workers in every department were put on guard. At the Council all expressed themselves as accepting the messages of instruction, including the author of the book in question, who had just arrived at the Council. In an after meeting he said that he still thought he was right, but would do anything rather than go out alone.

The Document: "Decided Action to be Taken Now"

As not all may have the printed testimony, "Decided Action to be Taken Now," I think I should insert a complete copy of the original document in this memorandum. There were several messages sent on by Mrs. White in the first enclosure that was rushed to the train at St. Helena. (There was no air mail then.) This "Decided Action" statement was the key message for the hour. Other messages related especially to teachers and physicians and the need of guarding our people. I have quoted from one of these in the

former chapter, giving a few paragraphs from the Review that came out the week following the Council. But in reading this "Decided Action" message, consider the background. For a year we had been in the crisis. For a year the messages of the Spirit of prophecy had insistently urged carefulness and patient waiting, while all the time indicating the perils that surrounded.

Then suddenly, in the night, an aged sister was awakened to take pen in hand over in California, nearly three thousand miles away from the Council in Washington. In the Council the issue in the background was tying things up again, so that it seemed nothing could be done to define positions and relationships and plans. Just there, in the California valley, the pen of the agent of the Spirit of prophecy began to move—"writing as fast as my hand could pass over the paper," Sister White told us. And consider the unusual complexity of the teaching knocking at our door. Yet as one reads "Decided Action" it is seen to meet the issue at every turn. It is a wonderful piece of writing to be started at one o'clock in the morning and hurried out to reach a time of need. Imagine any of our brethren awakened in the night and asked to review that book and situation in such haste! Not a man could have done it, and all the circumstances of the situation and the accurate choice of words and turn of phrases, and the timeliness of it all, and the more than natural force attending its reading in that Council gave and clear and overwhelming evidence of a super-natural power before our eyes:

Nov. 4, 1903-8 B. -242 St. Helena, Cal., October, 1903

DECIDED ACTION TO BE TAKEN NOW:

TO OUR PHYSICIANS AND MINISTERS—

"During the night the Spirit of God has been presenting many things to my mind. The experience that was given us at the General Conference held in Battle Creek early in 1901, was of God. Had Dr. Kellogg at that time done thorough work, the terrible experience through which we are now passing would never have been.

"God has permitted the presentation of the combination of good and evil in "Living Temple" to be made to reveal the danger threatening us. The working that has been so ingeniously carried on he has permitted in order that certain developments might be made, and that it might be seen what a man can do with human minds when he has obtained their confidence as a physician. God has permitted the present crisis to come to open the eyes of those who desire to know the truth. He would have his people understand to what lengths the sophistry and devising of the enemy could lead.

"Men have given our leading physician allegiance that is due to God alone; and he has been permitted to show what self-exaltation will lead men to do. Scientific, Spiritualistic sentiments, representing the Creator as an essence pervading all nature, have been given to our people, and have been received even by some who have had a long experience as teachers of the word of God. The results of this insidious devising will break out again and again. There are many for whom special efforts will have to be put forth to free them from this specious deception.

"I am now authorized to say that the time has come to take decided action. The development seen in the cause of God is similar to the development seen when Balaam caused Israel to sin just before they entered the Promised Land. How dangerous it is so to exalt any man that he becomes confused, and confuses the minds of others in regard to the truths that for the last fifty years the Lord has been giving his people.

"Few can see the meaning of the present apostasy. But the Lord has lifted the curtain, and has shown me its meaning, and the result that it will have if allowed to continue. We must now lift our voices in warning. Will our people acknowledge God as the supreme Ruler, or will they choose the misleading

arguments and views that when fully developed, make Him, in the minds of those who accept him, as nothingness?

"These words were spoken to me in the night season. The sentiments in "Living Temple" regarding the personality of God have been received even by men who have had a long experience in the truth. When such men consent to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, we are no longer to regard the subject as a matter to be treated with the greatest delicacy. That those who we thought sound in the faith should have failed to discern the specious, deadly influence of this science of evil, should alarm us as nothing else has alarmed us.

"It is something that can not be treated as a small matter that men who have had so much light, and such clear evidence as to the genuineness of the truth we hold, should become unsettled, and led to accept spiritualistic theories regarding the personality of God. Those doctrines, followed to their logical conclusion, sweep away the whole Christian economy. They estimate as nothing the light that Christ came from heaven to give John to give to his people. They teach that the scenes just before us are not of sufficient importance to be given special attention. They make of no effect the truth of heavenly origin, and rob the people of God of their past experiences, giving them instead a false science.

"During the past night, I have been shown more distinctly than ever before that these sentiments have been looked upon by some as the grand truths that are to be brought in and made prominent at the present time. I was shown a platform, braced by solid timbers,—the truths of the word of God. Some one high in responsibility in the medical work was directing this man and that man to loosen the timbers supporting this platform. Then I heard a voice saying, "Where are the watchmen that ought to be standing on the walls of Zion? Are they asleep? How can they be silent? This foundation was built by the Master Worker, and will stand the storm and tempest. Will they permit this man to present doctrines that deny the past experience of the people of God? The time has come to take decided action."

"I was instructed to call upon our physicians and ministers to take a firm stand for the truth. We are not to allow atheistic, spiritualistic sentiments to be brought before our youth. God has led us in the path, giving us truth, eternal truth. By this truth we are to stand. Some of the leaders in the medical work have been deceived, and if they continue to hold fanciful, spiritualistic ideas, they make many believe that the platform upon which we have been standing for the past fifty years has been torn away. These men need now to see with anointed eyes, with clear spiritual vision, that in spite of all men can do, "the foundation of God standeth sure,"and the Lord knoweth them that are His."

"The message to the Laodicean church comes to us at this time with special meaning. Read it, and ask God to show you its import. Thank God that he is sending us messages of mercy. Those accepting the theories regarding God that are introduced in the "Living Temple" are in great danger of being led finally to look upon the whole Bible as a fiction; for these theories make of no effect the plain word of God.

"The tempter is working to gather together at Battle Creek as large a number as possible, hoping that they will receive false ideas of God and his work, and thus make of no effect the impression that God would have made on the minds of those engaged in the medical missionary work and in the gospel ministry. God abhors the great swelling words of vanity that have been spoken by some connected with the Sanitarium. The judgments call for humiliation rather than for proud boasting and self-exaltation.

"The heavenly messenger turned to those professing to be medical missionaries, and said, "How could you allow yourselves to be led blindfold? How could you so misrepresent the name you bear? You have your Bibles. Why have you not reasoned from cause to effect? You have accepted theories that have led you away from the truths that are to stamp their impress upon the characters of all Seventh-day Adventists. Your leader has been moving the foundation timbers one by one, and his reasoning would soon leave us with no certain foundation for our faith. He has not heeded the testimonies that God

through his Spirit has given. The books of the Bible containing most important instruction are disregarded because they say so much about a personal God. He has not known whither his feet were tending. But in his recent writings, his tendencies toward pantheism have been revealed."

