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Goodloe Harper Bell, Pioneer Seventh-day Adventist Christian Educator

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GOODLOE HARPER BELL: PIONEER SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHRISTIAN EDUCATOR

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A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment

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ABSTRACT

GOODLOE HARPER BELL

PIONEER SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHRISTIAN EDUCATOR

by

Allan Gibson Lindsay

Chairman: George R. Knight

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Dissertation

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Title: GOODLOE HARPER BELL PIONEER SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHRISTIAN EDUCATOR

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The Seventh-day Adventist church operates a worldwide system of Christian education. The pioneer educator who played a most significant part in laying its foundations was Goodloe Harper Bell (1832-1899).

Bell was a public school teacher in central Michigan from 1851 through 1866. He became a Seventh-day Adventist in 1867 and was subsequently invited to open a small private school in Battle Creek, Michigan. The success attending this school encouraged the church to employ Bell as the first teacher to operate a denominationally sponsored school in 1872. The school became Battle Creek College in 1875. Until 1882, Bell taught a variety of subjects at this school, but particularly excelled in the teaching of English.

Between 1869 and 1884 Bell rigorously promoted Christian education in a number of other capacities. He edited the Youth's Instructor and was elected superintendent of the largest Sabbath school operated by the church. These appointments gave him the opportunity to organize the Sabbath schools of the church and to provide the first graded series of Bible lessons for children and youth. He also played a leading role in the nation-wide organization of the Sabbath schools, and in instructing superintendents and lay-teachers in the principles of Christian education. In 1882 the church appointed him the founding principal of the South Lancaster Academy in Massachusetts until he retired in 1884.

During his retirement years he served as founding editor of the Sabbath-School Worker, editor of a journal--The Fireside Teacher--dedicated to the moral and educational benefit of the Christian home, founder of the first correspondence school operated by a Seventh-day Adventist, and author of well-received textbooks in grammar, rhetoric, and literature.

As a teacher Bell profoundly influenced the early development of the educational program of the Seventh-day Adventist church. Though largely self-educated, he gained a reputation as a most thorough and careful teacher. He was committed to a program of practical education which provided for the balanced physical, mental, and spiritual development of his students based upon the principles and teachings of the Bible.

Fig. 1. Goodloe Harper Bell (1876).

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AUHR	Heritage Room, James White Library, Andrews University. Berrien Springs, Michigan.
DF	Document File.
EGWRC-AU	Ellen G. White Research Center, Andrews University. Berrien Springs, Michigan.
EGWRC-DC	Ellen G. White Research Center. Washington, D.C.
GC Archives	General Conference Archives. Washington, D.C.
GC Bulletin	General Conference Bulletin
GRAC	George Royal Avery Collection, Heritage Room, James White Library, Andrews University. Berrien Springs, Michigan.
MS	Manuscript.
RH	Advent Review and Sabbath Herald.
SDA Year Book	Seventh-day Adventist Year Book.
SSW	The Sabbath-School Worker.
ST	Signs of the Times.
YI	Youth's Instructor.

PREFACE

Of all the religious educators who operated within the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the first three decades of its educational history, Goodloe Harper Bell was one of the most influential. The impact of his life and teaching extended into the church, the Sabbath school, the day school, and the home. He served as teacher, principal, tutor, editor, administrator, author, and expositor of nature. Appointed the head teacher of the first denominationally sponsored school, he later exerted a powerful influence in the formative years of the church's first college. The organization and conduct of the Sabbath school benefited from the lasting reforms he introduced. Through his series of graded Sabbath school lesson booklets, he instructed Adventist young people for more than twenty years in the truths of the scriptures at a time when there were very few church-operated elementary schools. He was the founding principal of the South Lancaster Academy and author of a comprehensive series of language and literature textbooks. Concerned about home education, he published a monthly journal devoted to home culture, and he was the first to introduce and implement correspondence school work among Seventh-day Adventists.

Need for the Study

Practically all of the major published accounts of Bell's life and work are those appearing in the general Adventist histories. None of these have attempted to make a serious exhaustive survey of the life and contribution of Bell as a Christian educator. Neither have they made any extensive assessment of the significance of that contribution to the foundational development of Seventh-day Adventist education. As outlined above, Bell pioneered the way in so many areas of importance, yet his work and influence have been generally underestimated.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of this study was to describe and document the extensive contribution to the Seventh-day Adventist Church of Goodloe Harper Bell as a Christian educator who was intimately involved in education within the church, the school, and, to a lesser extent, in the home between the years 1868 and 1899. Two subsidiary objectives were: (1) to focus on the qualities of Bell's personality and character which contributed to his strengths and weaknesses and (2) to shed light on Bell's teaching methodology arising out of his philosophy of Christian education. In the fulfillment of these objectives, this study has resulted in a greater understanding of Seventh-day Adventist educational history, especially during the formative period between 1868 and 1884.

Scope and Delimitations of the Study

The main thrust of this study was to focus upon Bell as a Christian educator, and thus to record and evaluate his impact

upon the early development of Seventh-day Adventist education. It was not primarily intended to provide a comprehensive biography of the man, except where such biographical data shed light on Bell's experience as a Christian educator. It was also recognized that there were some periods of Bell's life for which very few records, if any, are still available for study, e.g. the first thirty-four years of his life, his period of service as General Conference Treasurer, and his connection with the Western Health Reform Institute in Battle Creek. Thus a consistently developed biography was not possible. This study has focused on Bell's contribution as a Christian teacher within the context of his times, and against the background of certain developments within and without the Seventh-day Adventist church.

Previous Studies

Published Accounts

Though no attempt to study Bell's life and work in depth has been made previously, a number of short articles have been published. The oldest published biographical account is found in the Youth's Instructor[1] of February 9, 1899. This account was written by one of his former pupils, J. C. Bartholf, several weeks after Bell's death and it became the primary source document for all subsequent historical reviews of his life. It is a useful article in spite of its being written with a clear eulogistic intent.

[1] J. C. Bartholf, "Goodloe Harper Bell," Youth's Instructor 47 (February 9, 1899):101-6.

The short article in the Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia[1] provides a digest of Bell's life, but is based on the 1899 life sketch referred to above. It makes no assessment of his character or personality, though it does describe his most significant contributions to the work of the church.

The two major published accounts on Bell are those written by E. K. Vande Vere and E. M. Cadwallader. Vande Vere in The Wisdom Seekers[2] devotes one chapter, parts of two more, and an appendix article to Bell. His readable and accurate account provides insight into the personality and teaching methods of the man and makes some evaluation of Bell's work as an educator, both in the day school and in the Sabbath school, as perceived through the diaries and memoirs of some of his students. Vande Vere, however, did not attempt to analyze any of Bell's writings. The original typescript of Vande Vere's book, located in the Andrews University Heritage Room, is more useful than the published book, since it includes more material and the footnote references.

Cadwallader's History of Seventh-day Adventist Education[3] contains several chapters largely devoted to Bell and presents a more inclusive though less descriptive account than Vande Vere. He has attempted some critical evaluation of the source material,

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[1] Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, rev. ed. (1976), s.v. "Bell, Goodloe Harper."

[2] Emmett K. Vande Vere, The Wisdom Seekers (Nashville, Tenn.: Southern Publishing Association, 1972), pp.15-19, 42-47, 267-75.

[3] E. M. Cadwallader, A History of Seventh-day Adventist Education, 3rd ed. (Lincoln, Nebraska: Union College Press, 1958), pp. 17-23, 56-66.

though his basic biographical material relied heavily on the Youth's Instructor life sketch in 1899. Cadwallader's account is limited in its usefulness by its lack of documentation.

Rowena Purdon wrote two brief accounts of the history of the South Lancaster Academy. The first and shorter account, The Story of a School, was later expanded into That New England School.[1] These two booklets provide some interesting insights into the period when Bell was principal by one who graduated from South Lancaster four years after Bell left the school.

In 1885 the Review and Herald published a series of eight short articles on the history of the Sabbath school work up to that time.[2] These give some helpful background information as well as a short chronicle of Bell's labors. In 1910 Flora Plummer published the first of two small booklets on the history of the Sabbath school which briefly describe Bell's contribution in greater detail.[3]

Apart from these studies, the only other published accounts of any consequence to focus on Bell are the general histories of the Seventh-day Adventist Church by R. W. Schwarz,[4] A. W.

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[1]Rowena Elizabeth Purdon, The Story of a School (South Lancaster: College Press, n.d.), pp. 6-23, and That New England School (South Lancaster: College Press, 1956), pp. 27-40.

[2]C. C. L.[ewis], "Sketches of Sabbath School History," Review and Herald 62 (February 10-April 21, 1885).

[3]Flora L. Plummer, Early History of the Seventh-day Adventist Sabbath School Work (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., c. 1910), and From Acorn to Oak (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, c. 1920).

[4]Richard William Schwarz, Light Bearers to the Remnant (Mountain View, Cal.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1979), pp. 121-32.

Spalding,[1] and M. E. Olsen;[2] the personal recollections by former pupils such as J. O. Corliss, M. E. Olsen, D. W. Reavis, and M. A. Steward;[3] and a valuable assessment of his work as a teacher of English by J. O. Waller.[4] The history by J. N. Loughborough makes very little reference to Bell.[5]

Unpublished Accounts

There are practically no unpublished accounts of Bell's life and work. In 1966 E. C. Walter wrote a doctoral thesis on "The History of Seventh-day Adventist Higher Education in the United States." This included a description of Bell's labors for the church.[6] It too, however, is largely based upon the 1899 lifesketch and adds nothing new to the information already available on Bell.

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[1]Arthur Whitefield Spalding, Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists, 4 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1962), 2:51, 52, 115-25; 3:85.

[2]Mahlon Ellsworth Olsen, A History of the Origin and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists, 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1925), pp. 323, 332-41.

[3]J. O. Corliss, "Early Experiences," Review and Herald 96 (March 6, 1919):10, 11; M. E. Olsen, "Recollections of Prof. G. H. Bell," Youth's Instructor 68 (May 18, 1920):4, 5; Drury W. Reavis, "Some of Our Pioneers," Review and Herald 96 (July 31, 1919):13; Drury W. Reavis, I Remember (Takoma Park: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., n.d.); Mary Alicia Steward, "The Beginnings of Our School Work," Review and Herald 101 (September 18, 1924):29-31.

[4]J. O. Waller, "Adventist English Teachers: Some Roots," Spectrum 10 (November, 1979):37-45.

[5]J. N. Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1909), p. 391.

[6]Edwin Carlton Walter, "A History of Seventh-day Adventist Higher Education in the United States," Ed.D. dissertation, University of California, 1966, pp. 30-47.

In 1967 Derek Beardsell completed his M.A. thesis on George Royal Avery.[1] This thesis gives a brief portrayal of Bell as a teacher from Avery's perspective as one of Bell's students at Battle Creek College.

Major Sources

This study is a documentary account derived from the collection and evaluation of both published and unpublished primary sources. Secondary sources, such as histories of nineteenth-century education, denominational histories, and relevant county histories, were also used to provide contextual and biographical material.

A significant part of the study of Bell's teaching in English was based upon an examination of his eight textbooks, including his language series of five volumes. He also wrote a series of eight Sabbath school lesson books which were the first graded books for Bible study within the Seventh-day Adventist church.

Church yearbooks documented administrative decisions and activities related to Bell's work. The annual school bulletins for Battle Creek College provided helpful information on the operation of this school while Bell was associated with it.

Particular study was given to the Battle Creek newspapers, especially the Battle Creek Daily Journal and the Nightly Moon, during the period Bell lived and worked in Battle Creek.

Important primary sources also included such journals as the Review and Herald, Youth's Instructor, Sabbath School Worker,

[1]Derek C. Beardsell, "George Royal Avery, A Rich Poor Man," M.A. thesis, Andrews University, 1967, pp. 95-93.

Christian Educator, Health Reformer, and Bell's own periodical, The Fireside Teacher.

The minutes of the Battle Creek College Board (1877-1882) and of the South Lancaster School Board (1882-1884) were very useful in providing documentation of the operation of those schools during Bell's tenure in them. The General Conference Minutes made little reference to Bell.

It is unfortunate that relatively few letters by Bell himself are still extant. Most of his correspondence appears to have been lost or destroyed. His known surviving correspondence is housed in the Andrews University Heritage Room and the White Estate in Washington, D.C.

Letters about him or to him, however, do exist, and three people in particular provided very valuable insights into Bell's personality and character in their letters and/or memoirs. George Royal Avery was a student in Bell's classes at Battle Creek College beginning in 1875. He continued contact with him to the end of Bell's life. Avery's diaries and extensive collection of manuscripts, letters, and other material were a particularly useful source.

Drury Reavis was another student whom Bell taught at Battle Creek College until his graduation in 1880. Reavis also served for a short time as a secretary in the Sabbath school of which Bell was the superintendent. Though none of his correspondence with Bell remains, he did describe his reactions to Bell both as a student in his class and as a secretary in his Sabbath school

in his memoirs entitled I Remember.[1]

The third individual who knew Bell intimately was Ellen White, one of the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist church. Of all who were his acquaintances and whose correspondence with him or about him still remains, Ellen White has written the most comprehensively. For this dissertation, therefore, her writings constituted a significant witness both to Bell as a man and to his contribution to the church. Their reliability has been accepted on two grounds. First, Ellen White occupied a unique position within the Seventh-day Adventist church by virtue of the belief held by the church that God bestowed upon her the biblical gift of prophecy. According to the scriptural record, God communicated to those who received this gift through visions or dreams, and then commissioned them to speak or write their messages for the benefit of individuals or groups.[2] The Seventh-day Adventist church believes that Ellen White met the biblical tests by which the genuineness of any more recent manifestation of the prophetic gift is determined.[3] Consequently, when Ellen White wrote about persons or situations on the basis of claimed supernatural revelation, such material is viewed as being both normative and authoritative

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[1]Reavis, I Remember, pp. 90-92, 110-113.

[2]See, for example, Num 12:6; Jer 1:5-10; 36:2-4; Ezek 2:1-7; Amos 3:7; Acts 3:21; 1 Cor 12:1, 4, 10, 28; Eph 4:8, 11-12; 2 Pet 1:21. For a detailed analysis of Ellen White's role in the Seventh-day Adventist church see Roy E. Graham, "Ellen G. White, An Examination of Her Position and Role in the Seventh-day Adventist Church," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1977.

[3]Biblical tests of the prophetic gift are presented in Deut 13:1-5; 18:20-22; Isa 8:20; Matt 7:15, 16; and 1 John 4:2.

in those given situations. Since some of her written material makes reference to supernatural revelation concerning Bell, such statements have been accepted as trustworthy in this dissertation.

Second, apart from the implications inherent in the above statement, Ellen White knew Bell personally. Her children were taught by him at the Battle Creek school. She often worshipped in the same church as he did during the time her home was located in Battle Creek up through 1881. Her husband, James, was also well acquainted with Bell and had considerable respect for his teaching ability. Both of the Whites were closely connected with the Battle Creek College in the early days of its development, and Ellen White knew those who were involved in the crisis at the college in 1882. Thus her testimony about Bell is also considered because she was a contemporary witness whose Christian character was highly regarded by those who knew her.

In addition to the correspondence by those specifically named above, letters relating to Bell from the following people were also examined: W. C. White, J. E. White, M. E. Olsen, G. I. Butler, J. H. Kellogg, S. N. Haskell, U. Smith, Eva Bell, Winnie Loughborough, and Lilla Hough.

The diaries of G. R. Avery, H. P. Holser, Ella Graham, G. A. Johnson, and Sara (Skinner) Johnson added a personal dimension to the understanding of Bell's character, as did the manuscripts and memoirs of S. Brownsberger, W. C. White, J. E. White, and Alma (Wolcott) Caviness.

Numerous other miscellaneous sources were also examined

in an attempt to discover hitherto unknown facts about Bell's early life. These included nineteenth-century public school reports, county records, and the United States census reports for the years 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880 which provided some valuable biographical data.

Design of the Study

The study is presented in a chronological framework with the exception of two chapters (three and six). The content of these chapters was more suitable for topical treatment. Chapter one is an introduction to Bell's early life in the states of New York and Michigan. It also examines his early career as a teacher. Chapter two describes his initial contact with the Seventh-day Adventist church in Battle Creek Michigan, and his subsequent opening of the first denominationally sponsored school. Chapter three records his notable pioneering contribution to the Sabbath school work of the Seventh-day Adventist church between 1869 and 1887. The fourth chapter resumes the account of Bell's work as a teacher in Battle Creek College until his resignation in 1882. His brief career as the founding principal of the South Lancaster Academy is the subject of chapter five. Among Bell's most lasting contributions were his English textbooks. These are examined in chapter six within the context of the approaches to the teaching of English in the late nineteenth century. The final chapter examines Bell's work as a Christian educator during his retirement years between 1884 and 1899. It especially focuses on his efforts on behalf of home culture and correspondence school work.

Acknowledgments

The preparation of a dissertation is not done without the encouragement, support, and assistance of many people. Some have helped directly, while others have helped in a more indirect but nonetheless tangible way by their prayers and kind words. To all such the writer is extremely grateful. Special recognition, however, is due to some because of the large contribution they have made to the completion of this work.

Gratitude is sincerely expressed to the officers of the Australasian Division for the moral and financial support given during the two and one-half years of study at Andrews University.

The writer has been particularly fortunate in receiving the benefit of the experience and knowledge of the four very supportive and considerate members of his doctoral committee. Particular thanks is expressed to the chairman, Dr. George Knight, for so freely giving his time, counsel, and companionship. Supporting him were Dr. Roy Graham, Dr. John Waller, and Dr. Cedric Ward, whose professional guidance, constructive criticism, and constant encouragement are greatly appreciated.

The work involved in researching this project has been made considerably lighter by the help so willingly given by the following people: Mrs. and Mrs. Glenn Davis of Battle Creek; Mrs. Louise Dederen and the staff of the Heritage Room, Andrews University; Mr. Bert Haloviak of the General Conference Archives, Washington, D.C.; Mrs. Hedwig Jemison and the staff of the Ellen G. White Research Center, Andrews University; the staff at the

Ellen G. White Research Center, Washington, D.C.; Dr. L. Massie of the Waldo Library, Western Michigan Library, Kalamazoo; Mrs. Marlene Steele of the Willard Library, Battle Creek; Dr. Emmett Vande Vere of Collegedale, Tennessee; and Dr. Myron Wehtje of Atlantic Union College.

The writer is grateful to Mrs. J. Mapes, a granddaughter of Goodloe Bell's sister Annette, for the information and help given. Appreciation is also expressed to Mrs. J. J. McLoone, who is a great-granddaughter of Goodloe Harper Bell. Mrs. McLoone kindly made available a book containing twenty of Bell's handwritten original essays not previously known to exist.

Words of gratitude are also due to those who gave special help in the final preparation of this dissertation. Mrs. Pat Saliba, assisted by the writer's wife, typed the manuscript in a thoroughly competent, helpful manner. Mrs. Joyce Jones, the Andrews University Dissertation Secretary, always rendered cheerful and constructive advice.

A very special expression of praise and gratitude is reserved for the writer's wife, Deirdre, who gave so much in encouragement, love, and understanding throughout this study program. Four children, Coralie, Peter, Lanelle, and Phillip in Australia, also deserve special thanks for their patient endurance of parental absence and for their loving support.

Finally, the writer expresses deep gratitude to his Heavenly Father for His sustaining grace and love and for His revelation of Christian education.

CHAPTER 1

EARLY YEARS FROM NEW YORK TO MICHIGAN

1832-1866

The lifespan of Goodloe Harper Bell, extending over the latter two-thirds of the nineteenth century, covered a period of dramatic change. Andrews Jackson had become the seventh president of the United States three years before Goodloe was born and the influence of nationalism and Jacksonian democratic ideals laid the foundation for new and rapid political developments. With the extension of the franchise more than four times as many men voted in 1836 as in 1824. Americans were sure that their nation was a nation on the move. Optimism was the spirit of the day.[1] Adolphe E. Meyer well describes the period between 1825 and 1850 as an age

> . . . of gaudy hopes and gusty aspirations, of visions of unending progress, of moral and humanitarian causes, of reform and uplift movements. It was a period of national awakening, and of the kindling of optimism and self-confidence, and even of braggadocio, which springs from freedom and from a sense of achievement.[2]

During the first decades of the nineteenth century public

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[1]Henry F. Graff, gen. ed., The Life History of the United States, 12 vols. (New York: Time Incorporated, 1963), vol. 4: The Sweep Westward, by Margaret L. Coit, pp. 9, 20.

[2]Adolphe E. Meyer, An Educational History of the American People (New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1957), p. 149.

schools were still rare. "Unschooled, uncontrolled youngsters loitered in the streets, assaulting and insulting passersby, stealing, wrecking, setting fires."[1] Legislation in some states to establish free schools had not met with public support. Not until the 1840s would America begin to feel the impact of the "common school revival" led by such far-seeing educators as Josiah Holbrook, Horace Mann, and Henry Barnard.

Changes of great consequence were occurring in industry and travel. Coit says that "modern industrial America was born in the time of Jackson."[2] The increase in cotton mills illustrates the phenomenal industrial growth: less than a score of mills by 1810, nearly 800 by 1830, and by 1840, nearly 1300.[3] Coupled with the incredible growth in the size and the population of the United States between 1825 and 1850 was enormous material progress. The development of canals, roads, railroads, together with the onset of steam and the machine brought men closer together and dramatically increased trade and migration.[4] The expansion of the western frontier, with its accompanying mass movement of thousands, made pioneers of many who left the security of their homes in the east and dreamed of adventure, wealth, and land in the west.

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[1]Coit, The Sweep Westward, p. 10.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Meyer, An Educational History, p. 141.

[4]Ray Allen Billington, Westward Expansion: A History of the American Frontier (New York: Macmillan Co., 1949), pp. 332-48.

Bell's Ancestors Move West

Among those who left New England for western lands early in the nineteenth century were the Bell and Blodgett families.[1] In 1807 Goodloe Bell's paternal grandfather migrated from Vermont to Jefferson County in upper New York. He and his family settled on a farm in Rutland, six miles southeast of Watertown. Twenty-one years later, Samuel Blodgett and his family left Massachusetts to develop a farm in Antwerp, twenty miles northeast of Watertown.

Settlers in the early 1800s found that most of upper New York was very stony. However, Jefferson County, a gently undulating land, had mostly a superior sandy loam that yielded abundant crops. The enormous trees made carving out a home and farm very difficult.[2] In fact, most of Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties remained wilderness until the late nineteenth century. Due to the rough country and the distance from markets, development was very slow and population remained small.[3]

It was in Jefferson County, then, that both the Bell family in Rutland and the Blodgett family to the northeast in Antwerp developed their farms and enjoyed the rewards of their labors.

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[1]For a detailed account of Goodloe Bell's ancestry, see appendix A.

[2]John W. Barber and Henry Howe, Historical Collections of the State of New York (New York: S. Tuttle, 1841), p. 200.

[3]For a history of the early development of Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties see David M. Ellis et al., A Short History of New York State (New York: Cornell University Press, 1957), pp. 156-58; and Billington, Westward Expansion, pp. 259-61. Ellis et al also provide an informative description of pioneer farming in New York during this period. See their Short History, pp. 163-69.

And it was in Antwerp on November 15, 1830, that David Bell, then twenty-four years of age, married Lucy Ann Blodgett.[1]

It is not known whether David and his new wife remained in Antwerp or engaged in farming near his own parents in Rutland or elsewhere. Both villages were near Watertown, though Rutland was some fourteen miles closer. The village of Watertown on the Black River had been incorporated in 1816 and by the 1830s was becoming a significant center with several large woolen and cotton mills. Its population in 1830 was 4,768, the second largest village in the county of Jefferson.[2]

Bell's Early Life

According to biographical accounts,[3] it was "near Watertown" that David and Lucy's eldest child was born on April 7, 1832.[4]

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[1] "Petition for Assignment of Dower by Lucy Ann Brown in the Estate of David Bell," filed November 2, 1874, Probate Court, Grand Haven, County of Muskegon, Michigan.

[2] History of Jefferson County New York with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers (Philadelphia: L. H. Everts & Co., 1878), p. 140.

[3] J. C. Bartholf, "Goodloe Harper Bell," YI 47 (February 9, 1899):102. All subsequent Seventh-day Adventist historical accounts of Bell's life that refer to his birth and early life appear to be based upon Bartholf's life-sketch of Goodloe Harper Bell. See, for example, E. M. Cadwallader, A History of Seventh-day Adventist Education, 3rd ed. (Lincoln, Neb.: Union College Press, 1958), p. 17; Emmett K. Vande Vere, The Wisdom Seekers (Nashville: Southern Publishing Association, 1972), p. 16; Mahlon Ellsworth Olsen, A History of the Origin and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists, 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1925), p. 332.

[4] No birth certificate exists for Goodloe Bell. The sources named in the previous footnote give the month and year of his birth. The only record of the date in April is that inscribed upon Bell's gravestone in the Oak Hill Cemetery, Battle Creek, Michigan. The

He was named Goodloe Harper Bell, possibly after his mother's brother, Robert Goodlow Harper Blodgett.[1]

Goodloe was the first of twelve children, nine of whom lived to maturity.[2] In 1832 and for some time afterwards, Asiatic cholera was raging and spreading terror throughout the country. Special measures were adopted in Watertown to prevent its spread, and the surrounding towns and villages were invited to cooperate in the adoption of sanitary measures.[3] It is possible that some

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records of the Ninth Census point to approximately 1832 as the year of Bell's birth. See Population Schedules of the Ninth Census of the United States--1870, Michigan, vol. 4, Calhoun County, 3rd Ward of the City of Battle Creek, p. 20.

[1]It is also possible that either Goodloe Harper Bell or his uncle, Robert Goodlow Harper Blodgett, were named after the prominent politician, Robert Goodloe Harper (1765-1825). Dictionary of American Biography, 1943 ed., s.v. "Harper, Robert Goodloe."

[2]The eight children who were born after Goodloe and who lived to maturity are given below in the order of their birth. No birth certificates are available. The year of their birth, given in parenthesis and accurate within one year, has been obtained from information in the Population Schedules of the 1860, 1870, and 1880 Censuses. In the case of two of the children, biographical accounts give more accurate birth dates. Helen (unknown); Ambrose (1838); Emer (1840); Chauncey (1843); Darwin (February 20, 1845); Annette (also known as Florilla--July 12, 1847); Alice (also known as Emogene or Emma--1850); Inez (1854). See Population Schedules of the 8th Census of the United States--1860, Michigan, vol. 4, Town of Cazenovia in the county of Muskegon, p. 30; Population Schedules of the 9th Census of the United States--1870, Michigan, vol. 4, Town of Cassinovia [sic] in the county of Muskegon, p. 9; Population Schedules of the 10th Census of the United States--1880, Village of Canada Corners, County of Muskegon, p. 24; Biographical History of Northern Michigan Containing Biographies of Prominent Citizens (Indianapolis: B. F. Bowen & Co., 1905), p. 653; Portrait and Biographical Record of Muskegon and Ottawa Counties Michigan (Chicago: Biographical Pub. Co., 1893), p. 226.

