

Bible Reasons Why You Should Be a Seventh-day Adventist

16. SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

Our critic's final attack (No. 40) is leveled against the "Spirit of prophecy." We appreciate the privilege of giving Bible evidences for our belief in this gift. Although this is a fundamental feature of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, let the reader clearly understand that Seventh-day Adventists stand on the Protestant principle of the Bible, and the Bible only, as the rule of faith and doctrine, bringing every teaching and practice to the test of that divine revelation. This stand was made very clear in the earliest denominational literature. James White, one of the founders of the denomination and the husband of Ellen White, said:

"Every Christian is in duty bound to take the Bible as a perfect rule of faith and duty. We should pray fervently to be aided by the Holy Spirit in searching the Scriptures for the whole truth, and for his whole duty. He is not at liberty to turn from them to learn his duty through any of the gifts." *Second Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, April 21, 1851.

Repeatedly Mrs. White gave the same testimony, such as the following from an address in Christiania (Oslo), Norway. "The Bible, and the Bible alone, is to be our creed, the sole bond of union." - *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, Dec. 15, 1885.

And again: "True Christianity receives the Word of God as the great treasure house of inspired truth, and the test of all inspiration."-*The Great Controversy*, p. 193.

Bible Teaching Regarding the Prophetic Gift

Before the fall of man God spoke to him face to face. Since the obscuring veil of sin has separated between man and his Maker, the Lord has made known His wonderful provision for man's salvation through His chosen human instruments-the prophets. "Hear now My words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make Myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream." Num. 12:6. Time and again, down through the centuries, God has sent special messengers to call His people to a deeper spiritual life and to encourage them in the prosecution of His work. Referring to the experiences of Israel, the Scriptures inform us that "the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because He had compassion on His people."

2 Chron. 36:15. Such visitations have been especially marked in times of crisis. And the people have been admonished, "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper." 2 Chron. 20:20. The apostle Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant." In this connection he outlined very clearly the "diversities of gifts," all by "the same Spirit," and among them "prophecy." (1 Cor. 12:1, 4-11.) To the church at Ephesus he wrote, "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers!" And the purpose of all these gifts is "for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ!" And how long will these gifts be needed? "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ!" Eph. 4:11-13. Indeed, Paul's teachings regarding these gifts seemed especially to emphasize their need in the remnant church: "So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ!" 1 Cor. 1:7.

In the providence of God a collection was made of much that the prophets of Israel had written, together with inspired historical and poetical books, which constituted the Scriptures approved by Christ and His apostles. (John 5:39; Acts 17:11.) Likewise the inspired writings of some of the apostles and a few others were collected by the early Christian church, the canon of the New Testament being made up before the close of the fourth century. These marvelous collections of sacred writings constitute the Bible-Biblia, the Book-which is the standard by which all teachings and gifts in the church must be tested. (1 John 4:1; Isa. 8:20.)

But this wonderful gift of the Bible has not rendered needless these spiritual gifts in the church. The gift of prophecy was manifested in the early church. We read in the book of Acts of certain prophets who were active in the church. There was one Agabus, also "at Antioch certain prophets and teachers," and the four daughters of Philip, the evangelist, "which did prophesy." (Acts 11:28; 13:1; 21:9, 10.) And we are admonished in 1 Thessalonians 5:20, "Despise not prophesyings!"

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The Spirit of Prophecy in the Remnant Church

Would it not be reasonable to expect that God would send special messages for the encouragement and guidance of His remnant church, during the crisis years just before the second coming of Jesus, when the gospel work is to be finished in all the world? Indeed, it would surely be unreasonable not to expect this. We would naturally conclude that just as God sent Simeon, Anna, and John the Baptist to help prepare the people for the first coming of Christ, so would He send a messenger who, through a special work of the Spirit, would prepare the way for His second coming. However, we are not dependent on reason or supposition in this matter. It was foretold in the Bible that the Spirit of prophecy would be one of the two distinctive features of the remnant church. "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." Rev. 12:17. The testimony of Jesus is defined to be "the Spirit of prophecy." Rev. 19:10.