"The enemy of souls has sought to bring in the supposition that a great reformation was to take place among Seventh-day Adventists, and that this reformation would consist in giving up the doctrines which stand as the pillars of our faith, and engaging in a process of reorganization. Were this reformation to take place, what would result?—The principles of truth that God in his wisdom has given to the remnant church would be discarded. Our religion would be changed. The fundamental principles that have sustained the work for the last fifty years would be accounted as error. A new organization would be established. Books of a new order would be written. A system of intellectual philosophy would be introduced. The founders of this system would go into the cities and do a wonderful work. The Sabbath, of course, would be lightly regarded, as also the God who created it. Nothing would be allowed to stand in the way of the new movement. The leaders would teach that virtue is better than vice, but God being removed, they would place their dependence on human power, which, without God, is worthless. Their foundation would be built on the sand, and the storm and tempest would sweep away the structure.

"Who has authority to begin such a movement? We have our Bibles. We have our experience, attested to by the miraculous working of the Holy Spirit. We have a truth that admits of no compromise. Shall we not repudiate everything that is not in harmony with the truth?

"A mind trained only in worldly science fails to discern the deep things of God, but the same mind, converted and sanctified, would see the divine power in the word. Only the mind that is cleansed by the sanctification of the Spirit can discern heavenly things.

"The Scriptures, given by inspiration of God, are "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Let us go to the word of God for guidance. Let us seek for a "Thus saith the Lord." We have had enough of human methods. Brethren, awake to your God-given responsibilities. Your judgment, unless perverted by a wrong practice of false principles, will discern the deep things of God, given the Holy Spirit, and your hearts will be made susceptible to the teaching of the word.

"May God bring his people under the deep movings of his Spirit. The Spirit makes efficient the ordinary means of grace. God teaches that his kingdom is to be established in the earth. "Not by might, nor by power," but by his Spirit. The Spirit is the efficiency of his people.

"I am instructed to say that those who would tear down the foundation that God has laid are not to be accepted as the teachers and leaders of his people. We are to hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end. Words of power have been sent by God and by Christ to this people, bringing them out from the world point by point, unto the clear light of present truth. With lips touched with holy fire, God's servants have proclaimed the message. The divine utterance has set its seal to the genuineness of the truth proclaimed.

"The Lord calls for a renewal of the straight testimony borne in years past. He calls for a revival of spiritual life. The spiritual energies of his people have long been torpid, but there will be a resurrection from apparent death.

"In the future, God will call for the gifts and talents of men not now actively engaged in his service. Let these respond to his call, putting their trust in the great Medical Missionary. The power that is the life of the soul had not been seen as it must be. It had been smothered for want of spiritual ventilation, the blending of human effort and divine grace.

"God is calling upon his people to work. He come to them as they idle away the precious, golden moments, and says, "Go work to-day in my vineyard."

"By prayer and confession of sin we must clear the King's highway. As we do this, the power of the Spirit will come to us. We need the Pentecostal energy. This will come for the Lord has promised to send his Spirit as the all-conquering power.

"Men may still learn the things that belong to their peace. Mercy's voice may still be calling, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." It is only when spiritual life is given, that rest is found and lasting good secured. We must be able to say, in storm and tempest, "My anchor holds." He who builds upon any other foundation than that which has been laid, builds upon shifting sand. God calls for a reformation. But he who seeks to bring about a reformation without the aid of the Holy Spirit's reviving power will find himself adrift. Those who turn from human foolishness and frailty, from men's seductive arts, from Satan's planning, to Christ, the shepherd and bishop of our souls, will stand secure upon the platform of eternal truth."

Ellen G. White

Changes That Brought No Change

The persistence of erroneous ideas of the mystical sort is something passing comprehension. There is a more than natural force behind the teachings. These ideas that we faced in the first decade of this century were determined to gain a recognized place in our teaching, despite all the warnings.

Among the messages of the Spirit of prophecy that followed the exposures and warnings at the time of the Autumn Council of 1903, was one, entitled, "Seductive Influences." As it was never, I think, put in printed form I will not quote from it. In effect it told the general brethren,—

If error does not succeed in getting fast hold, because of warnings from God, it changes somewhat its features, while working in more covered ways seeking to deceive if possible the very elect.

We saw the application of these warnings very soon. We think not so much of the promoters of the views, who themselves did not understand. We think of the evil one behind it all who was working unceasingly to fasten fatal error upon the movement.

Soon after the Council of 1903 the book, "Living Temple," was brought out under another name, with some things that had been objected to eliminated. It was republished under the title, "The Miracle of Life." Friends of the new movement were quick to point to this as a sign that the author had accepted correction and that now all was well. To one such, a medical associate who had formerly been one of our ministers, Mrs. White wrote (July 31, 1904):

"It will be said that 'Living Temple' has been revised. But the Lord has shown me that Dr. Kellogg has not changed, and that there can be no unity between him and the ministers of the gospel while he continues to cherish his present sentiments. I am bidden to lift my voice in warning to our people saying, 'Be not deceived; 'God is not mocked!'

Friends thought there was a change, but the agent of the Spirit of prophecy said there was no change. A few months afforded ample evidence that the Spirit of prophecy knew the facts. Not very long after this, I was in England. In London I saw a copy of a journal called "The Herald of the Golden Age." It was the organ of a society called the "Order of the Golden Age," devoted to food and other reforms, along the lines of the new-thought propaganda. The editorial led out:

"In response to a great influx of spiritual illumination from higher spheres, there is apparent in every country of our Western World at the present time, a wonderful awakening on the part of more highly evolved souls, to the fact that it is our privilege to attain freedom from bondage to prevalent materialistic thought."

The editor then went on to speak of a new book called, "The Living Temple," saying:

"The Council of the Order is so impressed with the importance and value of this book, and feels so strongly that the information contained in its pages would prove of the greatest value to our members, co-workers, and converts, that a special arrangement has been made with the proprietors for it to be supplied direct to the English public from our Publishing Office."

In the advertising columns the book was featured; and along-side it was featured the "Life of Dr. Anna Kingsford"—"a rare and wonderful book that teaches much concerning transcendental truth and the higher forms of Spiritualism." In such association was the book promoted in England at the time when many in America thought that its teachings had been repudiated by the author. Invariably, during those years, the messages of the Spirit of prophecy came with an accuracy and timeliness that could not have been the result of mere human foresight and discernment.

In the summer of 1903, before the opening up of the issue, some of our tract societies had taken the book for sale to our people, not knowing that some of its teachings were under question. One over-sea tract society sold a copy to a non-Adventist customer. Ere long the purchaser visited the office to tell how much he appreciated the book, adding: "You Seventh-day Adventists are Theosophists, and you don't know it."

So close were we to being swept off our foundations by a flood of mystical teachings. But it was worked out for us by a guiding gift that gave warning at every turn on the right hand and on the left. When the enemy came in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifted up a standard against it.

No Change in Attitude of the Spirit of Prophecy

As soon as the messages came warning against the erroneous views, it began to be said that Mrs. White had been lead to change her teaching. At one of the schools Mrs. White had spoken to the students saying that it should not be said that God is in tree or leaf or flower; that these things are manifestations of His power and love; that students must not be taught that God is personally in the things of nature. One of the promoters of the new view declared, in effect:

"This, of course, is very different from what she wrote some years ago. W. C. White and others have made her believe we are teaching a pernicious doctrine, so it must be downed."