[3]William H. Horton, ed., Geographical Gazetteer of Jefferson County, N.Y. 1684-1890 (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse Journal Co., 1890), pp. 729-730.

of the three children who died in childhood were victims of this epidemic.

David Bell and his family did not remain in Jefferson County. At some time between 1832 and 1845 he moved to the village of Rossie in St. Lawrence County, some thirteen miles north of Antwerp. In 1845 his son, Darwin, had his birth recorded in Rossie, and two years later the record of the birth of his daughter, Annette, is given as St. Lawrence County.[1] The 8th Census taken in 1860 lists another daughter, Alice (also known as Emogene or Emma), as being born approximately three years later, or about the year 1850, in the state of New York.[2] This is significant because the Bell family is described as being in Hillsdale, Michigan, in 1851. It would seem, then, that 1850-51 was the time when they migrated west to eventually commence a new life in the area west of Grand Rapids, Michigan. Goodloe Bell was then about eighteen years of age.

The two decades between 1830 and 1850 were dramatic in the development of the state of Michigan. Of notable significance in the opening up of this state to settlers from the state of New York and further east was the completion in 1825 of the Erie Canal from the Hudson River to Buffalo on Lake Erie.[3] Michigan was then

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[1] Biographical Record of Muskegon and Ottawa Counties, p. 226, and Biographical History of Northern Michigan, p. 653.

[2] 8th Census--1860, Town of Cazenovia, County of Muskegon, Michigan, p. 30.

[3] Billington, Westward Expansion, pp. 301-4; Leo C. Lillie, Historic Grand Haven and Ottawa County (Grand Haven: n.p., 1931), pp. 78-80.

connected by continuous water transit with the tide water at New York. The effect to the northwest territory was almost immediate. Within a short time the steamers "Superior," "Henry Clay," and "Pioneer" were moving hundreds of homeseekers from Buffalo to Detroit. The travellers were undeterred by the overcrowded canal boats, the poor food, and the swarming mosquitoes though they were hardly uncomplaining. They were now able to travel cheaply with their household goods, and "be sure of reaching their destination without losing a wagon in a mudhole."[1]

This new means of access would not have been so significant if unsettled conditions in New York had not influenced thousands there to move west. The worn-out soils in many areas of New York could not compete with the virgin lands of the west. It was not difficult for the pioneering spirit of the Bell family to respond to the prospects of developing a new farm and commence the long journey westward.

Migration Further West

No record remains of the Bell family's migration to Michigan. By 1850 a canal linked Carthage, near Watertown, with the Erie Canal at Rome, New York. The rail route from Rome to Buffalo was also available for travellers.[2] The route taken from Buffalo to Michigan depended upon whether the family interrupted their journey to Hillsdale at Oberlin, Ohio. Steamers brought

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[1]Billington, Westward Expansion, p. 301.

[2]Ellis et al, A Short History, pp. 246-47, 251.

passengers from Buffalo to Cleveland, and beginning in the midsummer of 1850, a train connected Cleveland with Wellington, nine miles from Oberlin. Between 1850 and 1853, this was the usual way to travel to Oberlin College.[1]

Education at Oberlin

Practically all of the major histories of Seventh-day Adventist educational development written in this century refer to Goodloe Bell's attendance at Oberlin College in Ohio.[2] Oberlin College, established in 1833, was a prominent school of educational reform.[3] Many of its principles were similar to those later promoted by the Seventh-day Adventist pioneer, Ellen White, in the educational program she outlined to her church in and after 1872. They would also be strongly supported by Goodloe Bell.

The histories of Bell all appear to be based upon the earliest known sketch of Bell's life which was published by one of his students, J. C. Bartholf, three weeks after Bell died.

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[1]Robert Samuel Fletcher, A History of Oberlin College from Its Foundation through the Civil War, 2 vols. (Oberlin, Ohio: Oberlin College, 1943):2:545.

[2]Cadwallader, History, p. 17; Olsen, Origin and Progress, p. 332; Vande Vere, Wisdom Seekers, p. 16; Arthur Whitefield Spalding, Origin and History of Seventh-Day Adventists, 4 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1962), 2:116; Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, rev. ed. (1976), s.v. "Bell, Goodloe Harper;" R. W. Schwarz, Light Bearers to the Remnant (Mountair View, Cal.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1979), p. 122; C. Mervyn Maxwell, Tell It to the World, rev. ed. (Mountain View, Cal.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1977), p. 219.

[3]For a comprehensive treatment of Oberlin College from 1833 until the Civil War see Fletcher, History of Oberlin College, 2 vols.

In this account Bartholf states that the Bell family left the northern part of New York and

> . . . moved still farther west, settling near Oberlin, Ohio, where the now famous and successful Oberlin College had recently been opened. This change was a most gratifying one to the aspiring and studious young man, as it gave promise of affording him the much-coveted opportunity of acquiring a college education. He entered the school, and remained there a short time; but he was doomed to bitter disappointment in realizing the bright dreams of securing a thorough college training. Soon after entering the institution his family deemed it wise to make another move still farther west, this time settling near Hillsdale, Mich., and still later, in the vicinity of Grand Rapids.[1]

Bartholf stated that Bell was disappointed by this loss of the opportunity for further education.[2] Nevertheless he "improved every moment for study and reading, and was maturing plans to return to Oberlin, when his father died, leaving Goodloe, his eldest son, to be henceforth the virtual head of the large family of younger children."[3] Further examination of the two succeeding paragraphs would suggest that Bell's attempt to study at Oberlin, the death of his father, and Bell's assumption of the father-role in his family all occurred before Bell was nineteen years of age. Bartholf continued:

> Though deprived of the opportunity of continuing his studies at college, he did not give up the idea of securing a thorough education. Thereafter he redoubled his efforts . . . and applied himself with increased diligence . . .

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[1]Bartholf, "Goodloe Harper Bell," p. 102.

[2]Appendix B contains two of Bell's essays entitled "My Books," and "My Books Again," in which he described his early love of learning.

[3]Bartholf, "Goodloe Harper Bell," p. 103.

> until he became one of the most successful teachers and educators the State of Michigan has ever produced. . . .
> When nineteen years of age, he began teaching country schools.[1]

The Adventist histories that have subsequently been written have interpreted Bartholf's account in this way.[2] One more recent example by E. M. Cadwallader will suffice:

> Possessed of the pioneer spirit, and perhaps because the Watertown area was getting too civilized by the time Goodloe had reached the age of probably sixteen, the family moved west and settled in or near Oberlin, Ohio. Here, to Goodloe's gratification was Oberlin College. . . . He was not there long, how long, we do not know, till his family moved again, this time to Hillsdale, Michigan. . . .
> In a final move, Goodloe's father took the family to Grand Rapids, Michigan. Here the youth improved his time by reading and studying and was planning on returning to Oberlin when the death of his father made him the acting head of the family.
> Young Bell continued to study and by the age of nineteen was qualified to teach a one-teacher country school.[3]

In order to evaluate the accuracy of Bartholf's account and the more recent histories concerning Bell's attendance at Oberlin and succeeding events, it is necessary to examine the evidence. The birth of David Bell's daughter, Alice, in New York in the second half of 1849 or early 1850,[4] indicates that the Bell family was still in New York at that time. Goodloe Bell would then have been seventeen or eighteen years of age. It is highly

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[1] Ibid.

[2] See for example, Cadwallader, History, p. 17; Olsen, Origin and Progress, p. 332; Schwarz, Light Bearers, p. 122.

[3] Cadwallader, History, p. 17.

[4] This is based on the 1860 Census record which in the first half of that year gives the age of Alice Bell as ten and her birthplace as New York. See 8th Census--1860, Town of Cazenovia, County of Muskegon, Michigan, p. 30.

unlikely that he would migrate west on his own, and so he could not have attended Oberlin at about the age of sixteen.

The land records at the Register of Deeds in Hillsdale, Michigan, do substantiate the presence of the Bell family in Hillsdale County in 1851. On December 31, 1851, David Bell purchased a 40-acre tract of land in Section 30 in the Township of Cambria.[1] The purchase price was $175.[2] Evidently during the next two and a quarter years considerable effort together with the farming experience of David and his family brought much improvement to the land because on March 31, 1854, David and Lucy Ann Bell are recorded as selling the land for $625.[3]

Their stay near Hillsdale between 1851 and 1854 is further confirmed by a biographical account of one of David's sons, Darwin, a younger brother to Goodloe. Concerning David Bell it states: "In 1851 he came to Michigan and settled in Hillsdale County, whence, three years later, he removed to Casenovia Township."[4].

A comparison of the above records points to the fact that if Goodloe did attend Oberlin, he would have done so briefly between

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[1]Cambria was a village some eight miles south of Hillsdale. It was named and given a post office in 1841. Walter Romig, Michigan Place Names (Grosse Point, Mich.: Walter Romig, n.d.), p. 94.

[2]Land Sale Indenture-Nelson Doud to David Bell, Register of Deeds, County of Hillsdale, Hillsdale, Michigan, Liber Y, p. 568.

[3]Land Sale Indenture--David Bell and wife to Horace Bowen. Register of Deeds, County of Hillsdale, Hillsdale, Michigan. Liber Y, p. 569.

[4]Biographical Record of Muskegon and Ottawa Counties, p. 226.

1850 and 1851, possibly during the winter of 1850/51. It is of interest that though the student lists at Oberlin have no record of Goodloe Bell ever attending the college, it is possible he may have attended a winter school. The archivist at the Oberlin College Archives has stated that winter schools were conducted at Oberlin College at this time, though no records remain either of those who attended them or of the subjects offered in 1850-51.[1] They were usually preparatory in content but higher studies were taught if the number of students justified them. In his History of Oberlin College, Fletcher wrote:

> What Summer School is to students of the present generation, Winter School was to the students of the mid-nineteenth century. . . . Winter School gave the student a chance to make up entrance requirements or other deficiencies and catch up with his class. The Winter School or "Winter Term" as it was sometimes called was not an integral part of the school year. All responsibilities, including the financial ones, were assumed by the little group of teachers who chose to take charge of it. . . . The usual rules were in effect. . . , some manual labor was usually available, and full credit was given for the courses taken.[2]

In support of Bell's attendance at Oberlin is the accuracy of Bartholf's reference to the Bell family's sojourn at Hillsdale. Since this is supported by original sources, it lends more credence to the report of the brief stay at Oberlin. Bartholf's article was published soon after Bell's death when his family and many others who knew Bell intimately were alive. Notice must also be

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[1] Interview with W. E. Bigglestone, Oberlin College Archives, Mudd Learning Center, Oberlin College, Ohio, September 9, 1981.

[2] Fletcher, History of Oberlin College, 2:735.

taken of the fact that of all the comprehensive Seventh-day Adventist historical accounts which have been written on Bell's life, the only three authors who knew Bell personally and who were his students all wrote of his attendance at Oberlin for a brief period.[1]

If Bell did participate in the winter school, it would have been long enough for some of the reform ideals of his teachers to make an impact upon his life. The Christian principles for which Oberlin stood, its high standards of personal morality, the Bible-centered curriculum, the combination of manual work and study, and the emphasis placed upon agriculture[2] were all principles Bell would later strongly uphold, especially after 1872.

Arrival in Michigan

In 1851 David Bell and his family arrived in Hillsdale county, where, as stated above, he purchased a farm in December and remained for more than two years until March 1854. Though none of the extant historical accounts state the fact, original sources reveal that at some time in the early fifties Goodloe Bell married Catharine Mary Stuart.[3] The location and date of this

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[1]The three authors were James C. Bartholf, Arthur W. Spalding, and Mahlon E. Olsen. The statement made about 1938 by Bell's son-in-law, Charles H. Giles, that Bell "had never been to college" can be interpreted to mean that Bell had never completed a college course nor had taken formal studies at the college level. See Charles H. Giles, "Stories of Old Advent Town," ca. 1938, Local History Collection, Willard Library, Battle Creek, chap. 3, p. 24.

[2]Fletcher, History of Oberlin College, 1:341-72; 2:634-64.

[3]The 8th Census lists Mary C. Bell (more usually called Catharine Mary) as the wife of G. H. Bell and gives her age as four years younger than Goodloe. See 8th Census--1860, Michigan, County

marriage have not yet been traced. The birth of a baby girl, Ida, about December 1853 would point to a marriage in 1852 or early 1853.[1]

It is presumed, therefore, that in about April, 1854,[2] David Bell and his family, accompanied by Goodloe Bell, his wife, and baby, left Hillsdale and journeyed north. The Bell family, being pioneers by tradition and experience, were not content unless they were at the frontier of development. In those days, Ottawa County was at the edge of Michigan expansion, and most of the settlers who began to carve out their farms from the heavily forested areas in the vicinity of the Grand River had come from New York and New England. They had journeyed west with a song of hope on their lips:

> Come all ye Yankee farmers who wish to change your lot,
> Who've spunk enough to travel beyond your native spot,
> And leave behind the village where Ma and Pa do stay,
> Come follow me and settle in Michigania--
> Yea, Yea, Yea, in Michigania.[3]

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of Ottawa, Chester Township, p. 142. The mother's maiden name of Stuart is given in the death certificate for her second daughter, Eva Bell Giles. Record of Deaths, Calhoun County Court House, Marshall, Michigan, book 14, p. 14.

[1]The only record of Ida's birth date is inferred from the inscription on her gravestone which stated that she died in September, 1854, aged nine months. "Gravestone Inscriptions Kent County--Michigan," inscriptions for Lisbon Cemetery in Sparta Township, Kent County, copied from the Muriel Link Collection, Michigan State Library, Lansing, Michigan, p. 78.

[2]Based upon the fact that David Bell sold his land in Cambria on March 31, 1854.

[3]Billington, Westward Expansion, p. 305.

David Bell took his family to Cazenovia[1] which had been established as a separate township in October 1852.[2] It was originally situated in Ottawa County until February 1859 when it became part of Muskegon County.[3] The first school teacher in Cazenovia, Mrs. M. E. Tenny, later described the area as it was in 1853, when the first school was opened, as being "covered with a magnificent forest, mostly hardwood. Game was plentiful. People used to get tired of venison."[4] The land was fertile and with its gently undulating terrain was soon to become known as "a good fruit country as well as unexcelled in production of grains and vegetables."[5] Into this wilderness, as it was in 1854, came David and Lucy Bell and their children and together they raised up a settler's cottage on the 160 acres David purchased on sections 20 and 29.[6]

A Home in Lisbon

Five miles to the south of Cazenovia lay the village of Lisbon in the townsnip of Chester. Chester had been surveyed in

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[1]A number of different spellings of the name of the town are found, including Casinova, Cassinovia, Casinovia, Casanova, Cazenovia, and the present spelling, Casnovia.

[2]Lillie, Historic Grand Haven, p. 252.

[3]Ibid, p. 294.

[4]Undated and unnamed newspaper article from 1912. Located in the "Ideal Scrapbook," vol. 1, p. 38, Public Library, Muskegon, Michigan.

[5]Muskegon Chronicle (Michigan), October 3, 1912, p.8.

[6]Biographical Record of Muskegon and Ottawa Counties, p.226.

1837 but had no settlers to speak of until 1845.[1] By the time Goodloe Bell arrived there in 1854, it had a population of 500.[2] In 1882 the area was described as "one of the best farming towns in the State," being well watered and suitable for grain crops and grazing.[3] On May 12, 1854, a patent was issued to Goodloe Bell for 80 acres of land on section 23 of Chester township.[4] Under the arrangements of the time, Bell could build upon and develop the land though payment for it was not completed until October 14, 1864.[5] Final proof was issued on January 5, 1865. After 1854 for at least eight years it would appear that Bell was located near Lisbon village where he was able to spend at least part of his time on his own farm. His love of farming and growing things was to be one of his most satisfying interests until the very day he died.

Goodloe and Catharine Bell had not been in Chester long before tragedy overtook them. Their baby daughter, Ida, at the age of nine months, passed away in September 1854. She was buried

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[1]Historical and Business Compendium of Ottawa County Michigan, 2 vols. (Grand Haven: Betts and Conger, 1892), 1:39-40.

[2]History of Ottawa County, Michigan (Chicago: H. R. Page & Co., 1882), p. 32.

[3]Ibid, p. 114.

[4]Tract Books, vol. 70, Ottawa County, Record Group 80-116, State Archives of Michigan, Lansing, Michigan.

[5]Deed Record, Register of Deeds, County of Ottawa, Grand Haven, Michigan, Book Z, p. 12. The land was described as: "The East half of the South East Quarter of Section 23 in Township 9, North of Range 13 West, containing 80 acres," for which Bell paid $320.

in the Lisbon cemetery not far from the family home.[1]

Five months later, the family was again overtaken by grief when David Bell, Goodloe's father, passed away on February 25, 1855, at the age of 48.[2] David's wife, Lucy, was left with the care of six children below the age of sixteen including a baby girl, Inez, who had been born the year before David died.[3] According to Batholf's lifesketch, referred to earlier, when Goodloe's father died, Goodloe was "henceforth the virtual head of the large family of younger children." It is not known to what extent this was literally true. It is clear from the facts stated above that the father's death did not occur before Goodloe was nineteen years of age, which has been inferred from Bartholf's article.[4] Goodloe was twenty-two years of age when his father passed away. He was married and presumably had a house on his land in Chester Township.

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[1]The record of gravestone inscriptions for the Lisbon cemetery states: "Bell, Ida. Daughter G. H. Bell and Catharine M. Died Sept. 1854. Age 9 months." "Gravestone Inscriptions Kent County--Michigan," p. 78.

[2]Biographical Record of Muskegon and Ottawa Counties, p.226 In 1874 David Bell's wife, Lucy Ann Brown (she had remarried in 1857/58) filed a Petition for Assignment of Dower in which the date for David's death is given as February 25, 1854. The difference in the year was probably due to the fact that nineteen years had elapsed since his death. He could not have died in February, 1854 because in March 1854, David and Lucy Bell both appeared before W. L. Stuart, a Justice of the Peace in the County of Hillsdale when their land at Cambria was sold. "Petition for Assignment of Dower by Lucy Ann Brown in the Estate of David Bell," filed November 2, 1874, Probate Court, County of Muskegon, Muskegon, Michigan; Land Sale Indenture--David Bell and wife to Horace Bowen, Register of Deeds, Hillsdale, Liber Y, p. 569.

[3]8th Census--1860, Town of Cazenovia, County of Muskegon, Michigan, p.30.

[4]Bartholf, "Goodloe Harper Bell," p. 103.

It is possible that he may have cared for the family from there, or he may have temporarily moved his home to Cazenovia. It cannot be doubted, however, that his faithfulness to duty so evident throughout his life, his Christian profession, as well as his love for his family would have made his help, counsel, and friendship very available to his mother and younger brothers and sisters.

Teaching in the Public School

Consideration must now be given to the work in which Bell was engaged between 1854 and 1866 which prepared him for his greatest legacy to his generation as the pioneer Christian educator of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

The three basic historical accounts of Bell's life that were written by his contemporaries, all refer to his early teaching experience. Spalding said that he became "an educational figure of some prominence in the public school system of the State of Michigan."[1] Olsen writes that Bell's teaching ability "won early recognition, and it was not long before he was filling good positions in some of the best schools of the State."[2] It has already been noted that Bartholf whose account was recorded before the other two, wrote: "When nineteen years of age, he began teaching country schools." Laying aside the difficulty of interpreting the time element in this statement as discussed above, Bartholf does describe Bell's teaching career as beginning in country

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[1]Spalding, Origin and History, 2:115.

[2]Olsen, Origin and Progress, p. 332.

schools. He added that finally Bell "was called to important positions in various city schools of the State."[1]

Further confirmation of the fact that Bell was engaged in school teaching in the 1850s and 60s is given in three other brief references. The first was the earliest known published description of Bell's work prior to 1866 that was published while Bell was still alive. In 1869, George W. Amadon introduced Bell as the new editor of the Youth's Instructor and described him as being "eminently qualified for his new position having spent the greater portion of his life in the school-room."[2] One year later, Bell himself referred to his earlier teaching experience by writing in the Youth's Instructor, "Having spent many years in the training of the young, we feel an interest in them that it would hardly be possible for us to feel under other circumstances."[3] Then, many years later, on the occasion of the death of Bell's eldest daughter Eva, the Battle Creek Moon-Journal referred to her father as having been "a public school teacher since his youth."[4]

It is unfortunate that no official records of Bell's teaching in any public school can be traced. The annual reports of the Superintendent of Public Instruction during the 1850s and 60s

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[1]Bartholf, "Goodloe Harper Bell." p. 103.

[2]G. W. Amadon, "A New Editor," YI 17 (July 1969):52. See also C. C. Lewis, "Sketches of Sabbath-School History, No. 5," RH 62 (March 10, 1885):151.

[3]G. H. Bell, "The Present Volume," YI 18 (December 15, 1870):189.

[4]Battle Creek Moon-Journal, February 27, 1931, p.22.

rarely refer to individual teachers. Inspectors' reports in Chester Township do list the names of some of the teachers in the district schools at this time,[1] but the records are not complete and none contains the name of Bell as a district-school teacher. Thus it is not known whether Bell commenced his teaching career in the county of Hillsdale (where he was when he was nineteen years old), Cazenovia (because of his family responsibilities following the death of his father soon after the family arrived from Hillsdale), or in Chester Township.

One piece of evidence that may point to Hillsdale County as the location of his first school is an advertisement that was printed on the back page of Bell's textbook, Guide to Correct Language, published in 1882. It identifies Bell as being "a successful educator" in English "for more than thirty years," or since about 1851.[2] This would tend to confirm Bartholf's account which stated that Bell was nineteen years of age when he began to teach. Bell turned nineteen in 1851, and as described above, was presumably in Hillsdale County with his parents at that time.

By 1854 he was in Chester Township and presumably teaching in one of the surrounding schools. His residence near the village of Lisbon for most of the period between 1854 and 1866 is supported by evidence from six primary sources. First, it has already been

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[1]For example, see "Annual Report of the School Inspectors of the Township of Chester, County of Ottawa, to the County Clerk, for the year 1861," Record Group 55-11, State Archives, Lansing, Michigan.

[2]Advertisement located in back of G. H. Bell, Guide to Correct Language (Battle Creek, Mich.: Giles and Holser, 1882).

noted that Bell purchased eighty acres of land in May 1854 in Section 23 one mile west of the town of Lisbon in Chester Township.[1] Second, on September 13, 1857, the birth of their second daughter Eva is described as being in Lisbon.[2] Third, the 1860 Census records that the Bell family (which by then included another daughter, Clara, who had been born in 1859) was residing in Chester Township.[3] Fourth, the reports for the school inspectors of the Township of Chester for the years 1859, 1861, and 1862 list Goodloe H. Bell as one of the three school inspectors for each year.[4] (In the 1860 Census, Bell's occupation for the year 1860, that was omitted from the inspectors' reports, is listed as "farmer"). Fifth, on February 20, 1865, Bell and his wife Catharine sold twenty acres of their land in Chester Township.[5] They still retained sixty acres but it is significant that the indenture should describe Bell as being "of Ionia County." This is the first indication that Bell may have been later located in a school outside of Chester

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[1]Tract Books, vol. 70, Ottawa County, Record Group 80-116, State Archives, Lansing, Michigan.

[2]Eva Bell Giles obituary, RH 108 (April 23, 1931): 29; Battle Creek Moon-Journal, February 27, 1931, p. 22.

[3]8th Census-1860, Michigan, County of Ottawa, Chester Township, p.142.

[4]"Annual Report of the School Inspectors of the Township of Chester, County of Ottawa, to the County Clerk, for the years 1859, 1861 and 1862," Record Group 55-11, State Archives, Lansing, Michigan.

[5]Deed Record, Register of Deeds, County of Ottawa, Grand Haven, Michigan, Book 7, p. 437. The remaining 60 acres Bell sold to John Crowley for $1,800 on August 31, 1866, just before his first visit to Battle Creek. Deed Record, Register of Deeds, County of Ottawa, Grand Haven, Michigan, Book 4, p. 192.

Township. Sixth, tragedy again befell the Bell family when Goodloe's wife Catharine died on February 2, 1866, at the age of 29 and was buried in the Lisbon cemetery.[1] This, however, does not necessarily suggest that Bell was then living in Lisbon. He may have buried his wife in that cemetery because his baby daughter, who had died over eleven years previously, was buried there.

The conclusion that may be drawn from a consideration of this evidence is that Bell was engaged in teaching and farming in the Lisbon district between 1854 and 1863. For at least three of those years he served as visiting inspector of schools in Chester Township. What must be called into question, however, are the statements that suggested he was promoted to fill "important positions" in the state's "city schools." If he did become "an educational figure of some prominence" in the Michigan public-school system, as Spalding says, then, except for his work as an inspector, the evidence for this is lacking. It is unlikely that between 1854 and 1863 he was connected with any "city schools." Lisbon was situated about twenty-three miles from Muskegon, and sixteen miles from Grand Rapids, the locations of the nearest city schools.

Between 1863 and 1866 it is possible Bell may have relocated his home and work in Ionia County. Practically nothing is known, however, of his whereabouts during this period. In 1865, when Bell sold some of his land in Chester Township, as noted above, his location was given as Ionia County, east of Grand Rapids.

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[1] "Gravestone Inscriptions-Kent County, Michigan," p. 78.

That he may well have occupied a teaching or school supervisory post in this region is supported by two items of evidence. First, at the time of his death the Christian Educator described Bell's teaching career before 1866 by saying that he "was widely known as a pioneer Michigan educator, having held important teaching positions in Grand Rapids, Portland, and elsewhere."[1] Portland is situated in Ionia County. A survey of the reports by the Portland school inspectors between 1863 and 1866 reveals that he was not an inspector. He may, however, have been a teacher in the area but that has not yet been established.

The second piece of evidence is an affidavit signed by Oscar F. Conklin and William P. Conklin in 1902. They indicated that they knew Goodloe Bell in 1858 and for about ten years afterwards. "His occupation was school teacher, and he taught in Ottawa County and some of the time in Kent County. He resided in [the] Township of Chester on a farm . . . the greater part of that time."[2]

The report in the Christian Educator stated that Bell had taught in Grand Rapids, which is in Kent County, as well as in Portland, Ionia County. If both these pieces of evidences are reliable, they indicate that Bell did occupy some teaching positions in Grand Rapids and Portland between 1863 and 1866, though this has yet to be better substantiated.

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[1]"Prof. G. H. Bell," The Christian Educator 3 (January 1899):122.

[2]General Affidavit by Oscar F. Conklin and William P. Conklin, June 26, 1902, in Application for Widow's Pension, no. 54351, by Harriet (Bryant) Bell, Military Service Records, Washington, D. C.

Before concluding this introduction to Goodloe Harper Bell as an educator, it is important to understand the context of those educational influences that he brought with him to Battle Creek in 1866. It is pertinent therefore to examine education as it was in the school districts of Michigan in the 1850s and 60s, including the role of the visiting inspector of schools.