In the latter part of the year 1844 many sincere Advent believers, recognizing that divine power had attended the proclamation of the judgment-hour message, even though Christ did not come to earth as expected, were earnestly praying for light and guidance. One of these groups in New Hampshire received the light on the binding obligation of the fourth commandment and began to keep the seventh-day Sabbath. There was given to another group, in western New York, special light on the ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary. And there came to an earnest, praying company in Maine a manifestation of the gift of prophecy. From these groups the light received was kindled elsewhere, and there soon came into existence a united body of Adventists who, having experienced the bitterness foretold in Revelation 10:7-11, now recognized that they still had a message to give to "many peoples, and nations, and tongues" the third angel's message of Revelation 14:9-12.

As a little group of devout, but greatly perplexed, Adventists in Portland, Maine, were gathered in a private home earnestly praying for an understanding of God's Word, and for direction from heaven, one of their number, Ellen G. Harmon, a very timid but deeply spiritual girl of seventeen, was taken off in vision. The future experiences of the faithful advent believers were presented to her, also a view of the coming of Jesus in all His glory, and of the new earth, the future home of the redeemed. While this revelation was in some respects different from the current of their thinking at this time, it came as a message of hope and courage to those who were passing through very bitter experiences. But the direction to Miss Harmon to tell to others what God had revealed to her was, to her, the source of a great trial. Of this she said:

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"But it seemed impossible for me to perform this work that was presented before me; to attempt it seemed certain failure. The trials attending it appeared more than I could endure. How could I, a child in years, go forth from place to place, unfolding to the people the holy truths of God?"-Life Sketches, pp. 69, 70.

True messengers or prophets do not seek for such responsibilities, nor are they elected by the church. (Heb. 5:4.) With fear and trembling, Miss Harmon (later Mrs. Ellen G. White) took up her God-appointed task. As one long associated with Mrs. White has well said:

"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 Spirit of Prophecy in the Advent Movement, p. 28.

Hers was a life of earnest toil for the cause she loved, with no feeling of self sufficiency or pride of position. Concerning her work she wrote: "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?'"-Ibid., p. 44.

Some years ago Mr. Jones, then an Adventist, wrote a pamphlet, which he diligently circulated (even after he had left the church the first time), in which he spoke in the highest possible terms of the work of Mrs. White. He said: "The evidences of the genuineness of Mrs. White's divine calling, and the proofs of the reliability of her prophetic utterances, are not alone numerous and dependable, but they are

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thoroughly convincing. . . . 'When the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall it be known, that the Lord has truly sent him.'" -The Time, The Need, The Message, p. 50. His words were true then, and they are true now.

Evaluation of the Work of Mrs. Ellen G. White

Shortly after Mrs. White's death in 1915, an editorial appeared in *The Independent* (New York), August 23, 1915, entitled "An American Prophetess!" We quote a few sentences which illustrate perhaps the unbiased, nonsectarian estimate of many regarding her life and work.

"At the age of seventeen she had her first vision, and was bidden, she believed, by the Holy Spirit, to proclaim the speedy advent of Christ to glorify His saints and destroy His enemies. She dreaded the duty, but was given strength to accept it, and was rewarded with a long succession of revelations through her life....

"Did she really receive divine visions, and was she really chosen by the Holy Spirit to be endued with the charisma 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, the most admirable of the American succession."

In speaking of the teachings and the character of the Adventist people, the same article said: "These teachings were based on the strictest doctrine of inspiration of the Scriptures. . . . This faith gave great purity of life and incessant zeal. No body of Christians excels them in moral character and religious earnestness."

The professed burden of Mr. Jones for years was to bring the Seventh-day Adventist denomination up to the high standard of spiritual life taught by Mrs. White. Even after he joined the so called "Reform Movement," he continued to sell his pamphlet, in which he professed to be "standing absolutely for every fundamental teaching that has received the endorsement of the Spirit of prophecy, and the approval and support of the devoted and beloved pioneers of the [Adventist] movement." Now he professes to believe that Mrs. White teaches "the gospel of dead works," that she is a deceiver and a false prophet, and that the founders of the Adventist Church were "unskilled and deluded pioneers."

If Mr. Jones had such a wonderful, spiritual transformation as he claims before he joined the Adventist Church, is it not strange that for more than twenty years he studied Mrs. White's writings and yet failed to see her unscriptural, false-gospel teachings, and that even after he was disfellowshipped from the church the first time he still avowed complete confidence in her writings.