(In passing, imagine how anyone, persuaded only by influence of some associate, could take up the pen and write these piercing analyses of every feature of the teaching. No one, on such a basis, could possibly have so turned the searchlight of truth upon every winding turn of his philosophy. Such writing could never come from one acting on the suggestions of another. These warning messages could only be penned by one pouring out the deepest conviction of the soul. The influencing of the mind was there, but it was the influence of the Spirit from within. In no other way can one account for such messages as sprang forth at the instant of need.)

But far from having changed, it is on record that from the earliest days the Spirit of prophecy had borne witness against these ideas of Deity. When men misinterpreted her writings, and claimed they could teach "Living Temple" doctrines from her books, Mrs. White felt stirred. True, the modern school of religio-scientific thought in all the world has long been perverting phrases of Scripture to support error. When the Apostle John wrote, "God is light", no doubt the ancient Gnostic perverted it about as the

modern Theosophist does. The words convey one idea to the Christian believer, quite another to the Theosophist.

It has become a current method with Spiritualists and others to pervert Scripture phrases to support their errors. And so among us, phrases from the Spirit of prophecy were seized upon to give color to defense of the pantheistic idea. In the pamphlet, "Letters to Physicians and Ministers," issued in 1904, Mrs. White said:

"About the time that 'Living Temple' was published, there passed before me in the night season representation indicating that some danger was approaching, and that I must prepare for it by writing out the things God had revealed to me regarding the foundation principles of our faith.

"A copy of Living Temple" was sent me, but it remained in my library unread. From the light given me by the Lord, I knew that some of the sentiments advocated in the book did not bear the endorsement of God, and that they were a snare that the enemy had prepared for the last days. I thought that this would surely be discerned, and that it would not be necessary for me to say anything about it.

"In the controversy that arose among our brethren regarding the teachings of this book, those in favor of giving it a wide circulation declared: 'It contains the very sentiments that Sister White has been teaching.' This assertion struck right to my heart. I felt heartbroken; for I knew that this representation of the matter was not true.

"Finally my son said to me, 'Mother you ought to read at least some parts of the book, that you may see whether they are in harmony with the light that God has given you.' He sat down beside me, and together we read the preface, and most of the first chapter, and also paragraphs in the other chapters. As we read, I recognized the very sentiments against which I had been bidden to speak in warning during the early days of my public labors. When I first left the state of Maine, it was to go through Vermont and Massachusetts, to bear a testimony against these sentiments. 'Living Temple' contains the alpha of these theories. I knew that the omega would follow in a little while; and I trembled for our people.... The scripture used to substantiate the doctrine there set forth, is scripture misapplied.

"And there may be in my writings many statements which, taken from their connection, and interpreted according to the mind of the writer of 'Living Temple,' would seem to be in harmony with the teachings of this book. This may give apparent support to the assertion that the sentiments in 'Living Temple' are in harmony with my writings. But God forbid that this sentiment should prevail."—pp. 52-54

In the first book of Mrs. White's experience and views, published in 1851 there was a refutation of the teaching that diffused the personality of God in the things of nature. These ideas were all abroad in the years following 1844. The rise and spread of "Transcendentalism" in New England is a well-known feature in history. Mystical ideas of God and of mind and life were all abroad.

Pantheistic theories were promoted by poets and philosophers; and modern spiritualism was soon adding to the confusion of thought. From the beginning, the Spirit of prophecy was bearing witness for the plain Bible view. In the second vision ever to be put in print, given to Ellen Harmon (White) in February, 1845—but a few weeks after her first vision—she told of a view of the person of Jesus in glory:

"I saw a throne, and on it sat the Father and the Son. I gazed on Jesus' countenance and admired His lovely person. The Father's person I could not behold, for a cloud of glorious light covered Him. I asked Jesus if His Father had a form like Himself. He said he had, but I could not behold it, for, said He, if you should once behold the glory of His person, you would cease to exist." Early Writings p. 45.

This view is in harmony with Bible descriptions. Strike this view from us, and substitute the idea [of] the all-pervasive personality called God by the pantheistic philosophy and we are at once involved in the

mazes of the spiritualistic deception. Then Heaven and the throne are wherever God is, and He is everywhere, in tree and plant and creature.

In the first interview I had with the author over the book prepared for us he illustrated his idea that it was idolatry to conceive of God as having form. He gleefully told of pressing one of our ministers into a description of the Father's person. Naming different portions of the human anatomy, he got the unsuspecting minister to say "Yes" as to likeness of man's bodily members, until the picture was crude and irreverent. The reverent view leaves it just where the view given by the Spirit of prophecy left it. The form was there on the throne, as real as the form of Jesus on the throne beside the Father. But a cloud of glory veiled the Father's person. The reverent mind does not seek to penetrate that veil between.

Again, later, in "Early Writings" Mrs. White wrote in warning against the view that diffused the Deity in nature:

"I have often seen the lovely Jesus, that He is a person. I asked Him if His Father was a person and had a form like Himself. Said Jesus, 'I am in the express image of My Father's person.'

"I have always seen that the spiritual view took away all the glory of heaven, and that in many minds the throne of David and the lovely person of Jesus have been burned up in the fire of spiritualism."—p.67

The door of heaven is open to the faith of a little child. It is a real place. The throne of God is there, and angels wait to speed between heaven and earth. Enoch and Elijah and Moses, and the saints who were raised with Christ (Matt. 27:52) are going to and fro amid surroundings real and tangible to men in redeemed flesh. Eden, that once was on earth, is there, with its trees that once grew on earth. Jesus, "this same Jesus," "the man Christ Jesus," is by the Father's throne, in the same flesh, glorified, that He bore as our Saviour here, And there is the Father, whose face the angels and the redeemed can see, and whose loving face we, too, shall see if faithful.

Strike out this view of Bible truth and substitute for it the pantheistic conception that makes of Deity a personality present everywhere the same as He is anywhere, and there is no place in the universe for the sinner to come before God. This hopeless Hindu conception is easily recognized in its own heathen surroundings. But clothe it in the language of Christian thought, and in third angel's message phraseology, and it may readily deceive the very elect if they are off guard.

In the very first writings of the Spirit of prophecy in 1844 and 1845, descriptions of heaven and of the throne, and of the Father and Son were given to lift up a standard against the religio-scientific philosophy of God and nature that was to come in like a flood.

More Than Common Error

In the message, "Decided Action to be Taken Now," the teachings pressing in were described as "spiritualistic sentiments." Those who had received the ideas were said to have consented "to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil." It was in these terms that the messages of the Spirit of prophecy to the 1899 General Conference, twelve years before, had foretold the perils before us:

"Satan, in a deceptive garb still lurks in the tree of knowledge. The words of God spoken at creation, 'But of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it,' come sounding along the line of ages to our day." "Bulletin," 1899.

And, as quoted early in this review of experiences, the topic of the relation of God and nature was also dealt with the messages of 1899. It was along this line that speculative philosophy about God would bring peril to us. We did not understand what this meant then, but now these very deceptions had swept in upon us. It was spiritualism for Seventh-day Adventists. Recall that message at the 1903 General Conference, already quoted at length:

"Spurious scientific theories are coming in as a thief in the night.... you know that Satan will come in to deceive if possible the very elect.... He is coming in, pretending to be the great medical missionary."

