

The Gift of Prophecy

In the Seventh Day Adventist Church

By William A. SPICER

Since the inception of the Advent Movement in the forties of the last century, its adherents have claimed the gift of prophecy as one of its divine credentials. Its manifestation as seen in the life and work of Ellen G. White is set forth here by a beloved leader of the church, who was qualified by profound knowledge of the Scriptures and long association with the one who identified herself as a "messenger of the Lord." In her exemplary life, her fidelity to the Bible as the Word of God, and her ministry to the church as counselor and guide through a half century of labor, the author sees a remarkable embodiment of one of the distinguishing features of what the Bible identifies as God's "remnant" people. Her monumental writings and divinely inspired counsel in times of crises offer impressive evidence of her Heaven-sent call to a place of unique responsibility.

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01. Spiritual Gifts To The Church

Seventh-Day Adventists have through all their history unhesitatingly pointed to the prophetic gift manifested in the work and life of Ellen G. White as an evidence that the work of the Advent Movement is a fulfillment of prophecy. We sincerely believe that the words of Revelation 12:17—"the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ"—apply to the group of people who have adopted the name Seventh-day Adventist. These words of the prophecy were explained to John by an angel later, "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Revelation 19:10).

The Christian church in general has been well admonished through the years by Christ's warning, "There shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matthew 24:24). But so intent have men been on guarding against false prophets that they have overlooked the implication in the words of Christ that there must be true prophets as well as false or the warning would have been against all prophets. It may therefore come as a surprise to some devout Christian people to discover that there are Bible-believing Christians of the conservative order who claim that the gift of prophecy has been manifested in our own day and age. We believe that all open-minded Christians will be pleased to examine the facts and weigh the evidences adduced to support such a claim and come to their own conclusions. We invite you to

such an examination of the claims set forth by Seventh-day Adventists regarding the prophetic gift in their church.

This small book will afford space for only the merest outline of facts and experiences in our history, serving to picture the wondrously helpful and constructive side of the working of this special gift in the everyday development and progress of our cause.

For that matter, other spiritual gifts bestowed upon the New Testament church have also been in evidence.

All the Gifts Build Up

Of these gifts for service, left by Christ for His church, the apostle Paul wrote: "When he ascended up on high, he gave gifts unto men. He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:8-12).

To "edify" is to "build up," and so the Revised Version renders it: "Unto the building up of the body of Christ," the church. The story of the Advent Movement bears witness to the presence of these gifts building solidly on the gospel foundation. True men of God, called from all walks of life in those days of 1844 and onward, had these gifts in evidence among them. In no other way can we account for the wise hearted, sure way in which they built in the pioneering days. Those years were times of stress and confusion in the religious world, and all manner of curious and eccentric and often fanatical cults were springing up. By the gifts bestowed-of apostleship and teaching of the Spirit of Prophecy-the early workers laid down a system of truth, drawn from the word of Holy Writ, that we stand for today in all the world.

A Sound Platform

Let an outside observer tell it. Some years ago the president of the International Association of Christian Workers wrote a book on erroneous cults and isms of the day. Someone asked him why he had not included Seventh-day Adventists in the survey. He replied: "There are no fundamental grounds of disagreement between the organized church of Jesus Christ and the Seventh-day Adventist. On all the cardinal doctrines of the Bible; the miraculous conception, the virgin birth, the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension, the deity of Christ, the atonement of Christ, the second coming, the personality of the Holy Spirit, and the infallible Bible--the Seventh-day Adventist rings true as steel." Dr. J. E. Brown, In the Cult Kingdom, pages 5, 6.

Our pioneers, from earliest times, built on the foundation of Christ and Holy Scripture a structure of truth that meets the universal spiritual needs of all mankind, and stands foursquare against all the winds of error that can ever blow. And these gifts led our early builders to lay plans of organization for service that stand in principle to this day, needing only adaptation and expansion to meet a growth which the pioneers never conceived of in those first years. The Spirit, through whom came these gifts to the church, surely equipped those early workmen.

Others Saw It

Observers looking on from without, even in the beginnings of our development, felt that there was something remarkable about the work and efficiency of this small people.

For instance, in the year 1884 one of our workers, traveling by train in a Western State, fell into conversation with a bishop of one of the great churches, and with the editor of a newspaper, with whom the bishop was traveling. The bishop, at the close of the interview, said to his editor friend:

“The Seventh-day Adventists are the greatest marvel of development of the last forty years. With all the opposition imaginable, with the most unpopular doctrines, in spite of all difficulties, this people have grown out of nothing and poverty to be one of the most successful in making themselves felt all over the earth; and their cause is onward in spite of everything.” Quoted in *The Review and Herald*, December 9, 1884.

Yet in 1884 our work had only begun to look toward the wide world. Beyond North America and Europe we then had no work. But this discerning administrator of religious activities saw that the movement had within it the elements of vigorous, successful growth. Years later, I recall, two officials of another church called at our General Conference office in Washington, D.C., to get information and material for the study of our plan of work and organization, which, they felt, had given this small people an efficiency in service beyond the ordinary.

We know well enough that the power and efficiency are not in any plan that can be set down on paper. The results come from preaching the message of “the everlasting gospel” which the prophet John, in the Revelation, saw carried to all nations as the hour of God’s judgment came. That gospel is still “the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” But along with the laying hold of the great system of Bible truth, Seventh-day Adventists from earliest times recognized the importance of the spiritual gifts which Christ left with His church. Among these was the gift of prophecy, “the spirit of prophecy,” as the Revelation names it in connection with the foretelling of last-day developments in the gospel work.

A Notable Gift

During the days of 1844, when the Seventh-day Adventist Church had its rise, this gift of prophecy appeared. Observers outside our church have often borne tribute to the strong up building character of this special gift in the work of Seventh-day Adventists. But only those who have lived with the ministry of this gift, and observed its working from within, can ever know how strong and ever fresh and constant and sure that gift of prophecy has been from the times of 1844 until today. And so it must ever be; for it is a spiritual gift, the ministry of which continues. In messages of inspiration and instruction and counsel, covering in manifold detail every phase of this closing gospel movement, this gift is a factor that still works powerfully in building up the cause of God in all the four quarters of the earth.

02. The Advent Movement

The great distinguishing feature of the last-day church, according to the Scripture, was that of loyalty to the law of God. “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (Revelation 14:12).

Twice over, this feature is inscribed on the record of the Revelation. Near the end of the great controversy the Lord calls forth a people to lift up again the standard of His holy law, which the great falling away had “thought” to change (Daniel 7:25).

Satan’s Warfare Against the Movement

The vision on Patmos further pictures the wrath of Satan against this movement to call men and women back to loyalty to God’s commandments. In the twelfth chapter of Revelation, the church through all the ages is symbolized by the woman clothed with the sun, against whom Satan has fought, first through pagan Rome in the first centuries, then through papal Rome during all the long prophetic period of the 1260 years, reaching to “the time of the end.” And now, as the last, or “remnant,” church bears the special closing message of the gospel, the enemy of truth is moved to special opposition: “The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the

commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 12:17). In Revelation 19 the angel specifically defines this term; "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (verse 10).

Here is another distinguishing feature. The remnant church, the people of the prophecy, were to keep the commandments, as did the New Testament church, and they were to have the gift of prophecy, one of those gifts bestowed upon the New Testament church.

The Spirit of Prophecy

The Spirit of prophecy is the gift by which the prophets spoke in old time. "The prophets," says Peter, "enquired and searched diligently" to know "what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Peter 1:10, 11).

The Spirit of Christ "testified" through the prophets. It was the "testimony of Jesus" through the prophets to the church of old. It is the "spirit of prophecy" which Christ gave as a gift to the New Testament church "some, apostles; and some, prophets." And here it is set forth in the vision of Revelation 12 as a gift restored to the remnant church. This last-day church was to be brought out, organized, and led of God into a special worldwide work.

When God led His church forth anciently in that special movement from Egypt to Canaan, He placed the gift of prophecy in the movement. It was one agency through which the movement was organized, instructed, and guided in the way. "By a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt, and by a prophet was he preserved" (Hosea 12:13).

It has ever been God's way. But here we may note that this very movement of old is set forth as a type of the final gospel movement: "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples [{"types," margin}: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Corinthians 10:11).

In that first movement the Lord put the gift of prophecy in His "church in the wilderness." In the fullness of prophetic time the last movement was to come. The Lord was to "set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people from the four corners of the earth" (Isaiah 11:11, 12). And as this final movement should rise, the Lord again was to give to His church the gift of prophecy.

Opponents of any idea of the reappearance of that gift have urged that the word "prophecy" sometimes meant a mere bearing witness, as of testifying for Christ before men. But there is no place here for that interpretation. The prophecy is speaking here of two distinguishing marks of the last church. It "keeps" something, and it "has," or possesses, something. It keeps "the commandments of God," and it has "the testimony of Jesus." The latter is not something the church does, in addition to keeping the commandments; it is something it "has" in its possession. It was to have in it the gift of prophecy. It is a possession to have and to hold. When John was about to fall at the feet of the angel, in his visions, to show reverence, the angel restrained him, saying, "See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren that hold the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Revelation 19:10, R.V.).

Again, a second time, the angel defined the term, as though to meet the attacks which were to be made upon this gift in the remnant church of the prophecy. Note the repetition of the caution restraining John's impulse to do the angel reverence: "And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Revelation 19:10. "... I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets." Revelation 22:9. "The testimony of Jesus," as the term is used

specifically here, “is the spirit of prophecy,” and this is the Spirit that moved in John’s brethren, “the prophets.”

The picture of the whole prophecy is clear. In the last days, as the closing judgment work began in heaven above, a special movement was to arise on earth, through which the great threefold message of Revelation 14 was to be borne to every nation, and tongue, and people.

The Two Distinguishing Features Go Together

Two special features, we have seen, were to distinguish this “remnant” church of the movement. Like the New Testament church, they were to “keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus,” and also, like the New Testament church, they were to have among them “the Spirit of prophecy.”

It is fitting that to the church to whom is committed anew the work of lifting up the downtrodden law of God, there should also come the restoration of the prophetic gift. The holy law and the gift of prophecy are associated in the Scriptures: “Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he” (Proverbs 29:18). “The law is no more; her prophets also find no vision from the Lord” (Lamentations 2:9).

In the great “falling away” after the apostolic days, the law of God and the truth of God were trampled underfoot. With the restoration of the full message of the commandments of God the prophecy associates the restoration of the prophetic vision.

As the Pioneers Stated It

The pioneers of the Adventist Church well set forth this restoration of the gift in the introduction to the second part of Early Writings, one of the earliest volumes of the Advent Movement:

“The gift of prophecy was manifested in the church during the Jewish dispensation. If it disappeared for a few centuries, on account of the corrupt state of the church toward the close of that dispensation, it reappeared at its close to usher in the Messiah. Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, ‘was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied.’ Simeon, a just and devout man who was ‘waiting for the consolation of Israel,’ came by the Spirit into the temple, and prophesied of Jesus as ‘a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel’; and Anna, a prophetess, ‘spoke of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.’ And there was no greater prophet than John the Baptist, who was chosen of God to introduce to Israel ‘the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world.’

“The Christian age commenced with the outpouring of the Spirit, and a great variety of spiritual gifts were manifested among the believers. Since the great apostasy, these gifts have rarely been manifested; and this is probably the reason why professed Christians generally believe that they were limited to the period of the primitive church. But is it not on account of the errors and unbelief of the church that the gifts have ceased? And since a special work of the Spirit was necessary to prepare a people for the first advent of Christ, how much more so for the second. The apostles’ commission belonged to the Christian age, and embraced the whole of it. Consequently the gifts were lost only through apostasy, and will be revived with the revival of primitive faith and practice.” 133-135.

And with the reviving of the primitive faith – “the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” the revival of the gift of prophecy appeared, as foretold in the visions of John on the Isle of Patmos.

In olden time the prophet on Patmos wrote of the glory of the second coming of the Lord, as he had seen it in vision. He told about the New Jerusalem. “I John saw the holy city,” he wrote. “I saw a new heaven and a new earth.” He saw the worldwide gospel movement rise, as the hour of God’s judgment came. He saw the people come in 1844, keeping God’s commandments. With the rise of the movement

he saw the gift of prophecy restored in the remnant church. The aged apostle and prophet wrote it on the page, and laid down the pen of the revelation.