Early Educational Theory and Practice

The twenty-five year period from 1850 to 1875 witnessed a remarkable development in education in the state of Michigan as well as in the rest of the United States. In 1850, Michigan was completing fifteen years of statehood. Those who framed the state Constitution in 1835 planned that the legislature should provide a system of common schools which should be maintained in every district for at least three months in the year. The second constitution of 1850 added another imposition upon the legislature by stating that such a school system should be available without cost to all. Michigan was slow to adopt both of these mandates but the foundation for education had been laid.[1]

The school system was organized around the ungraded, single-district school which the state's pioneers had brought with them from New York and New England. The Report of the Michigan Superintendent of Public Instruction for 1855 states that there were 3,255 such school districts under the supervision of 5,078 "qualified"

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[1]George N. Fuller, ed., Michigan: A Centennial History of the State and Its People, 5 vols. (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1939), 2:397.

teachers of which 32 percent were males and 68 percent were females. The schools at that time were maintained for an average of 5.6 months each year. The average length of time that children between four and eighteen[1] attended school, however, was 3.4 months per year.[2] Schooling was not made compulsory until 1871 when an act required "all children between the ages of eight and fourteen to attend school at least twelve weeks each year unless excused for cause."[3]

Bell commenced his teaching career when the "common school revival" was beginning to emanate from New England throughout the American states as a result of the work of Horace Mann and other reformers. Though no direct contact between the ideas of these men and the teaching theory and practice of Goodloe Bell can be established, it is assumed that a man who read as widely as Bell did could not remain untouched by them.

Mann's ideas extended into every province of education. Normal schools were established, and the supervision of schools was made more effective.[4] The school year was lengthened, textbooks

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[1] In 1861, the State legislature changed the years of school age to five through twenty. Charles R. Starring and James O. Knauss, The Michigan Search for Educational Standards (Lansing: Michigan Historical Commission, 1969), p. 21.

[2] Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Michigan of the Years 1855, '56, and '57 (Lansing: Hosmer & Kerr, 1858), pp. 18-19.

[3] Fuller, ed., Michigan Centennial History, 2:403.

[4] Massachusetts established the first public normal school for the training of teachers in Lexington in 1838. By the end of the fifties, eleven had been founded. Four were in Massachusetts

were modernized, and teaching methods, in harmony with the theories of Pestalozzi, were gradually developed. The harsh discipline inherited from colonial times became more humanized and school libraries were enlarged and promoted. Meyer says of Mann's years in office in Massachusetts that education "was transformed from a hollow mockery into a secular system of the highest worth and dignity."[1]

In Michigan the Superintendent of Public Instruction, John M. Gregory, was among those who saw that the schools needed such a transformation. Gregory was the Superintendent from 1859 to 1864, the period when Bell was a visiting inspector of schools in Chester Township. Gregory gave his assessment of schooling in 1862 in the following description:

> In the case of large numbers of children, it is scarcely worth the time and money spent in attaining it. Term after term, these pupils endure the tedious confinement of the school room, and the hated drudgery of committing to memory incomprehensible lessons, and finally leaving school, able to read, but without ease or correctness--to write, in a stiff and almost illegible chirography, a few blundering sentences of bad grammar and worse orthography,--to solve the simple problems in some textbook on arithmetic so as to get the author's answers, . . . and perhaps to answer a part of the questions in some school geography.[2]

A description of the typical Michigan district school and schoolhouse in the 1850s serves to further clarify our understanding

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and one each in Connecticut, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Illinois, Minnesota, and Michigan. Meyer, An Educational History, p. 205.

[1] Ibid., p. 163.

[2] Twenty-Sixth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Michigan, With Accompanying Documents for the Year 1862 (Lansing: John A. Kerr & Co., 1862), pp. 15-16.

of the conditions of teaching and learning when Bell was closely connected to public education.

The teachers usually taught for two terms each year. The smallest attendance came in the summer term during July and August. In the summer, "children under eight were usually sent to district schools, which functioned virtually as nurseries in the planting, haying and harvesting seasons."[1] Women were commonly employed for the summer sessions when only the smaller children attended. After the age of eight or nine, boys generally attended only the winter schools because they were kept at home in summer to work on the farm.

The winter term varied in length, but the school had to be open for at least three months in the year to qualify for money from the primary-school fund. The general rule was to employ only men in the winter to handle the "large boys" of sixteen or seventeen and older. Both the younger and older children were usually in the same room since no effective grading came to most rural district schools until the 1860s and 70s.[2]

The average rural schoolhouse contained about forty-five pupils in the winter term. In the middle of the century, frame schoolhouses were gradually replacing those constructed of logs, but there were still many made of logs and they are aptly described by Starring and Knauss:

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[1] John Barnard and David Burner, The American Experience in Education (New York: Franklin Watts, 1975), p. 21.

[2] Ibid. See also Starring and Knauss, The Michigan Search, pp. 18-19: Edward H. Reisner, The Evolution of the Common School (New York: Macmillan Company, 1930), p. 312.

> In log schoolhouses, crude desks were built of boards fastened to slanted pegs driven into the walls on three sides of the room, with the teacher's desk or table on the fourth side near the door. In the newer buildings, desks replaced the slanting boards, and wood-burning stoves the rough fireplaces. Seating would conform to one of three plans. The desks might be in parallel lines across the width of the room, facing the teacher's desk; they might be arranged parallel to the sides of the room and to the end opposite the teacher's desk, with the pupils facing the teacher; or they might be in the same arrangement with the backs of the pupils toward the teacher--the rationale being that each pupil, not being able to watch the teacher, supposed the teacher's gaze to be directed at him and consequently refrained from mischief.[1]

The method of instruction was largely suited for individual children. The students brought books from home to school, and learning largely involved getting assignments "by heart." Learning, therefore, was more a matter of "dogged perseverance and courage than of intellectual appreciation or understanding."[2] Through much of the nineteenth century, learning by rote remained the predominant style.

The seeds to change this view were already being planted in American soil through the influence of such widely accepted pedagogical works as Samuel Hall's Lectures on School Keeping (1829) and David Page's Theory and Practice of Teaching (1847) which clearly reflect a dependence on Pestalozzi.[3] These men campaigned against the evil of rote learning--the learning of words and rules

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[1]Starring and Knauss, The Michigan Search, p. 19.

[2]Reisner, Evolution of the Common School, p. 312.

[3]Samuel Read Hall, Lectures on School Keeping (Boston: Richardson, Lord and Holbrook, 1829), pp. 78-79, 86-87; David P. Page, Theory and Practice of Teaching (New York: E. L. Kellogg & Co., 1894), pp.122-25.

without a consciousness of their meanings. The prevalence of poor teaching methods and, in many cases, the lack of knowledge on the part of the teacher threw the burden of learning upon the textbook. Lessons were learned in the reader and speller page by page. Completing the exercises in arithmetic meant getting the right answer, not understanding the process.

Like their modern counterparts, Hall and Page lamented the learning definitions or rules in arithmetic and grammar with little or no comprehension of the real meaning of the concepts involved. They suggested that a primary responsibility of teachers was to cultivate understanding in their pupils and thus develop that quality of knowledge from which further learning and practical application may proceed.

But how were teachers to develop such understanding? David Page, in particular, saw education as being primarily concerned with awakening the self-activities of the child. Teaching was not "a pouring-in process," so common in the schools of the mid-century, but a process in which the teacher first excites enquiry by preparing the mind with a desire to know and, if possible, to find out by itself. Page said that by giving the pupil the results before they are desired or before they have been sought for, the teacher "makes the mind of the child a two-gallon jug, into which he may pour just two gallons, but no more."[1]

This is relevant to this present consideration, for it

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[1] Ibid., p. 90.

will be shown that the emphasis on understanding and upon arousing enquiry through questioning were strong features of Bell's teaching methodology and were contrary to the general practice of his time. Most teachers of the 1840s and 50s were unaffected by the new pedogogy. Meyer stated that for all the wisdom of such teachers as Hall, Page, and others, it made little difference in most classrooms. The essence of the schoolman's task in those days was "to curb the child's bent for self-expression, to beat away his inherent wickedness, to crowd facts into his memory. . . ."[1] Though the specific educational influences operating upon Goodloe Bell cannot be traced, his prodigious efforts at self-education, so evident in the knowledge he brought with him to Battle Creek, in all probability brought him into contact with the ideas of the foremost educational leaders of his day. His ready acceptance of many of their principles helped to make him the outstanding teacher he was.

Inspector of Schools

The abilities demonstrated in the teaching field were clearly factors that must have won for him votes in 1859 from those in Chester Township who were electing their Board of School Inspectors. The school law of 1837 set up a system of inspection and supervision for the district schools that continued essentially unchanged until 1867. Three inspectors, one of whom was to be the Township Clerk, formed a board whose duties included the

[1]Meyer, An Educational History, p. 224.

examination of candidates for teaching, the supervision of the schools of the township, and the purchase of books for the Township Library.[1] They chose one of their number as "visiting inspector" whose duty it was to visit each school in the township at least once in each term "to enquire into the condition of such schools, examine the scholars, and give such advice to both teachers and pupils as he may think beneficial."[2] The Primary School Law recommended that an entire day be devoted to each school--"the forenoon being spent in witnessing the ordinary course of instruction, and the afternoon in a public examination of the scholars."[3] The visiting inspector was to be compensated at the rate of one dollar per day for the time spent in discharging his duties.[4]

An important part of the duties of the inspectors, as outlined in Section 85 of the Primary School Law, was the public examination of prospective teachers in regard to "moral character, learning, and ability to teach a School." After 1859, the teacher was to be given a certificate, which stated that a satisfactory pass had been attained in the common branches: reading, writing, spelling, geography, grammar, and arithmetic. Much stress was placed

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[1] School Funds and School Laws of Michigan with Notes and Forms to which are added Elements of School Architecture, etc., With Lists of Textbooks and Library Books. John M. Gregory, Superintendent of Public Instruction (Lansing: Hosmer and Kerr, 1859), pp. 190-93.

[2] Ibid., p. 194. [3] Ibid.

[4] The School Laws of Michigan with Notes and Forms to which are added Courses of Study for Common and Graded Schools, and a List of Recommended Textbooks, etc., John M. Gregory, Superintendent of Public Instruction (Lansing: John A. Kerr & Co., 1864), p.27.

upon the moral character. In the explanation of Section 85, it was stated:

> No excellency of scholarship or experience or skill in teaching, can compensate a School for the lack of moral purity and integrity in the Teacher. The Law has wisely made a good moral character a requisite for a qualified Teacher, since it is on the virtue as well as on the intelligence of the people that the safety of the Republic depends.[1]

The Annual Report of the School Inspectors of the Township of Chester for the year 1859 includes the name of Goodloe Harper Bell as one of the three township inspectors for that year. It listed eight schoolhouses in the township, four constructed of logs and four of frame construction. There were 286 children between the ages of four and eighteen in attendance who were taught by four male and nine female qualified teachers.[2]

Bell's name was not listed for 1860, but the report for both 1861 and 1862 describes Bell as the "visiting inspector." During 1861 Bell reported the examination of twelve teachers, eleven of whom received certificates. He made eighteen visits to the schools, all of which were inspected during the year. Attached to this report was a map of Chester Township drawn by Bell. It showed the boundaries of the school districts and the location of the eight district schools. Four of them were located within two miles of Bell's farm.

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[1] School Funds and School Laws, 1859, p. 200.

[2] "Annual Report of the School Inspectors of the Township of Chester, County of Ottawa, to the County Clerk, for the year 1859," Record Group 55-11, State Archives, Lansing, Michigan.

Bell reveals much about himself as well as the condition of the district schools in his 1861 report given in full below:

> 1st. Good order in Districts Nos. 1, 4, & 5. In 1 & 5 almost perfect order and system prevailed. In Nos. 6, 7 & 9 the order was not very good.
> 2nd. Morals and Behavior. The general behavior was very good except a want of respect for the teacher in some schools. I heard no swearing and saw no quarreling.
> 3. Progress in Scholarship. Good in Nos. 5 & 6.
> 4. Attendance very irregular.[1]

It is not known whether Bell himself was teaching in a school at this time. It would have been difficult to teach and be a visiting inspector at the same time. One of the other two inspectors for 1861 and 1862 was also listed as one of the district school teachers, but he was not the visiting inspector. Bell's occupation in the 1860 Census was described as "farmer." Certainly the visiting inspectors would need some kind of employment other than their school work. In fact this was a weakness in the system of school supervision, as the Superintendent of Public Instruction wrote concerning the office of school inspector in his report for 1860:

> Requiring but a temporary service, and offering but a meager remuneration, it either fails to command the service of qualified men, or finds them too busily engaged in their own affairs, to bestow the necessary time and attention upon the Schools.[2]

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[1] "Annual Report of the School Inspectors of the Township of Chester, 1861." Bell's 1861 report was reproduced in the Twenty Fifth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Michigan, with Accompanying Documents for the Year 1861 (Lansing: John A. Kerr & Co., 1861), pp 203-4 (Emphasis his.)

[2] Twenty-Fourth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Michigan, with Accompanying Documents for the Year 1860 (Lansing: Hosmer and Kerr, 1861), p. 21.

In his 1862 report, Bell indicated that there were 329 children attending nine schools in the district, none of which were graded schools. There were three male and twelve female qualified teachers who taught school for an average of only 4.8 months in that year. Bell also reported examining twenty-four teachers during the year, eighteen of whom received certificates. He made twenty-two visits to the schools for which he received twelve dollars in remuneration.

Bell's description of the schools in his township reflects both the condition of the schools and his own sense of humor. He wrote:

> We have two schoolhouses in the township that are large enough to seat the scholars comfortably but in one of these, the scholars are suspended between the heavens and the earth. Two other houses are comparatively large and well built, but not large enough to accommodate the schools.
>
> The other houses are poor, cold, small, and entirely unfit for use.
>
> Only one house in the township has a recitation seat.
>
> We have no apparatus or maps worthy of mention. No additions are made to our District Libraries and I fear they are not very useful.
>
> Good order, good behavior, and thorough intelligent teaching has characterized most of our schools but the efforts of teachers have been very much crippled by irregular attendance on the part of scholars, and want of interest on the part of patrons.[1]

It is possible that Bell may also have been the visiting inspector for 1863. In the report for that year, the same two inspectors, David Waller and John Pintler, who together with Bell constituted the Board of Inspectors the previous year, gave only

[1] "Annual Report of the School Inspectors, 1862."

the statistical details and added concerning the required written report: "The Visiting Inspector having failed to report we cannot report anything under that heading."[1] Bell's name is not listed again as township inspector.

Death of Bell's Wife

The events of 1866, described in the next chapter, point to a period prior to that year as one of increasing ill-health of Goodloe Bell. Certain of Bell's characteristics predisposed him to sickness in the stomach and nerves. He was a perfectionist. He demanded much of himself and of those with whom he worked. His physical condition was made worse by his constant study which both wearied his mind and weakened his body. As a result, he was not physically or emotionally prepared for the tragedy that overtook him and his three small daughters early in 1866. In the previous year his last daughter, Junia, had been born. The young mother, however, had not long to live. About eight months later Catharine, Goodloe Bell's wife, passed away on February 2, 1866. She was buried in the small cemetery near Lisbon. At her grave, Goodloe erected a simple headstone at the top of which was engraved a hand with a finger pointing heavenward. Above the hand two words are written which doubtless demonstrated not only Catharine's but also Goodloe's faith. They are "Meet me."[2]

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[1] "Annual Report of the School Inspectors, 1863."

[2] The gravestone still stands in the Lisbon cemetery, Sparta Township, Kent County, Michigan.

Her death was a devastating blow to the husband and father of three motherless children. The eldest was nearly eight and a half years old; the youngest, eight months. Nevertheless, this event was to be instrumental in bringing the family to Battle Creek where Goodloe Bell would discover a new faith and where he would make his greatest contribution as a religious educator.

Conclusion

This chapter has traced the first thirty-four years of Goodloe Bell's life. This detailed history was necessary for several reasons. First, it confirms and, in one or two rare instances, corrects Bartholf's biographical account of Bell's life, which is the oldest account known to exist. Second, it enlarges one's understanding of Bell's life and sees him against the background of his times. Third, it establishes the basis for Bell's significant contributions as a Christian educator.

The emphasis in this chapter has been on his educational foundations. Bell did not make his mark as a Christian educator until after 1866 when he came to the city of Battle Creek in Michigan. Though he was a Christian and involved in Sunday school work prior to this time,[1] nothing is known of his early commitment to religious education. Bell had become "an active Christian" in his youth, "entering the communion of the Baptist Church." Some time later he joined the sect known as Christians, or Disciples. Bartholf says that Bell believed "their tenets to be more

[1]Lewis, "Sketches of Sabbath School History, No. 5," p. 151.

in harmony with the Bible than those of his Baptist brethren yet his new faith "brought upon himself bitter opposition."[1]

Teachers in those days were urged to teach the principles of Christian morality to the children under their charge. Indeed, no less a figure than the Michigan Superintendent of Public Instruction in his 1864 annual report stated:

> God must come more and more into our daily life and history. The Man of Nazareth must become the Great Teacher of mankind. If the Bible is a divine truth and not a mere dream, and the world be predestined to Christianity; if the history of the last eighteen centuries has any true significance in it, then the last age of the world must be religious and Christian, and education must conform to, if it does not lead, the general movement. Why then endanger the prosperity and very existence of our public schools by holding them to the lower and secular levels of thought, while humanity itself is advancing to the higher and religious? The common schools must ultimately, and not long hence, become religious or perish.[2]

It is impossible to know to what extent Bell may have shared this view of education in 1864, but it is clear that particularly after 1872 his commitment to the teachings of "the Man of Nazareth" and to the goal of education being "religious" and "Christian" was a distinguishing feature of his work as a teacher. To a study of this new direction in his life this thesis now turns.

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[1]Bartholf, "Goodloe Harper Bell," p. 103.

[2]Twenty-Eighth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Michigan, with Accompanying Documents for the Year 1864 (Lansing: John A. Kerr & Co., 1864), pp. 52-53.

Fig. 2. Battle Creek College in the 1870s.

Fig. 3. The Western Health Reform Institute (Battle Creek) in 1866.

CHAPTER 2

FOUNDING THE FIRST SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST SCHOOL

1866-1875

This chapter examines the beginning of Goodloe Harper Bell's career as a Christian educator for the Seventh-day Adventist church. His particular significance between 1866 and 1875 lies in his appointment in 1872 as the first denominationally-employed teacher to operate a Seventh-day Adventist church-sponsored school. He thus pioneered the educational program for this church and laid the foundation for the worldwide system of education that has since been established. During the period covered by this chapter Bell also made notable contributions to two other Christian educational agencies. The first was the Sabbath School. Because of its special significance, however, his contribution in this area is treated in depth in chapter three. The second was his work as editor of the denominational journal, the Youth's Instructor, which is considered here.

Bell's first known contact with the Seventh-day Adventist church occurred in 1866 when he came to its Health Institute which had been recently opened in the city of Battle Creek in central Michigan. Battle Creek was the organizational headquarters of the church and became the location for Bell's home from 1867 until his

death in 1899.[1] In this city Bell founded his first school. A brief review of the establishment of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Battle Creek, therefore, provides a background for the study of the foundation of Bell's work in Christian education.

The first settlement in Battle Creek took place in 1831. A leading figure among the early pioneers was Judge Sands McCamly who was attracted to the water power available at the site where the Kalamazoo River, flowing north at this point, meets Battle Creek from the east. The town developed on the tongue of land between the two streams where the first log house was erected in 1832.[2]

In spite of the soil's fertility and the abundant water power, few settlers entered the area until after 1835 when Judge McCamly's sawmill began to operate. Then in 1837 the erection of a grist mill that could provide flour for the pioneer families attracted more settlers until by 1850 the village had grown large enough to be incorporated.[3] By that date Battle Creek was on the way to achieving its reputation as "The Queen City of Michigan." Later it would be said that "a most potent factor in the development of Battle Creek's prosperity" would be "the location there of a large colony of 'Seventh-day Adventists'" which had grown "until

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[1]Between 1882 and 1884 Bell lived in South Lancaster, Massachusetts, while he was in charge of the school there. His wife and part of his family, however, remained in his home at Battle Creek.

[2]Washington Gardner, History of Calhoun County, 2 vols. (Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1913), 1:311-12.

[3]Pioneer Collections--Report of the Pioneer Society of the State of Michigan, 40 vols. (Detroit: Wm. Graham's Presses, 1880), 2:213, 215.

that city is now [1903] the world's headquarters for that sect."[1]

Battle Creek Adventist Beginnings

By the early fifties, the city's population was about two thousand. Among them was David Hewitt, an "honest" Presbyterian peddler, to whom Joseph Bates[2] was directed in 1852, on Bates' first visit to Battle Creek. Hewitt became the first Seventh-day Adventist in Battle Creek and at his home on 338 West Van Buren Street the first meeting of Seventh-day Adventists in Battle Creek occurred on May 31, 1853. At the second meeting on June 6, Elder James White, and his wife Ellen were present.[3] Loughborough later stated that James White told the small group, "I am much impressed

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[1] Pioneer Collections--Report of the Pioneer Society of the State of Michigan, 40 vols. (Lansing: Robert Smith Printing Co., 1903), 3:352.

[2] Joseph Bates (1792-1872) was a former sea captain and one of the three principal founders of the SDA Church. In 1845 he commenced keeping the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath. The following year his 49-page tract, The Seventh-day Sabbath, a Perpetual Sign, was instrumental in convincing James and Ellen White to observe that day. Bates played a leading part in the organization of the church and shaping its beliefs. See Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, rev. ed. (1976), s.v. "Bates, Joseph."

[3] James White (1821-1881) was recognised as the most outstanding of the early leaders of the SDA Church. In 1849 he began a publishing work that he carried on in Battle Creek after 1855. He wrote extensively and founded a number of periodicals, including the church's major paper, The Review and Herald. From 1861 until his death in 1881, he was president of the church's publishing association except for a period of illness between 1865 and 1868. He was also closely associated with the operation of the two other major church institutions in Battle Creek: the Health Institute and Battle Creek College which opened in 1866 and 1875, respectively. He served as president of the General Conference during the periods 1865-1867, 1869-1871, and 1874-1880. See ibid., s.v. "White, James Springer," and James White, "Western Tour," RH 4 (June 23, 1853):21.

that if you are faithful there will yet be quite a company in Battle Creek."[1] Even James White could not have realized the extent to which his words were to be fulfilled.

Hewitt's home lay in the then undeveloped West End of the town on the pleasant and high ground overlooking the Kalamazoo River. Spalding suggested that Sands McCamly, the city's founder, intended this part to be the center of Battle Creek, and thus he "set aside a square for a public park, expecting that around it would be built the civic buildings and the business of the town."[2] But McCamly built a millrace farther east and attracted the business interests to the land between the Kalamazoo River and Battle Creek. The West End and the area around McCamly Park were left for the Adventists to develop.[3]

In 1855 the members of the church erected their first small battened meetinghouse on Cass Street near Hewitt's home.[4] Later that year, the publishing work of the church was established in the town. Opposite McCamly Park on the corner of West Main and

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[1]Loughborough, "Second Advent Experience," RH 100 (July 26, 1923):5.

[2]Arthur Whitefield Spalding, Footprints of the Pioneers (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1947), p. 160.

[3]The Review and Herald Publishing Association was established on the south side of the park, and the third and subsequent Adventist churches on the west, while the Health Institute (that later became the world-famous Battle Creek Sanitarium) and the Battle Creek College were two blocks north.

[4]"The Dedication of the Tabernacle," RH 53 (May 8, 1879):145. The church measured 18 by 24 feet, and in 1879 was described as forming the wing of a house on the corner of Van Buren and Cass Streets. Ibid.

Washington Streets, a two-storied wooden structure was built to house the printing equipment. In 1861, this building was moved down the slope toward the river to make way for a larger brick structure. It was later to be the location of Goodloe Bell's first Seventh-day Adventist school.

The establishment of the publishing work brought a rapid increase in the membership of the Seventh-day Adventist church in Battle Creek. Consequently, in 1857, the members built a second church which was located on West Van Buren Street.[1] In this small building the young but growing denomination chose its name in 1860.[2] While the nation agonized in the Civil War, the Adventists struggled to develop a united organization. They achieved this goal in May 1863 with the establishment of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.[3]

Now that the foundation had been firmly laid, the church could direct its attention to carrying its message to the world.[4]

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[1]This church measured 28 by 44 feet. See ibid.

[2]"Business Proceedings of the B.C. Conference," RH 16 (October 23, 1860):179.

[3]"Report of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists," RH 21 (May 26, 1863):204-6.

[4]The Seventh-day Adventist Church was founded on the premise that it was called into existence as a prophetic movement to proclaim the messages portrayed in Rev 14:6-12. The symbols of three angels flying in heaven and preaching to all the nations of the earth were believed to represent the final world-wide proclamation of the "everlasting gospel" prior to the second coming of Christ (Rev 14:14, 15) that would raise up a people who would "keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (Rev 14:12). For a comprehensive and well documented study of the origin and mission of

During the next decade it established in the city of Battle Creek two institutions that were to be most significant influences towards accomplishing this purpose. They were the Western Health Reform Institute and a school, and were the forerunners of a chain of similar institutions around the world. Goodloe Bell was associated with both. The Health Institute provided the means which brought him into contact with the Seventh-day Adventist church. The school became his legacy to the denomination and to its youth.

In 1866 Bell was not the only one suffering illness and physical breakdown. So too were many of the Seventh-day Adventist leaders. In fact, during the year ending in the spring of 1866, it was a cause of grave concern that many of "the more efficient" church workers were "either entirely prostrated, or afflicted in some way calculated to dishearten and cripple them."[1] Due to the sickness of two of the three committee members in both the General Conference Committee and the Michigan Conference Committee, these committees had been unable to meet for counsel. This crisis moved the church leadership to set apart a season of prayer and fasting for four days from Wednesday, May 9, through to May 12. The leaders called for public meetings to be held in the churches on each day and urged:

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the Seventh-day Adventist Church see P. Gerard Damsteegt, Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1977).

[1]"God's Present Dealings with His People," RH 27 (April 17, 1866):156. This article lists the names of twelve church leaders afflicted with sickness or death in their families in 1866.

> . . . Let us cry to the Lord to revive his cause, remove his rebuke from off his people, restore his servants, and lead on the message to its destined victory. . . . We have reached a crisis in which it seems that the Lord alone can save us. . . .[1]

Though this prayer was not specifically for Bell, who at that time was also ill, it was to be answered more than he could have imagined.