Long had the messages tried to forewarn us. But there was something supernatural in the working of this thing. We who first came in contact with real inwardness of the teaching at close quarters had felt that power working in this philosophy. Friends of the teaching smiled at the idea that there was anything mysterious in it. For myself I knew there was mystic, hypnotic power in it. I knew by painful experience that I had to fight it, resist it in my soul or I would be swept off my feet. And I never got free from the paralyzing fear of it and challenge [of] it in face to face committee work. Yet some smiled at the idea of danger. At the 1903 General Conference the author of the book in question declared:

"This talk about an awful crisis, and awful dangers; I want to say to you, There is nothing in it; there is nothing in it. The truth of the matter is that all we want is confidence, confidence in the truth, confidence in God, and confidence in one another."

At the preceding Autumn Council, of 1902, one veteran minister, to whom we had looked for years as a teaching leader, begged us to read the book, "Living Temple," with "confidence." It was that confidence in partaking of the mixture of truth and error dealing with speculative views of the Deity that betrayed our brother. For two days in that council he had stood with the General Conference executives. Then time came when he spent some hours in counsel with promoters of the new ideas, and he came out as an advocate of them. In the Council he told us the book taught true ideas of God from the scientific standpoint. Now he would teach the same things from the Scriptures. Scornfully he told us that what a lot of Seventh-day Adventists needed was a "new God;" that many were worshipping a God altogether too small for the larger and true idea. He then set forth this idea from Scripture. It was later brought out by the Good Health Publishing Company as a tract entitled, "The Revelation of God."

Two paragraphs will suffice:

"'Hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand.' Open your hand as wide as you can, and hold it level, palm upwards. Note the depression in the middle of your hand. That is the hollow of your hand. Fill it with water and see how much it will hold without running over. And all the waters are measured in the hollow of God's hand as easily as those few drops of water lie in the hollow of your hand. Then if only his hand is so great that all waters lie in the hollow of it, how large is he himself? It is simply impossible for any human mind to conceive of the size that such a hand would have to be. Then if it would be impossible for any human mind to conceive of a true likeness even of the hand of God, how much less a true likeness of himself?

"'Meted out heaven with the span.' The span is the measure from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the second finger. What is the compass of the heaven? Conceive it if you can. Yet the whole compass of the heaven is by him measured simply with the span. Then again, what is the size of that hand? No human mind can conceive of the compass of heaven. Then no human mind can conceive of the size of that span by which he meted out the heaven. And when no human mind could possibly conceive only the size of the hand, the reach of the span with which he meted out the heaven, how infinitely beyond all reach of human thought is any true conception of the form of God."

The fatal error was the assumption that the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 40) was endeavoring to impress us with the greatness of God's form. It is "the greatness of His might" (Verse 26) that the prophet is describing in these figures of speech. This philosophic view, set forth as the true one, was but repeating the ancient heathen philosophy of the Universe-God, sometimes thus given colossal members and parts, and again represented as an ether-like personality pervading all. The Hindu philosophy says: All this (universe) is Brahma." And Pike, an old Washington jurist, professor, and philosopher said of the Persian

view: "It was thought the universe should be deemed an immense being." In the Egyptian and other philosophies, he says:

"The universe was a living and animated being like man.... This was the Universe-God, which the ancients adored as supreme Cause and God of gods.... God, in the view of Pythagoras, was One, a single substance, whose continuous parts extend through all the universe. The world or universe was thus compared to man... Thus he made the universe a great intelligent being, like man—an immense deity."

It was conceived that great power must imply great size. It was thought Deity must be great in form in order to be great in power. So came the idea of colossal form, such as we had pictured to us in the vestry of the Tabernacle in that Council of 1902.

The error was due to failure to apprehend that which is the only hope of our salvation. God's power is manifested by His word. He is "upholding all things by the word of His power." He saves us by this all-powerful word which works within. It is not infinite form but infinite power and love and mercy. The sinner redeemed will not have to search the universe to view, a little at a time, a form that the logic of the philosophy must necessarily picture as greater than the universe, one whose smallest measurements—it is an awful suggestion—must be beyond all human conception. The redeemed, in the flesh, immortal, will "see God." They can approach a Father upon His throne in the heavenly temple. "They shall see His face." And by the Father's side we shall see "the man Christ Jesus"—"this same Jesus" that the disciples saw—in form like unto the Father.

The heathen philosophy takes the thought away from infinite power, which is our hope of salvation, to fasten it upon the mind-staggering conception of infinite form. It is truly a god "that our fathers knew not," as the record of Israel says, speaking of idolatry that crept into the Exodus movement.

The message, "Decided Action to be Taken Now," said of the issue facing us: "The development seen in the cause of God is similar to the development seen when Balaam caused Israel to sin just before they entered the Promised Land."

The Bible story of the way in which the ancient people of Israel were lured into idolatry seemed heretofore to have recorded perils from our own path to the Promised Land; but here we were in danger of going into idolatry ourselves. This "commingling" of the pantheistic idea of a pervasive personality in living things with the other idea of an infinite form seems illogical, but it is characteristic of some of the ancient heathen philosophies. And the author of "Living Temple" laid hold of the idea of colossal form as soon as it was set forth before us in that Council. A paragraph was added to the proofs, and appeared as follows when the book was published:

"A hand large enough to hold the waters of the earth in its hollow, would be as large as the earth itself. Hence, no human eye could ever see more than a very small fraction of it at a time. A span great enough to mete out even the earthly heavens, would cover at least 9,000 square miles. Try to form a conception of a hand of much proportion; when outstretched, the distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the little finger would be 9,000 miles. The height of a person is nine times the length of the span, so the height of being with such proportions must be at least 81,000 miles. It is just as easy to conceive of a person filling all space as of a person having a height equaling ten times the diameter of the earth."
"Living Temple," p. 33

One might ask, How could the same book teach both these ideas—of God as intelligence pervading all nature, and as a colossal form? How could both ideas be set forth together? But this seeming contradiction is characteristic of pantheism. One of the most often quoted portions of the Khandogya Upanishad (14th hap., 3rd part) had this declaration:

"All this is Brahma (That is, everything is God).....He is myself within the heart, smaller than a corn of rice, smaller than a canary-seed, or the kernel of a canary-seed. He also is myself within the heart, greater than the earth, greater than the sky, greater than heaven, greater than all these worlds." "Literature of the East," Vol. 9, p.111.

The flinging about of these new-old teachings, infected with the contagion of spiritualistic heathenism, led the Spirit of prophecy, to rush off that first message to catch us in the midst of the Washington Council. The message cried out:

"It is something that can not be treated as a small matter than men who have had so much light, and such clear evidence as to the genuineness of the truth we hold, should become unsettled, and led to accept spiritualistic theories regarding the personality of God. These doctrines, followed to their logical conclusion, sweep away the whole Christian economy. They estimate as nothing the light that Christ came from heaven to give John to give to His people. They teach that the scenes just before us are not of sufficient importance to be given special attention. They make of no effect the truth of heavenly origin, and rob the people of God of their past experiences, giving them instead a false science."

Until the Spirit of the Lord lifted up a standard against it, the teaching was spreading like a plague. It was spiritualism for Seventh-day Adventists.

Pantheism Here and in Its Ancient Setting

Here in the Western lands, where general culture and standards have been more or less influenced by Christianity, the new-thought and pantheistic ideas are by many considered interesting evidences of deep thinking. Amid the conditions that have arisen as the fruitage of pantheism, in ancient pagan lands, the ideas do not seem so picturesque.