Nineteen centuries later, in 1844, a youthful agent took up the pen of prophecy, and began to write to tell of visions of the glories of Christ's coming and of the New Jerusalem and the heavenly land-the same themes that the prophet on Patmos had written of, but now presented as glories soon to be revealed.

There had been no failure in the prophecies of the Revelation. The time had come, the people of the prophecy appeared, and they had the gift which had been foretold.

03. The Coming of the Gift of Prophecy

It was following the great Advent Awakening of the early decades of the nineteenth century, reaching a climax in the years preceding 1844, that the Adventist Church arose. It has spread to all lands with the definite message of the judgment hour, calling men to the standard of the commandments of God.

Forming the Movement

It is wonderful to trace the hand of God's providence in the bringing forth of the movement, its message, and its people. To give the threefold message, it was necessary that its heralds should primarily understand three great truths brought to view in Revelation 14:

1. The commandments of God and the Sabbath truth.
2. The meaning of the judgment hour. And, as shown in Revelation 12,
3. The remnant church of the prophecy was to have the gift of prophecy.

No one man, no one group, was left to frame a movement to fulfill these specifications. The providence of God put the movement together as the hour of God's judgment came in 1844. Here are three steps in the process:

1. In 1844, in New Hampshire, in New England, a group of devoted Advent believers saw the truth of the commandments of God. They understood that church tradition had lawlessly perverted the fourth commandment; and in 1844 the first members of this group began to keep the seventh-day Sabbath of the commandments.

2. In the same year, in October, 1844, the true light on the heavenly sanctuary and its relation to the judgment hour began to come to a little group of Advent believers in the western part of the State of New York. Erelong representatives of those keeping the Sabbath came in contact with those having light as to the judgment work, the cleansing of the sanctuary. As the two groups exchanged light on Bible truths, here was the beginning of a movement standing for the commandments of God and holding the Bible truths required for proclaiming intelligently the message, "The hour of his judgment is come."

3. Yet further, in the year 1844-that fateful year of prophecy-in eastern New England, in the State of Maine, there was a group of Advent believers among whom was manifested the gift of prophecy. The agent of this gift was called to service in 1844. Later those associated with this gift came in contact with the Bible teaching already referred to, the truths of the Sabbath and of the heavenly sanctuary and the judgment hour. Thus was formed the nucleus of the definite Advent Movement of the prophecy. We see the various special factors all having their roots in 1844. And from that day to this, the people of the prophecy have been hastening on toward all nations with the gospel message of preparation to meet the Lord.

How the Gift of Prophecy Came

In 1844 it is evident God's providence was preparing to call the agent through whom He should speak messages to the people of the rising movement. The early pioneers often told how the Lord appeared to a man, a believer in the Second Advent, giving him a vision of the journey of the Advent people to the city of God. It was in this year 1844, in the State of Maine. In the experience this man was told to tell the vision to others. He refused. He felt it impossible to tell a vision, a dream. He fairly demanded of the Lord that he should be excused. At last, as our early pioneers who knew the facts related it, the Lord indicated to the man in a later vision that he was excused. The angel told him that the burden had been laid on "one of the weakest of the weak."

Later, listening from outside a meeting hall where another was relating a vision to the believers, this man who had been excused said the vision he had heard related was the same that was given him, and that he had refused to tell. And he told of the word spoken to him, that one of the weakest would be chosen in his stead.

The agent next called to this service was surely one of the weakest, measured by human standards. Again in calling a special agent God had, as in New Testament days, "chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty" (1 Corinthians 1:27). And in the history of this gift in the Advent Movement we have indeed seen how mightily God does work through human weakness.

Ellen Harmon's Call

It was upon a youthful member of one of those Advent groups in Maine that the burden was laid. She was a mere girl, Ellen G. Harmon, but one who had had a good Christian experience in the Advent awakening preceding 1844. Near the close of 1844 the Lord appeared to her in vision as she was kneeling at family worship. Here is her own account of what happened:

"While I was praying at the family altar, the Holy Ghost fell upon me, and I seemed to be rising higher and higher, far above the dark world. I turned to look for the Advent people in the world, but could not find them, when a voice said to me, 'Look again, and look a little higher.' At this I raised my eyes, and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the Advent people were traveling to the city, which was at the farther end of the path: They had a bright light set up behind them at the beginning of the path, which an angel told me was the midnight cry. This light shone all along the path and gave light for their feet so that they might not stumble.

"If they kept their eyes fixed on Jesus, who was just before them, leading them to the city, they were safe. But soon some grew weary, and said the city was a great way off, and they expected to have entered it before. Then Jesus would encourage them by raising His glorious right arm, and from His arm came a light which waved over the Advent band, and they shouted 'Alleluia!' Others rashly denied the light behind them and said that it was not God that had led them out so far. The light behind them went out, leaving their feet in perfect darkness, and they stumbled and lost sight of the mark and of Jesus, and fell off the path down into the dark and wicked world below. Soon we heard the voice of God like many waters, which gave us the day and hour of Jesus' coming. The living saints, 144,000 in number, knew and understood the voice, while the wicked thought it was thunder and an earthquake. When God spoke the time, He poured upon us the Holy Ghost, and our faces began to light up and shine with the glory of God, as Moses' did when he came down from Mount Sinai.

"The 144,000 were all sealed and perfectly united. On their foreheads was written, God, New Jerusalem, and a glorious star containing Jesus' new name. At our happy, holy state the wicked were enraged, and would rush violently up to lay hands on us to thrust us into prison, when we would stretch forth the hand in the name of the Lord, and they would fall helpless to the ground. Then it was that the synagogue of Satan knew that God had loved us who could wash one another's feet and salute the brethren with a holy kiss, and they worshiped at our feet.

“Soon our eyes were drawn to the east, for a small black cloud had appeared, about half as large as a man’s hand, which we all knew was the sign of the Son of man. We all in solemn silence gazed on the cloud as it drew nearer and became lighter, glorious, and still more glorious, till it was a great white cloud. The bottom appeared like fire; a rainbow was over the cloud, while around it were ten thousand angels, singing a most lovely song; and upon it sat the Son of man. His hair was white and curly and lay on His shoulders; and upon His head were many crowns. His feet had the appearance of fire; in His right hand was a sharp sickle; in His left, a silver trumpet. His eyes were as a flame of fire, which searched His children through and through. Then all faces gathered paleness, and those that God had rejected gathered blackness. Then we all cried out, ‘Who shall be able to stand? Is my robe spotless?’ Then the angels ceased to sing, and there was some time of awful silence, when Jesus spoke: ‘Those who have clean hands and pure hearts shall be able to stand; My grace is sufficient for you.’ At this our faces lighted up, and joy filled every heart. And the angels struck a note higher and sang again, while the cloud drew still nearer the earth.

“Then Jesus’ silver trumpet sounded, as He descended on the cloud, wrapped in flames of fire. He gazed on the graves of the sleeping saints, then raised His eyes and hands to heaven, and cried, ‘Awake! awake! awake! you that sleep in the dust, and arise.’ Then there was a mighty earthquake. The graves opened, and the dead came up clothed with immortality. The 144,000 shouted, ‘Alleluia!’ as they recognized their friends who had been torn from them by death, and in the same moment we were changed and caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air.

“We all entered the cloud together, and were seven days ascending to the sea of glass, when Jesus brought the crowns, and with His own right hand placed them on our heads. He gave us harps of gold and palms of victory. Here on the sea of glass the 144,000 stood in a perfect square. Some of them had very bright crowns, others not so bright. Some crowns appeared heavy with stars, while others had but few. All were perfectly satisfied with their crowns. And they were all clothed with a glorious white mantle from their shoulders to their feet. Angels were all about us as we marched over the sea of glass to the gate of the city. Jesus raised His mighty, glorious arm, laid hold of the pearly gate, swung it back on its glittering hinges, and said to us, ‘You have washed your robes in My blood, stood stiffly for My truth, enter in.’ We all marched in and felt that we had a perfect right in the city.

“Here we saw the tree of life and the throne of God. Out of the throne came a pure river of water, and on either side of the river was the tree of life. On one side of the river was a trunk of a tree, and a trunk on the other side of the river, both of pure, transparent gold. At first I thought I saw two trees. I looked again, and saw that they were united at the top in one tree. So it was the tree of life on either side of the river of life. Its branches bowed to the place where we stood, and the fruit was glorious; it looked like gold mixed with silver.

“We all went under the tree and sat down to look at the glory of the place, when Brethren Fitch and Stockman, who had preached the gospel of the kingdom, and whom God had laid in the grave to save them, came up to us and asked us what we had passed through while they were sleeping. We tried to call up our greatest trials, but they looked so small compared with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that surrounded us that we could not speak them out, and we all cried out, ‘Alleluia, heaven is cheap enough!’ and we touched our glorious harps and made heaven’s arches ring.

“With Jesus at our head we all descended from the city down to this earth, on a great and mighty mountain, which could not bear Jesus up, and it parted asunder, and there was a mighty plain. Then we looked up and saw the great city, with twelve foundations, and twelve gates, three on each side, and an angel at each gate. We all cried out, ‘The city, the great city, it’s coming, it’s coming down from God out of heaven,’ and it came and settled on the place where we stood. Then we began to look at the glorious things outside of the city. There I saw most glorious houses, that had the appearance of silver,

supported by four pillars set with pearls most glorious to behold. These were to be inhabited by the saints. In each was a golden shelf. I saw many of the saints go into the houses, take off their glittering crowns and lay them on the shelf, then go out into the field by the houses to do something with the earth; not as we have to do with the earth here; no, no. A glorious light shone all about their heads, and they were continually shouting and offering praises to God.

"I saw another field full of all kinds of flowers, and as I plucked them, I cried out, 'They will never fade.' Next I saw a field of tall grass, most glorious to behold; it was living green and had a reflection of silver and gold, as it waved proudly to the glory of King Jesus. Then we entered a field full of all kinds of beasts--the lion, the lamb, the leopard, and the wolf, all together in perfect union. We passed through the midst of them, and they followed on peaceably after. Then we entered a wood, not like the dark woods we have here; no, no; but light, and all over glorious; the branches of the trees moved to and fro, and we all cried out, 'We will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods.' We passed through the woods, for we were on our way to Mount Zion.

"As we were traveling along, we met a company who also were gazing at the glories of the place. I noticed red as a border on their garments; their crowns were brilliant; their robes were pure white. As we greeted them, I asked Jesus who they were. He said they were martyrs that had been slain for Him. With them was an innumerable company of little ones; they also had a hem of red on their garments. Mount Zion was just before us, and on the mount was a glorious temple, and about it were seven other mountains, on which grew roses and lilies. And I saw the little ones climb, or, if they chose, use their little wings and fly, to the top of the mountains, and pluck the never-fading flowers. There were all kinds of trees around the temple to beautify the place; the box, the pine, the fir, the oil, the myrtle, the pomegranate, and the fig tree bowed down with the weight of its timely figs--these made the place all over glorious. And as we were about to enter the holy temple, Jesus raised His lovely voice and said, 'Only the 144,000 enter this place,' and we shouted, 'Alleluia.'

"This temple was supported by seven pillars, all of transparent gold, set with pearls most glorious. The wonderful things I there saw I can not describe. Oh, that I could talk in the language of Canaan, then could I tell a little of the glory of the better world. I saw there tables of stone in which the names of the 144,000 were engraved in letters of gold. After we beheld the glory of the temple, we went out, and Jesus left us and went to the city. Soon we heard His lovely voice again, saying, 'Come, My people, you have come out of great tribulation, and done My will; suffered for Me; come in to supper, for I will gird Myself, and serve you.' We shouted, 'Alleluia! glory!' and entered into the city. And I saw a table of pure silver; it was many miles in length, yet our eyes could extend over it. I saw the fruit of the tree of life, the manna, almonds, figs, pomegranates, grapes, and many other kinds of fruit. I asked Jesus to let me eat of the fruit. He said, 'Not now. Those who eat of the fruit of this land go back to earth no more. But in a little while, if faithful, you shall both eat of the fruit of the tree of life and drink of the water of the fountain.' And He said, 'You must go back to the earth again and relate to others what I have revealed to you.' Then an angel bore me gently down to this dark world. Sometimes I think I can stay here no longer; all things of earth look so dreary. I feel very lonely here, for I have seen a better land. Oh, that I had wings like a dove, then would I fly away and be at rest!" Early Writings, pages 14-20.