Mr. Jones now says that "it has for years been incontestably proved ... that the profession of Mrs. White of being a specially chosen 'messenger' of God is false." It is true that the "proofs" of the mistakes which he attributes to her were propounded by the critics many years ago. As far as we can discover he offers no new criticisms. All that he gives were refuted before Mr. Jones was born. In the meantime Mrs. White has been recognized as one of the outstanding Christian workers of the nineteenth century, and for thirty years since her death there has been an ever-increasing demand for her writings. Mr. Jones may malign the good name of this godly woman, calling her an impostor, a deceiver, and a false prophet, but such accusations will not affect the high regard in which she is held by the multiplied thousands who have been blessed by her personal ministry and her writings. Mrs. White is dead, yet continues to speak through these writings, and anyone who would know the truth regarding her spiritual influence can easily learn it from what she has written.

My last statement is well illustrated by the following incident. Some years ago an influential woman who was a guest at our English sanitarium near London was encouraged to read *The Desire of Ages*. After reading the book she was aflame with interest and eagerly read other of Mrs. White's books. "The author is inspired," she declared and from Edinburgh, on June 6, 1932, she sent a glowing testimonial for *The Desire of Ages*, a part of which is here quoted:

"After a lifetime studying the religions of the world-the efforts of the human soul to get into contact with the Infinite I have come across a book by Ellen G. White, the very name of which describes its motive: *The Desire of Ages*. Since reading this truly wonderful book, my most ardent wish for this suffering, distraught world is that every man and woman should be-M come, through its pages, familiar with its Supreme Subject." Quoted in *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, July 21, 1932.

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Thus while religious prejudice seeks to belittle the work of Mrs. White, unprejudiced observers the world around give expressions of admiration for the results of her work.

Seventh-day Adventists do not feel called upon to press upon non-Adventists the obligation to accept the "testimonies" of Mrs. White (for, as Paul says, "Prophesying serveth not for them that believe not, but for them which believe." 1 Cor. 14:22), but inasmuch as Mr. Jones has made her work a point of special attack, it seemed necessary to give the foregoing facts and general statements regarding Mrs. White's call and work.

Does Mrs. White Contradict the Bible?

It would indeed be strange 'were there not among the thousands of pages written by Mrs. White some things difficult to understand. Indeed, there are doubtless some things that Mrs. White herself did not fully understand, as was the case with the ancient prophets. (1 Peter 1:11.) There are many things in the Bible that are difficult of comprehension, and the opponents of the Bible make much of the "contradictions" which they find there; but the devout Bible Christian knows from the internal as well as the external evidences that the Bible is the Word of God, and he is not disturbed about some things that may still be obscure. Let it be understood, in the first place, that neither Mrs. White nor the church claimed infallibility for her. The reader will have noted, from the quotation from her on page 80, how she struggled to put in the very best language possible the exalted themes on which she wrote.

Speaking of prophets, Jesus said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits." Matt. 7:16. We have given some evidences of the fruit of Mrs. White's work. These fruits of her long life of service, and not a few obscure statements or trumped-up charges with which detractors endeavor to besmirch the second-advent message, are the test of the genuineness of her call to be a messenger" for God.

Every one of our critic's charges against Mrs. White can be satisfactorily answered, but it would take more space fully to refute all his criticisms than can be allowed in this pamphlet. It should be clear to every unbiased reader that Mr. Jones has made a strained effort to find instances in which her teachings contradict the Bible. For instance, he claims that Mrs. White "taught that the tower of Babel was built before the flood." This charge was made fully eighty years ago and has been disproved many times. One can hardly account for its repetition here, unless it be on the supposition that the critic thought that the readers of his diatribe would not have access to the facts. Perhaps he expects his readers to be so outrageously shocked to think that one who claimed to be a messenger for God, and a Bible student, should be so ignorant as not to know when the tower of Babel was built, that they will not look into the matter further.. The little book *Spiritual Gifts*, Volume III, published in 1864, to which he refers, gives the exact order of events, as anyone can see from these chapter headings: chapter seven, "The Flood"; chapter eight, "After the Flood"; chapter nine, "Disguised Infidelity"; chapter ten, "Tower of Babel." And the contents of these chapters is in harmony with the sequence of the chapters. Then why the charge? Because of a typographical error (page 301) in omitting the word "and" and a comma. This was corrected in the next edition of the book, under the title *Spirit of Prophecy*, Volume 1, page 266, published in 1870. Here is the corrected passage with the comma and "and" in brackets:

"The Lord first established the system of sacrificial offerings with Adam after his fall, which he taught to his descendants. This system was corrupted before the Flood 1, and] by those who separated themselves from the faithful followers of God and engaged in the building of the tower of Babel."