Earlier that year, Ellen White had directed the members of the church to the importance of health and its relation to the character preparation necessary for the second coming of Christ. The church, she said, had a responsibility to take practical steps to alleviate suffering and to direct the sick to those means by which they might recover their health. One way by which this should be done was the provision of an institution "for the benefit of the diseased and suffering," and where they could learn how to prevent sickness.[2]

Only with great faith could the few Seventh-day Adventists of that time with their limited means undertake to establish such an institution. Nevertheless they responded positively to her suggestion. Because of the illness of Elder James White, J. N. Loughborough as president of the Michigan Conference Committee assumed the responsibility of leadership and the raising of funds

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Ellen G. White, "Our Late Experience," RH 27 (February 27, 1866):98; and Testimonies for the Church, 9 vols. (Mountain View, Cal.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), 1:489, 492.

for the venture.[1] The committee located a site on a farm in the West End of Battle Creek which was the estate of Judge Benjamin Graves. It consisted of "a large, nice building, comparatively new," on "a site of over five acres in the highest and most beautiful part" of the city.[2] On September 5, 1866, the Western Health Reform Institute opened with "two doctors, two bath attendants, one nurse (untrained), three or four helpers, one patient, any amount of inconveniences and a great deal of faith in the future of the Institution and the principles on which it was founded."[3]

Bell Visits the Health Institute

Two months after the opening of the institution, Dr. H. S. Lay reported on the prosperity of the Institute by noting that patients had been received from Canada and from nine states as far apart as Rhode Island and Iowa. So many had come, he claimed, that it had become necessary to secure rooms nearby for those who were able to walk a short distance, leaving the rooms in the main building for the accommodation of those more feeble.[4] Among those

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[1]Spalding relates the account of the establishment of the Health Institute in his Origin and History, 1:367-69.

[2]"The Health Reform Institute," RH 28 (July 10, 1866):48. See also "The Western Health Reform Institute," RH 28 (August 7, 1866):78.

[3]The Medical Missionary, 4 (January 1894), p. 11. The "one patient" must have held true for only a very short time. Compare Dr. J. F. Byington's account of the opening in RH 29 (January 1, 1867):43.

[4]The Health Reformer 1 (November 1866):64.

who came to the institute from Michigan soon after its opening was Goodloe Bell.

Seventh-day Adventist historical accounts of Bell's life generally state that Bell came to the Health Institute twice, once in 1866 and then again in 1867. Bartholf, for example, states: "In 1866 he came to Battle Creek, accompanying a friend who came to the newly established Sanitarium for medical treatment. The next year Professor Bell came for treatment himself."[1]

The evidence seems to indicate that Bell himself may have been in need of treatment when he came first in 1866. W. C. White, a son of Elder and Mrs. James White, and a former student of Bell's, recollected in 1924 that Bell "came to the Health Institute, a confirmed dispeptic [sic], and there recovered his health."[2] Another late source describes him coming for treatment, "having suffered in health, owing to overwork in his educational efforts."[3] Bell knew much about teaching, but little of the laws of health. Even in later life, his propensity to dyspepsia and mental fatigue demonstrated that in this area of his life he was a slow-learner. Bell's striving for excellence in all things made demands on his health. His life was dominated to excess by the maxim that "a thing worth doing is worth doing well," and as a

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[1]J. C. Bartholf, "Goodloe Harper Bell," YI 47 (February 9, 1899), p. 103.

[2]W. C. White, "Pioneer Pilots in Christian Education," Founders Golden Anniversary Bulletin 1874-1924. Emmanuel Missionary College Bulletin, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 1924, p. 26, AUHR.

[3]The Missionary Magazine 13 (July, 1901):319.

result of his overzealous labors he paid the price in poor health.

In addition to his illness of body, the emotional distress caused by the loss of his wife early in 1866 after her long illness exacerbated his condition. The newspaper account of the death of his daughter, Eva Bell Giles, in 1931 noted that after her mother's death "her father came to Battle Creek to recuperate at the . . . Health Institute . . . in the year of its foundation, 1866."[1]

Regardless of whether he came to the Institute in 1866 with a friend or for his own health's sake, it is certain that he spent some time there in November of that year. Two days before Thanksgiving, the patients and helpers met together to plan for their Thanksgiving dinner and appointed two men as "a committee on Proceedings" one of whom was G. H. Bell. The dinner was fittingly described as one that "the worst dyspeptics" might partake of: unleavened biscuit, hygienic cake, luscious fruit, and a variety of vegetables. No condiments were provided but it "was spiced a little with good humor, pleasantry, and with a rich and wholesome cheer, and seasoned with a good appetite."[2]

The program that followed in the evening include charades, some poetry, pantomimes, and singing. It concluded with six toasts, four of which were proposed by Mr. Bell: to Dr. Lay, Dr. Byington (two of the physicians at the Institute), to "Our

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[1]The Battle Creek Moon-Journal (Michigan), February 27, 1931, p. 22.

[2]The description of this first Thanksgiving celebration at the Health Institute is provided by one of the patients, O. F. Conklin in The Health Reformer 1 (December, 1866):74-75.

Visitors," and a general toast "To the Physicians of the Western Health Reform Institute." Bell's four short speeches reflect his Christian faith, his sense of humor, and his understanding of the program of the Health Institute. Two of them follow:

> Dr. Lay. We are glad he has been led to lay off all allegiance to drugs, and to lay hold of the Health Reform. May God give him strength and wisdom to lay successfully the foundation of one of the greatest and best Institutions in our land, and although he may never meet a just recompense here, may be be so happy as to lay up treasure in Heaven, and at last wear a bright and starry crown.
>
> Dr. Byington. A man who will stand by the truth, let come what will; and who will stand by you in the hour of trial and sorrow. May he ever be one who shall live by faith, and finally enter by the gate into the City.[1]

Evidently Bell stayed long enough in 1866 to come under the particular influence of one of the other patients, S. Osborne,[2] who was there at the same time. Osborne had proposed the toast "To the Proprietors and Supporters of this Institute" on the occasion of the Thanksgiving celebration. He was a sincere Seventh-day Adventist who, according to W. C. White, shared a room with Goodloe Bell "in the old north lodge." Bell was wary of the Adventist faith, but he could not fail to be impressed by Osborne's zeal and concern on his

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[1] Ibid., p. 75.

[2] The By-Laws of the Health Institute made provisions for Certificates of Proxy by which those who owned shares in the Institute could empower another to vote on their behalf. See The Articles and By-Laws of the Health Reform Institute located at Battle Creek, Mich. Battle Creek: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1867, p. 12, AUHR. One of these certificates was signed in 1879 by an S. Osborne of the town of Shepherdsville, Kentucky. "Health Reform Proxies 1867 & Various Other Dates," Record Group 29, Statistical Secretary, GC Archives.

behalf. White said that Bell, who was a light sleeper, often awoke during the night to hear his roommate praying for him.[1]

The influence of Osborne together with the impact of the Health Institute's program and personnel impressed him. Always an avid reader, he began to study the teachings of the church. After he became acquainted with the minister who conducted the Sabbath services, he also attended the meetings of the church.

It would appear, however, that Bell did not stay at the Institute over the winter. He had probably left his three young children with members of his family in Cazenovia and he returned to be with them. But his health remained poor and when the snows of winter had passed, he returned to the Institute for convalescence. His stay in 1867 brought him not only restoration of the body but a new faith for his soul. Charles C. Lewis wrote that Bell "the next spring through reading embraced the truth"[2] and united with the Battle Creek church.

It was during his second visit that Bell's career as an educator of Seventh-day Adventist youth commenced, though not yet with official endorsement. The church needed to catch from Bell himself his enthusiasm for teaching and his concern for the educational and spiritual welfare of its children.

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[1]W. C. White, "Stories Re Early Education in Battle Creek," p. 1, DF256, EGWRC--AU.

[2]C. C. Lewis, "Sketches of Sabbath School History--No. 5," RH 62 (March 10, 1885):151.

Early SDA Schools in Battle Creek

Other schools operated by church members in Battle Creek had been tried earlier but without success. J. Edson White, the older son of Elder and Mrs. James White, recalled that he had attended the first Adventist school in Battle Creek. It had been conducted for about a year by Mrs. M. M. Osgood in her home in the West End in 1856.[1] In the following year a school, taught by Mary Louise Morton, met in the second church built near the corner of Cass and Washington Streets.[2] Robert Holland conducted the next school for a brief period. W. C. White later recalled that Holland, who had been a public school teacher, conducted a private school in Battle Creek "some time prior to 1858." His discipline, however, was "weak and

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[1] J. Edson White's account, written when he was 75 years of age, contains several inaccuracies. The year for this first school is given as 1865, which is clearly an error, as a study of the succeeding paragraphs reveals. This is most likely a typographical mistake; the last two digits should be reversed. Edson also states that his two brothers, Henry and William, attended with him. It is unlikely that William accompanied him. In the fall of 1856 the age of the three boys would have been: Henry--9; Edson--7; William--2. Edson's third error appears to be in the total number of years given for the operation of the schools by the four teachers he describes. The year 1857 is fixed for the opening of the second Adventist church which is given as the location of the second school. The fourth school taught by John F. Byington is known to have opened late in 1858, yet between these two schools, Edson White reports that a third school was operated by Robert Holland for two years, which would be too long a period to fit Edson's time schedule. See Edson White, "The Early Schools among Seventh-day Adventists in Battle Creek." Founders' Golden Anniversary Bulletin 1874-1924. Emmanuel Missionary College Bulletin, Berrien Springs, 1924, p. 46, AUHR.

[2] Spalding stated that the school conducted in the second church building in 1857 was taught by Eliza H. Morton, "a noted teacher and educational author" (Spalding, Origin and History 2:115). According to the Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, rev. ed., s.v. "Morton, Eliza H.," in 1857 Eliza Morton would have been

unsatisfactory," and the brethren were "more free to criticize than pay tuition sufficient to keep the teacher in necessary food." Consequently this school soon closed.[1]

John Fletcher Byington began the next Adventist school. In the Review and Herald of January 14, 1858, James White advertised that Byington proposed to open a school on February 1 "for the benefit of the children of Sabbath-keepers in the place and also those abroad," because several church families in nearby towns had expressed anxiety about sending the children to "a good school" in Battle Creek. James White said that Byington's success in teaching had been "good," and he expected "he will teach an excellent school."[2] Possibly as a reaction to the problems associated with Holland's school, there appears to have been a slow response to this announcement. In October the Review and Herald carried the notice: "It is now expected that a school will be commenced in Battle Creek the second Monday in November."[3] But those who criticized Holland for too little discipline criticized John Byington for too much.[4] His school also lasted for only a brief and stormy time, for in 1861 James White wrote a note to another would-be teacher, Wm. Russell:

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only five years old! Edson White gives the name as Mary Louise Morton.

[1]W. C. White, "Memories and Records," p. 1, DF256, EGWRC--AU.

[2]James White, "School at Battle Creek," RH 11 (January 14, 1858):80.

[3]C. Smith and J. P. Kellogg, "A School in Battle Creek," RH 12 (October 14, 1858):168.

[4]W. C. White, "Memories and Records," p. 2.

> We have had a thorough trial of a school at Battle Creek, under most favorable circumstances, and have given it up, as it failed to meet the expectations of those interested. We therefore wish to be excused from acting any part in reference to your enterprise.[1]

Another reason given for discontinuing Byington's school was that in 1861 the city of Battle Creek built a new public school building only a few hundred feet north of the place where the Adventists had located their church.[2] This school was in the West End where most of the Adventist families lived and "urgent appeals were made to the Seventh-day Adventist parents to send their children to this school."[3] Because the teachers made a great effort to conduct the school on Christian principles, many Adventists sent their children there. When the children passed to the high school, however, there was much perplexity and anxiety as the parents observed the effect of the school's irreligious influences upon their children's characters.

Thus by 1867 the stage was set in Battle Creek for another attempt at a school taught by a member of the church. The earlier attempts highlight both the difficulties such a teacher would meet, and the qualities he would need to be successful.

By this time the publishing work was expanding and the church congregation had grown to about four hundred. This

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[1] RH 18 (September 24, 1861):134.

[2] This school was known as Number Three and was located on Champion Street, at the head of Cass Street.

[3] W. C. White, "Pioneer Pilots in Christian Education," p. 26; Edson White, "The Early Schools," p. 46. See also W. C. Coburn, "Public Schools of Battle Creek," Michigan History Magazine 5 (January-April 1921):224.

necessitated the erection of the third church building opposite McCamly Square on Washington Street. The time was approaching when the church would need to give serious consideration to the operation of a denominationally sponsored school. Goodloe Bell played a crucial role both in establishing the need for quality Christian education and in ensuring the successful operation of such a school.

Bell's First School

Cadwallader has pointed out that there are two main accounts of the events that led to Bell being hired to teach school after his conversion to Adventism in 1867.[1] The setting for both accounts is the Health Institute to which Bell had gone in that year to recover his health. The treatment given at the Institute was founded on the principle that "all curative power" for the body lies "in the living system" and thus the agencies of healing used were only those that would "assist Nature in her work of restoring health and vigor to the system." These were described as "proper food, rest, sleep, air, water, exercise, light, heat, etc."[2] Spalding's less reliable account relates how, while Bell was engaged in exercise on the grounds of the Institute, he made the acquaintance of some of the "boys of the neighbourhood," among them the two sons of James and Ellen White, Edson and Willie. Finding that they were having problems with arithmetic and grammar, he offered to help. They were

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[1] Cadwallader, History, p. 21.

[2] From an advertisement for the Health Institute in Calhoun County Business Directory for 1869-70 (Battle Creek, Mich.: E. G. Rust, 1869), p. 274.

so impressed by the clarity and thoroughness of his instruction, wrote Spalding, that the boys "appealed to their father to get Mr. Bell for their teacher." He was soon installed in a cottage on Washington Street to conduct his own private school.[1]

Cadwallader, however, has correctly stated that in the summer of 1867 Edson was eighteen years of age and Willie was nearly thirteen. He thought it was most unlikely that the White boys would be loitering near the Institute when their thrifty parents believed so strongly in useful employment for their children.[2]

Thus the account by Willie White is probably more accurate. He tells how Bell was exercising by sawing wood in the back yard of the Review and Herald publishing establishment. Edson White, who worked in the typeroom, made the acquaintance of the man sawing wood. Discovering he was a teacher, Edson shared with Bell his hatred of grammar and was surprised when Bell told him that "grammar, properly taught, was one of the most interesting studies in the world." Edson asked Bell if he would be willing to teach a group of young men. Bell indicated his willingness and later told W. C. White that he was surprised one day, on answering a knock at his door, "to see J. E. White standing there with about fourteen young men."[3] Soon an evening class was arranged for the young people employed in the Review office, and Bell, in his clear, direct, and concise way,

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[1]Spalding, Origin and History, 2:115, 116.

[2]Cadwallader, History, pp. 21-22.

[3]W. C. White, "Stories Re Early Education in Battle Creek," p. 1.

began to explain to them the intricacies of English grammar.

Bell's withdrawal from the public-school system was an act of faith on his part. No schools were being operated at the time among Seventh-day Adventists. Assured salaries to teachers, therefore, were unknown among them. His acquiescence to Edson's request, together with his concern for the lack of educational opportunities among those who shared his newly found faith, resulted in his moving his home and his children to Battle Creek. Both Elder and Mrs. White encouraged him in his school venture.[1] According to one report, he was given housekeeping rooms and an adjoining classroom on the second floor of the old North Lodge which stood opposite the Health Institute property.[2] Edson White recalled that among the young people attending Bell's school at this time were John Harvey Kellogg, Homer Aldrich, Bert Loughborough, J. Edson White, and others who later occupied positions of responsibility in the work of the Adventist Church.[3]

Mr. Bell's students were quick to perceive the excellencies of their new teacher. His reputation for careful teaching spread, and within a short time the Battle Creek Church employed him to teach a day school, possibly in the spring of 1868.

Evidently the quarters in the old North Lodge became too

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[1]Geo. I. Butler and S. N. Haskell, "Educational Matters," RH 59 (February 28, 1882):137.

[2]"West End, Once Home of Pretentious College," The Battle Creek Moon-Journal (Michigan), April 18, 1923, p. 12.

[3]Edson White, "The Early Schools," p. 46.

cramped. When the Battle Creek church leaders hired Bell to teach they offered him the original Review office and print shop that had been moved in 1861 to the corner of Kalamazoo and Washington Streets behind the new Review building. This had become a dumping place for cast-off material, but after cleaning and refurnishing it became the location for Bell's "Select School." Bell and his family[1] moved into the ground floor; the upper floor became the schoolroom.

Two recollections of that school have been published. Mary Alicia Steward, who had been taught by Bell while a student at Battle Creek College in the 1870s, remembered the building as being

> . . . old and rickety and unpainted. The schoolroom was on the second floor, so we climbed the shaky stairs, and found ourselves entering a long low room, with long wooden benches for seats. In the center of the room at one side, facing the door, was the teacher's desk, and the classes assembled on benches in front of it.[2]

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[1]Goodloe Bell was married for the second time to Harriet Eliza (King) Bryant on December 11, 1869. Harriet had previously been married to George Bryant who had fought in the Civil War. Bryant was taken prisoner on October 11, 1863, and died in prison at Andersonville, Georgia, on June 19, 1864. See Widow's Pension No. 54351, Harriet Eliza Bryant. Military Service Records, Washington, D.C.; Record of Service of Michigan Volunteers in the Civil War, 1861-1865 (Kalamazoo, Mich.: Ihling Bros. and Everard, n.d.), p. 30. Harriet brought with her to the Bell family a daughter, Ann Eliza (Lizzie), who had been born on March 28, 1851. See Declaration for Widow's Pension, Harriet Bryant. Military Service Records, Washington, D.C. Harriet was two years younger than Goodloe Bell being born in Cayuga County, New York on July 13, 1834. One son, David Omar Bell, was born to Goodloe and Harriet about the year 1871. Ninth Census of the United States--1870. Calhoun County, Third Ward of the City of Battle Creek, p. 20. The date of Harriet's birth is given on her gravestone in Oak Hill Cemetery, Battle Creek. The approximate date of Omar's birth is deduced from the Tenth Census of the United States--1880, Calhoun County, City of Battle Creek, p. 54.

[2]Mary Alicia Steward, "The Beginnings of Our School Work," RH 101 (September 18, 1924):29.

J. O. Corliss, recalling his visit to the school soon after it was opened, noted

> . . . six or eight lads from about sixteen to twenty years of age, who were patrons of the effort. The methods of teaching were so unique, without the usual commitment to memory of dry book rules, that every boy gave diligent attention to lesson work, and the word was soon heralded about that Professor Bell was the very best kind of teacher.[1]

Since it is known that Edson White was one of Bell's students when he began to teach, a letter written by Bell to Edson in the summer of 1868 provides a more intimate glimpse of Bell as a man and as a Christian educator who was concerned about the character development of his students. Bell had gone to Cazenovia for the summer and was working on the farm of his brother, Ambrose. He was pleased to receive "a good long letter" from Edson who had written to his teacher to tell him how well circumstances were treating him at the time. Bell, in reply, tactfully reminded Edson that he owed "all this happiness to Him who has but used others as His instruments to do you good." He expressed confidence in Edson's ability to meet calmly and resolutely the trials that would surely come into his life. Bell, who was a little self-conscious of the advice he was giving young Edson, added rather apologetically: "You see my schoolmaster ways will crop out."[2]

Bell felt stronger since returning to Cazenovia. He told Edson that he could lie down and sleep almost any time of the day,

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[1] J. O. Corliss, "Divine Providences," RH 96 (March 6, 1919):10.

[2] G. H. Bell to J. Edson White, July 14, 1868, EGWRC-DC (emphasis his).

provided he could find the time to do so. "That, you know, is something very remarkable for me." Bell expressed his pleasure that Elder Van Horn had commenced evangelistic meetings in Cazenovia the previous Sunday night,[1] and reported that "all my folks are interested beyond my fondest expectations."

Sensitive to the relationships between Edson and his parents, Bell encouraged Edson to "try in every way to minister to the comfort and happiness of your parents. I think you have it in your power to do more to that end than any other person living." Then, perceptively, he added:

> You know your mother loves you for she manifests it in a way that you can understand. But I fear you are sometimes in danger of misjudging your father's feelings on account of his stern nature, but Edson, he loves you with a depth and strength of affection that is not easily measured and seldom equalled.[2]

Few other details are still extant on the operation of Bell's schools between 1868 and 1872. The records conflict as to how long Bell continued to teach before the denomination officially sponsored him in 1872. As early as February 24, 1868, Edson White was completing grammar exercises for his English teacher, presumed to be Bell. On March 29, when Edson wrote as an example of a sentence, "Oh thunder, I shall not have my sentences," Bell wrote

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[1]Elder Van Horn reported on his more than sixty evangelistic meetings in Cazenovia in RH 32 (July 28, 1868):89 and RH 32 (October 6, 1868):197. As a result a church was formed and at the 9th Annual Session of the Michigan State Conference in 1869 the Casinovia [sic] church was admitted into the Conference. See RH 33 (May 25, 1869):173.

[2]G. H. Bell to J. Edson White, July 14, 1868.

below it, "I am sorry you wrote such an expression."[1] Evidently in March, Bell was teaching grammar, but probably only in the evenings. From a letter Ellen White wrote to her son Edson on March 9, it would appear that Bell was planning to open a day school in the spring. In reply to a question Edson had raised, she wrote, "In regard to Brother Bell's school I know not. Write us more definitely terms and studies."[2] This tends to be confirmed by the notice that appeared in the Review and Herald on August 18, 1868: "Professor G. H. Bell will commence the second term of his select school in Battle Creek, September 9. This school has thus far proved a success."[3]

According to W. C. White's recollections in 1924, the Battle Creek church employed Bell to teach for only one year. The next year Bell carried it "at his own financial risk." White says that "after this for a couple of years, the day school was discontinued." During 1869 and 1870, many of the young men and women employed in the publishing house and the Health Institute "were constantly pleading for educational advantages." Bell, therefore, conducted early morning classes in penmanship and evening classes in grammar which were "eagerly attended."[4]

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[1]A sample of grammar exercises for the months of February and March, 1869, have been preserved in the file--"James Edson White--English Papers written by" at the Ellen G. White Research Center, Washington, D.C.

[2]Ellen G. White to Edson White, March 9, 1868. Letter 8, 1868, EGWRC--DC.

[3]RH 32 (August 18, 1868):144 (emphasis supplied).

[4]W. C. White, "Pioneer Pilots," pp. 26-27.

Sidney Brownsberger, who later became the first principal of Battle Creek College, described his first meeting with Bell in the late summer months of 1869 when Bell was teaching a class "composed chiefly of office employees." Bell told Brownsberger that "this grammar class was organized especially for the office hands [the workers in the publishing house] and that he was conducting a school in B.C. which corresponded in every particular to what is now called a church school."[1]

On the other hand, in 1882 the president of the General Conference, G. I. Butler, and S. N. Haskell wrote an article in which they were describing Bell's school in the old Review office building near the Kalamazoo River. They said: "Here it continued to grow for a few years till it was removed to the meeting-house, then again to the east office building, which had just been erected. Till this time it had been under the sole charge of Bro. Bell."[2] Since Bell did not locate his school in the meeting-house until late in 1872,[3] and in the new east office building until 1873, Butler and Haskell implied that Bell continued to teach uninterruptedly in the old Review building from 1868 to 1872. This implication, however, must be called into question.

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[1]Sidney Brownsberger, "Personal Experiences, Conditions, and Impressions in Connection with the Educational Work among Seventh-day Adventists," p. 2, Brownsberger Collection, AUHR.

[2]Butler and Haskell, "Educational Matters," p. 137.

[3]S. Brownsberger, "Reminiscences of Sidney Brownsberger," Founders' Golden Anniversary Bulletin 1874-1924, Emmanuel Missionary College Bulletin, Berrien Springs, p. 47, AUHR.

Certainly Bell taught a school in 1870 and this appears to have been a day school. On February 19, 1870, Ellen White wrote to a "Brother King" concerning a girl, Lena, who had been staying with him and his wife. Evidently Mrs. King had not represented Christianity very well to Lena who was about to return to her home prejudiced against Christians. Mrs. White expressed an interest in the girl and proposed that Lena and her sister come to her home where she would care for them. She wrote, "We will have them attend Bro. Bell's school. He may do them good. Perhaps we may, in the strength of God, remove this prejudice that has closed about this poor child."[1]

It is clear that Bell had ceased teaching at Battle Creek at least during the spring of 1872, and possibly even during a portion of 1871. In the spring of 1872 he was living near his relatives in Cazenovia.[2] Because of his need for rest and a restoration of his health, he had temporarily withdrawn from Battle Creek.[3] Evidently problems had also developed in his relationship with his students, their parents, and the Battle Creek church. These had depressed him and no doubt contributed to his departure from Battle Creek. (This is discussed more fully below).

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[1]Ellen G. White to Brother King, February 19, 1870, Letter 1, 1870, EGWRC--DC.

[2]G. H. Bell to Ellen G. White, April 9, 1872.

[3]Bell is listed in the Ninth Census as living in Battle Creek in 1870 with his wife and children. See Ninth Census of the United States--1870, Calhoun County, Third Ward of the City of Battle Creek, p. 20. His name is not listed in the Battle Creek City Directory for 1871 and 1872.

It is difficult, therefore, to reconstruct in detail Bell's educational activities between 1868 and 1872. He was engaged in teaching for at least half of this period, but it is not known whether he taught during the regular day school or whether he taught only morning and evening classes for at least part of the time.

Heavy Church Responsibilities

In the light of the other responsibilities Bell assumed, one may well wonder how he could continue in full-time teaching, particularly in 1870-71. E. K. Vande Vere has stated that the local Battle Creek congregation "thought him valuable to have around because, like a beast of burden, he could be counted upon to assume any job no one else wanted."[1]

In fact, both the Battle Creek church and the General Conference leadership were not slow to appreciate the qualities of the teacher who had recently come among them. In 1869 three major responsibilities were carried by Bell in addition to his school work: he was appointed superintendent of the Battle Creek Sabbath School, editor of the church youth journal, and a member of a committee set up to defend the character of one of the church leaders.

His first appointment, early in 1869, as the superintendent of the Sabbath School in Battle Creek,[2] proved to be a responsibility that Bell carried for most of the time until 1882. The

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[1]Emmett K. Vande Vere, The Wisdom Seekers (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1972), p. 267.

[2]G. W. Amadon, "A New Editor," YI 17 (July, 1869):52. See also E. R. Fairfield, "The Reporting System," YI 18 (March 15, 1870):46.

changes he introduced into its operation later extended into the Sabbath schools across the nation, and notably contributed to the growth of this educational facility within the Seventh-day Adventist Church. (This is treated in depth in chapter three.)