Miss Harmon was told to tell to others what should be revealed to her. She also felt that it was impossible for her to accept the call. In Early Writings she relates:

"After I came out of this vision, I was exceedingly troubled. My health was very poor, and I was but seventeen years old. I knew that many had fallen through exaltation, and I knew that if I in any way became exalted, God would leave me, and I should surely be lost. I went to the Lord in prayer and begged Him to lay the burden on someone else. It seemed to me that I could not bear it. I lay upon my face a long time, and all the light I could get was, 'Make known to others what I have revealed to you.'

Said the angel, 'If you deliver the messages faithfully, and endure unto the end, you shall eat of the fruit of the tree of life and drink of the water of the river of life.' Pages 20, 21.

In that first vision she had been shown glimpses of that tree of life and the river of life. And that young girl rose from prayer to take up the burden. Faithful she was. For seventy years her voice was heard bearing messages of counsel in the Advent Movement; and the writings from her pen have been a blessed gift to the remnant church all along the way, and a blessing to millions of readers in many languages.

The published books are a monument to the gift against which critics have dealt their blows in vain. The prophecy foretold that the attacks would come. The enemy was to be wroth with the remnant church, the prophecy on Patmos forewarned, because of two things especially--they were to keep the commandments of God, and were to have the Spirit of prophecy. If the attacks failed to come, we should know there was a mistake somewhere.

Personally, I have a fair memory of the character of most of the written attacks during sixty years. In earlier times the objectors' leaflets were flying about continually. But not a critic has there been who could produce anything like these writings that he criticizes. There is something here that baffles the critic and holds him smiting in vain against the monumental rock of truth.

04. Her Place in the SDA Church

Opponents have been quick to say, "Oh, you Seventh-day Adventists have another Bible--the writings of Mrs. White."

But One Foundation of Doctrine

No, we reply, Seventh-day Adventists have but one Bible. That is the one foundation of faith and doctrine. The church is built upon Christ, and all its doctrine upon the living Word. All spiritual gifts are gifts to the church that is built upon the Word. These gifts are to minister the word of God to us, and to lead us into the Scriptures, which are our one rule of faith.

That has always been the teaching in this Advent Movement. In the first little booklet issued by James White, our early leader (who became the husband of Ellen G. Harmon), he wrote in 1847: "The Bible is a perfect, and complete revelation. It is our only rule of faith and practice." *A Word to the Little Flock*, 13.

Repeated in Later Writings

This was the principle laid down from the beginning in the writings of Mrs. White. Early in her experience she wrote:

"I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word we are to be judged. God has, in that Word, promised to give visions in the 'last days'; not for a new rule of faith, but for the comfort of His people, and to correct those who err from Bible truth." *Early Writings*, 78.

"The word of God is sufficient to enlighten the most beclouded mind, and may be understood by those who have any desire to understand it. But notwithstanding all this, some who profess to make the word of God their study, are found living in direct opposition to its plainest teachings. Then, to leave men and women without excuse, God gives plain and pointed testimonies, bringing them back to the word that they have neglected to follow." "The word of God abounds in general principles for the formation of correct habits of living, and the testimonies, general and personal, have been calculated to call their attention more especially to these principles." "The Lord designs to warn you, to reprove, to counsel, through the testimonies given, and to impress your minds with the importance of the truth of His word.

The written testimonies are not to give new light, but to impress vividly upon the heart the truths of inspiration already revealed. Man's duty to God and to his fellow man has been distinctly specified in God's word; yet but few of you are obedient to the light given. Additional truth is not brought out; but God has through the Testimonies simplified the great truths already given and in His own chosen way brought them before the people to awaken and impress the mind with them, that all may be left without excuse." – Testimonies 5, 663-665.

In the lands that she was called to visit in a lifelong ministry, Mrs. White bore the same testimony. Speaking in Christiania (now Oslo), Norway, in 1885, she said:

"The Bible, and the Bible alone, is to be our creed, the sole bond of union; all who bow to this holy word will be in harmony. Let us meet all opposition as did our Master, saying, 'It is written.' Let us lift up the banner on which is inscribed, The Bible our rule of faith and discipline." Review and Herald, December 15, 1885.

Exalting the Book

Well I remember the last words this faithful servant ever spoke in the general assembly of the church. At a world General Conference in Washington, D.C., she came to the platform on the last day of the session to speak a farewell word to the delegates who had come in from the four quarters of the earth. She felt impressed that she would never attend another General Conference, and she never did. What would be the last message by personal presence in such an assembly by one who had been so many years the agent through whom the gift of prophecy had been manifested? Mrs. White spoke a few words of good cheer and farewell, and then turned to the pulpit, where lay a Bible. She opened the Book, and held it out with hands that trembled with age. And she said: "Brethren and sisters, I commend unto you this Book."

Without another word, she closed the Book, and walked from the platform. It was her last spoken word in the world assembly of the church she served. Well was it symbolic of her lifelong ministry, ever exalting high, supreme above all, the Holy Scriptures as the foundation of the faith of the people of the Advent Movement.

No; critics of this movement can never justly say that Seventh day Adventists have "another Bible." The one Book is all that is needed to maintain the doctrines they preach as fundamental in the gospel of salvation.

A Wonderful Ministry

But all through the history of the movement the gift of prophecy has ministered these things of sound doctrine to us, and has been an inspiration to higher living and a counselor in the doing of the work. Warnings have come to us when we have taken the wrong turn, and the right way has been pointed out. The Lord, the living God, has been leading a movement, as He led the Exodus movement long ago. We who have marched with the Advent Movement through the years as it has risen from a small restricted field of work into a truly world movement, have all along seen this gift of prophecy doing things that we knew Mrs. White herself could never have devised by any natural gift or skill. There is here the touch of the supernatural.

As Dependent As Others on Divine Grace

Mrs. White was like other believers. She felt the need of seeking God for her own personal needs as every believer feels it in his sense of weakness. At the General Conference of 1871 she spoke out:

"I never realized more than I do today the exalted character of the work. I see the need in myself. I must have a new fitting up, a holy unction, or I cannot go any further to instruct others. I must know that I am

walking with God. I must know that the grace of God is in my own heart, that my own life is in accordance with His will." Testimonies 2, 618.

The possession of the prophetic gift does not make the human agent a strange and different kind of person. My childhood memory very clearly pictures Mrs. White as a kindly, motherly neighbor for whom I used to do errands. She was a good mother in Israel, and our old headquarters in Michigan had numbers of such good mothers in the church and community. Mrs. White loved the home duties, and might be heard singing to herself as she worked about the house. Naturally, the constant demands upon her time in the work of the cause left her less time for the common duties than other home keepers generally have.

There was nothing of the pretentious about her bearing, no attitude of officiousness. There was no assumption of personal authority or suggestion of personal wisdom about everything. But when the Spirit of the Lord impressed her to give counsel there was an inflexible courage to speak the message needed, in the fear of God and in the spirit of Christ. Leading brethren might come for counsel regarding this problem or that. She might say that no light had been given her concerning it; the brethren would have to seek God and do their best. Again it might be she had just the light needed. She had been shown the very situation presented, and had counsel from the Lord as to what should be done. Often this counsel would be found written out in those journals in which she would write, morning by morning and day by day, as the Spirit recalled to her mind things shown, perhaps in the night season.

A Great Literary Output

Considering the fact that as a girl Mrs. White had been prevented from getting more than a common-school education, it is all the more unexplainable from the natural standpoint that she should have written what she did. With no preparation for literary work she produced books that the best minds have admired, as we shall see.

It was done in weakness. We are told in *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* that for a considerable time after her call to service she was unable to write. Of a time well on in the year 1845, she says:

"Up to this time I could not write; my trembling hand was unable to hold a pen steadily. While in vision, I was commanded by an angel to write the vision. I obeyed, and wrote readily. My nerves were strengthened, and from that day to this [written in 1880] my hand has been steady." Page 90.

The writing was often done amid the rush of daily interviews and ministry, at home and abroad; and often through the years it was done amid physical weakness. In 1891 Mrs. White was asked by the General Conference Committee to visit Australia, where a vigorous work was growing up in a new field. A year and a half later she wrote to the headquarters office in America:

"With the writings that shall go in this mail, I have since leaving America written twenty hundred pages of letter paper. I could not have done all this writing if the Lord had not strengthened and blessed me in large measure. Never once has that right hand failed me. My arm and shoulder have been full of suffering, hard to bear, but the hand has been able to hold the pen and trace words that have come to me from the Spirit of the Lord." *Ibid.*, page 340.

While these writings are not placed on the same level as Holy Scripture, as we have shown, one who reads the volumes she produced will find that they bear the impress of the same Spirit who spoke in the ancient prophets. There is something unmistakably characteristic of these writings that is not found in other works that we publish. The divine credentials of these writings are discovered in the reading of them.

In view of the nature of these writings, and having regard to the lack of any special training for literary work, there is but one explanation of it all—with the call to that young woman in 1844 to take up this burden, there came strength and gifts to do the work required.

05. Her Writings Carry Their Own Credentials

The books that have come to the Seventh-day Adventist Church through Mrs. E. G. White carry their own credentials. They touch human needs in a spiritual way that is unique in devotional literature. The only explanation is that given by the writer of the books, who said: "I have written many books, and they have been given a wide circulation. Of myself I could not have brought out the truth in these books, but the Lord has given me the help of His Holy Spirit." Review and Herald, July 26, 1906.

The Impressions of Many Readers

Many a reader, knowing nothing of the author's experience, has felt that these books showed some special spiritual gift on the writer's part. I give a few examples to illustrate, gathered from here and there, impressions of Catholic readers as well as Protestant.

At a conference in the city of Washington one of our laymen said: "I loaned the book Steps to Christ to a young woman in business. She returned it, saying she had never read such a book before. 'It seemed to me it was inspired,' she said."

In far Lithuania, one of the Baltic states of Europe, a colporteur called at a Catholic home: "The wife ran in," he said, "and brought out a book. 'This is our Bible,' she said, holding it up triumphantly. I took it, and saw at once it was our book Steps to Christ."

One denunciation of that little book is equally a testimony to the exceptional power of its simple message. In one country of Eastern Europe, our workers told of a great poster put up by an archbishop. It read: "Adventist Literature Forbidden! Of the books sold by the Adventists, the book, Steps to Christ, is the worst of all."

On the other hand, in New England, a Catholic man lent a French Steps to Christ to a friend, who wrote to the office of our Book and Bible House: "I have a book, Vers Christ, given me by a Roman Catholic friend, who said it was the best thing he ever read written by human hand."

At a conference in northern California an old schoolmate of long ago, Mr. Axtell, told me: "While living in Arizona, I loaned the book Christian Education, to a public school man. He returned it, saying: 'That book reads as if it were inspired.'"

A nurse in New England was invited by a wealthy and cultured lady, whom she had met in one of our medical institutions, to spend a holiday at the lady's summer home at the seaside. Our nurse took along for reading the book Education. I was told the story:

"The lady of the house saw the book, and read it. 'The author of this book must have been a woman of exceptional education,' the lady said. 'No,' replied the nurse, 'not at all. It was the very reverse. She was called into religious work as a young girl, with only common-school instruction.' 'Then she must have written by inspiration,' was the comment of this highly educated lady, who was able to appreciate the exceptional character of the book."

Only recently a clergyman, a Yale University man, with London University postgraduate study, happened into a ministerial class in one of our colleges. He said he was of the liberal school of thought. He picked up and examined a copy of Testimonies to Ministers, which the class was using. He later said to our teacher:

"I have looked through this book and I find it is the very best material you could place in the hands of young men studying for the ministry. These young people should count themselves fortunate in having such instruction. I have read some of Mrs. White's works. With the limited education that she had, no one could write such books as she has written unless inspired of God."