When it was noised abroad that Seventh-day Adventists had repudiated any possible religious sympathy with the new-thought philosophy, it was of course, written down by the average journalistic story-writer that the broad-minded thinkers in the crisis were those who had refused to be held to old and narrow ways. In the popular New York Magazine, The Delineator, an interviewer of our former medical associate told how his philosophy appeared to a worldly looker-on. The interview ran:

"While Dr. Kellogg and his household have lived in conformity with the most unworldly religious views, he has faced existence with no narrow outlook. And thus he has outgrown the anthropomorphic conception of God (that is, the conception of Genesis 1, of God in whose image man was made). 'My God,' he says simply today, 'is the personal, but universal intelligence that pervades the heights and the depths and the farthest reaches of the universe.'

"While this faith was growing wider with the years, some time ago the doctor gathered his children together on a Sabbath in Spring. He pointed out the buds on the trees. 'See,' he said, 'they will be leaves tomorrow. Who is it makes the leaves?'

"'Why, God does,' answered the children promptly. "'But where? Does He make them form the outside and stick them on?' "'Oh, no,' said the children. 'He makes them through the sap inside the tree.' "'Oh,' said the doctor. 'Then God must be inside the tree.' "'Why, yes,' agreed the children. "'Then their father laid a hand on Jack's head. 'What makes Jack's hair grow?' "'Why, God, ' said the children. "'But how? Does He stick it on from the outside?' "'Oh, no. He makes it grow from the inside of Jack's head.' "'Then God is within Jack. Is it not so?' "'The children looked in wonderment as they had never looked at Jack before. 'Yes,' they assented, 'God must be within Jack.'

"'And God is within all of us and God is everywhere,' concluded the doctor." "Delineator," Dec., 1910.

Poets can make this philosophy look very refined. But the philosophy in its native oriental home does not hesitate to go the whole way of this kindergarten lesson. Jack not only has hair, but he has thoughts, good thoughts and evil thoughts. If God is within sending out the hair, then is He within sending out the good thoughts . . . and the evil thoughts. And the doctrine of pantheism strikes out the distinction between good and evil. It is all divine. While appearing to exalt all natural life to the divine, it really drags the divine down to the level of the natural.

"There is nothing supernatural about religion," the Delineator interviewer was given to understand. "It is a perfectly natural thing."

There is where the pantheistic philosophy has ever left man—with only natural forces, notwithstanding all the talk of the divine and of Personality and Intelligence and God. Man himself is as much divine as anything. The great saying of the Hindu philosophy was "Tat twam asi, " meaning, "That thou art." You yourself are the mystical Absolute. Man is the same as God. "We speak without hesitation of our body as the temple of God, "wrote Max Miller, yet we shrink from adopting the plain and simple language of the Upanishads that the self of God and man is the same." "Six Systems of Indian Philosophy," p. 254.

At the 1937 Autumn Council at Battle Creek those who attended a lecture at the sanitarium heard the speaker—our old associate—tell of the personality in the grass, by which the tender blade reared up again after a foot, in stepping across the lawn, had crushed the blade to the earth. So would the Hindu philosophy of nature tell it. In the book, "Advanced Course in Yogi Philosophy," the Yogi Ramacharaka says:

"The Grani Yogi sees Intelligence in everything, from the mineral to man...Each little cell contains intelligence, or mind, which works along unconscious lines, and builds up the plant. Our bodies are built up in the same way. There is Intelligence in everything—and it all emanates from the Absolute."

This was really the doctrine that Seventh-day Adventists were asked to accept as advanced light. In the Delineator interview our former associate was quoted as having outgrown the anthropomorphic conception of God. "My God," he says simply today, "is the personal but universal intelligence that pervades the heights and the depths and the farthest reaches of the universe."

As a man can work only where he is personally, so this teaching really conceives that God must be limited. If His power is to work in the leaf and tree, then God must be personally in leaf and tree. Thus pantheism would make God like man—notwithstanding this talk about outgrowing the anthropomorphic idea of the old-fashion Bible believer. It misses the blessed truth that fills all Scripture, that our God in the heavens speaks power by His word. He created the heavens and the earth by His word. "He spake, and it was." He upholds all things, "by the word of His power." His Spirit speaks to hearts. His angels are everywhere at work for Him, going to and fro from His throne. In these ways—by the sending forth of His agencies—the Bible teaches that He is working everywhere in the universe, His power manifested in all creation. It is by His power that He is present everywhere. It is not that one "outgrows" this simple Bible conception when he goes into the mazes of pantheism. One simply loses the revealed knowledge of God and slips back into the age-old religion of primitive Animism, that peoples all living things with divine all-pervading Personality. The encyclopedia describes the primitive pantheist as conceiving that all living things are "endowed like himself with will and personality." (Hastings' Ency., art. "Animism")

It was into this maze of mysticism that primitive men fell when they forgot God as the Creator, Whose throne is in heaven. Into this mysticism, which has darkened the outlook and the life for pagan peoples through the ages, we were invited to take a plunge in those days of controversy.

Our Institutions: Denominational or Udenominational?

Before the issue had been openly joined over the question of teaching, there had been no little counsel from the Spirit of prophecy about the matter of the organization of our oldest health institution under a law that provided the institution could not expend any of its funds outside the State of Michigan. While in Australia, in the nineties, Mrs. White had called earnestly on the old institution to help in planting the first sanitarium in Australia. As the issue was developing, in the Autumn of 1902, one complaint against the Spirit of prophecy was over this insistent call that had come for the old base to help in establishing new plants, whereas the law under which the institution was incorporated forbade such sending out of funds.

Messages such as the following had been sent from Australia to the General Conference of 1899, held at South Lancaster, Massachusetts, appealing for help for Australia:

"The Battle Creek Sanitarium has received thousands of dollars in donations which should be passed over to institutions in other countries, which are struggling for an existence. And more than this, the profits of the sanitarium should be largely used in helping similar institutions in needy circumstances." "Bulletin," 1899, p. 131.

Along with the appeal for help for new fields from the old institution, the same message repeated the counsels against the tendency among our institutions to keep on with increasing enlargements in old centers:

"The Lord has presented to us that the enemy is still seeking with all his power to center the work in Battle Creek, contrary to the word of God. A movement to erect more buildings there, and to gather in more people, will bring results for evil that are not now foreseen.

"Not all the institutions now at Battle Creek should have been there. Our people have found excuse after excuse for establishing new enterprises and erecting more buildings." "Bulletin," 1899, p. 131.

In the meantime, Mrs. White had returned from Australia. The burning of the old institution in early 1902 had raised the question of finance for rebuilding, and Mrs. White had repeated the plea of not so much building in one place.

Before the issue of teaching had involved the medical management and the General Conference in serious discussion of these things—while most of the leaders were in Europe—Mrs. White spoke at length on the question of older institutions helping new plants. It was the chapel of the St. Helena (California) Sanitarium, adjoining her home. The attorney of the Battle Creek institution, Judge _____, was present. He was a member of our church then. The meeting was held June 22, 1902 (while the old institution was rebuilding). The report of the meeting was sent to headquarters in those days, and I venture to quote a few paragraphs from it, as it introduces the matter of denominational institutions.