Mr. Jones is an experienced printer and has been reputed to be a diligent student of Mrs. White's writings. To make such a charge must be due either to a bold effort to deceive or to crass ignorance. Surely neither alternative can beget confidence in him as a critic or a religious teacher.

Mr. Jones says that "Mrs. White taught that probation for sinners came to an end in the year 1844." The references given do not prove the statement; nor is it true. All the Adventists of what is called the Miller Movement believed that Christ would come and that probation would end in October, 1844. Ellen G. Harmon, with her parents, believed that teaching, but she took no part in public teaching or writing before the passing of the time. Her call, as previously stated, was after the disappointment. When the Lord did not come at the time the Adventists expected, there was, of course, great perplexity. Their experience was analogous to that of the disciples who were so desperately disappointed when Jesus was crucified. "We trusted," they said sadly, "that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel' Luke 24:21. Many of the Adventists who had experienced the great spiritual power in the movement still felt that probation must have closed, and in their perplexity they were earnestly praying for further light. This charge of teaching that probation was closed was fully refuted by Mrs. White herself years ago. A few

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sentences from this reply will suffice:

"For a time after the disappointment in 1844, I did hold, in common with the Advent body, that the door of mercy was then forever closed to the world. This position was taken before my first vision was given me. It was the light given me of God that corrected our error, and enabled us to see the true position." "No one has ever heard me say or has read from my pen statements which will justify them in the charges they have made against me upon this point."-Quoted in *The Testimony of Jesus*, by F. M. WILCOX, pp. 95, 105. The truth of these statements is verified by the records.

Alleged False Predictions

A strained effort is made to prove that Mrs. White made false predictions. It is said she predicted that she would be among the living saints to be translated when Jesus comes. The reference given does not say this, and we have no knowledge of her ever having said it. In describing the coming of Christ she does say, "We all in solemn silence gazed on the cloud as it drew near," etc. Would our hypercritic also count Paul as a false prophet because he said in 1 Thessalonians 4:17, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air"? Evidently Paul in vision was transported to the scene, and so identified himself with the living saints. Likewise, in Mrs. White's vision of this glorious event,, she thought of herself as a part of the redeemed host.

Mrs. White is said to be a false prophet because she declared many years ago that time was very short. This is a question well worth our careful consideration. Of course, what Mrs. White wrote about the nearness of Christ's coming is no less perplexing than several expressions along the same line in the Bible. Paul wrote to the Corinthian church: "But this I say, brethren, the time is short." 1 Cor. 7:29. The beloved John wrote as if the coming of Christ were imminent in his day: "Behold I come quickly"; "Surely I come quickly." Rev. 22:7, 20. Surely the Bible believer would not infer that Paul and John were false prophets. Mrs. White, in discussing this matter, once wrote: "The angels of God in their messages to men represent time as very short. Thus it has always been presented to me."-Quoted in *The Testimony of Jesus*, p. 79.

In this matter of delayed or unfulfilled prophecy there are two important things to remember: It is clearly taught in the Word of God that positively stated predictions are sometimes changed by the attitude of the people. (Jer. 18:9, 10.) In harmony with this principle Peter indicates that the church may hasten the coming of Christ. (2 Peter 3:11, 12.) It would likewise be true that the slowness of God's people in preaching the gospel to the world would delay the Lord's return, for the gospel of the kingdom must be preached to all the world before the end comes. (Matt. 24:14)

While it is not the primary purpose of the prophetic gift to predict future events, Mrs. White has, in the course of her work of warning and instruction, made many forecasts of things to come. There are predictions in the book *Great Controversy*, written more than sixty years ago, that portray conditions as they exist today in spite of all the political, social, and religious changes since then. As Mr. Jones said in 1928, "Many predictions in connection with the work of the denomination have been made and have been remarkably fulfilled." But now he brushes aside these outstanding characteristics and joins other critics with their microscopes, in an endeavor to find something which they can claim as a false prediction.

And in such efforts they themselves do not hesitate to make false statements. For instance, we are told by Mr. Jones that Mrs. White predicted that "Christ would come before slavery would be abolished in the United States." Yet no such prediction was made. The reference cited makes no mention of the United States. According to the Bible there will be slaves in the world when Jesus comes. The apostle John, describing the Lord's coming, says, "The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains." Rev. 6:15. Would Mr. Jones impeach the beloved disciple for saying there would be "bondmen" when Jesus comes?