Not Like Ordinary Writings

How can one explain it? The only explanation is that the Lord, who called Mrs. White to the service, in a special way qualified His servant to deliver the messages of instruction. The critics may depreciate the human agent, but the more that is done, the more highly they exalt the fruitage of the gift. "By their fruits you shall know them." The fruit of the gift in the large number of her printed books is one of the evidences of the genuineness of the gift that leaves the opponent baffled; for no one can explain how a person with little educational training could, without special aid, write on these educational principles in such a way.

Some years ago, in Australia, a worker connected with our publishing house there told me how a leading minister of the country met him.

"Look here, Mr. Anderson," the minister said, "I know that Mrs. White never wrote these books you are selling under her name."

"But who do you think did write them?" our worker asked.

"Some of you men in the publishing house wrote them," was the answer.

"Why, bless you," our representative said, "We haven't a man in the denomination who could write a book like one of these."

That is true. We have had men who have written good books, useful books, from the days of the pioneers on. But no man among us ever wrote so much as a chapter approaching these writings. There is a different quality, a different touch here.

In England, W. E. Read told me: "We have heard again and again of ministers in the popular churches who have read from Mrs. White's writings in the pulpit. One minister said he could always tell her writings in our papers, even without seeing the signature. There was a 'different touch,' he said."

In one of the fields of the British West Indies, some time ago, a local worker told me an incident: "The dean of the cathedral," he said, "warned that Mrs. White was a 'false prophet.' But later he preached at a special service in the cathedral, and read nearly all of one chapter from the book The Acts of the Apostles."

Two Bookstore Proprietors

In one of the large cities of America a man was looking over books in a secondhand bookstore: "He asked for the religious books, and was directed to a miscellaneous assortment in the back of the store. He remarked to the proprietor that he saw none in which he was interested. Being asked what author he preferred, he said, 'Mrs. E. G. White.' 'Oh,' said the proprietor, 'that's different. Her writings are not classed with those back there at all. We have them here in the front, with the Bibles. They are in a class by themselves.'" Pacific Union Recorder, July 25, 1934.

This reminds me of a conversation with A. W. Anderson, of Australia. He told me he was once talking with the leading bookseller of that country:

"What a remarkable lady that Mrs. White was! Her books are absolutely wonderful!" said the merchant.

"What do you know about them?" Mr. Anderson asked.

“Occasionally we get them in our secondhand department,” was the reply, “and I have looked them over. I think they are wonderful books.”

Mr. Anderson then explained that the author began her work with no literary training and with no education to form the basis for literary work.

“There is only one explanation for that sort of thing,” the merchant replied, “and that is inspiration.”

About The Great Controversy

There is the book *The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*, which has had a remarkable appeal to the unlearned and the learned. Years ago, in Finland, I met a peasant farmer who had come from near the Arctic Circle to attend a conference for the first time. It was *The Great Controversy* that had led to his conversion. “I felt that it was inspired,” he told me, “as I read its pages.”

To a Catholic businessman of Argentina, South America, a man of education and culture, a colporteur had sold a copy of this book. Later, meeting the colporteur, the purchaser said:

“You have brought me great happiness. I have read nearly the whole of the book *The Great Controversy*. I believe it is the truth. I do not know the author, but she must have been divinely inspired. I would not sell that book for fifty dollars, no, not for one hundred dollars, if I could not get another.”

A leading lawyer in one country, referring to *The Great Controversy*, said: “That book was not written by education, but by inspiration.”

A young lady colporteur, of Virginia, told me a story of this book that illustrates the manner in which the author wrote it. The young woman said, in effect:

“I sold a copy of *The Great Controversy* to the wealthiest person in a certain town, the most influential woman there. She wanted it for a sister who was a Catholic. But first the woman read it herself. When I met her later, she said: ‘That is a most wonderful book. I never read anything like it. It seemed to me as I read I could see the very picture of the scenes written about.’ And I said to her: ‘That is just how this writing is different. The author is describing scenes that she has seen pass before her under the influence of the Spirit of God.’”

Our colporteur sister gave a remarkably true answer on the spur of the moment. She was evidently familiar with Mrs. White’s statement in the introduction to this book: “Through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, the scenes of the long-continued conflict between good and evil have been opened to the writer of these pages.”

The author was writing as an eyewitness. First, in 1848, the scenes of the great controversy had been caused to pass, in part at least, before the eyes of the young woman. Then, she tells us, they were repeated ten years later, while attending a meeting in Ohio. She wrote of this:

“In the vision at Lovett’s Grove [Ohio, in 1858], most of the matter which I had seen ten years before concerning the great controversy of the ages between Christ and Satan, was repeated, and I was instructed to write it out.” *Life Sketches*, p. 162.

It was not by any ordinary method of authorship that these writings came forth through the years. Long did the pressure to write sometimes crowd upon this servant of God, awaiting the time, in a busy, active life, when that pen could trace on paper, in the rolling-letter style of her handwriting, the things that the Spirit of God had instructed her to relate.

These Truths Our Defense

We do not have to defend this gift, it is our defense. An old West Indian man, aged seventy-eight, had the right idea of these books. He was always seen carrying the book *Christ Our Savior* wherever he went.

"I love this book," he said. "When people ask me the reason for carrying it about with me, I reply: 'Oh, this book is my bodyguard.' From the time I started to read it, I have been a changed man. I do not know how the change came about. One thing I know, I changed since I started to read it."

Here is an item from the non-Christian land of Japan. The book *Patriarchs and Prophets* was officially commended to the public. Manager H. P. Evens, of our Japanese Publishing House, wrote: "Of all our books in Japan, this is the only one to be recommended to the public by the Imperial Department of Education. This is indicated on the title page, at the top, in large black characters."

Colporteur Leader Kraft, who accompanied the Japanese colporteur to the department, told me: "The official himself volunteered to give the recommendation. The department has put copies in schools and libraries, and many thousands of copies have been sold in Japan."

There is a voice in these writings that speaks with special force to even the non-Christian mind.

When *The Desire of Ages* was brought out in Great Britain, a society lady in Edinburgh read a copy. She was agitated. She said to our people: "You are a small people. You ought not to have the circulation of a book like this. It ought to be in the hands of the big London publishers. It seems inspired."

She did not understand that our method of sale through colporteurs gave us a means of reaching more homes with a religious book than the big publishers would be likely to reach. (By the way, this method of book distribution was developed under instruction that came to us through inspiration.)

A Graphically Written Life of Christ

Early in the American sale of the life of the Savior, *The Desire of Ages*, a lady in Massachusetts purchased a copy. For ten years it lay unread on the shelf. Then, in a time of spiritual discouragement she picked it up. She wrote to the author:

"As soon as I began to read it, I felt as never before how real it was. Where before it had seemed like ancient history, it now seemed as if it were today that it all happened. Peace came to my troubled soul, and my eyes were opened to God's mercies as never before. I see in Him a living personal Savior who is with me all the time. I have consecrated my life to His service."

As the scenes of that life on earth were made real to the author by the Spirit, the story was made very real for the reader. It is an illustration of the special helpfulness of this gift in the opening of Bible themes.

The Spirit in Which the Work Was Done

It is a marvel how Mrs. White was able to bring out this great book, *The Desire of Ages*, during those busy years in Australia. Everything in the up building of a new work in a great field drew upon her sympathies and her time. And in those years, at least from 1892 to 1895, there came to the General Conference headquarters in America the finest instruction for ministers and workers that we ever had given to us in a short series of years. Older workers will recall the envelope-size booklets in which the late beloved O. A. Olsen, then president of the General Conference, passed these counsels on to us. It was in itself a vast volume of instruction, much of which was probably included in larger books at a later time. And all the time workers at the headquarters in America knew that Mrs. White was struggling to find time to work on *The Desire of Ages*. Of her feeling toward this task she wrote to O. A. Olsen in 1892:

"I walk with trembling before God. I know not how to speak or trace with pen the large subjects of the atoning sacrifice. I know not how to present subjects in the living power in which they stand before me. I

tremble for fear lest I shall belittle the great plan of salvation by cheap words. I bow my soul in awe and reverence before God and say, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' Letter 40, 1892.

It was in that spirit that Mrs. White made more real to us the gospel narrative. Let us quote two portions--a view of the world when the Savior came in the flesh, and a view of the triumphant return to heaven after the atoning sacrifice had been made. Those who have read the book the most, will read these scenes again with greatest pleasure.

"In the Fullness of Time"

When the world's need was greatest, the revelation of the Gift was made:

"The deception of sin had reached its height. All the agencies for depraving the souls of men had been put in operation. The Son of God, looking upon the world, beheld suffering and misery. With pity He saw how men had become victims of satanic cruelty. He looked with compassion upon those who were being corrupted, murdered, and lost. They had chosen a ruler who chained them to his car as captives. Bewildered and deceived, they were moving on in gloomy procession toward eternal ruin, to death in which is no hope of life, toward night to which comes no morning."

"Sin had become a science, and vice was consecrated as a part of religion. Rebellion had struck its roots deep into the heart, and the hostility of man was most violent against heaven. It was demonstrated before the universe that, apart from God, humanity could not be uplifted. A new element of life and power must be imparted by Him who made the world."

"And when the fullness of the time had come, the Deity was glorified by pouring upon the world a flood of healing grace that was never to be obstructed or withdrawn till the plan of salvation should be fulfilled." - The Desire of Ages, pages 36, 37.

Other books there are, well written, that keep the way of the historical narrative, with much useful information. But in this book we are out with Jesus among the people. We listen to His gracious words, and we find the balm of Gilead for the healing of our souls.

The Return of Jesus After the Resurrection

Then, as Jesus returned to His Father's presence, we see new glories as this pen opens the Scriptures to us:

"All heaven was waiting to welcome the Savior to the celestial courts. As He ascended, He led the way, and the multitude of captives set free at His resurrection followed. The heavenly host, with shouts and acclamations of praise and celestial song, attended the joyous train.

"As they draw near to the city of God, the challenge is given by the escorting angels

'Lift up your heads, O you gates; And be you lift up, you everlasting doors; And the King of glory shall come in!'

"Joyfully the waiting sentinels respond 'Who is this King of glory?'

"This they say, not because they know not who He is, but because they would hear the answer of exalted praise 'The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle! Lift up your heads, O you gates; Even lift them up, you everlasting doors; And the King of glory shall come in.'

"Again is heard the challenge, 'Who is this King of glory?' for the angels never weary of hearing His name exalted. The escorting angels make reply 'The Lord of hosts; He is the King of glory.' [Psalm 24:7-10.]

"Then the portals of the city of God are opened wide, and the angelic throng sweep through the gates amid a burst of rapturous music.

“There is the throne, and around it the rainbow of promise. There are cherubim and seraphim. The commanders of the angel hosts, the sons of God, the representatives of the unfallen worlds, are assembled. The heavenly council before which Lucifer had accused God and His Son, the representatives of those sinless realms over which Satan had thought to establish his dominion—all are there to welcome the Redeemer. They are eager to celebrate His triumph and to glorify their King.

“But He waves them back. Not yet; He cannot now receive the coronet of glory and the royal robe. He enters into the presence of His Father. He points to His wounded head, the pierced side, the marred feet; He lifts His hands, bearing the print of nails. He points to the tokens of His triumph; He presents to God the wave sheaf, those raised with Him as representatives of that great multitude who shall come forth from the grave at His second coming. He approaches the Father, with whom there is joy over one sinner that repents; who rejoices over one with singing.

“Before the foundations of the earth were laid, the Father and the Son had united in a covenant to redeem man if he should be overcome by Satan. They had clasped Their hands in a solemn pledge that Christ should become the surety for the human race. This pledge Christ has fulfilled. When upon the cross He cried out, ‘It is finished,’ He addressed the Father. The compact had been fully carried out. Now He declares: ‘Father, it is finished. I have done Thy will, O My God. I have completed the work of redemption. If Thy justice is satisfied, “I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am”’ (John 19:30; 17:24).