At about the same time Bell assumed the superintendency of the Battle Creek Sabbath School, the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association in May 1869[1] appointed him as editor of the Youth's Instructor. Under his leadership this journal, in 1870, became a twice monthly, rather than a monthly publication. For a Christian educator, the Instructor provided the opportunity to teach Christian principles to the more than three thousand children and youth who received the paper.[2] Bell assumed the responsibility of editor, aware of the difficulty of the task which he called "a great and noble work." He wrote in the first issue he edited (July 1869) that he knew he could not do the work well in his own strength. His only hope was that "in living so near to God" he would "walk in his counsel and have help from him."[3]

Bell introduced few changes. His editorials and articles carried such titles as "Fourth of July," a short series on "Thoughts on Everyday Life," "Self Examination," "Going to School," "Greetings--New Years Morning," "Gifts," "Keep Good Company," "Who

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[1]"SDA Publishing Association," RH 33 (May 25, 1869):174.

[2]A. M. Driscall, "A Talk with the Children," YI 18 (November 1, 1870):164.

[3]G. H. Bell, "Salutation," YI 17 (July 1869):52.

Will Be a Missionary?" "How to Overcome Sins."[1] His writing was concise, practical and adapted to the level of his readers.

The most significant change came in the vigorous support given to the work of the Sabbath school. Bell's election to the superintendency of the Battle Creek Sabbath School provided him with the opportunity to introduce his principles of Christian education and organization in that locale. It also enabled him to tell others of their effectiveness through the pages of the Instructor. Bell's enthusiastic penchant for thoroughness and organization is very evident in the recommendations and suggestions published in the Sabbath School Department section that appeared in each issue of the paper throughout the twenty months he served as editor. Bell also prepared for the journal two sets of Bible lessons for Sabbath school study by the younger children and the youth of the church. Their impact and significance are considered in the next chapter.

Bell's efforts on behalf of the youth were appreciated--by some at least. Late one night in December 1869, he was delighted to receive a surprise Christmas gift in the form of a desk with seven drawers and about "thirty apartments in all," many of them filled with packages, envelopes and "reams of the nicest writing paper." This gift came from "the Young People of Battle Creek." He used the gift to draw a lesson in his editorial column on Heaven's most

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[1]These articles are found in the following issues of Youth's Instructor: July 1869, pp. 50-53; August 1869, p. 60; September 1869, p. 68; October 1869, p. 76; November 1869, pp. 84-85; December 1869, p. 92; January 1870, p. 4; January 14, 1870, p. 12; February 1, 1870, p. 20; April 1, 1870, p. 52; April 15, 1870, p. 60.

precious gift to us. He exhorted the youth to "taste and see that the Lord is good."[1]

Nevertheless, during 1870 Bell found his duties as editor increasingly onerous because he seemed incapable of declining other offices that the church invited him to accept. Consequently, he began to pay the price again in poor health. As early as April 1870 a note appeared in the Instructor appealing for readers to excuse Bro. Bell "for any seeming lack in some of the departments of this number. His arduous labors for the good of the cause in other directions, will certainly furnish an excuse which all who love the work of the Lord will accept."[2] Six months later when the Bible lessons were omitted from the October 15 issue, it was explained that the reason was "the absence of the editor. . . . Bro. Bell is in ill health, and is absent to recruit."[3] At the end of the year, Bell expressed regret that he had not made the paper "more useful and interesting" as he had hoped. He realized that it deserved "better talent, larger experience, and more time and attention than we have been able to give it for the past year." He added, "Our cares and labors outside of the work on the Instructor have been abundant; but for the future we hope to be more favorably situated in regard to the interests of our little paper."[4] Two months later,

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[1]G. H. Bell, "Gifts," YI 18 (January 14, 1870):12.

[2]YI 18 (April 1, 1870):56.

[3]YI 18 (October 15, 1870):160. Webster's Dictionary gives one meaning of "recruit" as "to regain health."

[4]YI 18 (December 15, 1870):188-89.

however, he reluctantly relinquished editorship to Miss Jennie R. Trembley who had been caring increasingly for the paper during the latter part of 1870.[1]

Bell's third responsibility in 1869 was his appointment to a committee to investigate charges being made against the character and financial affairs of Elder James White. Six years earlier the church had found it necessary to set up a committee "to take measures to ascertain grounds of the charges, complaints, and murmurs" that were then in circulation against him.[2] At that time White was completely exonerated. No man in leadership, however, is free from those who would undermine him, and by 1869 the unjust attacks of his enemies[3] made it again necessary to set up another committee to examine more recent charges against his business dealings. In October 1869 the appointed committee, consisting of Elders Uriah Smith, J. N. Andrews and Mr. G. H. Bell, invited readers of the Review and Herald to report in writing "any act of dishonesty, or overreaching, or fraud, or covetousness, or grasping of means in any unbecoming manner" on the part of Elder White. They also

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[1]The February 1871 issue was the last one edited by Bell. The new editor, Miss J. R. Trembley, and her assistant, Miss E. R. Fairfield, were elected on February 8, 1871. See "Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association," RH 37 (February 14, 1871):68.

[2]Vindication of the Business Career of Elder James White (Battle Creek, Mich.: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1863), p. 5.

[3]For a recent biographical account of James White's abilities as an enterprising businessman and of the basis of the false charges made against him both in 1863 and 1869, see Virgil Robinson, James White (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1976), pp. 85, 107, 207-13, 260, 277.

invited those "who have been witnesses of or sharers in, his acts of benevolence," to provide statements[1] that "the whole truth" might be known, for Bell shared the convictions of the others on the committee that "a sacred regard for the truth and for right" demanded a defense against the charges made.[2]

The committee spent some months gathering testimonials. Finally in 1870 they published their report which reflected the thoroughness that characterized Bell, as well as Andrews and Smith. None of those with any accusations had submitted them. Fifty-four individuals, however, had testified to the good character of the Whites. Bell was satisfied to sign his name under the report which concluded with a commendation of the document "to all lovers of truth and justice, with the consciousness that we have done only our duty in the matter."[3]

Bell's three responsibilities in 1869 referred to above, viz. the superintendency of the Battle Creek Sabbath School, the editorship of the Instructor, and the membership on the "Defense" committee, all continued in 1870, but in that year even more duties were thrust upon him. On March 15, the General Conference met with Bell as one of the delegates representing the Michigan Conference.[4]

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[1]Defense of Eld. James White and Wife (Battle Creek, Mich.: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Pub. Assn., 1870), p. 57.

[2]U. Smith, J. N. Andrews, G. H. Bell, "Defense of Eld. James White," RH 34 (October 26, 1869):144.

[3]Defense (1870), p. 154.

[4]"Business Proceedings," RH 35 (March 22, 1870):109.

During that session his colleagues elected him treasurer of the General Conference,[1] a director of the Health Institute,[2] vice-president of the Publishing Association--and therefore one of its trustees, and he was re-elected editor of the Youth's Instructor.[3] He was also appointed a member of the General Conference Auditing Committee.[4] After the General Conference had closed, the Michigan Conference met and appointed Bell as its treasurer and a member of its Auditing Committee.[5] Furthermore the conference recommended to the Battle Creek Church that he be ordained as an elder of that church.[6]

In addition to these responsibilities, Bell served on a

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[1] Ibid.

[2] The only known description of Bell's period of administration at the Health Institute is a communication by Ellen White to the Battle Creek Church early in 1872. She says that Bell was "encouraged to take still greater responsibilities and . . . become director of the Health Institute. . . ." She charged him with trying "to carry out the system of management" in the Institute "that he had adopted in the schools." He had failed because he had not made allowance for the maturity of the physicians, helpers, and patients at the Institute. The Articles and By Laws of the Institute provided for management by a board of seven directors. At the Annual Meeting of the Institute on March 18, 1870, Bell was elected one of the seven directors and he served for one year. See Ellen G. White, Testimony to the Church at Battle Creek (Battle Creek, Mich.: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Pub. Assn., 1872), pp. 8-9, 10; The Articles and By-Laws, pp. 6-8; Review and Herald 35 (March 22, 1870):106.

[3] "10th Annual Meeting of SDA Pub. Assoc.," RH 35 (March 22, 1870):106.

[4] "Business Proceedings," Ibid., p. 109.

[5] "Michigan State Conference," Ibid., p. 110.

[6] Ibid.

committee of five charged with prescribing a course of study for the newly organized Ministers' Lecture Association.[1] The church as yet had no college to provide any form of ministerial training and James White was concerned about the lack of educational qualifications among those who desired to teach the gospel to others. He proposed that such an association would organize an annual series of lectures on biblical subjects and other topics not only for ministers, but also for Sabbath school superintendents and teachers.

The first series of lectures took place immediately following the General Conference Session late in March 1870. The speakers, however, had been too busy in the work of the annual meetings, and did not have enough time for preparation. Thus only nine lectures were given, including a daily lecture and exercise in English grammar by Bell.[2] On May 10, the committee published its recommended course of study for the year. The course included reading on ten Bible subjects, in ecclesiastical and ancient History, and English. The books in the last group would doubtless have been recommended by Bell and included J. M. B. Sill's Elementary Grammar, Welch's Analysis, and Quackenbos' Course of Composition and Rhetoric.[3]

At the beginning of the following year, the Review advertised the second series of lectures for the Ministers' Lecture

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[1]James White, "Ministers' Lecture Association," RH 35 (April 12, 1870):132-33.

[2]Ibid., p. 132.

[3]"Course of Study for Ministers," RH 35 (May 10, 1870):164.

Association. The committee planned a four-week course to be held after the 1871 General Conference. They hoped that one hundred "ardent men and women who are anxious to qualify themselves to teach the truth to others" would be present.[1] Lectures on Bible subjects as well as penmanship and English grammar were again planned. No detailed report of this series appeared later in the Review, though James White in 1872 stated that the series had been "very brief" and "beneficial only to a few."[2] With the formal organization of the denominational school in 1872 under Bell as teacher, the Lecture Association ceased to function. At the time, however, it represented the church's attempt, though feeble, to raise the standard of education within its ranks with the help of Goodloe Bell.

The year 1870, therefore, proved to be a very busy one for Bell. He may have been conducting a school in February of that year,[3] but it is difficult to understand how he could have done so after the General Conference in March assigned so many responsibilities to him, unless the school consisted only of the early morning and evening classes later described by W. C. White.[4]

The term of office for those elected at the annual meeting

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[1]"The Course of Lectures," RH 37 (January 31, 1871):56. See also RH 37 (January 10, 1871):32.

[2]James White, "Denominational School," RH 40 (August 6, 1872):60.

[3]Ellen G. White to Brother King, February 19, 1870, Letter 1, 1870, EGWRC--DC.

[4]W. C. White, "Pioneer Pilots," p. 27.

of the church was for one year only unless they were re-elected. Considering Bell's heavy responsibilities in 1870, it is surprising to discover that he was not re-elected to even one of those positions in 1871. Perhaps the church leadership realized how heavily laden Bell had been. He was ever inclined to take on more responsibility than his share. In 1872, as Ellen White looked back upon his experience in 1871, she wrote, "More was expected of Bro. Bell than can reasonably be of any one man."[1] Ten years later, she wrote of his work at Battle Creek College: "He has performed the labor which three men should have shared."[2]

It is not known where Bell was or what he was doing after he relinquished his offices in 1871. Sickness may have forced him to take his wife and family to Cazenovia where his mother and her family were. He was in Cazenovia during the late winter and spring of 1872.[3] He may have left Battle Creek in 1871, since his name is not listed in the Battle Creek City Directory for that year. Apart from possible sickness, there are a number of reasons that contributed to his leaving the city. Bell's work as a teacher in Battle Creek met with both support and opposition from the pupils, the parents, and the church. Some of the characteristics of his personality limited the effectiveness of his genius as an educator.

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[1]Ellen G. White, Testimony to the Church at Battle Creek (1872), p. 8.

[2]E. G. White, Testimony for the Battle Creek Church (Oakland, Cal.: Pacific Press Publishing House, 1882), p. 19.

[3]G. H. Bell to Ellen G. White, April 9, 1872.

An understanding therefore, of Bell's strengths and weaknesses throws considerable light not only on the problems he faced in 1872, but sensitizes the reader to the problems Bell faced in the future. The many responsibilities that he carried in the period from 1869 to 1871, as described above, also magnified his difficulties at this time.

Communications from Ellen White

The document that gives the greatest insight into Bell's teaching and personality at this time, as well as into the dynamics of the Battle Creek church, is a communication to that church by Ellen White soon after February 1, 1872.[1] Ellen White and her husband James had been co-founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and were members of the same church that Bell attended in Battle Creek. They had known him since he had become a member of the church in 1867, and they had sent their children to his school. Ellen White's candid but considerate communication gives a very balanced evaluation of both Bell's virtues and faults but it should be noted that the document was sent to the Battle Creek church, not to Bell. It reveals that the church was divided in its attitude toward him as an educator. Some appreciated his talent, while others deprecated his faults, and Ellen White felt it her duty to

[1] This testimony could not have been written before February 1, 1872, because it refers on p. 15 to the death of Miss Elmina Fairfield who died of consumption on that date at the age of 24. See James White, "She Sleeps in Jesus," RH 39 (February 27, 1872):85. Miss Fairfield was the assistant editor of the Youth's Instructor and had, with the editor, Miss J. R. Trembley, replaced Bell one year before.

deal with both. The sagacity of this communication necessitates a comprehensive treatment.

Ellen White wrote that on December 10, 1871, she "was shown the case of Bro. Bell in connection with the cause and work of God in Battle Creek." She noted that he had "qualifications to make a successful teacher." He loved his work and gave "his whole mind to it." He had "the power to explain, in a variety of ways, by impressive illustrations, principles which would otherwise lose much of their force upon the mind of the pupil." She also recognized that Bell's aim was to "accomplish permanent good" in the lives of his students, even prizing the improvement of his pupils more highly than he did the wages he received. He strove "to inspire his pupils with a spirit of cheerful, voluntary industry in study," and demonstrated an "interest and devotion" which, in Ellen White's estimation, were "rare."[1]

Both James White and his wife felt that the church was at fault in not appreciating Bell's "moral worth" and "his superior method of teaching." His "thorough drilling" in contrast to "the superficial methods of educating children in the common schools," and his strict discipline, were objectionable to many. Ellen White believed that it was this kind of teaching that was needed, because it gave "stability to the character." Part of Bell's problems lay in his requiring students to think for themselves rather than memorize dry and meaningless facts. When the children came to

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[1]White, Testimony to the Church at Battle Creek (1872), pp. 1-2.

Bell's school they were frustrated by his insistence that they should understand what they were learning, and not pass on to new work until they had demonstrated understanding. "They complained at home, and their parents sympathized with them when their sympathy should have been wholly with the faithful instructor of their children." Bell was the kind of teacher who looked after "the physical, moral and spiritual interest of their children," as well as instructing them in the sciences, yet they failed to appreciate his work on their behalf. When the children sensed that they had their parents' sympathy, it led them "to take liberties that they otherwise would not." This had the effect of depressing Bell and "his influence was not what it might have been if he had known that he had the cooperation of all the parents in his labors."[1]

There were some in the church who expressed appreciation of his abilities. Elder James White, in particular, appreciated Bell's "intelligent method of teaching," and he spoke "several times before the church in his favor." Such words of praise, however, according to Ellen White, "had the influence, almost unconsciously to himself, to exalt him." She described how the subsequent excessive confidence in his own ability was making him intolerant of the views of others. She provides some insight into the problems Bell must have had with those with whom he had worked in 1870, when she added that finally he

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[1] Ibid., pp. 2, 7, 3, 8.

> . . .could hardly endure to have his course questioned, or suggestions made of plans which he did not originate, or which differed from his ideas. The opinions of brethren and sisters of long experience were not respected by Bro. Bell, but set aside as unworthy of attention. Bro. Bell became exacting and was extremely sensitive over little things; especially if any disrespect was shown of his authority on the part of his pupils.[1]

She comments further on Bell's appointments in 1870. Because of his success in teaching, some too highly estimated his abilities "in every other respect." Consequently, he was encouraged to take still greater responsibilities. In his leadership in the church as elder, in the Sabbath School,[2] and in the Health Institute, she charged that "he sought to carry out the system of management . . . that he had adopted in the schools." Bell did not discern the difference between the control of children in a classroom and of mature men and women "with their habits fixed and their characters formed." His proclivity for order and organization made him dissatisfied unless people and programs were moving like "well-regulated machinery."[3]

In the Health Institute he failed to bring things "to the precise and perfect system he desired." He only succeeded in arousing the "wrath" of the patients and adding to the burdens of the physicians and helpers by his rules and system.[4] Unfortunately,

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[1] Ibid., p. 6.

[2] See for example, Miss E. R. Fairfield's article on "The Reporting System" in the Battle Creek Sabbath School, YI 18 (March 15, 1870):46.

[3] White, Testimony to the Church at Battle Creek (1872), pp. 8-9.

[4] Ibid., p. 14.

Bell treated the bodies and minds of others as he did his own. He was so desirous of bringing the church "into working order" that he disregarded "the laws of health and life." She said of him:

> With a martyr-like spirit, he considered it a virtue, irrespective of weariness and failing health, to press the matter to the desired end. The strain in one direction, calling into exercise certain powers of the mind, was severely wearing to mental and physical strength; and some minds were becoming unbalanced.[1]

It is clear that Ellen White was attempting to bring a spirit of mutual tolerance, understanding, and Christian love to the church at Battle Creek in their acceptance of one who had come among them back in 1867, "in poverty" and "humbly clad," yet who had struggled "to exert all the influence in his power to benefit the youth."[2]

At the time this communication was released to the Battle Creek church, Bell was living in Cazenovia. Ellen White knew that a teacher would be needed for the first school that the denomination was planning to sponsor in 1872, and she was, in all probability, preparing the church for Bell to be eased back into the school and into the life of the church.

The evidence appears to indicate that Ellen White wrote a letter to Bell with sentiments similar to those expressed in the letter to the church. No copy of that letter has been found, but there is a letter written by Bell to her on April 9, 1872, from Cazenovia. Bell said he was replying to her letter of March 26 which must have been delayed, because he had "just received it." He

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[1] Ibid., p. 15.

[2] Ibid., p. 4.

thanked her for the testimony she had given him. With humility he added:

> I think we have profited by it. There have been, I trust, heart-broken confessions and earnest efforts to reform, yet we have much yet to do. It is so easy to slip back into the old rut. I am determined to persevere and hope by the blessing of God to overcome my faults. I think I have gained some ground and to the Lord be all the praise.[1]

Bell had been spending part of his time on the farm in the preparation of more of his Sabbath School lessons. He asked Ellen White for any advice she could give him about what ground the lessons for the children should cover. Having spent "the last two or three weeks" laboring "very hard at the lessons," he was now "suffering from nervous prostration." He wrote:

> I find it hard to work my mind and my stomach at the same time. For days together I have eaten nothing but dry bread and sauce, and only a little of that. This gives me a clear brain, but reduces my strength.[2]

Ellen White's letter to Bell on this occasion was particularly significant for him because in it she invited him to return to Battle Creek to teach in the first denominationally sponsored school which was to be opened within a month or two.[3] Because we do not have her letter, we cannot know how her invitation was worded, but we do know Bell's reply. He indicated that he had no engagement for

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[1] G. H. Bell to Ellen G. White, April 9, 1872.

[2] Ibid.

[3] It was originally planned that the school should open on May 13. It did not finally commence until June 3. See "A School in Battle Creek--Seventh-day Adventist Educational Society," RH 39 (April 16, 1872):144 and "The SDA School," RH 39 (June 11, 1872):204.

the summer. He had "refused every application in order to have time to prepare the Bible lessons." He thought he could find "good opportunities to teach" near Cazenovia, but he didn't think his labors were particularly needed there. He believed he should be "ever ready to answer the call of duty, and since you think I am needed in Battle Creek, I will come if you desire it." His next paragraph is significant. It reveals an awareness of the kind of situation Ellen White had described in her communication to the Battle Creek church. It also demonstrates his faith and humility as a Christian educator. He wrote:

> I greatly fear that I shall not be able to succeed as well as formerly, for I do not see how I can ever again have the respect and confidence of the young in Battle Creek: and without this, it would be impossible to have a good school. It seems to me that, under the circumstances, they must naturally look upon me with distrust; yet, if it is the will of the Lord, I am willing to try, trusting in him to give just that degree of success that seemeth good to him.[1]

Launching a Denominational School

Bell's acceptance won for him a place in Adventist educational history. He became the first teacher of the church's first denominationally sponsored school. For the next ten years he was associated with the school in Battle Creek, then in 1882 he became the first principal of a new school at South Lancaster, Massachusetts. After a short term of two years, he retired to Battle Creek to spend the remaining fifteen years of his life

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[1] G. H. Bell to Ellen G. White, April 9, 1872.

writing English textbooks and conducting private classes, mainly in English literature.

The movement to launch a school sponsored by the denomination had begun in 1869. Two months after the school had opened in 1872, James White wrote in the Review that "we have long felt the want of a denominational school for the especial benefit of those who feel it to be their duty to dedicate their lives to the cause of God. . . ."[1] He said that in the autumn of 1869 he had first introduced the idea to the people at Battle Creek and an Educational Society had been formed. Pledges were made and some money was paid, but while White was touring in the east, the funds were "unwarrantably and injudiciously expended." He became discouraged but organized the Ministers' Lecture Association as an interim measure to educate those who desired to teach the gospel to others.

Nevertheless by 1872 enough of the leaders were concerned about the neglect of higher education in the program of the church to develop new plans for a school. In April James White challenged the readers of the Review:

> Shall we have a denominational school, the object of which shall be, in the shortest, most thorough and practical way, to qualify young men and women, to act some part, more or less public, in the cause of God? Shall there be some place provided where our young people can go to learn such branches of the sciences as they can put into immediate and practical use, and at the same time be instructed on the great themes of prophetic and other Bible truth?[2]

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[1]James White, "Denominational School," RH 40 (August 6, 1872):60.

[2]James White, "A School in Battle Creek--Seventh-day Adventist Educational Society," RH 39 (April 16, 1872):144.

The idea of training young people for the various departments of the church was not the aim of the school conducted by Bell before 1872. It would appear that the earlier school, supported at least for part of the time by the local church, consisted of a Seventh-day Adventist teacher teaching the common subjects to younger Adventist children. But now the church leadership was convinced it must operate a school for all of its youth with the wider aim in view. This was further clarified by Elder White on May 7 when he wrote concerning the plans for the school.

> It is not designed to be a local affair designed for the children of Sabbath-keepers here in Battle Creek. If it was such, the Battle Creek church would take it wholly upon themselves, and no appeal would be made to brethren abroad. There are schools here already of a secular nature, probably as good as can be found in the United States. But this movement is designed for the general benefit of the cause.[1]

For this reason it was proposed that the school would provide for instruction "in all branches of education," including Biblical subjects, so that the youth may finally leave school "prepared to wield those weapons for the advancement of the cause."[2] Such a utilitarian view, however, was not the only prevailing rationale for the school. G. I. Butler expressed his conviction that the church needed a school "where influences of a moral character may be thrown around the pupils" in contrast to the ungodly atmosphere in the majority of the schools. "We want our children," he added, "to have a chance

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[1]James White, "The Proposed School," RH 39 (May 7, 1872):168.

[2]Ibid.

for mental culture without moral loss."[1]

Bell had evidently notified the school committee of his decision by May 11, because at a meeting that evening it was decided to begin the school on Monday, June 3, for a term of twelve weeks. They recorded that "a place is provided and teacher engaged."[2]

The place was the old two-storied print shop in which Bell had previously taught his school.[3] He was there to welcome the twelve students who ascended the shaky stairs to the long, low room on the second floor. His presence seemed to epitomize the nineteenth-century schoolman. Now forty years of age, he stood tall, underweight, and slightly bent. His kindly face was dominated by an aquiline nose and a long, flowing beard. One of his private students in the 1890s later described him: "The whole bearing of the man impressed me . . . with a sense of dignity and simplicity. . . ." In spite of his age, "his keen eyes, alert, vigorous carriage, and the boyish enthusiasm . . . were all reminiscent of youth."[4]

The leadership were happy with the beginning, considering the short time taken to advertise the school. In addition to the regular program, a grammar class was arranged at an hour convenient for many in the publishing office to attend. It was felt that this

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[1]Geo. Butler, "Our School at Battle Creek," RH 39 (June 4, 1872):197.

[2]"The School," RH 39 (May 14, 1872):176.

[3]Geo. I. Butler, "What Use Shall We Make of Our School?" RH 43 (July 21, 1874):44.

[4]M. E. Olsen, "Recollections of Prof. G. H. Bell," YI 68 (May 18, 1920):4.

added "strength and interest to this important feature of the school." It was reported that there was "an excellent spirit of zeal and hearty good will" on the part of those attending. Though the beginning was small, the leaders were confident that the school would "come up to its true position by a steady and healthy growth."[1]

By July the number of students had increased to twenty-five and the grammar class numbered between forty and fifty.[2] At the end of the term it was generally felt that the school had been successful beyond expectations. Of more importance to Bell, in view of his earlier fears, was the report that "none who have attended . . . have any fault to find with the school, but are well satisfied with the manner in which they have been taught, and the advancement they have made."[3]

Bell's discipline was firm. He shared the conviction of those responsible for the operation of the school that only those students who were serious about their studies and whose moral influence was beneficial should be permitted to stay. It was announced that those who were not prepared to cooperate in this way, "after due admonition and failure to reform," would be dismissed. "Without discipline of this kind, a proper moral influence cannot be maintained in the school. . . ."[4] Nevertheless, mixed with his

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[1]"The SDA School," RH 39 (June 11, 1872):204.

[2]J. H. Waggoner, "The School," RH 40 (July 16, 1872):36.

[3]School Committee, "The School," RH 40 (August 27, 1872):84. See also H. Nicola, "The School," RH 40 (August 6, 1872):63.

[4]School Committee, "The School," p. 84.

discipline was a genuine love for his students and a desire to help each to develop thoroughness in work habits and independence of thought. In all probability Bell was working hard to overcome the prejudice aroused against him from his earlier experience. He seemed to be succeeding, for his school continued to grow.

The second term commenced on September 16, but Mr. Bell was "temporarily indisposed." John Kellogg conducted the school until Bell was able to resume teaching. There were now forty scholars meeting in the upstairs room with more attending the grammar class.[1]

As Bell's reputation for thorough, careful instruction spread, and more students gave notice of attending school during the winter term, plans had to be made to procure larger and more suitable rooms. The sixty-three scholars who started in the winter term of 1872-73 came not to the old print shop for school, but to the meeting house. Folding desks had been attached to the backs of the pews. These could be dropped to avoid interfering with the convenience of the house as a place for the weekly meetings. The primary department met in the gallery.[2]

One of Bell's pupils during this term was Emma White, who two and one-half years before had married Edson White. On January 16, Emma wrote to her mother-in-law, Mrs. E. G. White, "I am going to school now, every day. I like it very much. I never saw a

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[1]"The School, RH 40 (September 17, 1872):112.