Speaking of the restriction preventing giving aid to new enterprises, Mrs. White said a view had been given her:

"One of authority stood before the company, and spoke words....he said that these restrictions were not inspired by God, but were of human devising. The means coming to the sanitarium were brought by people from all parts of the world, and should not be used in one state only."

"In the providence of God, my husband and I were largely responsible in founding the Battle Creek Sanitarium first called the Health Reform Institute. The Lord instructed us to establish this institution. ...We were led to encourage the people to believe that after they had helped to establish the Battle Creek Sanitarium it would in time repay them by assisting them to establish similar institutions in different parts of the country. Time and again we have stood before congregations and made this

promise, pleading with them to help us firmly establish this institution, and assuring them that in turn it would help them when they were ready to establish institutions in other places."

Thus speaking of the founding days, it was explained why the calls were so insistent when Australia needed help, help being called for, not from individuals but from the institution.

Then Mrs. White's son called her attention to the provisions of the law, under which the institution was later organized, forbidding the sending of money beyond the state.

In reply Mrs. White said: "Did God devise these restrictions?... The Lord is not pleased to have His people bound by any such yokes."

Then the attorney for the institution, Judge _____, remarked:

"I do not think the brethren understood, when they incorporated the Association, that the Act under which it was done provided that its means should not be used outside the State."

Mrs. White: "Is not that a yoke?"

Judge _____: "I think _____ now recognizes the fact that it ought to be reorganized. I am strongly in favor of reorganizing it.... I recognize the evil, and I think we ought to try to remedy it.... In times past I have had several talks with _____ on the advisability of such reorganization, so that it might be free from some of these restrictions. Until recently he has not been able to see the necessity for doing so.... I am sure he has begun to realize the necessity of such reorganization."

Mrs. White: "I hope it will be reorganized, because it does not now stand right in the sight of God."

Judge _____: "I am satisfied myself that you are right."

Denominational or Udenominational?

In connection with instruction as to desirability of organizing our institutions so that they might contribute to the work of the denomination wherever help was needed, the question of relation of our oldest medical enterprise to the denomination was raised among us. It began to be urged that the plant was not a denominational institution. Mrs. White, who was at the founding of the first medical institution, wrote:

"If ever a sanitarium was established to be denominational in every sense of the word, this sanitarium was.... In the name of the Lord, we are to identify ourselves as Seventh-day Adventists. If anyone among us is ashamed of our colors, and wishes to stand under another banner, let him do so as a private individual, not as a representative of Seventh-day Adventist medical missionary work." (Undated statement, of 1902).

Sure enough, however, as our crisis developed it appeared that in the latest organization of the institution it was provided that it should not be denominational. A journalist, the assistant editor of the Pilgrim Magazine, gave us and the public, this information in reporting an interview with our former medical leader. The interviewer wrote:

"One year ago the Sanitarium in this city, generally believed—and by Adventists quite as much as by the public at large—to be a denominational institution, was burned to the ground. It is now nearly rebuilt."

As the journalist sought information, he was told:

"The sanitarium of which I have charge has no more connection with the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, as such, than you have.'

"Believing that I had not heard correctly I asked the doctor to repeat the expression, which he did, precisely as quoted.

"Who, then, is it that owns it or runs it, or holds it in charge?" I asked.

"A private association, he replied. . . .

"The doctor continued:

"I myself drew up the institution's articles of association. I saw to it that it should be absolutely unsectarian. Membership in the association governing it, as open to a Catholic as to a Seventh-day Adventist."—Kalamazoo Telegraph, January, 1903.

Groping for an understanding, the interviewer referred to the Review and Herald publishing house, the main building of which had been burned a week before. "That is a church institution?" he said. "It is not," was the reply. "The Review and Herald concern is owned by a private stock company." But the essential difference was that the brethren who held the non-profit yielding stock in the printing house saw to it that when that corporation was reorganized, it was under articles that made the governing constituency altogether denominational. That was the difference.

In later years the original denominational character of our first medical work was minimized in vigorous terms. A highly placed member of the British government, Sir Horace Plunkett, had become a patron of the institution while holding some office in Canada, I believe. He gave an address at the institution. He told how a "little band of altruists" had begun the work in 1866. "The founders were Seventh-day Adventists. But he explained that the sect had no connection with its management now. That was the way in which the average man of the world would want to recognize the founders of a worthy enterprise. But the management, using this address as a publicity document, inserted the following paragraph at this point:

"(The institution was from the start a private enterprise and was never under the control of any denomination or sect, though for some years affiliated with the church of its founders. All such affiliation ceased years ago. The management have no connection with the religious organization referred to and no sympathy with the fanatical beliefs and practices which pertain to it. Neither had the Battle Creek Sanitarium any connection whatever with the numerous small religio-medico-sectarian institutions established by this sect in various parts of the world. The prestige of the Battle Creek Sanitarium System has suffered greatly because of the unauthorized claims of some of these church-controlled concerns. Hence this explanatory note.—Publishers.) —" Battle Creek Idea, " Sept. 15 1913.

Years before this, and before the undenominational issue had ever been thought of by our people, I would say, the messages of the Spirit of prophecy pointed out to our former associate the danger in a possible tendency toward the undenominational position. This appeared in copies of the instruction of years before, placed in hands of General Conference officers after it became apparent that we were in a real crisis over the teaching. From Cooranbong, Australia, February 27, 1900, the message had been sent:

"You may think that you can discard the name of Seventh-day Adventist, and make a name for yourself because of your supposed prosperity. But just as surely as you yield to this temptation, you will understand what the warnings mean that God has been sending you for years....O John, for Christ's sake, do not spoil your record."

We think of this admonition now, when we see the institutions built larger and larger, to really mammoth proportions, and standing as a monument to the warning messages sent through the years. These messages indicated the way even of business success. But men rejected the counsel and had their

own way. And, as I write, we know that the great institution has passed into the hands of a court, and is directed by the court in the interests of the bond holders.

What the future may hold we do not know, and we point no finger of reproach at former associated; but we must recognize a voice that bore true witness and gave wise counsels all the way along.

Counsels of Safety

The message, "Decided Action to be Taken Now" came to the Washington Autumn Council of 1903. One of our veteran ministers and teachers was present. (A. T. J.) He had planned to spend some time at our oldest health institution to give the large family of workers there help that he felt he could give. He had been in cooperative sympathy with the promoters of the new teaching, but did not realize that this meant any change in his relation to the Advent Message. When the message of the Spirit of prophecy, "Decided Action to be Taken Now," was read in the M-Street church that day in Washington, he spoke a few words of acceptance of the instruction.

His plans however were to go on to the old center as he had arranged. But later messages from Mrs. White urged that he should not do this, that he and others should keep away from contact with this propaganda that was at work. I recall how strong he felt, how well able he appeared to take care of himself. He said to us in effect"

"I am going to the sanitarium, and I am going to preach the third angel's message to the workers there just as I have always preached it."

So he went. But so far as the third angel's message was concerned he surely lost touch with it, measured by standards that represented its place in building up this movement, from the days of 1844. It was not long before his influence was merged with the work of those who had forsaken the old paths. Under date of August 1, the next year (1904) Mrs. White had a message for a little group, including our former strong teacher, telling what her Instructor had said concerning their danger:

"To Brother A.T.J. He said, 'Why have you permitted your mind to be worked as it had been? I warned you not to permit this.'"