“The voice of God is heard proclaiming that justice is satisfied. Satan is vanquished. Christ’s toiling, struggling ones on earth are ‘accepted in the Beloved’ (Ephesians 1:6). Before the heavenly angels and the representatives of unfallen worlds, they are declared justified. Where He is, there His church shall be. ‘Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other’ (Psalm 85: 10). The Father’s arms encircle His Son, and the word is given, ‘Let all the angels of God worship him’ (Hebrews 1:6).

“With joy unutterable, rulers and principalities and powers acknowledge the supremacy of the Prince of life. The angel host prostrate themselves before Him, while the glad shout fills all the courts of heaven, ‘Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing’ (Revelation 5:12).

“Songs of triumph mingle with the music from angel harps, till heaven seems to overflow with joy and praise. Love has conquered. The lost is found. Heaven rings with voices in lofty strains proclaiming, ‘Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever’ (Revelation 5:13).” *The Desire of Ages*, pages 833-835.

The writings by this gift are different. All gifts are needed. Books by many hands must have their mission. No one gift suffices. But the ministry of the gift of prophecy through the writings of a humble agent who had no preparation in the natural way for such service, is ever a token of the leadership of the living God in the church.

Commendation From a Literary Point of View

This review must end with but one more citation. It is from a teacher of literature who speaks from a literary viewpoint only. It is worth while hearing one word on that side. One of our members in Massachusetts reported having taken some university extension work there. Abbreviated, our student’s story is this: “One day our teacher, who had just returned from an extended study of literature in Europe, asked each member of the class to come next day with three quotations from a favorite author. The name was not to be given, and the class was to be asked to name the author by the selection read.

"I was the first one called on, and although there were forty eight in the class, no one else was called upon. The entire time was taken up in discussing the three quotations I presented-passages from The Desire of Ages. No one could name the author. Then to my happy surprise, the teacher said:

"Well, class, that is from the pen of Mrs. E. G. White.' She spoke at length, saying she knew nothing of the author's religion, but she felt able to declare herself as to literature; and she said it was a pity Mrs. White's writings were not better known in the literary world. She said she was going to make a strong statement, but she meant every word. Of all the writings she knew, outside of the Bible, there were none so full of beauty, so pure, and yet so simple, as the writings of Mrs. E. G. White."

It is not as literature that we treasure these writings. Yet the spiritual truths, that are the vital thing, are expressed in language fitting to the high themes continually presented. The writings of Ellen G. White carry their own credentials.

06. Out Of the Ordinary

These writings of Mrs. White are literature. But they were not produced by ordinary literary method.

The writer was called from early youth to give to others what had been revealed to her; and along with the thoughts presented to her came a gift of expression befitting the themes. It was not that she was told word by word the language by which to express the thought. Views, scenes, were caused to pass before her, and a burden of conviction laid upon her as to Bible truths and counsels needed. In early years she explained it thus:

"Although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own." Review and Herald, October 8, 1867.

Thus she would tell and retell the message, seeking to make it clearer and more complete in detail when that might be helpful. A new edition of a book might be enlarged, portions omitted to give place to more complete presentation in other portions, or changes in expression made to render the thought clearer. The small book of an early edition sometimes grew into a large book in later times as circumstances might call, or as new and fuller views were imparted by the Spirit.

From earliest years opponents were ready to charge "suppression" or change of view if a later edition varied from an earlier. But the work of passing on the volumes of counsel and Bible exposition went forward for seventy years, the agent in the exercise of the gift pursuing her way in the spirit of obedience to that first counsel of 1844: "Said the angel, 'If you deliver the messages faithfully, and endure unto the end, you shall eat of the fruit of the tree of life and drink of the water of the river of life."

Some Sources of Book Material

Much material that went into the published books was originally written in counsels to individuals, or to committees or boards. A message might be given for some worker or leader. Page after page would Mrs. White's pen trace, of counsel and exhortation, of encouragement and warning to that person. In one letter lessons might be drawn from the life of Abraham, or from the experiences of David, or Daniel, or Paul. Thus here was matter exactly fitted to make part of a chapter in this book or that, as the time came for the compilation of a permanent volume.

That pen was busy through the years, sending messages uncounted to workers and people, and producing the finest expositions of Bible themes, needing, of course, the amplifying and working over

and over, and the additions of matter from the same pen, to make the connected and complete discourse or narrative of a choice volume.

These letters, or testimonies, as they are called, were written at home and abroad, in the midst of general meetings, or in hours caught in travels by rail or steamship, in homes where the writer might be a visitor--all through the seventy years it was going on.

Who, ordinarily, could make up chapters for such books from copies of one's letters? Every person in official work has written letters, year after year. In making an unflattering comparison, I should speak only of my own letters, if I may be excused for doing so. In two terms of service I worked as Mission Board secretary for almost twenty-five years. Naturally, I was called to write, write, by stenographic dictation, to workers at home and in every part of the earth. I did my best. But all the literary talent in our denomination could not make a worth-while chapter for a book out of all the copies of my letters that are stacked up somewhere at headquarters. We don't write that kind of letters. But when this agent was moved by the Spirit to write letters, there was something not discoverable in any natural way of letter writing. That is how we now and then find some of the choicest paragraphs or pages in the printed volumes in some letter of older date that was manifestly hurriedly written and hastened on to someone in need of counsel.

A Message From the Waldensian Valleys

Sometimes the place from which a message comes adds significance to it. For instance, there is the closing section of volume 5 of the Testimonies. It is entitled, "God's Care for His Work." When that writing came out in 1889, it seemed to me the finest prose in our language on that theme. It is a wonderful piece of writing. And only recently I learned from what place some of these paragraphs first came to us. Going over the old file of the Review and Herald for 1887, looking for some other item, I saw that the basis of this section, "God's Care for His Work," was an article sent from the old Waldensian valleys of the Italian Alps. Mrs. White was down in Torre Pellice in 1886, amid scenes hallowed by memories of papal persecutions, when the Waldenses and others found refuge in the mountain fastnesses. From Torre Pellice it was that Mrs. White sent an article to the Review (January 11, 1887), reviving in our hearts a trust in God for such times of trial and persecution. In paragraphs that blaze like beacons from old Waldensian campfires in the Alpine mountains, we are exhorted:

"We are standing on the threshold of great and solemn events. Prophecy is fast fulfilling. The Lord is at the door. There is soon to open before us a period of overwhelming interest to all living. But God's servants are not to trust to themselves in this great emergency. In the visions given to Isaiah, to Ezekiel, and to John we see how closely heaven is connected with the events taking place upon the earth and how great is the care of God for those who are loyal to Him. The world is not without a ruler. The program of coming events is in the hands of the Lord. The Majesty of heaven has the destiny of nations, as well as the concerns of His church, in His own charge.

"Brethren, it is no time now for mourning and despair, no time to yield to doubt and unbelief. Christ is not now a Savior in Joseph's new tomb, closed with a great stone and sealed with the Roman seal; we have a risen Savior. He is the King, the Lord of hosts; He sits between the cherubim; and amid the strife and tumult of nations He guards His people still. He who rules in the heavens is our Savior. He measures every trial. He watches the furnace fire that must test every soul. When the strongholds of kings shall be overthrown, when the arrows of God's wrath shall strike through the hearts of His enemies, His people will be safe in His hands." - Testimonies, volume 5, pages 753, 754.

One would go far to find a finer piece of modern writing than these paragraphs of trust from out the Waldensian valleys. From lands far and near, from stopping places where the unsettled conditions and

upset of travel would ordinarily forbid thoughtful writing, this pen continued the flow of inspiring comment and counsel for seventy years.

A Gift of Language

No; let no one get the idea that because Mrs. White was called as a young girl, with but limited school training, she had not a remarkable use of language in which to express the messages given. She was all her life in a school of rare experience. The eldest among us cannot remember a time so early that this woman's voice did not speak the messages in eloquent and choice language. Professor M. E. Cady, one of our veteran educational leaders, once commented on this as follows:

"In later years while at a camp meeting near Boston, Dr. Emerson, president of the Emerson School of Oratory, heard Mrs. White speak. He remarked that her voice was remarkable for its resonant quality and its flexibility. He further said that from the beginning to the end of the sermon the speaker did not violate a single rule governing correct expression." Quoted in *The Review and Herald*, September 12, 1929.

Early workers who were in Australia with Mrs. White tell of an illustrative incident there. Mrs. White spoke one day at a camp meeting, reading her message from a pen-written manuscript. After the meeting three ladies--not Adventists--asked Mrs. White if they might take the manuscript home for examination. The request was granted. When the spokesman brought it back, she said: "We had been told by unfriendly critics that you could not write proper English. But here we have seen this writing in your own hand, and find it in good English. We know your critics are unfair."

Many years ago an opponent suggested to me that the newly published book, *The Desire of Ages*, was probably written by one of Mrs. White's helpers.

"No," I replied at once. "You must remember that Mrs. White comes in before us in committees and councils, and speaks offhand and at length in the same language--the same high thoughts, the same eloquent and graphic, moving sentences. You know that no helper she ever had could do that."

It is absolutely true. Anyone who really knew Mrs. White in service recognized these finest things in her books as indeed really identifying marks of her own personal touch.

This is not to suggest for a moment that possession of this gift ensured grammatical accuracy or expertness in punctuation or capitalization, or in all the technical niceties of the traditional literary method. The chosen agent was concerned with the vital thing of delivering the messages faithfully.

Of the help she had in a literary way from James White as they traveled among the churches in the early years, she wrote:

"We traveled extensively. Sometimes light would be given to me in the night season, sometimes in the daytime before large congregations. The instruction I received in vision was faithfully written out by me, as I had time and strength for the work. Afterward we examined the matter together, my husband correcting grammatical errors, and eliminating needless repetition. Then it was carefully copied for the persons addressed, or for the printer." *The Writing and Sending Out of the Testimonies to the Church*, page 4 (from a letter written in 1906).

The Work of Helpers

Anyone looking at the long list of books written by Mrs. White can see that no one person could ever have done all the gathering and arranging and copying and recopying of material necessary in preparing all those books for the press. It would be physically impossible--the more so for one like Mrs. White, with demands upon her time and service wherever she went. As Baruch was a valued scribe and copyist

for Jeremiah the prophet, so helpers were essential for the large task involved in Mrs. White's work. She herself wrote of the valued service of these associates. Of one who was helping on bookwork at the time, she once wrote:

"She takes my articles which are published in the papers, and pastes them in blank books. She also has a copy of all the letters I write. In preparing a chapter for a book, M remembers that I have written something on that special point, which may make the matter more forcible. She begins to search for this, and if when she finds it she sees that it will make the chapter more clear, she adds it. The books are not M's productions, but my own, gathered from all my writings. M. has a large field from which to draw, and her ability to arrange the matter is of great value to me. It saves my poring over a mass of matter, which I have no time to do."

How impossible for any author, in the ordinary way of literary work, to produce such devotional and expository volumes after this manner! It sets the seal of a special divinely imparted gift upon the work.

Opponents, as I have said, have sometimes charged that these helpers did the writing. Think of it! The bitterness of opposition has led men who attacked this gift to make charges that would cover the record of these Christian helpers with infamy. If the helpers could have spent years writing matter to be passed off as written by someone else, they would have been deceivers unworthy of a place in a Christian work. Many have known these helpers. I have known most of them personally. True souls, their help was considered invaluable. But as one helper has come and another gone, through the long years, the work of that pen has gone on unvaryingly. Not one helper who came had ever written things like these before coming. Not one who has passed on to other work has ever written things like these afterward. There is a gift here, a gift to the church, that builds up the church and the movement as only a divinely imparted gift could do.

07. Spiritual Up Building Of the Church

Unto the building up of the body of Christ" [the church] (Ephesians 4:12, R.V.).

That is the purpose of all the gifts-of apostles, teachers, evangelists, pastors, and all the rest. All these gifts have wrought in the Seventh-day Adventist Church ministering the Word of God. That Word it is that "builds up." In the apostle Paul's farewell to the elders of Ephesus, warning them of the apostasy that would sweep into the church after his death, he said: "Now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (Acts 20:32).

Always to the fore in ministering this word that builds up in the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been the gift of prophecy. Observers without have noted the spiritual influence of this gift.