[2]"The School," RH 41 (December 24, 1872):16.

teacher that was so thorough in everything as Brother Bell is."[1] Indeed, Bell's thoroughness of instruction was one of his most outstanding characteristics as an educator and was the feature most often mentioned by those who came in contact with his teaching. When the General Conference Committee rendered its report to the church constituency in the spring term, they commented concerning his school, "Its order, its high moral tone, and its thoroughness of instruction, are gratifying. . . ."[2]

It was Bell's thorough teaching that endeared him to the Whites.[3] In March 1873, at the annual meetings, James White delivered an address in which he spoke of both the function of and plans for the proposed enlarged denominational school. He told of the need for both English and foreign languages to be taught so that young men and women might "became printers, editors, and teachers. . . ." He believed that in the school, "the common branches of education should be thoroughly taught, and all our ministers, to say the least, especially our young men, should be taught to speak and write the English language correctly."[4] Clearly

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[1]Emma L. White to E. G. White, January 16, 1873, EGWRC--DC.

[2]General Conference Committee, "The School," RH 41 (April 1, 1873):125.

[3]See, for example, White, Testimony to the Church at Battle Creek (1872), p. 3.

[4]James White, "Conference Address," RH 41 (May 20, 1873):-181. Though published in May, this address was given on March 11, 1873.

Bell's language teaching was to be a most significant factor in the realization of this dream.

The school broke up for the summer vacation with the prospects of a prolonged break between terms. The Review announced at the end of May that "for certain reasons" it was thought best to do this, and that the school would not reopen until early September.[1] Bell's health may again have contributed to these reasons, because he withdrew to Cazenovia for the summer and fall and did not return to teaching at the school until the beginning of the winter term on December 15.[2]

A New Principal Appointed

Bell's indisposition necessitated the appointment of a new head teacher. With the prospects of school buildings being erected in the near future, consideration would also have to be given to the choice of a principal for the new school. A relief teacher could have been appointed to take charge while Bell was away, leaving the option open to appoint him as principal when the school became more permanently established. The church leadership, however, decided to call a new teacher whom they also appointed head. They chose a graduate from the University of Michigan, Sidney Brownsberger, who had been teaching school in Delta, Ohio.[3] Though thirteen years

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[1] "The Next School Term," RH 41 (May 27, 1873):192.

[2] Geo. I. Butler, "The Next Term of the School," RH 42 (December 2, 1873):200. See also Brownsberger, "Reminiscences," p. 47.

[3] Like Goodloe Bell, Sidney Brownsberger had accepted the doctrines of the SDA church through the reading of tracts just

younger and with less experience in teaching than Bell, Brownsberger had university training and was to receive his M.A. degree in 1875. It was argued by some that this would give the young Adventist school more scholastic standing.[1]

Brownsberger commenced his teaching on September 15, 1873, with Miss Mary Welsh assisting him.[2] Opportunity for "the study of languages" and "the higher branches" was provided. The school met in the church building, as previously, but with the prospects of moving into the third Review and Herald office building, which was then being errected on West Main Street, for the winter.

The winter term, therefore, brought not only a new location in two large rooms which could comfortably seat 125 scholars, but also the return of Bell who was to teach "the more common branches."[3] Bell's willingness to return to the school under Brownsberger illustrates his "self-effacement." Spalding described Bell's feelings when he was replaced by Brownsberger:

> He was not by nature yielding and easy; one of his outstanding characteristics was tenacity of purpose and readiness to do battle for what he regarded as right. This naturally extended to his personal interests. But he subdued his

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before entering the teaching ministry of the church. In the winter of 1872 he had commenced to observe the seventh-day Sabbath. See Sidney Brownsberger, "Notes and Incidents," M. E. Olsen Private Papers, courtesy of Mrs. Alice Olson Roth, GC Archives.

[1]Vande Vere, The Wisdom Seekers, p. 19.

[2]Brownsberger, "Reminiscences," p. 47. Brownsberger gives the date for the opening of the school as September 19. This was a Friday and it would be unlikely to commence the fall term on that day. The Review and Herald gives the date as September 15. "The Fall Term of School," RH (August 5, 1873):64.

[3]Geo. I. Butler, "The Next Term of School," RH 42 (November 25, 1873):192 and RH 42 (December 2, 1873):200.

feelings under Christian discipline, and meekly and cooperatively took up duties assigned him.[1]

It would appear that Brownsberger and Bell differed to some extent in how they comprehended the details and implications of the program of Christian education that Ellen White had begun to outline to the church. In December 1872, Ellen White's first testimony on Christian education had been published.[2] Bell may have seen the document in an unpublished form earlier in the year, but at least in December he would most likely have read it with great interest. Ellen White was to write very comprehensively on the subject of education during the next thirty years and most of the major features of her philosophy were included in this first article.

At this time, however, she made practically no allusion to the importance of Bible study.[3] That theme was developed later. Now she gave greatest prominence to the theme of the physical development of man. In contrast with the prevailing educational practice, she stressed education of the physical man and the proper

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[1]Spalding, Origin and History, 2:121.

[2]Ellen G. White, Testimony for the Church, No. 22 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Pub. Assn., 1872). See RH 41 (December 24, 1872):16. This testimony was subsequently reprinted in Testimonies for the Church, 9 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1962), 3:131-60.

[3]Only in the last page of this testimony did she urge that young men entering the work of the gospel ministry should have a knowledge of Bible truth. She said that "the great object of education is to enable us to use the powers which God has given us in such a manner as will best represent the religion of the Bible and promote the glory of God" (ibid., p. 160). She did, however, write in earlier pages about the importance of moral education and the development of character. Her priorities in education are clearly revealed in her statement that education "embraces more than

development of health. She condemned the system of education inherited by her generation. She pointed out that poorly ventilated rooms, poorly constructed desks, and an emphasis upon intellect at the expense of the physical and moral development of the child had been "destructive to health and even life itself."[1] It was her conviction that had education in the past

> . . . been conducted upon altogether a different plan, the youth of this generation would not now be so depraved and worthless. The managers and teachers of schools should have been those who understood physiology, and who had an interest, not only to educate the youth in the sciences, but to teach them how to preserve health. . . . There should have been connected with the schools, establishments for carrying on various branches of labor, that the students might have employment, and the necessary exercise out of school hours.[2]

She called for a combination of study and labor, the effects of which would benefit the moral as well as the physical and mental powers of the youth. She wrote:

> Had there been agricultural and manufacturing establishments connected with our schools, and had competent teachers been employed to educate the youth in the different branches of study and labor, devoting a portion of each day to mental improvement, and a portion to physical labor, there would now be a more elevated class of youth to come upon the stage of action to have influence in molding society.[3]

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merely having a knowledge of books. It takes in everything that is good, virtuous, righteous and holy. It comprehends the practice of temperance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love to God and to one another. In order to attain this object, the physical, mental, moral, and religious education of children must have attention" (ibid., pp. 131-32).

[1]Ibid., pp. 135, 137, 142, 143.

[2]Ibid., pp. 141-42.

[3]Ibid., pp. 155-56.

In contrast with the classical education so prevalent in the schools and colleges of the day, the concept of education Ellen White called for was revolutionary. Nevertheless, Goodloe Bell's background had opened the way for him to accept it. He was not a college graduate. He came from generations of farmers and had himself farmed in Lisbon, enjoying the opportunity for agricultural labor. It is true that he was guilty in his own life of devoting too much time to the study of books to the neglect of his need for rest and physical labor, yet he saw the wisdom of Ellen White's counsel and later was to be among the first to put it into practical operation when he became principal of the South Lancaster school.[1]

Brownsberger, on the other hand, was a product of the classical schools of the day. He had been chosen as principal by the school committee because he was a product of "education."[2] As head of the new enterprise, he was the one who had to translate the ideal into reality, but this he was unable to do. In August 1874, eleven months after taking over the school, Professor Brownsberger met with Elder and Mrs. James White and the school board. On this occasion Mrs. White read to them her testimony on education. Brownsberger heard her read:

> We are reformers. We desire that our children should study to the best advantage. In order to do this, employment

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[1]G. H. Bell, "The School in New England," RH 59 (March 7, 1882):159.

[2]Brownsberger graduated from the University of Michigan in 1869. See First Announcement of Healdsburg College, 1882-83 (Oakland, Cal.: Pacific Press, 1882), p. 19.

> should be given them which will call the muscles into exercise. Daily systematic labor should constitute a part of the education of the youth, even at this late period.[1]

The committee admitted that such a program called for "a broader work" than they had envisaged, but since the testimony had been published and advertised in the Review as early as December 1872, they could hardly plead ignorance. W. C. White recalled that when one committee member asked Brownsberger what they could do, he replied, "I do not know anything about the conducting of such a school, where industries and farming are a part of the work. I would not know how to conduct such a school."[2] Brownsberger later recalled his impressions at this time: "It seemed impossible for us to break from the old methods and impressions of what constituted education."[3]

In all fairness, it must be stated that probably Bell did not really know either. It was one thing to support the ideal--another to put it into operation. As late as 1879, Bell would speak to a meeting of the Seventh-day Adventist Educational Society concerning the need for students to spend some time in physical labor in addition to their studies. Yet he "knew not how this could be secured."[4] Nevertheless, it is significant that in 1882, when

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[1]Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 3:159.

[2]W. C. White, "Pioneer Pilots in Christian Education," p. 29.

[3]Brownsberger, "Personal Experiences," p. 4, Brownsberger Collection, AUHR.

[4]Battle Creek and Emmanuel Missionary College Board and Faculty Minutes, vol. 10, September 24, 1877-January 8, 1890, meeting of November 9, 1879, p. 56, AUHR.

both Brownsberger and Bell were principals launching new schools on opposite sides of the continent, they both introduced a strong work-study program in their respective institutions.[1] Brownsberger may have been slow to grasp the principle at first, but he eventually adopted it wholeheartedly.

Locating Battle Creek College

The choice of Brownsberger as principal in 1873 was not the only decision made that year that had far-reaching implications. The selection of a site for the proposed new school building was also made in the same year.

As early as the spring of 1872, and again in the spring of 1873, possible sites for the school location had been visited. W. C. White recollected "the animated discussions" over the question at the White home, and "the long drives through the country, and the examination of many farms." The most favorable location was the J. L. Foster farm at the northern end of Goguac Lake--a block adjacent

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[1] Brownsberger later wrote that the principles being outlined by Ellen White during the 1870s impressed him so deeply that when he resigned from the Battle Creek College in 1881, he was "fully resolved" that he should never reenter denominational school work "except on the basis of the lines and reforms set forth in the testimonies" of Mrs. White. See Brownsberger, "Personal Experiences," pp 4-5. In 1882 he opened a new school in Healdsburg, California, on April 11, and commenced a strong work-study program. See First Announcement of Healdsburg College, 1882-83 (Oakland, Cal.: Pacific Press, 1882), pp. 5-6. AUHR; Healdsburg College, Third Annual Announcement, 1884-85 (Oakland, Cal.: Pacific Press Publishing House, 1884), pp. 5-6, AUHR. Goodloe Bell started his school in South Lancaster, Massachusetts, on April 19, 1882, and also instituted an industrial program with the academic studies. See S. N. Haskell, "Opening of the South Lancaster School," RH 59 (July 11, 1882):441-42.

to the acreage Goodloe Bell later purchased for his farm. The price, however, was too high. The next most suitable land was fifty acres known as the Fair Grounds situated north of Manchester Street. The Whites were particularly enthusiastic to secure this location, because "they saw the opportunity of developing a school with lands to cultivate and several educational industries that would train students in mechanical arts, and help them along with their school expenses."[1] Spalding's interpretation, if it can be accepted, says that they were "supported by Professor Bell; but the main drivers of the enterprise could not see so far into the planned educational reform. . . ."[2]

Instead, on December 31, 1873, they arranged for the purchase of a twelve-acre site opposite the Health Institute. The land belonged to Erastus Hussey, a wealthy Quaker merchant who was prominent in city and national affairs. Elder Butler made an attempt to rationalize their decision to buy this land in his description of the grounds. He said they formed "the most beautiful site for school buildings that can be found in the city of Battle Creek," and added rather naively that "the grounds will be ample. . . ." He gave as additional reasons that the selection would save the expense and inconvenience of moving the Health Institute

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[1]W. C. White, "Pioneer Pilots in Christian Education," p. 28. See also James White, "Permanency of the Cause," RH 42 (July 8, 1873):28.

[2]Spalding, Origin and History, 2:120.

and would mean that all the church's major institutions would be within easy reach of each other.[1]

Three months later an Educational Society was formally organized and it voted to proceed with the erection of a three-storied brick building capable of holding 400 or more scholars.[2] After the close of the school year in the spring of 1874, Butler reported that "the universal testimony of all who have attended is, that it is excellent. . . . The teachers are Christian men, who talk and pray, and labor with their pupils for their well being."[3]

The fall term opened in the Review building on August 24, 1874, for a long seventeen-week term. The students and faculty, however, looked forward to moving into the new school. On the first day of the winter term, at 10 a.m. on Monday, January 4, 1875, "a large company assembled in the capacious hall of the new school building to dedicate the building to its sacred uses. . . ." The temperature outside had dropped to below zero, but the occasion was one of "thorough good cheer." Later they announced that the name of the school would be Battle Creek College.[4]

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[1]Geo. I. Butler, "Our New School Grounds," RH 43 (January 6, 1974):29.

[2]Geo. I. Butler, "Our Educational Society and School Buildings," RH 43 (March 31, 1874):124.

[3]Geo. I. Butler, "What Use Shall We Make of Our School?" RH 43 (July 21, 1874):44.

[4]"Next Term of School," RH 43 (July 21, 1874):48; James White, "The School at Battle Creek," RH 44 (September 15, 1874):104; Uriah Smith, "The Opening of the School," RH 45 (January 8, 1875):12; Uriah Smith, "Battle Creek College," RH 45 (February 11, 1875):56.

Conclusion

Goodloe Bell must have been very satisfied with the growth of the school since its humble beginnings in 1868. The progress had not always been smooth, but the final outcome owed much to Bell's love for God and his students, the quality of his instruction, the strength of his commitment to teaching, and his faith in the educational program outlined by Ellen White. As a Christian educator, Bell was clear, thorough, and concise. He was more concerned that his students should understand what they were learning than merely memorize meaningless facts. A major goal of education for Bell was the development of independent thinking that was, at the same time, subject to control by the principles of the Bible. Bell believed that character development lay at the heart of the educational process. He stressed, therefore, the importance of the moral, physical, and spiritual development of his students as much as their intellectual growth.

Bell's major contribution was through his work at the Battle Creek School. This chapter, however, has also briefly examined his contribution to the Christian education of the youth of the church as editor of the Youth's Instructor. Though his period of service was limited by his involvement with other responsibilities and by increasingly poor health, his influence through his writing was positive, and directed towards establishing the faith of the children and youth upon the principles of the Bible.

Bell also used the pages of the Youth's Instructor to advertise and explain his methods of Christian education through the

Sabbath school. In 1882, two leaders of the church had occasion to recall the "remarkable growth" of Bell's day school from 1868 to 1875. In accounting for the growth, they said that his school, "together with the Sabbath-School under the same management, laid the foundation for the success of later years."[1] Bell did indeed make a most significant contribution as a Christian educator to the development and improvement of the Sabbath schools of the church. This facet of his career is the theme of the next chapter; his teaching career at the Battle Creek College is continued in chapter four.

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[1]Geo. I. Butler and S. N. Haskell, "Educational Matters," RH 59 (February 28, 1882):137.

CHAPTER 3

TEACHING THE CHURCH THROUGH THE SABBATH SCHOOL

Next to the day-school movement which Bell officially launched in 1872, the second great investment of the Seventh-day Adventist church in the Christian education of its youth has been through the institution of the Sabbath school. It was through the Sabbath school that the church first formally expressed its concerns about the salvation of its children. However, the contemporary treatment of children as little adults[1] and the expectation of Christ's imminent return inhibited for some years the full development of Sabbath schools for young people.

The science of child development and the principles of how children learn were yet to be discovered. The common schools made little effort to make learning attractive. When children went to school, their teachers expected them to absorb the hard, bare facts of knowledge. When they went to church, they were little adults, and therefore expected to learn a little of what greater men learned. Then, too, in the late 1840s, the

[1] Robert W. Lynn and Elliott Wright, The Big Little School: Two Hundred Years of the Sunday School, 2nd ed. rev. and enl. (Birmingham, Alabama: Religious Education Press, 1980), pp. 70-78.

Sabbath-keeping Adventists[1] believed that the Lord would come before the child attained adulthood. James White wrote in 1852: "Some have thought that because Christ was so soon coming they need not bestow much labor on their children. This is a grievous error, sufficient to call down the frown of Heaven."[2]

At least Elder James White was concerned enough about Christian education to propose that parents should establish Sabbath schools, "even where there are but two or three children in a place."[3] To meet the need for appropriate Bible lessons, White began to publish a new monthly journal, the Youth's Instructor, for the children and youth of the church. It was planned that each issue would contain lessons that would instruct them in the teachings of Scripture.

By the mid 1860s the number of Sabbath schools had increased considerably. Some were still being conducted in private homes, but in many areas where churches had been established, Sabbath schools had also been organized for the children and youth. The organization and conduct of these schools, however, remained haphazard. Each school operated independently of the other, and in most the standard of teaching left much to be desired. Bible lessons, provided through the pages of the Youth's Instructor, were

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[1]A name identifying those who kept the seventh-day Sabbath in the 1840s and 1850s and would later (1860) adopt the name Seventh-day-Adventist.

[2]James White, "An Address," YI 1 (August, 1852):1.

[3]Ibid., p. 2. See also his article "A Paper for Children," RH 3 (July 8, 1852):37.

not on a regular basis and were usually prepared for only one grade level. Finally, no state-wide association existed to promote the growth and to encourage the development of Sabbath school interests.

The church needed a Christian educator well-acquainted with Scripture and with the principles of teaching who would make the Sabbath school his special work and bring organization and unity to the disjointed efforts being made. Thus the appointment of Goodloe Bell as superintendent of the Sabbath school in Battle Creek in 1869 proved most auspicious. During the next eighteen years, no other single individual exerted more beneficial influence upon its development than did Bell. This chapter is concerned with tracing Bell's influence and the means by which he exerted such a great impact upon the church's educational program provided in the Sabbath school.

Bell made his contribution in four major areas: as superintendent of the Battle Creek Sabbath School; in the preparation of graded Bible lessons; in the organization of Sabbath school associations; and as a founding editor of the Sabbath-School Worker. These four areas are examined in detail so that Bell's contribution as a Christian educator may be evaluated. First, however, it is necessary to briefly outline the historical development of the Sabbath-school prior to the time of Bell's appointment as superintendent at Battle Creek. This will clarify the significance of the changes he brought to the organization of the Sabbath school, not only in Battle Creek but, as it will be shown, wherever Sabbath schools were operated across the United States and beyond.

Early Sabbath Schools

Recognition has already been given above to the initiative and foresight of Elder James White who, in 1852, published a new journal, the Youth's Instructor, specifically for the purpose of providing Bible lessons for the children of the church. He said that he designed the Youth's Instructor lessons not only for small children but also for those from sixteen to twenty years of age.[1] Twenty years earlier, the American Sunday School Union, at its First National Convention in New York, had considered the desirability of uniform Bible lessons for American Sunday schools and had commended the system of "a verse a day and the same verse for all."[2] White also could see the value of a uniform course of study for his infant and as-yet-unnamed church.[3] He published four lessons in the August 1852 number, and in this way both the Youth's

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[1] Ibid.

[2] The Development of the Sunday-School 1780-1905. The Official Report of the Eleventh International Sunday-School Convention, Toronto, Canada, June 23-27, 1905 (Boston: Executive Committee of the International Sunday-School Association, 1905), p. 157. Many Sunday schools adopted this plan in 1832 (ibid.), but the systematic study of the whole Bible over a period of seven years, known as the uniform lesson system, was not officially adopted until the Fifth National Sunday-School Convention in April 1872. See Edwin Wilbur Rice, The Sunday-School Movement and the American Sunday-School Union, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Union Press, 1917), pp. 365-66; and Lynn and Wright, The Big Little School, pp. 100-102.

[3] In 1852 James White estimated the membership of the various groups sharing a common belief to be "near one thousand" in the state of New York; "several hundred in the Western States," besides a "goodly number" in Canada. "A Brief Sketch of the Past," RH 3 (May 6, 1852):5.

Instructor and the Sabbath school were instituted together.[1] Their development for many years was to be closely intertwined.

James White organized the first regular Sabbath school in 1853 in Rochester, New York, where the headquarters of the church was then located. In the following year John Byington established another in his home at Buck's Bridge, New York.[2] When the church moved its publishing work from Rochester to Battle Creek in 1855, Merritt G. Kellogg organized the Sabbath school there and was elected its first superintendent. Three years later the school was reported to be in "a flourishing condition" with about fifty scholars who were taught by ten or more teachers.[3]

During the late 1850s Sabbath schools were established in other places, but each school was free to choose its own program. In 1859 L. J. Richmond reported to the readers of the Youth's Instructor that his school in Ashfield, Massachusetts, had been operating for about five years. There were ten scholars who were studying the Bible Class lesson book.[4] The superintendent was

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[1]L. Flora Plummer, Early History of the Seventh-day Adventist Sabbath-School Work (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., ca. 1910), pp. 5-6.

[2]Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, rev. ed. (1976), s.v. "Sabbath School."

[3]"Battle Creek Sabbath-School," YI 6 (March 1858):16.

[4]The Bible Class was a book published late in 1855. It contained fifty-two lessons that had previously appeared in the Youth's Instructor. They had been prepared by R. F. Cottrell on the theme of "the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." C. C. Lewis, "Sketches of Sabbath-school History--No., 3," RH 62 (February 24, 1885):118.

proud of some of his scholars who had committed about fifty chapters of Scripture to memory.[1] Mrs. P. M. Bates, wife of Captain Joseph Bates, described the Sabbath school in Monterey, Michigan, in 1860. Thirty scholars between the ages of four and fifteen met after the morning service. Generally the parents stayed with their children, however, and listened to the recitation of the lesson. Before the school was dismissed all repeated the ten commandments together.[2]

Because of its location at the headquarters of the church, the Sabbath school at Battle Creek became the largest and the most influential of all the schools. When Jesse Dorcas, of Tipton, Iowa, wrote to the editor of the Review and Herald in 1860 requesting information on "the most approved mode for conducting a Sabbath-school," it was the superintendent of the Battle Creek school, G. W. Amadon, who wrote the reply. He reported that his school met at 11:30 after the morning service and continued for one hour. After singing and prayer, the teachers heard the classes recite their lesson which was "usually some six or eight verses of the Bible." These were committed to memory and "repeated in order by each scholar in the class." The teachers then questioned the scholars on their recitation. Before concluding the school, the superintendent would announce the lesson for the following week and review the one just recited. "In this way," Amadon said, "the

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[1] L. J. Richmond, "Our Sabbath-School," YI 7 (April 1859):27.

[2] P. M. Bates, "Our Sabbath-School," YI 8 (June 1860):47. See also H. M. Kenyon, "From the Sabbath-school in Monterey, Mich.," YI 14 (March 1866):19.

minds of the whole school travel over the lesson pretty thoroughly." Amadon reported that the school had previously gone through the Bible Class book of lessons twice, and recommended that every school "begin with that book." When this book was being used, the lesson was recited to the teachers and then the superintendent occupied ten or fifteen minutes asking general questions about the lesson. He also heard each scholar and teacher recite a short verse of scripture which, because of the great variety of texts chosen, "added to the interest of the school."[1]

Amadon was also editor of the Youth's Instructor in 1860. In June of that year he invited those who were conducting Sabbath schools to prepare a brief report to "show the numerical strength of the Sabbath-school enterprise."[2] Three Sabbath schools responded in the August issue: Deerfield, Minnesota; Round Grove, Illinois; and Decatur City, Iowa. In Deerfield the twenty scholars between four and eighteen years of age met after the morning service, and each pupil recited whatever scripture he had learned during the week. Questions were asked on the scriptures given. After an intermission, a Bible class was conducted which "frequently" lasted "till three o'clock." The Round Grove School reported studying six verses for a lesson; they were then going through the Sermon on the Mount. In Decatur City, the twelve

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[1]Geo. W. Amadon, "Sabbath-Schools," RH 15 (February 16, 1860):101-102. For a biography of George Amadon, see Milton Raymond Hook, Flames Over Battle Creek (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1977).

[2]YI 8 (June 1860):44-45.

scholars and one teacher had commenced at Genesis 1 and were studying from three to four chapters a lesson.[1] In 1861 the Battle Creek Sabbath School reported that the book of Revelation was the theme of its lessons. The superintendent commented that "even the little boys of eight and twelve years are most pleasurably entertained with this wonderful book."[2]

With no central organization, it is clear that each school was free to make its own decision on its course of study. There was, however, a great stress on the memorization of scripture.[3] One school told with pride that from June 21 through July 8 the thirty scholars had memorized 2,580 verses.[4] Another reported that some of the children memorized from forty to fifty verses a week.[5]

In an endeavor to bring some degree of unity in operation,

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[1] YI 8 (August 1860):64.

[2] G. W. Amadon, "Battle Creek Sabbath-School," YI 9 (March 1861):20.

[3] It is of interest to note the parallel development in the history of the American Sunday school. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, before a system of organized Bible lessons was introduced, the memorization of Scripture verses became almost a craze. Schools rivalled with each other to see which could report the largest number of verses recited. Some children memorized the four gospels; two girls in six weeks recited 8,336 verses. One historian noted it was common for pupils to learn more than 300 verses a week. See Rice, The Sunday-School Movement, p. 75; The Development of the Sunday-School 17980-1905, pp. 10; Lynn and Wright, The Big Little School, p. 158.

[4] Jn. Wakeling, "From the Sabbath-School in Memphis, Mich.," YI 13 (September 1865):72.

[5] A. S. Hutchins, "Sabbath-Schools," YI 8 (December 1860):91. See also L. J. Richmond, "Our Sabbath-School," YI 7 (April 1859):27.

George W. Amadon published an article in 1863 entitled "How to Conduct a Sabbath School." He discussed the topic under ten headings: Organization, Classes, Teachers, Superintendent, Manner of Conducting the School, Lessons, Order, Punctuality, Library Books, and Length of Session. In regard to the lessons, he recommended that until proper lessons were printed, the Bible should be used as the textbook and in the spirit of the times that each school should make its own selection. The book of Acts was particularly suitable, he felt, and he proposed that twelve to fifteen verses could be the basis for each lesson.[1]

Thus by the mid 1860s, church members had established many Sabbath schools, but each operated independently of the others.[2] In most cases the superintendents and teachers expended much effort to arouse and hold the interest of the children, but the provision of suitable lessons was uncertain to say the least. One major limitation, however, was the lack of graded lessons. In many schools from two to four different age groupings existed, yet when the Youth's Instructor published lessons, they were adapted to only one grade.[3]

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[1]G. W. Amadon, "How to Conduct a Sabbath-School," YI 11 (May 1863):37-38.