To another of the group it had been said that a hypnotic influence was upon him, and he was exhorted, for Christ's sake, to break the spell. The teaching that was abroad was of a spiritualistic nature. It was a supreme effort of the great deceiver to get into the movement. No man's strength is sufficient to stand against spiritualistic philosophy if he puts himself in friendly contact with it. His only safety is in the attitude of constant mental and spiritual opposition to it. "Men in positions of responsibility," we were told at that time, "are in danger of changing leaders." (Series B No. 2, p. 48.) There was a hypnotic power in the teaching, as some of us knew, and it was not to be curiously looked at or studied to see what it was composed of. It is like a "live" wire. The very power of death is in it. The atmosphere of its promotion was deadly, and only by open hostility to it in the name of the Lord, could one safely have anything to do with it. In a message of 1904, entitled, "the Great Controversy," we were told:

"Those who feel so very peaceable in regard to the works of the men who are spoiling the faith of the people of God, are guided by a delusive sentiment.

"There is to be a constant conflict between good and evil.... If this matter were rightly understood and closely guarded, God's servants would feel a continual burden of responsibility to counterwork the efforts of the men who do not know what they are about, because they are enchanted by the delusive allurements of Satan." Series B No. 2 p. 11.

The formerly strong leader thought he could go safely with these influences. "I am going there," he told us; "and I am going to preach the third angel's message just as I have always preached it." But it was not

long until, without knowing it, he was opposing things that in all our history had built up this movement. He had early persuaded one of our younger ministers, (C. L. Taylor) a very kind and conscientious man, to come and help the spiritual interests in the great institution. This brother knew little of what had been going on. His six months' effort, and his statement as he tendered his resignation, show how truly the Spirit of prophecy counseled in representing the impossibility of serving the cause of truth in cooperative association with a propaganda of error and opposition to the denominational organization. In his parting letter of May 31, 1906, a copy of which he sent me, this younger minister said to the management of the institution:

"In my letter to Elder (A.T.J.), stating the conditions under which I could come, I announced that I would not come to take part in any partisan effort....In coming to Battle Creek and joining in the work here, I did not believe it necessary, much less plan, to be any less Seventh-day Adventist in my views and methods and practices."

He tells how Elder (J) had assured him the plan was to ignore controversy, and seek to place the work on such a basis that our people would have to acknowledge it as the work of God and give it cooperation as aforetime. But, he said, all were "painfully conscious" that it did not work out. He felt to acknowledge that he himself was drawn into attitudes that did not "encourage respect for the Spirit of prophecy." The College there had been reopened, and the Spirit of prophecy had counseled that the environments were such that the old headquarters was not the place for our young people to get their education for this cause. Our brother says he had planned to take up revival work for the young people from the first. But he was asked to promote the school matter first. He wrote about it:

"But from the day that I undertook the circulation of the school's calendar my influence with the young people was canceled. (Most of the workers were Adventists, and they evidently expected to see their ministerial leaders stand for the Adventist faith.) I did not know the real status of the family, or I should certainly have utterly refused to take any part in pushing the school work; and you did not know the conditions, else you would never have allowed me to do what you asked. From inquiries made, I gathered that the helpers, in spirit and in practice, were in sympathy with the management; but such was not the case.... They were looking to see whether I would at once begin to help improve existing conditions or whether I would join in what appeared to them as a work contrary to the Spirit of prophecy. Looking back upon those days I wonder that the young people were as patient with some of us as they were....

"I wanted at the very first to have a study of the Testimonies; but I found no one else having a burden in that direction, and my efforts proved fruitless. But suppose at the beginning we had all done that very thing—had studied the instruction, had seen clearly our need of divine help, and had made suitable acknowledgment of our sins, and together had mutually and determinedly kept at the work; would we not have seen different results? And should we wonder that the helpers, so many of them, after waiting in vain for that very thing, left for other parts?"

The brother had had no contact with the situation that enabled him to understand that it was impossible to bring about spiritual conditions while keeping in harmonious touch with elements promoting positive error. The helpers evidently knew the issue better than their teachers. Many of them passed on. Others remained but took a positive stand against error and held firmly to the church of their faith.

Our brother who was drawn in to help, saw how impossible was his position, and the story of his six months' effort and withdrawal shows how truly the Spirit of prophecy had spoken in warning the older worker that he could not safely undertake his purpose. As it was, ere long our former veteran brother was an open critic of the denominational organization and a scornful critic even of the gift that had

formerly held his loyalty. There is no way of neutrality or of keeping peace with both sides, when the issue of truth and error comes to the dividing point. In those days the Spirit of prophecy said:

"When God's people are fully awake to the danger of the hour, and work fully on Christ's side, there will be seen a sharp contrast between their course and that of those who are saying, ' Good Lord and good devil,' and we shall see much firmer and more decided work done to counterwork the schemes of Satanic agencies." Series B, No. 2, p. 11, 1904.

Forewarned Was Forearmed

In those years of crisis there was one point of danger that I think none of the brethren had foreseen. I do not recall a suggestion of it round our new General Conference headquarters in Washington. Then came from California messages by the Spirit of prophecy saying that effort would be made by some not in sympathy with the General Conference to get control of our old Battle Creek Tabernacle.

In documents passed to us in those times was the following message to a veteran of the publishing work from the days of the first printing office, in Rochester, New York, to the later times of the old Review and Herald Office—our aged Brother G. W. Amadon. For some years he had been senior elder in the Battle Creek church, giving his time to church work. The message read:

"I wish to say to you and to the leading men in the church, and to the trustees of the Tabernacle, that light has been given to me very distinctly that Elder (A.T.J.) has taken a position that divorces him from the privileges of the use of the Tabernacle. He does not know what spirit is leading him. Efforts are being made to get possession of the Tabernacle. Brethren, be on guard. Keep burnished for action the weapon of your warfare, which is the Word of God. Pray, believe, and walk humbly with God; and let your prayers be without ceasing, that God shall be glorified. Make a most earnest effort to call to Battle Creek the very best ministerial talent, men of experience in the early days of the message, men who will give the trumpet a certain sound. Hold the fort. Do not let it be taken by those who have placed themselves decidedly in a position of opposition to the truth which God has given us for these last days.

"Our call is, Come out from among them, and be ye separate; and the Tabernacle should be set apart decidedly to those who are true and loyal.

"Those who have denied the faith, and who should tear down that which in past years they have labored to build up, should understand that they have no let nor part in the faith that has firmly held the people of God in unity. You do not know how earnestly they will work to get possession of the Tabernacle. But this must not be permitted. In no case should a decidedly opposing element be permitted to hold forth in the Tabernacle."

It was certainly a sounding of the trumpet, calling the brethren of the old Tabernacle to be on guard. And, sure enough, the time came quickly when they needed to be on guard. In those days Elder M. N. Campbell was called to the pastorate in this, our largest church. He saw the danger come, of which the brethren had been forewarned. I heard him tell the story briefly at a union conference session. It was this, as told in his own words:

In the year 1907 a strong feeling prevailed in the Battle Creek church that a certain group of men representing an institution which at that time was at outs with the movement, was trying to get a controlling voice in the Tabernacle affairs. On various occasion they had made it quite clear that they would be glad to see the property so held as to enable the representatives of the institution to use it whenever they saw fit.