For Spiritual Up Building

At a council in Oslo, Norway, G. A. Lindsay told of a Lutheran clergyman who wrote a thesis on the Second Advent idea in history. It was for his Doctor's degree in one of the universities of Sweden. He wrote very fully of the work and Second Advent teaching of Seventh-day Adventists. Mr. Lindsay said:

"He had somehow procured a copy of Early Writings, an early edition, and had been greatly impressed by the writings and work of Mrs. White in connection with this cause. He declared: 'The secret of the piety and spirituality and consecration of the Adventists will be found in these writings and messages of Mrs. White.'"

It is the truth, though believers in all lands would confess how poorly we have lived up to the high calling. More than any other one gift, this gift has continually drawn us to that "word of his grace" to

which the apostle Paul commended the early church. It has been like a living hand laying hold upon the church, drawing it with forceful entreaty to the fountain of living waters in Holy Scripture. It never lets go. Deeper yet, higher yet, has been the insistent appeal from the days of 1844.

From Early Years to Our Day

In the first vision to that young girl in 1844, there was a picture of the highway of holiness on which the people of the movement must walk to the Holy City: "I turned to look for the Advent people in the world, but could not find them, when a voice said to me, 'Look again, and look a little higher.' At this I raised my eyes, and saw a straight and narrow path, cast up high above the world. On this path the Advent people were traveling to the city." Early Writings, page 14.

The chief burden of this gift of prophecy, it would seem, has been to urge believers into this path, "high above the world." The voice that rang out clear and thrilling over many a campground in the years of Mrs. White's physical strength, "Clear the King's highway, and let the Savior in," sounds in all the writings. People of remotest lands recognize it. In languages of the African interior, in the islands of the South Seas, among peoples who have but comparatively few translated portions, it is recognized that here is a special call to piety and spirituality.

I was visiting a mission conference in ancient Taiyuanfu, chief city of Shansi, in North China. The whole atmosphere of the meeting was Chinese. The superintendent was an able Chinese evangelist. The only foreign touch was in the presence of several foreign missionary visitors. One day between sessions I saw a group of village women in specially animated conversation. I said to a missionary who knew the language, "Now, what do these village women talk about among themselves, so earnestly and eagerly?"

My friend, A. A. Esteb, listened a moment, then exclaimed: "I declare! Do you hear what that young village woman has just said to the others? 'What a wonderful treasure of spiritual food is given to us in the writings which have come to us through the gift of prophecy!'"

No Wonder Satan Attacks

A gift that stands so directly for the essential things of the Christian life merits the opposition of the enemy of souls. And it has met this from earliest days. In the sixties Uriah Smith, lifelong editor of the church paper, wrote of these writings:

"They tend to the purest morality. They discountenance every vice, and exhort to the practice of every virtue. They have aroused and re-aroused us to greater consecration to God, more zealous efforts for holiness of heart, and greater diligence in the cause and service of our Master. Yet with all this array of good fruit which they are able to present, with all this innocence of any charge of evil that can be brought against them, they everywhere encounter the bitterest opposition. Why is all this? Whence all this war against that of which no evil can be said?" The Review and Herald, June 12, 1866.

The answer is that the prophecy foretold the special wrath of the enemy against the remnant church that keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:17). That explains the otherwise inexplicable. The first Seventh-day Adventist minister ever to set foot in Ireland, the late R. F. Andrews, visited the North of Ireland counties in 1885. Not a note had ever been struck there by us. But he found that an American minister, of a group of no-law opponents of our work in the United States, had gone to and fro over there, warning the people against the writings and work of Ellen G. White. Strange how loyalty to the law of God, and possession of this gift of prophecy, brings forth the bitter attacks, as foretold.

In 1886 a minister, formerly prominent among us, left the movement. Others, he said, had turned and fought their former brethren, but this he would never do. But almost at the first dash he was called by

some church circles to fight the Adventists. He it was of whom J. H. Waggoner, one of our editorial pioneers, wrote in 1887:

“A certain man advertised to give a lecture in a village in California, in which he promised to ‘expose the visions of Mrs. E. G. White.’ At the close of his lecture, a gentleman, not connected with the Adventists, asked the lecturer, ‘What is the nature and the tendency of these visions? What is their moral tone, and what would be the effect of a person’s living in strict harmony with their teachings?’ The lecturer admitted that the morality taught therein is pure, and that any one would be saved who lived up to what they teach. Said one who was present, to the writer of this article, ‘I wondered what a man could think of himself, advertising to oppose and expose writings which are morally pure, and which would lead to salvation any one who would heed them.’” Quoted in *The Review and Herald*, May 3, 1887.

Those who called for such help to oppose the Adventists in California, quickly found that they were only helping the cause they desired to check. People of other churches did not appreciate the attack upon a Christian woman. They said, “We know Mrs. White. She is a good woman, and her life and influence among us have been such that attacks of this character are an offense to us.”

While no doubt printed misrepresentations of this gift and its agent have turned some from investigation of the truth, on the other hand, many in various lands tell how the bitter spirit of the attacks has turned their hearts to this way. One such, Mr. J. L. Branford, of Australia, years ago told of an experience:

“When I accepted the Sabbath truth, two books were placed in my hands almost immediately. One was *Early Writings*, the other was a book written by Mr. Canright. I read Canright’s book first. I had not gone very far before I was convinced that the spirit that actuated that man was from beneath. I could not contradict the statements he made against Mrs. White nor against the denomination, but I knew the man had not the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ. It was not until I read Mrs. White’s writings myself, and saw that they convinced me of sin, and pointed out my faults, that I realized that to follow their teachings would lead me to the kingdom of God. It was that that convinced me that the Spirit of prophecy was from God.” *Australian Record*.

This is typical of the experience of many. On that same occasion when the above statement was made, Pastor Robert Hare, one of the first Adventist ministers to be ordained for Australasia, said: “When I read the *Testimonies*, the Spirit of Christ talks to me. When I read the things men have written against Mrs. White, I see there a spirit of bitterness and hatred. But a tenderness flows into my soul when I read the *Testimonies*, and I know it comes from heaven.”

Early in Mrs. White’s experience an angel messenger explained to her in vision: “Your success is in your simplicity. As soon as you depart from this and fashion your testimony to meet the minds of any, your power is gone. Almost everything in this age is glossed and unreal. The world abounds in testimonies given to please and charm for the moment and to exalt self. Your testimony is of a different character. It is to come down to the minutiae of life, keeping the feeble faith from dying and pressing home upon believers the necessity of shining as lights in the world.” *Testimonies*, volume 5, page 667.

The uniqueness of this instruction is that it does come down to real life, to the minute details of home and church and human relationships. The nine volumes of the *Testimonies for the Church* are largely composed of personal messages sent to this one and that one in need of help, or to workers in service, and to boards and committees dealing with administrative problems. The counsels are therefore not so generally an exposition of abstract principles, but came as messages to actual men and women needing help in personal problems and experiences. Thus they speak in a very personal way to all; for people and families and groups are much alike.

In this same way Mrs. White had a way of dealing in person with problems, wherever she was called to go in those seventy years and more of service on three continents.

Mrs. White in Personal Action

For instance, just as the movement was taking shape in Europe, Mrs. White was called to spend two years or more there. Writing of a council at Basel, Switzerland, in 1885, one of the first held in Europe, one of our pioneers in the French work, D. T. Bourdeau, wrote:

“Never was the gift of prophecy more needed, and its service more timely, than on this occasion. Errors and difficulties that had baffled human wisdom and effort were pointed out, corrected, and removed, with that tenderness, plainness, faithfulness, and impartiality which have characterized this gift during the entire period of its manifestation among us.”

As he observed the manner in which this gift laid hold of the actual problems in that new field, he wrote of the methods: “It not only probes the wound, but it also pours in the oil, binds the wound, and hastens the process of restoration. It identifies itself with those for whom it labors, bearing their burdens in earnest, persevering prayer, forgetful of self and ease, and keeping the glory of God and the salvation of souls in view, aiming to secure these at any sacrifice. It brings with it the supernatural discernment that Peter evinced in the case of Ananias and Sapphira. It brings with it the miraculous, without which religion were a formal, heartless, lifeless, human affair.” Quoted in *The Review and Herald*, November 10, 1885.

Results That Could Be Seen and Measured

This sort of observation might have been repeated of hundreds of occasions. Multiply such service a thousand fold, and one approaches the record of seventy years of the ministry. In the face of practical, visible, living help rendered on an occasion like that, the murmurings and representations of all the critics that ever lived become as the foam of raging waves of the sea dashing against the rock. It is service rendered that counts. It is help given in demonstration of the Spirit and power of God that attests a divinely directed gift. When believers have seen and experienced such workings of a gift, day in and day out, year in and year out, sure of touch, unwavering, unflinching, they know the living God has placed a gift in the church for service.

Goodness Not a Full Qualification

We have had good mothers in Israel, multitudes of them, who lived the true life, and carried the true burden of helpfulness. God has made them a blessing. Some of them had natural gifts by education and training above any natural advantages that Mrs. White had had to whom this gift of prophecy was committed. But none of them—not one—could do, and not one of them ever did do, the kind of work that she was doing all the time for seventy years.

There was something more than goodness here. She was a good mother in our Israel, as were many others. But it had to be something in addition. It was the gift of prophecy, as of old, manifested through human weakness, and the high purpose in it all was to build up the church of the movement in piety and devotion and spiritual life and service.

Ever a Burden for the Salvation of Souls

And what a burden of soul for the salvation of believers was Mrs. White strengthened to carry! The record of her life seems to leave not a moment when this or that need of the church was not immediately pressing; or when some worker's need of encouragement or warning was not laid upon her heart. Let me illustrate by one example:

In 1932 I was at a large camp meeting in Sydney, Australia. I had spoken of how Mrs. White, while living in Australia, was given messages for Europe, for Africa, for America, for work and workers in all the ends of the earth. As an illustration having a local appeal, I read a three-line note written by Mrs. White from the Australian village of Cooranbong, where she was living in 1900, alongside the Avondale school. Across the sea to another continent she sent the message to a brother whom I called John Blank: "My instructor said, 'John Blank, you are departing from the faith once delivered to the people of God.'"

From out that little cottage, set on the edge of the Australian bush, the appeal went across the world to a beloved worker in danger. It shows how the lines of counsel and entreaty were always running out from the place of that gift, touching the work and workers in all the world. After the meeting an elderly lady in black came to me to speak of Mrs. White. "I know who Mr. Blank was," she said. "I worked for Mrs. White in 1900, as housekeeper. Night after night, in the early morning hours, I was awakened by Mrs. White's voice in prayer. I heard her praying for Mr. Blank, entreating God not to let him go, to hold him, and keep him, and save him."

It is one glimpse of the spirit in which this gift of prophecy was ever exercised. With all its stern warnings against sin and the wrong course, it spoke ever in the spirit of Christ. It is "the testimony of Jesus Christ," the voice of the Good Shepherd who came to seek and save the lost.

Men of the world have recognized a spirit beyond the ordinary in these instructions to the church. J. A. Rippey told of leaving a volume of Testimonies for the Church on a train seat. When he returned, a gentleman, who apologized for having picked it up, said: "I hold a chair on the faculty of a university in New York. I am continually reading books, but this is the finest literature I have ever read. Where can I get some of these books?"

08. Building Up An Organized Movement

THE apostolic gift is evidently the gift set for the leadership and administration of the work of the church. "First apostles," is the scriptural order. The gift of prophecy has ever taught the proper recognition of the responsibilities and duties of administrative leadership. Never, on the basis of the rare gift committed to her, did Mrs. White assume the place of administrative leader.

Respect for Administrative Responsibility

Not as a leader, but as a messenger she viewed her responsibility, bearing messages from God for the guidance of leaders and people. She felt herself, under God, subject to counsel and action of the administrative body, the General Conference, in cooperating with undertakings of the movement.

This attitude is illustrated by one experience. Mrs. White found herself in a land over the sea, to which she had gone by General Conference invitation. But she was sick, and apparently helpless to undertake active work in a new field. "I deeply regretted having crossed the broad waters," she related. "Why, at such an expense, was I in this country?" And in her physical misery and helplessness she wept. "But," she wrote, "I did not long indulge in the luxury of tears." She was there in obedience to the request of the General Conference, acting in the fear of God. She says:

"I said to myself, 'Ellen G. White, what do you mean? Have you not come to Australia because you felt that it was your duty to go where the Conference judged it best for you to go? Has not this been your practice?'"