[2]See, for example, the reports from the Sabbath schools in Roosevelt, New York; Memphis, Michigan; Orange, Michigan; and Marquette, Wisconsin, published respectively in V. O. Edson, "From the Sabbath-School in Roosevelt, N.Y.," YI 13 (May, 1865):40; Wakeling, "From the Sabbath-School in Memphis, Mich.," p. 72; N. S. Brigham, "From the Sabbath-School in Orange, Mich.: YI 14 (February, 1866):14; Estelle E. Hallock, "From a Youthful Sabbath-school Teacher," YI 14 (October, 1866):77. See also Lewis, "Sketches--No. 4," RH, March 3, 1885, p. 135.

[3]The term "grade" is here used broadly. Most of the early lessons published in the Youth's Instructor were not suitable for

A second major limitation to the development of the Sabbath school in the late 1860s was the lack of organization. There were no secretaries, no record books, and no system of reporting the attainments of the school. Improvement and expansion were not possible so long as such a fragmented approach remained. The smaller and more isolated schools, in particular, needed strong leadership and guidance.

Superintendent of Battle Creek Sabbath School

C. C. Lewis described three clusters of character qualities needed by the individual who would accomplish the changes required. (1) He (or she) had to be a person knowledgeable in the scriptures and acquainted with the abilities of children and youth to comprehend religious truth. (2) He had to be a disciplinarian and an organizer with enough experience to be sensitive to the needs of the Sabbath schools and capable of forming plans to supply those needs. (3) He had to be able to inspire his co-workers with enthusiasm for their work and to instill in them a sense of its sacredness and of their need to depend upon God for help. Therefore, when Bell assumed the responsibility of the Battle Creek Sabbath School in 1869, some of his contemporaries thought he was the man for the hour.[1]

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little children. See Lewis, "Sketches--No. 3," RH, February 24, 1885, p. 118. The first series adapted to little children was prepared by Miss Adelia P. Patten and was published in the Youth's Instructor between September 1863 and August 1865. The series consisted of 104 lessons, each containing a simply told story, a short memory verse, and some questions on the story.

[1]Lewis, "Sketches--No. 5," RH, March 10, 1885, p. 151; Geo. W. Amadon, "A Sketch of the Battle Creek Sabbath School," RH 78

Bell could not have foreseen that his influence in Sabbath school work would eventually extend from the Atlantic to the Pacific. His influence, however, would have been much more limited, at least initially, had not the Church chosen him as the editor of the Youth's Instructor at about the same time he was appointed Sabbath school superintendent.[1] Then he could use the columns of the journal to promote the changes he implemented.

In 1885, C. C. Lewis wrote a series of eight short sketches of Sabbath school history. He divided the history from 1852 to 1885 into three prominent movements around which other events clustered. They were (1) the beginning of the work in 1852; (2) the introduction of a better system of organization in 1869; and (3) a general revival of interest in the Sabbath school work in 1877-78 with the formation of state and general associations.[2] Bell was intimately involved with the last two movements. How he improved the organization of the Sabbath school through his role as Battle Creek superintendent is now considered.

(November 26, 1901):765; L. Flora Plummer, From Acorn to Oak, A History of the Seventh-day Adventist Sabbath School Work (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., ca. 1922), p. 36.

[1]Bell was appointed editor of the Youth's Instructor in May 1869. According to Miss E. R. Fairfield's report in the Youth's Instructor of March 15, 1870, Bell had been improving the organization of the Battle Creek Sabbath School for the previous ten months, which would also point to about the month of May 1869 when he was elected superintendent. "SDA Publishing Association," RH 33 (May 25, 1869):174; E. R. Fairfield, "The Reporting System," YI 18 (March 15, 1870):46.

[2]Lewis, "Sketches--No. 2," RH, February 17, 1885, p. 103.

Organizing the Sabbath School

According to Lewis's fifth sketch, Bell had had "much experience in Sunday-school work" prior to coming to Battle Creek, and it was therefore "natural that he should take a deep interest in the Sabbath-school work" among Seventh-day Adventists.[1] The Sabbath school in Battle Creek had 104 pupils and 24 teachers in 1869 when Bell assumed its leadership.[2] He lost no time in organizing it with his characteristic thoroughness and order. In July when he as editor published the first number of the Youth's Instructor, he introduced a new section entitled the "Sabbath School Department." Under this heading he proposed to write on the best methods of organizing and conducting Sabbath schools. He said that the first thing to do was "to get a good plan of Organization. If the school is thoroughly and properly organized, it will be far easier to carry it on successfully, and much more good can be accomplished." Bell then presented the plan of organization that had been "lately adopted" by the Battle Creek school:

> "1. The Sabbath School Year shall be divided into four equal portions, known as the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Quarter; the First Quarter commencing on the first Sabbath of June in each year.
> "2. The Officers of the Sabbath School shall be a Superintendent, an Assistant Superintendent, a Secretary, an Assistant Secretary, a Librarian, an Assistant Librarian, and a Treasurer. These Officers shall be elected quarterly, at a special meeting called for that purpose.

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[1] Lewis, "Sketches--No. 5," p. 151.

[2] J. R. Trembley, "Superintendent's Report of the SDA Sabbath-School at Battle Creek, for the Year Ending June 1, 1870," YI 18 (August 1, 1870):119.

"3. The Teachers shall be appointed by the Superintendent, and the duties of both Officers and Teachers shall be assigned by him. He shall also call all special meetings of the Teachers or the School."[1]

He also described his reporting system which was a revolutionary development in the history of the Sabbath school:

1. At the opening of each School the Secretary shall report the total attendance of Teachers and Pupils at the last School; also the attendance and punctuality of Each Teacher, and any other items which may be of interest to the school.

"2. Each Teacher shall make a Quarterly Report to the Secretary, showing the attendance, scholarship, and deportment of each Pupil in his class. An abstract of these reports shall be included in the Quarterly Report of the Secretary.

"3. The Superintendent, Secretary, Librarian, and Treasurer, shall at the end of each Quarter, make a Report of such facts as the interests of the School seem to demand; and at the end of each year a Summary of these Quarterly Reports shall be made out."[2]

Miss Elmina Fairfield was closely involved with the operation of the reporting system in Battle Creek, and in March, 1870 she commenced a series of eight articles in the Youth's Instructor describing it in greater detail.[3] She wrote:

Much might be said on the importance of keeping records in the Sabbath School; but I will only add further, that, could all have the privilege every Sabbath, as some of us here do, of mentally contrasting the past working of our school without the reporting system, with its present working under that system, nothing more would be needed

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[1]G. H. Bell, "Sabbath-School Department," YI 17 (July 1869): 54.

[2]Ibid.

[3]These eight articles are located in the following issues of the Youth's Instructor: March 15, 1870, p. 46; April 1, 1870, p. 54; May 1, 1870, pp. 70-71; May 15, 1870, pp. 78-79; June 1, 1870, p. 86; June 15, 1870, p. 94; July 1, 1870, p. 103; July 15, 1870, p. 107.

to convince them that it is necessary in order to have a good school.[1]

Bell prepared a number of record books for the teachers and secretaries to use. Each teacher was given a specially printed record book into which he recorded the names, attendance, punctuality, scholarship, and deportment of each pupil in his class. If a student was tardy, the number of minutes he was late was placed in the record. The teacher also recorded imperfectly learned lessons[2] and bad conduct. Miss Fairfield reported that this method of keeping the class record was both "simple and convenient."[3]

On Sunday every teacher handed to the secretary a written report taken from his class record book for the previous day. This was compared with a record taken by the assistant secretary of each pupil's attendance, punctuality, and deportment. The duplication of recording by the teacher and assistant secretary was justified by the explanation "that if, through carelessness or accident, one of these persons should lose his record, it may not be lost entirely, but be preserved in the book of the other." The assistant secretary also kept a record of the names, attendance,

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[1]Fairfield, "The Reporting System," p. 46.

[2]Miss Fairfield explained that Bell did not evaluate the learning of lessons on a scale of ten. An imperfect lesson was simply one that was not perfect. One reason given for this procedure was didactic. By establishing perfect lessons as the standard and any coming short of it as imperfect, children would learn more effectively of God's final judgment in which there will be but two classes of people: one pronounced perfect; the other, imperfect, "even if they have but one sin clinging to them." Fairfield, "The Reporting System--No. 2," YI, April 1, 1870, p. 54.

[3]Ibid.

scholarship, and punctuality of the officers and teachers of the school. Since this record was kept by the secretary as well, the two often compared their books "to guard against mistakes as much as possible."[1]

The secretaries' reports were compiled and presented to a teachers' meeting that Bell called each Wednesday evening. Then on the following Sabbath, the secretary read to the whole school a condensed report of the previous week's records.[2] At the end of the quarter, a report that summarized these weekly reports was rendered to the church at a meeting in which "the standing of every individual (officers and teachers, as well as the pupils)" was "thus made known publicly."[3] Then at the end of the year, the superintendent, secretary, and librarian presented their annual reports summarizing the details of the four quarterly reports.[4]

The contrast between the system of organization described above and what had existed before is impressive, but not everybody appreciated its worth. It demanded strict discipline, patience, and hard work on the part of many who were unaccustomed to the

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[1]Fairfield, "The Reporting System--No. 3," YI, May 1, 1870, p. 70.

[2]The secretary's report read to the Battle Creek Sabbath School on March 12, 1870 was given in YI, May 1, 1870, pp. 70-71.

[3]Fairfield, "The Reporting Systemn," p. 46. The directions for preparing the quarterly Sabbath school report were given in "The Reporting System--No. 7," YI, July 15, 1870, p. 107.

[4]The annual reports given by the superintendent, secretary, and librarian of the Battle Creek Sabbath School for the year ending June 1, 1870, were published in YI, August 1, 1870, p. 119; and YI, August 15, 1870, p. 127.

exercise of these qualities in Sabbath school. In what was most likely an understatement of the problems Bell faced, Miss Fairfield wrote:

> It was no easy matter for us to break away from our former customs and habits, and bring ourselves to a certain standard every Sabbath, neither was it an easy thing to have the pupils of the school enter heartily into it; but with encouragement from our superintendent, to patiently persevere in the matter, at the end of nine months the machinery, as we may term it, was all in motion.[1]

Early in 1870, one of the members of the Battle Creek Sabbath School, N. D. Richmond, commented on his reaction to the recording system in which all tardiness, poor scholarship, and bad conduct was registered against each student. He said that it was teaching him lessons concerning the development of habits "of thoroughness, promptness and punctuality," which he could not have learned in any other way.[2]

Elmina Fairfield was also convinced of the great value of the system, for when she wrote of the progress of the school, she said:

> We would not boastingly take any credit nor praise to ourselves; but it is our firm belief that what advancements have been made, have been secured mainly through the blessing of God on our reporting system, which was introduced into the school by our present superintendent, the editor of the Instructor.[3]

It is clear from a study of the details of Bell's reporting system that it demanded much from the officers of the Sabbath

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[1]Fairfield, "The Reporting System," p. 46.

[2]N. D. Richmond, "Our Record," YI 18 (January 14, 1870):14.

[3]Fairfield, "The Reporting System," p. 46.

school. Even the faithful Miss Fairfield commented that it implied "hard work . . . and very truthfully too."[1] Two of Bell's Sabbath school secretaries have described more fully their involvement in the work of the Sabbath school during the late 1870s.

Drury W. Reavis, a student in his third year at Battle Creek College,[2] was appointed Sabbath school secretary, which meant, he said, that he "belonged exclusively to Professor Bell for more than a year." It also meant that he was no mere "officeholder" or "ornament" but a "constant hard worker." Reavis related how he would go to Bell's home on Sabbath afternoon to spend from two to three hours preparing for the following Sabbath's program. Bell would give his suggestions

> . . . as to how he wanted the next session of the school reported, the studying of the lessons for each department, the changes he ordered, faults corrected, and every detail committed to me to have in order before the coming Sabbath.[3]

On the following Friday evening Reavis again went to Bell's home to report on the work done and to read to him the report he

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Drury Webster Reavis (1853-1939) was listed as a student in the Grammar Department of Battle Creek College for the 1874-75 school year. He finally graduated in 1880. See First Annual Catalogue of the Officers and Students of the Battle Creek College for the College Year 1874-75 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Review and Herald Steam Book and Job Print, 1875), p. 11; Sixth Annual Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Battle Creek College for the College Year 1879-80 With a Full Announcement for 1880-81 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Review and Herald Job Press, 1880), p. 46. He later became a propagandist for religious liberty, and the circulation manager for a number of religious publications. See Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, rev. ed. (1976), s.v., "Reavis, Drury Webster."

[3]D. W. Reavis, I Remember (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., n.d.), pp. 91-92.

had prepared for the next morning's Sabbath school. Bell always insisted on knowing exactly what the secretary was going to say and how he was going to say it. The manner of delivery had to be "fully up to the Bell standard." Occasionally Bell would pick the report to pieces "unmercifully," and Reavis would have to return to his room at a late hour and rewrite it entirely. Yet in spite of such treatment, Reavis later graciously wrote, "At first this seemed to be trying, and not necessary, but afterward I found it to be of great value to me, and have been thankful for it all through life."[1] Bell's teaching was never restricted only to the classroom. He was teaching in all that he did. The development of his students was uppermost in his mind at all times. Their future progress meant more than present pain.

Henry P. Holser, also a student at Battle Creek College in the late 1870s and early 1880s,[2] reveals in his diary for 1879 that he was an assistant secretary to the secretary, Drury Reavis, during that year. Selections from his diary also reveal the extent to which he too was involved with Sabbath school duties:

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[1]Ibid., p. 92.

[2]Henry Philip Holser (1856-1901) was listed in the 1st year of the English Course, as well as being a student in German at Battle Creek College in 1877. He graduated in 1882. See Fourth Annual Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Battle Creek College for the College Year 1877-78 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Review and Herald Pub. House, 1878), p. 27; Seventeenth Annual Calendar of the Battle Creek College, 1892 (n.p., 1892), p. 30. In 1888 he was appointed president of the Central European Conference and was in charge of the whole European Mission from 1895 to 1899. See Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, rev. ed. (1976), s.v. "Holser, Henry P."

> Sunday, February 23: "Went to the Review office to see the Secretary, D. W. Reavis. Worked at filling out the S.S. record at the Review Office all the afternoon; entered names most of the time."
> Tuesday, April 1: "Was busy all the morning gathering up S. S. Teachers' record books. And spent the remainder of the day in working on the S. S. record."
> Thursday, May 29: "At 5, rose and worked at my S. S. record work before and after breakfast."
> Sunday, June 29: "Worked this morning at gathering up S. S. record books to make out a quarterly report."
> Sabbath August 23: "After breakfast went to Prof. Bell's house to get the records and cards, and after arranging them, went to S. S. where I was kept quite busy."
> Friday, October 10: "At noon went to the Tabernacle with Prof. B.[ell] to arrange for seating the S. S. Spent all the evening on S. S. records."[1]

Holser's diary included very few weeks in which there was no record of work done for the Sabbath school. By 1879 Sabbath school in Battle Creek had grown considerably. Holser noted that 530 were present on November 8 and though the number of officers had also increased, all were kept busy.[2]

When Bell introduced the reporting system into the Sabbath school, he realized at the same time that frequent and regular meetings for the teachers in the school were necessary if the school was to be a success.[3] No school can rise higher than the quality of its teaching, and Bell's expertise in this direction was undoubted. He urged, therefore, that the teachers should not only meet with their students for a short time during the week

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[1]Henry Philip Holser Diary for 1879. Private collection of Emmett K. Vande Vere, Collegedale, Tennessee.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Fairfield, "The Reporting System--No. 4," YI, May 15, 1870, p. 78.

for lesson study, discussion, and prayer, but that they should also meet with the superintendent.[1]

The holding of weekly teachers' meetings had been a feature of the American Sunday school movement for many years. The first National Sunday School Convention held in New York in 1832 had recommended that Sunday school teachers meet each week to improve their teaching skills and labor for the school. At the fourth convention in 1869, the subject of training the teachers in the Sunday schools occupied a large place.[2] Two years later, Henry Clay Trumball was appointed the first Normal Secretary for the American Sunday School Union. He was to take charge of the work of training teachers for Sunday schools.[3] Trumball later described his views on the importance of the weekly teachers' meeting:

> With the best superintendent in the world, a Sunday-school without a weekly teachers' meeting is rather an aggregation of schools than a unified school; . . . Unless, therefore, a Sunday-school has a weekly teachers' meeting, it lacks an essential feature of the true Sunday-school; and its teachers can neither be at their best, nor do their best. . . .[4]

Clearly, Bell shared this philosophy. At first once each week, and later twice each week, he met with his teachers in a

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[1] It was expected that the teachers should also prepare reports on these private weekly meetings with their classes, setting out the attendance, punctuality, interest manifested, spiritual condition, and progress of each pupil. See ibid.

[2] The Development of the Sunday-School 1780-1905, p. 14.

[3] Rice, The Sunday-School Movement, p. 372.

[4] H. Clay Trumball, Yale Lectures on the Sunday-School-- The Sunday-School, Its Origin, Mission, Methods, and Auxiliaries (Philadelphia: John D. Wattles, 1888), p. 232.

well-planned meeting that continued for an hour and a quarter on each occasion. After singing and prayer, the secretary's report of the previous week's Sabbath school was presented, followed by the teachers' own reports on their classes. Bell would then bestow "words of encouragement, advice and counsel" and endeavor "to inspire all with greater enthusiasm and earnestness in the work." At the second meeting on Friday evening, he conducted a recitation and explanation of the following day's lesson and gave instruction on the best methods of teaching it.[1]

The Sabbath School Program

N. D. Richmond described the Sabbath morning exercises of the school in 1869. The teachers met for prayer at 8:30 A.M., half an hour before the school commenced. Five minutes of singing opened the program and this was followed by prayer and the secretary's report. The young people sat in their classes from the youngest to the oldest and at 9:15 A.M. the teachers conducted a half-hour period of lesson recitation. In spite of the many classes, there was "not the least confusion." Five more minutes of singing followed the lesson and then the teachers took their records, after which Bell as superintendent made his remarks. Richmond said that the school was "often encouraged by his hearty counsel and words of good cheer." Bell also questioned the larger classes on their lessons before the library books were distributed

[1]Fairfield, "The Reporting System--No. 4 cont.," YI, June 1, 1870, p. 86.

and the school dismissed with prayer.[1]

When Drury Reavis became a member of the Battle Creek Sabbath School, Bell assigned him to a small class of young men. Reavis soon invited others to join the class until there was a total of eight students. Bell, however, came and took away two. Reavis persuaded two more to replace them but Bell came again and took out four. The discouraged Reavis inquired why he took out so many. In the Socratic style Bell asked Reavis whether he had any bees on his farm.

> "Yes, Professor Bell."
> "Did you ever rob them?"
> "Yes, Professor, often."
> "Did robbing hurt the bees?"
> "Not that I could discover."
> "Did they soon fill up the hive with more honey?"
> "Indeed they did."
> "Is the lesson plain to you?"
> "Yes, Professor, I see the point, I will get four more boys to join the class next Sabbath."[2]

And the robbing of the class continued.

Reavis recalled Bell's Sabbath school as one in which

> . . . every member had to be able to give a detailed synopsis, not only of the lesson of the day, but of every lesson studied from the beginning of the book . . . and do it promptly and vigorously whenever called upon in class or in general review. And in those days we had reviews often.[3]

Bell's program was distinguished for its order and thoroughness. His promotion of it through the pages of the Youth's Instructor, as well as his visits to surrounding Sabbath schools, led

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[1]N. D. Richmond, "Our Sabbath-School at Battle Creek," YI 17 (November 1869):86.

[2]Reavis, I Remember, p. 91.

[3]Ibid., p. 90.

to its initial acceptance during the early 1870s among many schools. Its widespread adoption awaited the more centralized organization after 1878. Unfortunately, however, Bell's ardent approach to the work of the Sabbath school and the great demands he made upon those with whom he worked were later to limit the effectiveness of what he strove so hard to accomplish. This is discussed in greater detail below.

Three other features that Bell promoted strongly during his long period of service as superintendent were the Sabbath school library, the raising of funds for worthy projects, and the introduction of a special division of the Sabbath school for very young children.

The Sabbath School Library

A significant feature of the westward extension of the Sunday school after 1830 was the establishment of Sunday school libraries. The Sunday schools, with their historical function of teaching reading and writing to the poor, often paved the way for the common schools. The American Sunday School Union was still selling "hundreds of thousands" of its spelling books as late as 1858. Most of these went to Sunday schools. But agents of the Union also actively promoted and sold other literature, and the distribution of such Sunday school libraries served an important educational function. According to Lynn and Wright, "the library was the true mark of a bona fide Sunday school."[1] In the 1859

[1]Lynn and Wright, The Big Little School, pp. 55, 57.

Manual of Public Libraries, more than 50,000 libraries were listed in the United States. Of these 30,000 were in Sunday schools, 18,000 in other schools, and nearly 3,000 "in city and town collections."[1] It is significant that the Sunday school libraries were considered public. In many rural areas such book collections were the only books available for reading until the public school movement encouraged the establishment of township libraries.

It is not known how many of the early Seventh-day Adventist Sabbath schools purchased books for their libraries. The number may have been very small if the response of the Battle Creek superintendent, G. W. Amadon, is any indication. In 1863 when he wrote his article on "How to Conduct Sabbath School," he indicated that there was no library at Battle Creek. The church had purchased a collection from the Sunday school publications for fifteen dollars, but there was so much "error" in some of the books that Amadon said he could not recommend it.[2]

A library must have been built up during the next few years, however, because soon after Bell took office about May 1869, he called a meeting of the Sabbath school officers and discussed "the disposal of the old library, purchasing a new one, and adopting a new plan for drawing books."[3] Bell promoted the library by the inclusion in the weekly secretary's report of a statement "giving the number of books not returned into the library, the number drawn

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[1] Ibid.

[2] Amadon, "How to Conduct a Sabbath-School," p. 38.

[3] Trembley, "Superintendent's Report," p. 119.

out that day, with the number remaining in the library." Thus in the report rendered on March 12, 1870, the secretary reported "1 book not returned, 41 drawn last Sabbath, and 127 remaining in the library."[1] In the instructions for completing the quarterly and annual reports, there was to be a librarian's report which was to include not only a description of the number and condition of the books in the Sabbath school library but also a record of the amount of fines imposed, collected, and still unpaid.[2] Clearly Bell's predilection for thoroughness and organization extended into every phase of the operation of the Sabbath school.

Offerings for the Needy

The second feature strongly promoted by Bell was the raising of funds for the needy. For many years no regular offerings were collected in the Sabbath schools. Even as late as 1878 when the question of taking up Sabbath offerings was being discussed, some opposed the plan, believing it violated Sabbath observance.[3] Prior to this time, funds were raised "to assist the needy" and to send the Youth's Instructor to those unable to pay for its subscription. According to George Amadon, who for many years attended

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[1]Fairfield, "The Reporting System--No. 3," p. 70.

[2]Fairfield, "The Reporting System, No. 7," p. 107. For the year ending June 1, 1870, John Kellogg, the Battle Creek Sabbath School librarian, reported that the library contained 174 books and that $1.55 had been imposed and received for fines, most of which had been for neglecting to return books on time. See John Kellogg, "Librarian's Report," YI 18 (August 15, 1870):127.

[3]"General Sabbath-School Association," RH 52 (October 24, 1878):129.

the church and Sabbath school at Battle Creek, "when Brother Bell became connected with the Battle Creek Sabbath-school, . . . a much greater effort was made to raise funds than previously."[1]

The First Kindergarten Division

The third feature with which Bell as superintendent was closely connected was the opening of a division of the Sabbath school for very small children. Until the late 1870s there was no provision for children of kindergarten age at either the Battle Creek church or in any other Seventh-day Adventist Sabbath school. They could not understand the lessons prepared for the older children and needed simpler methods of teaching. At about the time the Dime Tabernacle was completed and occupied in 1879,[2] there were so many very small children in the Sabbath school that the leadership felt they should make special provision for them. The children were assembled in the northeast gallery of the Tabernacle and became "the center of attraction and the pride of the school." Bell was particularly impressed by their location and their age. "The shape of the entry, the semicircle form of the class, and the extreme youth of the children" suggested to him the name "The

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[1] Amadon, "A Sketch of the Battle Creek Sabbath-School," p. 765.

[2] The Dime Tabernacle was the fourth Seventh-day Adventist church to be built in Battle Creek and was located on the site of the former church on the west side of McCamly Square in Washington Street. It was given this name because church members were invited to donate to the project a dime each month for a year. Stonelaying for the foundation began on August 19, 1878, and the church was dedicated on April 20, 1879. See Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, rev. ed. (1976), s.v. "Dime Tabernacle."

Bird's Nest." It quickly outgrew its location in the gallery and was transferred to the south vestry on the ground floor. Because of the lack of suitable lessons, the teachers taught the children orally and illustrated the stories "with bright crayon drawings on large sheets of paper." This division was later directed by Miss Lillian Affolter, a kindergarten teacher, who developed lessons, songs, and illustrations especially for such young children. It was officially organized about 1886 and became known as the "Kindergarten Department."[1]

It was under Bell's leadership, therefore, that the division for the little children was established. As a Christian teacher, he saw the need for adapting the truths of scripture to the level of understanding and maturity of such young children. One can only assume that many in this group of children grew up with their knowledge of spiritual things more firmly established because of the special efforts made at their stage of development.

Sabbath School Promotion

As noted, Bell was appointed editor of the Youth's Instructor at about the same time he became the superintendent of the Sabbath school. His introduction to its readers of the new section entitled the "Sabbath School Department" enabled him to pass on to officers and teachers some of the knowledge gained from his long educational career. Nevertheless it appears that Bell's intentions in this regard were greater than his accomplishments. He

[1]Plummer, From Acorn to Oak, p. 38.

started well, but with the pressure of the many other responsibilities thrust upon him during 1870,[1] he was unable to continue his regular contributions to the Sabbath school section of the paper. In the early issues, however, he included much helpful counsel on teaching a Sabbath school class. For example, he urged caution against encouraging students to memorize their lessons "for the purpose of reciting well" or "for securing credit for a perfect lesson." He pointed out that when a teacher observes that the truths being presented are not taking root in the hearts of his pupils and changing their lives, he often becomes alarmed and either exhorts his pupils or censures them for their indifference. Such a procedure only hardens their hearts which in time leads to more exhortation from the teacher and still greater indifference in the students. Bell's counsel was, "Do not be too eager to mature fruit from the good seed sown in the heart, but harrow it in well and let it have time to take root."[2]

In the issues for October, November, and December 1869, and January 1870, he considered such topics as the preparation of the lesson, "Acquaintance with Pupils," "Class Meetings," "Assigning Lessons," conducting "Recitations," the importance of thoroughness and teaching the little ones.[3] Since thoroughness was one of Bell's hallmarks as an educator, his remarks should

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[1] See pp. 68-71 above.

[2] G. H. Bell, "Hints on Sabbath-School Teaching," YI 17 (September 1869):70).