"I was pastor of the church at that time and felt that steps should be taken to safeguard the property. A legal meeting had been appointed for a certain evening to re-incorporate the legal body which held the

church property. It appears that in Michigan corporations can continue for only thirty years. The corporation which held the Tabernacle property had lapsed, and it was necessary to re-incorporate. At this meeting the representatives referred to were there in full force. They were accompanied by an attorney who had been a judge as well as a lawyer.

"Just before the meeting I had called the church elders together for counsel. A feeling of depression had taken possession of their hearts when they learned the strength of the forces we would have to meet in the meeting about to follow. They felt that our case was hopeless. One dear old brother kept groaning: 'O, if only Sister White were here!' It was our veteran Brother Amadon, who had seen Mrs. White bearing testimony in the early days, leading through crises of opposition. I endeavored to awaken faith and confidence in the hearts of the brethren. I knew that if we went into the legal meeting with our men in a discouraged state to begin with, it would be practically impossible to bring anything to pass. I was praying very earnestly for the Lord to bring courage and deliverance to us in some fashion.

"About five minutes before we were to walk into the larger meeting, a telegram came from Mrs. White in which were the words: "Philippians one, twenty-seven, twenty-eight." We opened our Bibles and found these verses reading as follows:

"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; and in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation and that of God.'

"As these words were read the brethren realized that the Lord was present, and that He would work in our behalf. Courage and confidence came. And we walked into that legal meeting with victory in our hearts. In spite of the opposition that was met with, a complete victory was won. The tabernacle administration was re-incorporated and the property deeded over to the West Michigan Conference to make sure it was for ever to be under the control of the denominational organization that had built it, for the preaching of the advent message."

A Lesson For the Future

It is evident that the controversies of the "Living Temple" era were not something that were to stand alone. The Spirit of prophecy represented it as a beginning of an onslaught by the evil one that we would have to reckon with to the end. Of these things of 1902 and 1903, it was said (at the 1903 General Conference):

"Spurious scientific theories are coming in as a thief in the night; stealing away the landmarks....You know that Satan will come in to deceive if possible the very elect. He claims to be Christ, and He is coming in, pretending to be the great medical missionary." "Bulletin," 1903 p. 87.

Satan's appearing at the finish as an angel of light is described in the book, "Great Controversy," Evidently the special message of preparation for his coming is after this order of speculative teaching that flooded in upon us in the first decade of this century. In one document, "Teach the Word," dated July 24, 1904, at Washington, it was said:

"'Living Temple' contains the alpha of these theories. I knew that the omega would follow in a little while; and I trembled for our people. I knew that I must warn our brethren not to enter into controversy over the presence and personality of God." p. 53.

Having the fact nailed down forever in Scripture, and set forth in the Spirit of prophecy (especially in "Early Writings") we know that the Person of the Deity rules from heaven above. In the vision given in "Early Writings" His form upon the throne was veiled from sight by the cloud of glorious light. We are

not called to try to pierce that veil by speculative reasonings or definitions about Deity. We know that the Father is there. The "man Christ Jesus," the "express image" of His Father's person, ministers there before Him as our High Priest. All Holy Scripture records the universal ministry of the Spirit and to the angels in behalf of men. And we see God's power—"upholding all things by the word of His power"—manifested in all creation. We know that by faith we can pray to our heavenly Father, before a throne of grace, and that His ear is ever open to hear.

It is so plain and concrete that a child can understand it. But the moment the touch of mysticism is given to it the concrete and substantial vanish into mist. And mysticism is what the speculative teaching was declared to be: "We need not the mysticism that is in this book."—Series B, p. 52.

It was this mysticism that the Spirit of prophecy met in the early days, when Mrs. White was but a young woman. She then wrote:

"I have often seen that the spiritual view took away all the glory of Heaven, and that in many minds the throne of David and the lovely person of Jesus have been burned up in the fire of spiritualism." "Early Writings," p. 67.

It was mysticism that flavored the theory that set aside the truth of the heavenly sanctuary with its services of the holy and most holy places, when A. F. Ballenger brought the spiritualizing method from his study of the popular commentators in England. At the General Conference of 1905, Mrs. White bore testimony to him and to all the workers:

"Take heed how you mystify the gospel.... Those who are striving for originality will overlook the precious jewels in God's cabinet in an effort to get something new.

"Let this simple doctrines of the word shine forth in their true bearings, and let them be urged home according to their relative importance."

The most pitiful exhibitions of weakness in the truth have come in all our history from those who felt the urge to turn our something that would be recognized as deep and profound. This was apparently the urge that led the late Brother Ballenger in England to take on what appeared to his brethren there as an air of spiritual exaltation. His brethren there were distressed over it, long before he brought forth the old theories that to him were new. Out of it came the teaching about the sanctuary that the Spirit of prophecy classed with the mysticism of the "Living Temple" school:

"He draws out certain passages so fine that they lose their force...Brother Ballenger does not discern what he is doing, any more than Dr. Kellogg discerned that the book 'Living Temple' contained some of the most dangerous errors. Those who try to bring in theories that would remove the pillars of our faith concerning the sanctuary or concerning the personality of God and of Christ, are working as blind men. They are seeking to bring in uncertainties, and to set the people of God adrift, without an anchor."

In warning against the perils of the last days the Spirit of prophecy at the time of this crisis continually spoke of the danger of speculative philosophy that obscured and cast a mist over the plain and concrete and substantial things of truth. In Volume 8 of the "Testimonies," brought out in those days, there is much said after this order:

"I have been instructed that it is not new and fanciful doctrines which the people need.... God has not laid upon anyone the burden of encouraging an appetite for speculative doctrines and theories. My brethren, keep these things out of your teaching. Do not allow them to enter into your experience." p.295.

All these speculative, mystifying methods were abroad in apostolic days. It was the heart of Gnosticism, that ancient system, that spiritualized everything of Christian teaching. The apostles fought it day and night. And the Spirit of prophecy called us to study the apostolic warnings against these same things:

"Please read Paul's exhortation to the Colossians."—Series B. No. 2, p. 13.

Especially the second chapter of Colossians was commended to our attention. In other parts Paul referred to this so-called knowledge ("Moses") which the Gnostics felt so sure of. It was a mingling of Christian phrase with spiritualistic pantheistic teaching that was like germs of a contagion in those early times. The apostles fought it by the plain things of the word of God. So, as these ideas of mysticism came flooding in upon us, the Spirit of prophecy led Mrs. White to appeal to us to preach the fundamental things of the advent movement. She wrote:

"About the time that 'Living Temple' was published, there passed before me in the night season representations indicating that some danger was approaching, and that I must prepare for it by writing out the things God had revealed to me regarding the foundation principles of our faith." Series B. No. 2, p. 52.

Those foundation principles, the plain truths of the advent message, are our defense. They are God's answer to all the winds of error that can ever blow. But we must handle the truth with humility of heart, and teach it in simplicity and plainness. The more one knows of it the less deep and complicated and philosophical one needs to be in holding it and teaching it. Above all, it must be held in the surrendered heart. In a time of controversy and mysterious working of evil Paul wrote: "Let him that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." The clean heart sees more clearly than the clever mind. We do not know what forms the final attacks may assume, but the same message that has built up this work will finish it.