"I said, Yes."

"Then why do you feel almost forsaken and discouraged? Is not this the enemy's work?"

"I said, 'I believe it is.'"

"I dried my tears as quickly as possible and said, 'It is enough. I will not look on the dark side any more. Live or die, I commit the keeping of my soul to Him who died for me.'

"I then believed that the Lord would do all things well, and during this eight months of helplessness I have not had any despondency or doubt. I now look at this matter as a part of the Lord's great plan, for the good of His people here in this country, and for those also in America, and for my good." Selected Messages, book 2, pages 233, 234.

It was on recognition of the responsibility of the apostolic or administrative gift in the church that the personal surrender and trust were based. And those years, 1892 to 1900, in Australia were wonderfully fruitful for good. There was worked out, under the divine guidance which came through the gift of prophecy, the union conference plan of organization, which obtains with blessed efficiency in our work in all the world. And in Australia and New Zealand a base was built up that carries the great and blessed burden of the island fields of the South Pacific.

How It Looked to Men of the World

Men who knew nothing of our view of the gift of prophecy saw a building-up influence in the work of Mrs. White that left its visible mark on this cause. Many years later, in 1932, I was riding with one of our business brethren in Victoria. He said to me:

"Some time ago I met one of Australia's leading businessmen, now largely retired from affairs. Knowing that I had become a Seventh-day Adventist, he said to me: 'Do you know, Mr. Sandeman, I hold it as one of the cherished memories of my life that it was my privilege, in representing the business community, to welcome Mrs. E. G. White to Australia when she arrived from America many years ago. She impressed me as a remarkable woman; and we recognize the fact that her stay in this country contributed much to the development of the work your people have built up. I shall always count it a privilege that I had a part in welcoming that gifted lady to this country.'"

We think of the quiet, retiring woman, not given to appearing before the general public—save, perhaps, at times speaking by invitation in a town hall on Christian temperance or the Christian life and Christian home. And yet we know how, by the gift given her, she encouraged the administrative leaders and guided helpfully in the up building of the work. Men of affairs, looking on, saw in it the work of a woman to whom they attributed unusual natural gifts.

In 1915 the leading religious magazine of America, then the New York Independent, had occasion to refer to the widespread work of Seventh-day Adventists and to the solid achievements of the denomination in the way of educational, publishing, and medical institutions in many lands. The editor said: "And in all this Ellen G. White has been the inspiration and guide. Here is a noble record, and she deserves great honor."

Messages of Power in Girlhood

The special gift to help build up the cause was not in Ellen G. White. This was seen from that first call in girlhood. It was not of herself, timid and shrinking, that there came a force that worked mightily in cooperating with the early leaders in building up a movement fulfilling the prophecy. One sees it in the first work the youthful instrument was called to perform. She says of those first steps:

"In my second vision, about a week after the first, the Lord gave me a view of the trials through which I must pass, and told me that I must go and relate to others what He had revealed to me. After I came out of this vision I was exceedingly troubled, for it pointed out my duty to go out among the people and present the truth. My health was so poor that I was in constant bodily suffering, and to all appearance had but a short time to live.

“For several days, and far into the night, I prayed that this burden might be removed from me, and laid upon some one more capable of bearing it. But the light of duty did not change, and the words of the angel sounded continually in my ears, ‘Make known to others what I have revealed to you.’ How could I, a child in years, go forth from place to place, unfolding to the people the holy truths of God? My father repeatedly assured me that if God had called me to labor in other places, He would not fail to open the way for me.” Life Sketches, pages 69, 70.

So a young girl was soon out among groups of scattered believers in the Second Advent, joining older laborers in encouraging the people to hold fast to the “blessed hope.” It was a time of trial to many who had expected Christ to come at the end of the 2300-year prophetic period, in 1844. Multitudes had given up all faith in the soon coming of the Savior. Winds of doctrine were blowing and eccentric and wild movements abounded.

Facing the Situation

At seventeen this young woman was facing mesmerists, rebuking fanaticism, warning against the setting of a new time.

At eighteen and nineteen she was laboring in Vermont and Massachusetts. She bore important testimonies regarding the work of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, and regarding the Sabbath truth, which had just come to her attention.

At twenty-two her messages were pressing the leaders to launch definitely a publishing work.

At twenty-five most important instruction came regarding organization and church order. At that time much sentiment among the believers did not favor organization, and there was no way to keep disorderly elements from pressing in. Mrs. White wrote: “I saw that this door at which the enemy comes in to perplex and trouble the flock can be shut. I inquired of the angel how it could be closed. He said, ‘The church must flee to God’s Word and become established upon gospel order, which has been overlooked and neglected.’” Early Writings, page 100.

No Committee Order Could Have Qualified the Worker

All this was not a work naturally belonging to a young woman. No committee would ask a girl to undertake the task. And no call of a committee could qualify a youth for such service. But God had called, and the effectiveness of the work was in the messages borne. Evil and disorderly elements were trying to put the leaven of error into the work. Our pioneers saw to the full the truth of the warning of the prophecy that “the dragon” was wroth with the remnant, and had come forth to make war with the movement that stood for God’s commandments. And no wonder the enemy warred against the gift of prophecy in the movement, for by that gift the evils threatening were so continually exposed. One of the pioneers, recounting the effective working of the messages by this gift in early times, wrote in 1866:

“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, laid bare the evil motives of the false-hearted. They have warded off dangers from the cause of truth upon every hand.” URIAH SMITH in The Review and Herald, June 12, 1866.

The pioneer workers, responsible to keep the movement on right lines and clear of evil, saw things done by that gift that they well knew no young woman could do unaided by divine direction. They thanked God for it.

Among Strangers

Again and again in those early days the youthful messenger was called upon to point out, among strangers she had never seen before, some whose lives were secretly evil, while pretensions to piety were being used to secure a place in the little flock. Sometimes those pointed out acknowledged the fault and sought God for pardon, while in other cases a person might rise up and flee the place.

It was not alone in the first years and in those Eastern States that these experiences came. In 1935, at a meeting in Oregon, I met an elderly believer who told me of an experience that had meant much to him, many years before in Minnesota:

“At first,” he said, “I was skeptical, though a member of the church. I doubted about Mrs. White’s work. But I was at a meeting in Minnesota where she was present. She spoke, exhorting and admonishing. In the course of the talk she pointed out one man, an elder of the church. In a kind, appealing manner, but earnestly and sternly, she said that in a quiet way he was teaching ideas contrary to the faith of the body. And, further, that he was doing wrong in his conduct--leading a double life unknown to his brethren. It fairly took my breath away. But the man stood up and said that all Mrs. White had said was true. All my skepticism and doubting vanished. I had seen with my own eyes and heard with my ears a thing that I knew could have been done only through the Spirit of God.”

Sureness and Precision in Counsel

In giving counsel in places where conditions and personalities were unknown to her by any acquaintance, Mrs. White often spoke with sureness and precision, as the Spirit had presented situations to her mind. One such occasion was the first council she attended in Europe. It was held at Basel, Switzerland, in 1885. One of the veteran workers there, who acted as her interpreter in French, wrote:

“How interesting and wonderful it was to hear Sister White correctly delineate the peculiarities of different fields she had seen only as the Lord had shown them to her, and show how they should be met; to hear her describe case after case of persons she had never seen with her natural vision, and either point out their errors or show important relations they sustained to the cause, and how they should connect with it to better serve its interests!

“As I had a fair chance to test the matter, having been on the ground, and knowing that no one had informed Sister White of these things, while serving as an interpreter, I could not help exclaiming, ‘It is enough. I want no further evidence of its genuineness.’ - D. T. Bourdeau in *The Review and Herald*, November 10, 1885.

It was no exhibition to prove anything to anybody. It was just the regular work of giving counsel for the up building of the cause of God by the spiritual gift imparted. When a people see this year after year for many years, and reap the fruitage of the wonderfully helpful counsel through a spiritual gift, no technicalities of criticism can cast so much as a shadow on a life record. It is as clear as a sunbeam.

The same influence is seen in the working of this gift in fostering all departments of the cause.

09. A Worldwide Program

A worldwide missionary program is one of the distinctive features of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. “Unto every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,” is the commission in the prophecy of Revelation 14.

Observers See It

Observers have noted this aim. In the year of the great Pan-American Missions Conference at Panama, the leading Methodist organ, the *New York Christian Advocate*, said of the foreign mission aim of

Seventh-day Adventists: "Small though the denomination is, it has its missionaries scattered through every region of the globe, working with a consummate skill that is systematically taught as a part of their regular training." Quoted in *The Review and Herald*, October 11, 1906.

Referring to statistics of new missionaries sent out, a Baptist organ spoke editorially:

"The three largest non-Catholic denominational bodies in the United States, with seventy-two times as many members as the Adventists of the United States and Canada, are doing less altogether in foreign mission work (in some respects at least) than the Adventists are doing." *Advance*, June 30, 1927.

It sounds like appeal by exaggeration. But let it suffice. This is simply to allow others to say that this Advent Movement is a serious effort to carry the last gospel message to every nation, as the prophecy foretold.

A Gift Inspiring to World Action

In all this development of our world missions, the gift of prophecy has led and inspired.

It is remarkable, and instructive, to note how the spirit of opposition to this gift leads men to miss the plainest of facts. Here is a word from one who turned from the movement and began to attack the writings and work of Mrs. E. G. White. The opponent's representation, printed in another language than English, may be translated thus: "Unlike Paul, who looked out into the heathen world and saw an open door, Frau White looked out into the world and saw a shut door."

But think of it! In the first vision of this gift, in 1844, the calling out of the 144,000 of the prophecy of the seventh chapter of Revelation was described. And in a vision but a few days or weeks later, we have absolutely the finest paragraph on worldwide missions that I have ever found. Mrs. White published it as follows:

A View of the World Work

"Would that every one of you could have a view that was presented to me years ago. In my very childhood the Lord saw fit to open before me the glories of heaven. I was in vision taken to heaven, and the angel said to me, 'Look!' I looked to the world as it was in dense darkness. The agony that came over me was indescribable as I saw this darkness.

"Again the word came, 'Look you.' And again I looked intensely over the world, and I began to see jets of light like stars dotted all through this darkness; and then I saw another and another added light, and so all through this moral darkness the star-like lights were increasing. And the angel said, 'These are they that believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and are obeying the words of Christ. These are the light of the world; and if it were not for these lights, the judgments of God would immediately fall upon the transgressors of God's law.'

"I saw then these little jets of light growing brighter, shining forth from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and lighting the whole world. Occasionally one of these lights would begin to grow dim, and others would go out, and every time this occurred there was sadness and weeping in heaven. And some of the lights would grow brighter and brighter, and their brightness was far-reaching, and many more lights were added to it. Then there was rejoicing in heaven. I saw that the rays of light came directly from Jesus, to form these precious jets of light in the world." *Gospel Workers*, 1892 edition, pages 378, 379.

That was the repetition for the Advent Movement of the call of the angel of Revelation 14 to go to every nation and tongue and people. The constant representation by the gift of prophecy looking toward a truly worldwide work was hard for the pioneers to understand at first. James White, the first leader in

the movement, used to tell how it troubled them, when they could not see how it could be with time so short and numbers so few. It was felt that a few would be gathered out in all continents, representing all nations, but to send missionaries into all the remote lands and do a settled work in all the ends of the earth, seemed beyond their resources and abilities.

About so was the idea, I think, down to 1893, though the view of results to be expected was ever enlarging. I speak of it freely, as that was about my idea, as nearly as I can recall, when I was called to return from Europe to America, to act as secretary of the Foreign Mission Board in 1891.

The Call That Woke Us Up

But in 1893 a message came by the gift of prophecy that stirred the church into action. Mrs. White was then in Australia. From across the sea came the call to a world work with no qualifications or interpretations:

“The same work must be accomplished in Australia, New Zealand, in Africa, India, China, and the islands of the sea, as has been accomplished in the home field. Under an appropriate symbol of an angel flying through the midst of heaven is represented the work of the people of God.” The Bible Echo (Melbourne), September 1, 1892.