Pursuing this line further, Mr. Jones goes to a chapter in *Early Writings* which contains a scathing rebuke of slavery, and calls attention to the statement that slave masters would endure the seven last plagues. Then in triumph he says, "but the slave masters of 'the Old South' have long since passed away." The "Old South" is not quoted from Mrs. White. And can it be that Mr. Jones thinks that when slavery was abolished in the United States it became extinct in the world? The *Religious Digest* of May, 1942, said: "There are today not less than 5,000,000 slaves in the world. Some authorities place the figure as high as 8,000,000." And details are given. And further, may we ask the reader this question: Is it right or is it good common sense, to pass judgment on any prediction until the passing of the time given for its fulfillment?

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Mr. Jones next turns to a statement written by Mrs. White on January 4, 1862, on "The North and the South" (Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 1, pp. 253-260). This entire statement, written early in the War Between the States, would be profitable reading to anyone interested in the history of those times and in the cause of human freedom. Mrs. White states-and this is an acknowledged fact-that "the accursed system of slavery" lay "at the foundation of the war." Thousands, she said, had enlisted as soldiers with the understanding that the war was to exterminate slavery, and were very bitter to find that this was not the objective, which was only to preserve the Union.

Then she said: "In view of all this, they inquire, If we succeed in quelling this rebellion, what has been gained? They can only answer discouragingly, Nothing. That which caused the rebellion is not removed. The system of slavery, which has ruined our nation, is left to live and stir up another rebellion." Mrs. White is giving here the sentiments of the complaining soldiers that slavery "is left to live and stir up another rebellion." But even if the statement were her own, it would only have been a statement of conditions then existing, and a warning of what would result if those conditions were not changed. But those conditions were changed. Not many months later Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation freeing the slaves, and the disaster which was feared if slavery were not abolished was averted. Thus another charge against Mrs. White is disproved merely by the reading of the context of the critic's excerpt.

Speaking further of the failure of the North to carry out the real object of the war, the abolition of slavery, Mrs. White said that "this nation will yet be humbled into the dust." At the time this was written it was the general opinion in Northern circles that the secession would easily be put down, but in the months that followed the North suffered repeated reverses, and the nations of Europe came very near to recognizing the Confederacy as a separate nation. At least in the eyes of the world this nation was humbled in the dust.

In this connection Mrs. White tells how at that time England was considering the advisability of making war on the United States, and whether or not, in that event, others nations might seize the opportunity to attack her. Then follows the statement that "when England does declare war, all nations will have an interest of their own to serve, and there will be general war, general confusion." But England did not declare war, and the results that would have followed did not come. The whole context bears out this explanation of the passage. Webster gives one definition of "when" as "in the event that," or, "on condition that." This is evidently the meaning of the word "when" as used here.

Mrs. White's Integrity

Mr. Jones makes the serious charge that deception was practiced in the preparation and revision of Mrs. White's writings, even asserting that she herself "took part in the complete suppression" of matter that had been published, which was discovered to contain error. He offers no proof. As to suppression, on no occasion have any of Mrs. White's productions been recalled or withdrawn from circulation. Some of the earlier books are out of print, being superseded by enlarged editions, better adapted to general circulation. Some of the very first things she wrote, beginning in 1851, were republished years ago in a book entitled Early Writings of Ellen G. White. Because of the interest in the early history of the church, there have been requests, in recent years, for the reprinting of other early Ellen G. - White publications. A facsimile reproduction of the first Seventh-day Adventist publication, A Word to the Little Flock (1847, by James White), has been published; also of Spiritual Gifts, Volumes 1 and II; and others of the so-called "suppressed" books are to follow.

As for revisions, a prophet has the same right as any author to improve the expression of thought. Mrs. White never claimed verbal inspiration or perfection of diction. Early in her career she wrote: "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, unless they be those spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation."-Review and Herald, Oct. 8, 1867, p. 260.

The apostle Paul exercised his prerogative to set forth the truth in different forms of expression, to meet the needs of those to whom his message was being presented. We have two records of his telling the story of his first vision and his conversion. Identical words are not used, and there are expressions in each which are different from those in the other. (Acts 22:6-11; 26: 12-18.) Mrs. White in 1851 made a definite statement as to why some changes have been made in her published writings. In a pamphlet, entitled Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White, page 9, she prefaced a chapter "To the Remnant Scattered Abroad" with these words: "Here I will give the view that was first published in 1846.