The appeals accompanying the instruction were a clarion call to the Advent people to take up the task in earnest. It brought an awakening. After the light that came flooding in with the messages of the gift, we forgot all about what restricted ideas we had held. The believers saw that symbol of Revelation 14, the angel flying in the midst of heaven to every nation and tongue. The picture of the prophecy had been there all the time; but now it was seen that it meant the same work in all lands-publishing houses, schools, sanitariums, as well as evangelists, with the training of the young people of remote lands to carry the message to their own people. The believers caught the vision. The message rose and spread its wings yet wider, for stronger, farther, faster flight.

Observers witness this worldwide expansion of a small people, and remark upon the distinctive character of it. Some of these have scant patience with the doctrine of the gift of prophecy in the church. Some attack the movement on account of this gift, as the prophecy foretold (Revelation 12:17). But the fact remains that the gift of prophecy is one great factor in arousing the spirit of missions in the hearts of Seventh-day Adventist believers. By its fruits men may know it.

Ingathering of Souls in Catholic Lands

At a time when the coming in of a Roman Catholic was a wonder to be dwelt upon, Mrs. White urged work directly for Catholic peoples. At the council in Switzerland, in 1887, she said:

“We should not upon entering a place build up unnecessary barriers between us and other denominations, especially the Catholics, so that they shall think we are their enemies. There are many among the Catholics who live up to the light they have far better than many who claim to believe present truth. From that which God has shown me, a great number will be saved from among the Catholics. There has been but little done for them except to make them appear in the worst light.”- General Conference File, book for 1899.

We think of these words now, when for years Catholics, Roman and Greek, have been laying hold of the gospel of the Advent message by thousands every year.

10. Forewarning Of A Great Crisis

Something great and decisive is about to take place!" That was the awakening message that came before the outbreak of World War I.

Just as one illustration of ways in which it was sought by the gift of prophecy to forewarn of crises to be met, we may well speak of counsels that preceded the great war of 1914-1918.

Without a doubt we of the Adventist Church should have been moved by these counsels to give study to the question of handling our worldwide mission operations as they might be affected by international strife.

As it was, we did not understand the urgency of the counsels that came. They seemed like words for a time afar off. When the war did break, there was no time for conferences, no time for any special preparation for the handling of work in great mission fields that depended upon the European conference organizations. Everything had to be done on the spur of the moment. And it was a great advantage to the missions in some parts that the United States was neutral for a time, after those missions had been cut off from their base of supplies in Europe.

"Something Great and Decisive"

As Mrs. White met with the representatives of other lands in the 1909 General Conference, she felt that she had a serious message for those brethren regarding conflicts to come:

"Mrs. White solemnly charged the brethren who had come to the meeting as representatives of the cause of present truth from every part of Europe, from Asia, Africa, South America, Australasia, and the islands of the sea, to prepare their hearts for terrible scenes of strife and oppression beyond anything they had conceived of, soon to be witnessed among the nations of the earth." Life Sketches, page 421.

She said that these conditions were to arise "very soon." These things, she told the delegates, "will break forth with an intensity that you do not now anticipate." We were all exhorted to special prayer and acquaintance with God, in view of the times that were coming.

Again, in the Review and Herald (November 17, 1910), the church was urged to hasten on with its work with special earnestness, in view of the scenes of strife and commotion which soon would break out among the nations. Mrs. White wrote:

"Soon strife among the nations will break out with an intensity that we do not now anticipate. The present is a time of overwhelming interest to all living. Rulers and statesmen, men who occupy positions of trust and authority, thinking men and women of all classes, have their attention fixed upon the events taking place about us. They are watching the strained, restless relations that exist among the nations. They observe the intensity that is taking possession of every earthly element, and they realize that something great and decisive is about to take place, that the world is on the verge of a stupendous crisis.

"The Lord calls upon you, O church that has been blessed with the truth! To give a knowledge of this truth to those who know it not. From one end of the world to the other must the message of Christ's soon coming be proclaimed. The third angel's message-the last message of mercy to a perishing world is so precious, so glorious. Let the truth go forth as a lamp that burns."

Scenes of Destruction Pictured

Years before this, also, the gift of prophecy had evidently forewarned of just such times as came upon the nations with the great world conflict. Of a view of coming conflict which was caused to pass before her, Mrs. White wrote:

“The tempest is coming, and we must get ready for its fury, by having repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord will arise to shake terribly the earth. We shall see troubles on all sides. Thousands of ships will be hurled into the depths of the sea. Navies will go, down, and human lives will be sacrificed by millions.” Quoted in Signs of the Times, April 21, 1890.

While this earlier view, untimed as it was by any expressions in the context, may refer to the closing conflicts also, it certainly described exactly what passed before the world in those days of 1914-1918. “Thousands of ships” were “hurled into the depths of the sea.” The Encyclopedia Britannica, in its postwar volumes, wrote: “The dreary, dreadful tale of ships sunk and attacked is too long to give.” But under the heading “Submarine Campaigns” this authority carefully set down the loss of ships on the Allied side as 5,511. Another authority gave the number of ships of the Central Powers that went down as 482. Very nearly six thousand ships make up the casualty list of those four years of international storm and tempest.

The forewarning described the situation accurately when it said, “The tempest is coming.” Thousands of ships were hurled into the depths of the sea. Navies went down. Human lives were “sacrificed by millions.” Some put the direct and indirect loss of life by the first world war at twenty million.

As we looked at these forewarnings casually in the years before the great conflict, this talk about thousands of ships going down and millions of lives being sacrificed seemed evidently, to most readers, a description of the very closing scenes of earth’s history. Little did we appreciate as we read these things that so soon we were to pass through just such scenes of destruction. That is evidently why, in the messages just previous to the outbreak, it was emphasized that “soon” and “very soon” these experiences were to come upon us.

Well would it have been for us had we realized how very soon indeed the storm was to break, for in some ways preparation might have been made that possibly would have helped greatly in the work. The words of warning were surely plain enough.

11. Still Building Up

AS THE years passed, and still the field of work opened wider, the burdens of age began to press upon Mrs. White. She sometimes wrote of the day when her pilgrimage would end.

After the Agent in This Gift Should Die?

In the General Conference files is a letter from Mrs. White, dated January 30, 1905, to a former president of the General Conference, O. A. Olsen. She said:

“The question is sometimes raised, ‘What if Mrs. White should die?’ I answer: ‘The books that she has written will not die. They are a living witness to what said the Scripture. Of myself I could not have brought out the truths in these books, but the Lord has given me the help of His Holy Spirit.’

Again, two years later, and more at length, she spoke of this. In a tract, The Writing and Sending Out of the Testimonies for the Church, she wrote:

“Whether or not my life is spared, my writings will constantly speak, and their work will go forward as long as time shall last. My writings are kept on file in the office, and even though I should not live, these words that have been given to me by the Lord will still have life and will speak to the people.”

We see it continually. In ancient times it was so. A word written down by a prophet in one age had a special application for those who should read it centuries later. “Not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you” (1 Peter 1:12). Inspiration is a wonderful thing. It speaks a living word.

So, again and again, as conditions have changed and new situations have arisen in the progress of the Advent Movement, workers have found instruction in the printed volumes that came like a new message, as though spoken for that very hour. They had never seen the application before. The counsels of the gift of prophecy continue to speak and guide the church. More people study these writings now, it would seem, than ever in the lifetime of the writer of them.

The Books Were to Speak

This future work of her books was much upon her heart in later years; and in the closing days, after a fall that confined her to her room and made her feel that her end was near, she spoke particularly of one burden—the translation of these messages into foreign languages. Speaking from her sickroom, not only of her own books, but of all, she sent word to a convention of bookmen in session:

“If our bookmen do their part faithfully, I know, from the light God has given me, that the knowledge of present truth will be doubled and trebled. This is why I have been in so much of a hurry to get my books out, so that they could be placed in the hands of the people and read. And in the foreign languages the Lord designs that the circulation of our books shall be greatly increased.”—*Life Sketches*, pages 446, 447.

This foreign-language work was close to her heart—the multitudes of other speech who were to hear. From the sale of some of the books in English, and perhaps in two or three other languages, there would be income to devote toward issuing portions of the writings in the many languages wherein the expenditure would be more than any income to be expected from their sale. It was the provision of her last will and testament that the trustees were to continue this publishing of her writings in other languages as rapidly as funds permitted. It has meant setting many a tongue to speaking portions of these messages that have so enriched the movement.

One thing has always been emphasized—the necessity of not neglecting the smaller languages or the remoter people of the earth.

A Word From a World Observer

Mrs. White did not use her position to build up gain for herself. The gift was used to build up the cause of the movement. Even observers in the world noted this fact with satisfaction. If she had left a fortune behind her, they would have been disappointed. When Mrs. White died, in 1915, the editor of the *New York Independent* (the leading religious magazine of America) commented on her life and work, and her contribution to the Seventh day Adventist cause. First, the editorial spoke of the teachings and growth of the denomination:

“Of course, these teachings [of the founders of the denomination] were based on the strictest doctrine of inspiration of the Scriptures. Seventh-day Adventism could be got in no other way. And the gift of prophecy was to be expected, as promised to the ‘remnant church,’ who had held fast to the truth. This faith gave great purity of life and incessant zeal. No body of Christians excels them in moral character and religious earnestness. [The editor told of the growth of the work in many lands, and of the many publishing houses, colleges and academies, and sanitariums over the earth—the figures being now altogether out of date.]

“And in all this,” the *Independent* continued, “Ellen G. White has been the inspiration and guide. Here is a noble record, and she deserves great honor.

“Did she really receive divine visions, and was she really chosen by the Holy Spirit to be endued with the charism of prophecy? or was she the victim of an excited imagination? Why should we answer? One’s doctrine of the Bible may affect the conclusion. At any rate, she was absolutely honest in her belief in

her revelations. Her life was worthy of them. She showed no spiritual pride and she sought no 'filthy lucre.' She lived the life and did the work of a worthy prophetess." - August 23, 1915.

It was a fitting tribute by an observer from without, surveying a lifework. The conclusion stated is true.

"A Noble Christian Woman"

It was a Christian life that Mrs. White lived before the people, from the days of 1844, when she was called as a youth of seventeen, to the day of her death in ripe old age.

Even the bitterest critic-one who had left the movement and turned to write many attacks upon the work of his former associates, and especially upon the gift of prophecy in the church-paid tribute to a noble Christian life. He came to Mrs. White's funeral. His brother, an Adventist, told us of D. M. Canright's emotion as they walked together past the casket, with others of the congregation, at the close of the funeral service. They came back to their pew, and stood while the great congregation was still filing past. "Then," said our member, "my brother suggested that we go down again, to take one more look. We joined the passing throng and again stood by the bier. My brother rested his hand upon the side of the casket, and with tears rolling down his cheeks, he said brokenly, 'There is a noble Christian woman gone.'"

This also is a fitting tribute from without. Nothing could be further from the spirit of that lifework than for us to exalt the human agent. She was but a human agent. But it is right to say-what many thousands knew-that she was faithful to the call. Never a thing in her life brought shame to any believer. And the work done-and that is her monument-speaks confusion to all attacks.

When she was called in girlhood, she was shown that the call would make her the target of attack. And so it did from the first. She later realized how true were the foretelling of the prophecy of Revelation 12:17--the dragon making war upon the remnant church because of "the commandments of God," which they kept, and "the testimony of Jesus," which they held. But never did this agent swerve from the charge to "deliver the messages faithfully." On her dying bed she said:

"I am very weak. I am sure that this is my last sickness. I am not worried at the thought of dying. I feel comforted all the time, that the Lord is near me. I do not worry about the work I have done. I have done the best I could." Life Sketches, pages 444, 445.

And that is all that anyone can do. There was no thought of any merit to be awarded on the grounds of special work done. All her trust was in the unmerited grace of Christ, the one hope of every believer. "I am guarding every moment," she said in last hours with the family, "so that nothing may come between me and the Lord. There will be a glorious meeting soon." Then came the last words, "I know in whom I have believed."