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In this view I saw only a very few of the events of the future. More recent views have been more full. I shall therefore leave out a portion and prevent repetition."-The Testimony of Jesus, pp. 118, 119.

Our critic makes the bold accusation that Mrs. White was influenced to write personal testimonies by "both church leaders and others" who desired to gain certain objectives. He gives no proof and has none to offer. Her own reaction to such a suggestion was what you would expect from a sincere servant of God. "You think individuals have prejudiced my mind. If I am in this state, I am not fit to be trusted with the work of God." The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, Sept. 19, 1893.

This charge that the message of the prophet was of human and not divine origin is not a new one. There was a group of men in Judah who did not like Jeremiah's reproofs and words of warning. "Then spoke Azariah ... and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speaks falsely: the Lord our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there: but Baruch the son of Neriah sets thee on against us." Jer.. 43:2, 3.

Baffled by the acknowledged high character of the literary work of Mrs. White, who had very meager formal education, and bent on discounting any divine influence, her critics maintain that "able editorial assistants were responsible for much of the material" appearing under her name. Mrs. White had literary assistants but no "ghost" writers. In 1907 she said, "The reports that are circulated, that any of my helpers are permitted to add matter or change the meaning of the messages I write out, are not true."-The Ellen G. White Books, (a brochure), p. 9.

We would gladly give much fuller information regarding the preparation of Mrs. White's books did space permit. Her explanation of the use she, has made of the writings of others in the book Great Controversy is given in the introduction to that book, which is obtainable in many libraries.

A Consistent Life

The critic's last blow at Mrs. White-and surely a weak one is a charge of inconsistency. It is stated that while Mrs. White "urged her followers to dispose of their possessions and turn the proceeds to the cause," she herself at one time owned "two hundred or more acres of land"; and further that she warned against indebtedness and yet was seriously in debt at the time of her death.

The truth is that at no time did Mrs. White advise that Seventh-day Adventists should not own their own homes. Any counsel regarding the sale of property pertained to the disposal of surplus holdings. And in this matter of giving to the support of the gospel work, she herself was a brilliant example of benevolence.

It is true that when Mrs. White returned to the United States from Australia in 1901, she purchased a property of sixty acres of farm and hill land, on which were located her home and the houses of some of her assistants. The purchase price was \$5,000. Needing firewood for heating and cooking, she later purchased one hundred twenty acres of mountain woodland for \$550, which she held for a time. Would the reader condemn Mrs. White for thus providing for herself a home in her old age?

In order to hold down the retail price of her books, Mrs. White not only met the expense of her secretarial staff from her own resources, but also paid for the typesetting, plate making, and illustrations for these books. These heavy expenses, together with her many benevolences to aid in the work of the denomination, oftentimes called for sums of money beyond her immediate income; and at the time of her death an appraisal of her property for probate purposes revealed the fact that monies advanced to her for the prosecution of her work exceeded the actual forced sale value of immediately disposable property. This left for a time an indebtedness of a number of thousands of dollars, which during ensuing years was entirely liquidated from the income of her literary properties, in harmony with her specified provisions.

Mrs. White's experience in giving her entire income, beyond the bare necessities of life, to the development of the work of the denomination and leaving no estate at her death is, we believe, in keeping with the consistent life of one called as a messenger for God. She invested all her income and used her good name and the potential earning powers of her literary properties as security for money borrowed to advance the work of God. That Mrs. White planned wisely is evidenced by the fact that her indebtedness has been entirely cleared from the sale and earnings of properties which were left to meet these obligations.

A Tribute to the Character and Work of Mrs. White

Let us set down, in contrast to these carping criticisms, a testimonial regarding the character of this noble woman. Elder A. G. Daniells, for twenty-one years president of the General Conference of Seventh-day

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Adventists, who had twenty three years of direct observation of the work of Mrs. White, and, in his own words, "twenty additional years for thoughtful reflection and study of that life and its fruits," wrote:

"I can say that it is my deep conviction that Mrs. White's life far transcends the life of anyone I have ever known or with whom I have been associated. She was uniformly pleasant, cheerful, and courageous. She was never careless, flippant, or in any way cheap in conversation or manner of life. She was the personification of serious earnestness regarding the things of the kingdom. I never once heard her boast of the gracious gift God had bestowed upon her, or of the marvelous results of her endeavors. She did rejoice in the fruitage, but gave all the glory to Him who wrought through her."-The Abiding Gift of Prophecy, p. 368.