[3] These articles are to be found in the following issues of the Youth's Instructor: October 1869, p. 78; November 1869, p. 88; December 1869, p. 94; January 14, 1870, p. 14.

be especially noted. He believed that teachers should never be afraid of displeasing their pupils by being thorough with them. He added:

> If you are kind as well as firm, using no partiality, but adhering to strict justice, they will soon respect you for your straightforward course and love you for your faithfulness. Teach your pupils to be thorough in their lessons, and it will help them to be thorough Christians. It is a duty you owe them, and for the faithful discharge of which, you will have to give account. May God help you to be patient, longsuffering, and tender, yet firm; for many, many have been ruined by indulgence.[1]

By February 1870, Bell's other responsibilities prevented him from writing much more in the Sabbath school section of his journal. To make up for the lack, he began to use articles and suggestions from the various Sunday school journals of the period. The Sunday school movement was very active in the 1870s,[2] and Bell had no hesitation in publishing materials from such journals as the American Sunday School Worker, Baptist Teacher, National Sunday School Teacher, Sunday School Times, Wesleyan Sunday School Magazine, and Sunday School Banner.[3] The last issue of the Youth's Instructor with Bell as editor was February 1871. During his two years of service in that capacity he had added strength and efficiency to the Sabbath school movement. In 1885, C. C. Lewis wrote his appreciation of Bell's work: "Indeed, we have nowhere at the

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[1]G. H. Bell, "Hints on Sabbath-School Teaching, YI 17 (December 1869), p. 94.

[2]Lynn and Wright, The Big Little School, pp. 90-102.

[3]See the Youth's Instructor for: February 1, 1870, p. 20; March 1, 1870, p. 40; April 15, 1870, p. 62; June 1, 1870, p. 86; September 15, 1870, p. 143; October 1, 1870, p. 151; December 1, 1870, p. 182.

present time a better collection of reading matter for teachers and officers than may be found in the files of the Instructor during the years 1869, '70, and '71."[1]

Bell took over the superintendency of the Sabbath school in Battle Creek at a time when a strong and committed leader was needed, and he remained in that position for most of the period from 1869 until 1882.[2] During that time he not only strongly promoted the Sabbath school work in Battle Creek but in nearby localities as well. Many of these smaller churches lacked leaders with Bell's dedication and abilities and needed all the help and instruction they could receive. His visits to these churches brought to them the benefit of his counsel and experience. On June 23, 1869, for example, Bell met with the parents, teachers, and children from

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[1]Lewis, "Sketches--No. 6," RH, March 24, 1885, p. 183.

[2]During the 1870s the Sabbath school officers were elected to office each quarter, but no complete records of Battle Creek church officers exist for that decade. Bartholf's biographical account of Bell's life states that he was superintendent of Battle Creek Sabbath School for "fifteen years." Available records indicate that this should be nearly thirteen years, even if Bell served continuously throughout that time. Bell became superintendent in about May 1869 and he resigned in February 1882. See J. C. Bartholf, "Goodloe Harper Bell," YI 47 (February 9, 1899):104; Fairfield, "The Reporting System," p. 46; G. I. Butler to W. C. White, February 22, 1882, EGWRC--GC. On at least two occasions between 1869 and 1882 Bell was not superintendent for some period of time. He lived in Cazenovia early in 1872 and possibly for some time in 1871 and thus would not then have been the leader of the Sabbath school. In a probable reference to the year 1872 the Calhoun County Business Directory for 1873 lists Elijah B. Gaskill as head of the Sabbath school in Battle Creek (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Ann Arbor Printing and Pub. Co., 1873), p. 92. Then in 1880 Eva Bell wrote that her father had "refused to accept the office of superintendent for this quarter." Eva Bell to Sister Mary White, May 31, 1880, EGWRC--GC. See also Eva Bell to W. C. White, February 29, 1880, EGWRC--GC.

the Monterey, Allegan, and Otsego Sabbath schools in Michigan. Joseph Bates reported that he gave "an interesting discourse to teachers and children of the Sabbath school." Again, in July 1870, the acting editor of the Youth's Instructor explained that Bell had been away for several weeks assisting churches in different places to organize Sabbath schools.[1]

Bell also led out in some of the "great" Sabbath schools of the 1870s. On October 5, 1878, the largest Sabbath school ever held up to that time and also the first Sabbath school ever conducted at a Seventh-day Adventist campmeeting[2] assembled at the Battle Creek Fair Ground. Under the supervision of G. H. Bell, the fifteen hundred scholars and sixty teachers "entered heartily into the exercises, from grey-haired fathers and mothers in Israel down to little children."[3] From this time on, the promotion of the Sabbath school by means of well-conducted programs at the annual campmeetings became a regular feature.[4]

Bell also functioned as superintendent of the large Sabbath school that convened during the weekend of April 19-20, 1879, when

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[1]Joseph Bates, "Meetings in Michigan," RH 34 (July 20, 1869):30; YI 18 (July 15, 1870):112.

[2]W. C. White later called it an "experiment conducted with fear and trembling." See "Second Annual Session of the Gen. S. S. Association," YI 27 (November 26, 1879):200.

[3]Michigan Tribune, October 12, 1878, p. 3; "The Conference," RH 52 (October 17, 1878):124. D. W. Reavis described the Sabbath school program in "Report of the National Sabbath-School," RH 52 (December 12, 1878, Supplement):2.

[4]W. C. White, "Camp Meeting Sabbath-Schools," RH 54 (July 24, 1879):37.

the Battle Creek Dime Tabernacle was dedicated. Doubtless many visitors met with the 410 regular scholars and 54 teachers as the professor led out in the exercises of the school.[1]

Reaction to Bell's System

Bell's period of service as superintendent at Battle Creek, however, was not devoid of its problems. Ironically, those very qualities of character that enabled him to make such a great contribution, also contributed, when carried to excess, to his abdication of the office. His overzealous desire for thoroughness and organization was tending to dominate in the life of the church and thus produce motion without progress.

It is significant that in Miss Fairfield's first article on the Sabbath school reporting system, she used the word "machinery" twice to describe the system in operation at Battle Creek.[2] Nearly two years later, when Ellen White wrote concerning the problems at Battle Creek and the difficulties Bell was facing at that time,[3] she charged that though he had "nice ideas of order and discipline," he thought that "minds should be disciplined" in the common schools as well as in the Sabbath schools to move "unitedly" and "like machinery." She continued:

> Bro. Bell did not realize that he was depending more upon system to bring up the church of God to the right position,

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[1] E. S. Walker, comp., Battle Creek City Directory for 1880 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Michigan Tribune Steam Press, 1880), p. 107.

[2] Fairfield, "The Reporting System," p. 46.

[3] See pp. 73-77 above.

> and in working order,[1] than to the influence of the Spirit of God upon the heart.

Reference has already been made to the numerous meetings Bell called in order to regulate the work of the Sabbath school. Ellen White felt that this was "a serious error." Those involved were in danger of so overtaxing their physical strength that "sickness was the result." The only name she mentioned was Miss Elmina Fairfield who had "labored beyond her power of endurance." But Bell overrode the objections raised.

> Bell's mind was so concentrated upon the object of bringing up the church into working order that he did not regard the laws of health and life. With a martyr-like spirit, he considered it a virtue, irrespective of weariness and failing health, to press the matter to the desired end.[2]

In Ellen White's estimation, Bell had made Battle Creek Sabbath School "the one great theme of interest" to such an extent that a number of the young people were neglecting other religious duties. Often, at the close of Sabbath school, Bell and a number of teachers and scholars returned home to rest instead of attending the hour of worship. Ellen White did not want her words misunderstood. She recognized the need for "discipline and order in our Sabbath schools" and felt that the children "should be required" to observe its regulations.[3] But she was sounding a warning which she had occasion to repeat often during the next ten years.

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[1]Ellen G. White, Testimony to the Church at Battle Creek (Battle Creek, Mich.: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Pub. Assn., 1872), pp. 9-10.

[2]Ibid., p. 15.

[3]Ibid., p. 17.

By 1880, some in the Battle Creek church thought it was time to change the Sabbath school leadership. On March 22, Bell's daughter Eva wrote to Elder W. C. White concerning the rumor being circulated that there was "to be a general 'stirring up' of things and entirely new plans, arrangements, and officers. 'At any rate, Bro. Bell is to have nothing more to do with it.'"[1] The situation must have deteriorated during the next two months, because in her letter to W. C. White's wife on May 31, Eva Bell commented, "You probably heard how that father refused to accept the office of superintendent for this quarter. . . ." Bell had promised his support, however, to his successor and had attended the Sabbath school and teachers' meetings, working "just as hard for the school as ever."[2]

Bell's resignation, however, was evidently only temporary at this time. A letter from Ellen White to S. N. Haskell in April 1881 intimates that Bell was still connected with the Sabbath school. She wrote that Bell had been "cautioned again and again in regard to making the Sabbath school work like a machine." She regretted that he had chosen not to follow this counsel and added, "He is getting matters so fine, he will have a big reaction by and by."[3] The reaction, which came within nine months, is described in the next chapter.

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[1]Eva Bell to W. C. White, March 22, 1880, EGWRC--GC.

[2]Eva Bell to Sister Mary White, May 31, 1880, EGWRC--GC.

[3]Ellen G. White to S. N. Haskell, April 22, 1881, Letter 1, 1881, EGWRC--AU. See also Ellen White's Testimony for the Battle Creek Church (Oakland, Cal.: Pacific Press Pub. House, 1882), p. 10.

It was unfortunate that some not only rejected Bell but also his system of organization. G. I. Butler, the General Conference president, wrote to W. C. White on February 22, 1882, that "Bell has offered his resignation as Superintendent of the Battle Creek Sabbath School. I can't blame him with the feeling there is here."[1] Three months later Butler wrote again to White:

> There is no doubt but what the S. S. [Sabbath school] work has received a really hard blow . . . in the triumph of this raid on Bell . . . especially as the B. C. S. S. [Battle Creek Sabbath School] has gone back on him and his principles and system.

Butler added that they did not want "that kind of 'military discipline.' They wanted something more pleasant."[2]

The intensity of the reaction against Bell's system was seen later in 1882 when the name of J. Edson White was being suggested as superintendent of the Battle Creek Sabbath School. Many strongly opposed him because "he would carry out Bell's system, which was 'too much like military law.'" Thus when White's name was brought to the nominating committee, it was rejected "by a large majority" who voted for Wm. K. Loughborough in his place.[3]

In spite of this rejection of Bell's machine-like system of operation, Bell had made a most significant contribution to the basic organization and conduct of the Sabbath school while

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[1]G. I. Butler to W. C. White, February 22, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

[2]G. I. Butler to W. C. White, May 25, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

[3]G. I. Butler to W. C. White, September 17, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

he served as superintendent at Battle Creek.[1] Bell had found the Sabbath school work disorganized and generally lacking unity of purpose. But his appointment as superintendent at Battle Creek in 1869 enabled him to bring his considerable educational expertise and the genius of his organizational ability to that school. The implementation of his ideas in this large headquarters school influenced other schools nearby and, through the pages of the Youth's Instructor, across the continent. The strong centralized Sabbath school associations founded in 1878-79, however, were necessary to fully establish Bell's ideals and organization.

Author of Graded Lessons

Bell's second great contribution to the Sabbath school was the preparation of graded lessons. His crowning work in this regard was the writing of a series of eight small books called Bible Lessons for the Sabbath School. To rightly appreciate the significance of this contribution, it is necessary to first examine the attempts to provide Bible lessons for the Sabbath school from 1852 to 1869.

Early Sabbath School Lessons

The first Sabbath school lessons were a series of nineteen lessons prepared by Elder James White and published in the Youth's Instructor in 1852. The subjects were the Sabbath, the Law of God, the Life of Christ, and the Second Advent. They were presented

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[1]Plummer, From Acorn to Oak, pp. 25, 36; Amadon, "A Sketch of the Battle Creek Sabbath-School," p. 765. Lewis, "Sketches--No. 5," p. 151, and "Sketches--No. 6," p. 183.

in the form of a synopsis followed by questions on the lesson. This series was followed by another of seventeen lessons that White took from a journal, the Berean's Assistant, edited by Joshua V. Himes in 1844. The subject of these lessons was the book of Daniel. In contrast to those prepared by White, these lessons consisted of questions with references appended for obtaining the answers. Four lessons from the New Testament succeeded this series, after which nine lessons by Elder Uriah Smith on the subject of the sanctuary were presented. Nine lessons for children were also published.

No lessons were published in the Youth's Instructor for the first eight months of 1854. In the August issue, Roswell F. Cottrell, an early Adventist poet, writer, and minister, commenced his highly appreciated series[1] of fifty-two lessons developing the most essential features of "the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." In 1855 these were published in book form as The Bible Class, and the older young people and adults used them extensively for a number of years. When the series closed in 1855, no more lessons were published for three and a half years. In January 1859, the first of a new series of twenty lessons on 1 John appeared in the Youth's Instructor. The next series was not printed until 1863, though in 1861 and 1862, a series of disconnected questions published under the caption "Questions for Young

[1] James White said of the series, "They are excellent. They contain sound reasoning; and at the same time are simplified and brought to the capacity of children. Their value cannot be estimated." "The Instructor," YI 2 (September 1854):68.

Bible Students" created "a lively interest in Sabbath-schools."[1] In February 1863, the Review and Herald began to publish a second series of lessons by Elder Uriah Smith. These consisted of questions based upon two books, The History of the Sabbath by J. N. Andrews, and Smith's Prophecy of Daniel. They were for advanced classes and concluded in November 1863.

Up to this time the lessons that had appeared in the Youth's Instructor were not adapted to the child's mind, in spite of the claims of either author or editor. The language was neither simple nor adapted to their needs, and it presented concepts that were difficult for children to understand. This was particularly true for the very young ones who suffered most from the lack of suitable lessons. The series that continued from September 1863 for two years was noteworthy in meeting this need. Each of the 104 lessons prepared by Miss Adelia P. Patten contained a Bible story which was followed by some simple, direct questions and a short text to be memorized. These lessons were considered the best published up to that time and were well received by the Sabbath schools.

In 1866, G. W. Amadon, the editor of the Youth's Instructor published a series of seventeen lessons on a wide variety of Bible topics. These were taken from The Christian and filled a gap until Amadon himself prepared and printed eight lessons on early Bible history in January 1868. Joseph Clarke's long series of seventy-five lessons which succeeded these were on early Bible history

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[1] Amadon, "A Sketch of the Battle Creek Sabbath-School," p. 765.

also, but in more detail than the lessons by either Adelia Patten or George Amadon. Both Amadon's and Clarke's series were written for "little children" and in catechismal form with both question and answer supplied. Few scriptural references were included. Clarke's last lessons of the series appeared in the first issue of the Youth's Instructor of which Bell was editor.[1]

Bell's First Lessons

In the following month, August 1869, Bell released the first of his lessons--one series for younger children on Bible history and the other for youth on the book of Daniel.[2] The format of Bell's lessons was very different from those of Clarke.[3] Bell rejected the catechismal approach used by Clarke, for he believed that the Bible must be the textbook for each lesson, not merely the book containing the story upon which the lesson was based. Bell thought that "the object of the Sabbath-School should be to teach the plain truths of the word of God and thus disclose to

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[1]The topics, authors, number of lessons and the dates for the commencement of the series of Sabbath school lessons from 1852 to 1868 are given in appendix E.

[2]See G. H. Bell, "Bible Lessons," YI 17 (August 1869):62.

[3]A sample of Joseph Clarke's lessons is given below:

"Teacher: What was forbidden in his first command?
"Child: The worship of idols.
"T: What is the second?
"C: All worship of images.
"T: What in the third?
"C: Profanity."

Lesson 71, YI 17 (July 1869):54.

Compare Goodloe Bell's first lesson:

"1. What did God do in the beginning? Gen. 1:1.

its members the plan of salvation, and lead them to accept it."[1] This salvific emphasis led him to stress the importance of even children reading the scriptures for themselves. To discover the answer for the questions asked in each lesson, the child was required to look up a Bible reference that Bell placed after the question. In an obvious reference to the lessons presented previously by Clarke, Bell said that Bible lessons are sometimes written in such a way

> . . . as to prevent the necessity for that earnest thought and research, on the part of the teacher and pupil that is indispensable to all proper discipline of the mind. They become mere machines, their individuality is lost, and the recitations become dull and monotonous--simply a form.[2]

For Bell rote learning could never be part of Christian education.

Bell's lessons continued to appear in the Youth's Instructor until near the end of 1871.[3] His 108 lessons for the children covered the Bible story from creation to the time of the Egyptian plagues. There were eighty-five lessons in the series on Daniel for the youth. These covered the first nine chapters of Daniel and concluded with several lessons on the sanctuary, the ministry of Christ as High Priest, and the "investigative judgment."

"2. How did he create them? Ps. 33:6, 9.
"3. How did the earth look in its first state? Gen. 1:2.

Lesson 1, YI 17.

[1]Bell, "Hints on Sabbath-School Teaching," p. 94.

[2]G. H. Bell, "Remarks on Bible Lessons," YI 17 (August 1869):64.

[3]The last lessons on the book of Daniel appeared in YI 19 (November, 1871):83. The last for the younger children were published in YI 19 (December 1, 1871):91.

As would be expected, his lessons were thorough and concise with opportunity given for review. He urged a "thorough review" of Daniel 8, for example, in his series for the youth. To the teachers he said, "Thorough scholars never dread a review, and slack ones always need it." He encouraged the teachers to present the important lessons of this book so well

> . . . that the great truths taught in them may stand out before each mind in clear, bold outline, clothed in all their grandeur and beauty, and making that deep, vivid, and lasting impression upon the mind and heart of the pupil, that will not only affect all his future life, but his eternal destiny.[1]

Bell felt, however, that the lessons that had appeared in the Youth's Instructor could be improved, and he worked hard in revising them. Early in April 1872, he wrote to Ellen White to enquire whether she had any advice to give about them. He said he was "trying to simplify them" and had written "about eighty lessons to take the place of the first part of the series published in the Instructor." His hard work during the previous two or three weeks had left him "suffering some from nervous prostration," but he hoped that James White would look the lessons over and "judge of their harmony."[2]

The First Graded Lesson Books

Bell must have worked hard, because in June 1872 the Review and Herald announced that a volume of 208 lessons by G. H. Bell

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[1]G. H. Bell, "Bible Lessons for Youth," YI 18 (February 1, 1870):23.

[2]G. H. Bell to Ellen G. White, April 9, 1872, EGWRC--GC.

entitled Progressive Bible Lessons for Children; to Be Used in Sabbath Schools, and Families was "now ready."[1] This book was a great step forward in the development of graded Sabbath school lessons. It was the first Seventh-day Adventist Bible lesson book structured on a progressive plan from very simple lessons to the more difficult. The style was simple and natural with the language well-adapted to children. Reviews were frequent and the questions in each lesson were comprehensive and thought-provoking. Bell said in his "Suggestions" at the beginning of the book that he had a purpose in every question asked: to form connections, awaken interest, direct the mind to a certain train of thought or to show the teacher how to expand the lesson.[2] His questions were so structured that they obliged the student to use his Bible to obtain nearly every answer. Bell's philosophy of Christian education was based firmly upon the epistemological foundation that the Bible was "the great source of religious light and knowledge." He further described it:

> It is the great fountain of truth from which the pupil should draw those facts and promises on which his faith is to rest, the precepts he is to obey, and the doctrines he is to hold. From it he should learn the conditions of salvation and the grounds of the Christian's hope.[3]

In the 221 pages of the book, Bell's lessons traced the

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[1] RH 40 (June 18, 1872):8.

[2] G. H. Bell, Progressive Bible Lessons for Children to Be Used in Sabbath Schools and Families (Battle Creek, Mich.: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Pub. Assn., 1872). p. 16.

[3] Ibid., pp. 11-12.

Bible story from creation to the dedication of the sanctuary in the book of Exodus. He provided no lesson synopsis. Each lesson consisted only of a series of questions, but Bell believed that every lesson taught "something about the character of God, the principles of His law, the beauties of Heaven, or the natural tendencies of the human heart." He cautioned the teachers from making too long an application of the lesson. Although he planned that every lesson would contain something which "may touch the heart or affect the life of the pupil," he felt that sometimes "a single question or sentence will do more good than a long talk." In fact, he suggested that at times it is better to omit the application altogether.[1]

In 1875, Bell followed his Progressive Bible Lessons for Children with a second volume of 320 pages, Progressive Bible Lessons for Youth. The "Publishers' Note" explained that because the former volume had "met with such favor," the author had prepared a similar work "for more advanced learners." It was designed, therefore, for those who had completed the former volume and who desired to increase their understanding of "the great truths applicable to the present time."[2]

The 195 lessons in the book were a comprehensive coverage of events spanning the entire history of the church from creation

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[1] Ibid., pp. 15-16.

[2] G. H. Bell, Progressive Bible Lessons for Youth, to Be Used in Sabbath Schools, Bible Classes, and Families (Battle Creek, Mich.: Steam Press of the Seventh-day Adventist Pub. Assn., 1875), p. iii.

to the renewal of the earth following the second coming of Christ. The prophecies of Daniel and Revelation occupied a significant place in its contents. Because of the clarity and scope of the treatment of these prophetic books, the lessons also made a worthwhile contribution to the development of prophetic interpretation within the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Bell had first entered the field of prophetic exposition with his series on Daniel that appeared in the Youth's Instructor from August 1869 to November 1871. His exposition appears to closely follow the interpretation of Uriah Smith, who in 1863 had published in the Review and Herald his series of Sabbath school lessons based on his small book Prophecy of Daniel.[1] Smith subsequently published a more comprehensive treatment in Thoughts, Critical and Practical, on the Book of Daniel in 1873. It is most likely that Bell would have used this book as a guide to his study, as well as Smith's Thoughts, Critical and Practical, on the Book of Revelation (1867).[2] Bell brought to the task his usual thoroughness, clarity of thought, and simple writing style which resulted in a concise and succinct presentation. LeRoy E. Froom, noted historian of prophetic interpretation, said of Bell's coverage of Daniel and Revelation:

> It is phrased clearly and presents one of the remarkably able interpretations of that early time, meriting more attention than is usually accorded it. It had a molding

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[1] RH, September 15-November 24, 1863.

[2] Uriah Smith's book on Revelation was initially developed out of his presentations to his Bible class in the Battle Creek Sabbath School in 1862. See "The Book of Revelation," RH 20 (June 3, 1862):4.

> influence upon the youth, who followed it through the Sabbath schools and other Bible classes.[1]

Bell also presented in this volume some suggestions for superintendents, parents, and teachers. These included hints on studying and teaching, methods of lesson recitation, and conducting written recitations and reviews. He expressed his aim in writing the book at the end of his introduction: "If these lessons promote thoroughness in the study of the Scriptures, and a love for the precious truths they teach, the writer's hopes will be realized."[2] But his work of promoting Bible study was not yet finished.

An Eight-Year Bible Study Program

He next turned his attention to preparing the first of what finally became eight small booklets of graded Bible lessons. Each booklet, except the eighth, contained fifty-two lessons--one for each week of the year. The final volume contained sixty-nine lessons. This series, generally known as Bible Lessons for the Sabbath School, has been called "his greatest work, and that for which thousands hold him in loving remembrance."[3] The curriculum content of these eight booklets was similar to that found in the two former Progressive Bible Lessons. It was felt, however, that if the content of the two larger volumes could be divided and placed into smaller books, together with an expansion of some sections to provide fifty-two weeks of study in each book, the result

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[1]LeRoy Edwin Froom, The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers, 4 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1954), 4:1132.

[2]Bell, Progressive Bible Lessons for Youth, p. 16.

[3]Plummer, From Acorn to Oak, p. 36.

would be more useful to the Sabbath schools.

The eight books covered the Bible story from Genesis to the Acts of the Apostles.[1] Bell included regular and frequent reviews of previously learned lessons and gradually increased the difficulty of the booklets to suit the developing needs of the child. In Book 3, he added a new feature--giving the pronunciation of difficult Bible names and numerous notes on the places mentioned in the lesson. Bell planned Book 6 for youth from twelve to eighteen years of age, and began to omit the lesson synopsis in Book 7. He felt the older students should go directly to the Bible for the answers. He also introduced more reflective questions in this volume in order "to awaken thought rather than to teach doctrine." In closing the series he explained that he had taken much effort "to make the lessons afford real mental as well as

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[1]The first two volumes were more correctly called Bible Lessons for Little Ones and covered respectively the Bible story from Adam to Moses, and from Egypt to Canaan. The remaining six volumes treated the periods listed below:

No. 3	Moses to Solomon
No. 4.	The Beginning of Solomon's Reign to the Rebuilding of the Temple after the Captivity.
No. 5	The Rebuilding of the Temple by Zerubbabel to the Sending Out of the Twelve Disciples by their Lord.
No. 6	The Sending Out of the Twelve Disciples to the Week of our Lord's Passion.
No. 7	Our Lord's Last Passover to the Sending Out of Paul and Barnabus to the Gentiles.
No. 8	The first Preaching of Paul at Antioch to the Close of Paul's Career.

The books were all published by the Review and Herald Publishing Association in Battle Creek. In most cases, no dates were given.

moral discipline and culture. . . ."[1]

Bell's continual labor on behalf of the Sabbath school took its toll on his personal health. During the 1870s he was teaching at Battle Creek College but took advantage of the summer vacation to prepare his Sabbath school lessons. In 1878 he wrote to W. C. White from North Bloomfield, Ohio, that he was slowly gaining in health. He had been suffering from "a burning pain" in the back of his head and down his spine that was "very easily induced by mental effort and more especially by anxiety." He had recently completed another series for youth to make another book "as large as the one just printed." If his health was sustained, he "would have enough for another book before school shall begin," but he expected he would fall much behind. Bell enjoyed a special relation with W. C. White which seemed to be reciprocated. He concluded his letter to him with a request that W. C. White and his wife pray for him. "You have that filial love for me that those who have never been under my instruction can not feel."[3]

To bridge the gap until the eight lesson books were completed, Bell continued to revise and prepare lessons for Sabbath school study. In June 1878, the Review and Herald, responding to the great revival of interest in the Sabbath school work that

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[1]G. H. Bell, Bible Lessons for the Sabbath School--No. 8 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Review and Herald, 1887), p. ii.

[2]W. C. White, "Sabbath School Lessons," RH 53 (March 6, 1879):80; Arthur Whitefield Spalding, Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists, 4 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1962), 2:69.

[3]G. H. Bell to W. C. White, August 8, 1978, EGWRC--GC.

year, commenced a new section entitled the "Sabbath School Department." Sabbath school lessons in two new series by Bell were published in each issue of the paper until January 1879.[1] One series was for youth and the other for Bible Classes, a term used to describe the adult classes that met in the Sabbath school. Some of these lessons were adapted from his Progressive Bible Lessons, but many were freshly prepared. They were very comprehensive and often contained over thirty questions, with a synopsis of the lesson and sometimes a recapitulation.

Bell's lessons were published in the Review and Herald in 1878 because that was the only weekly paper then being printed by the church. In January 1879, however, the Youth's Instructor began a weekly edition. This journal was designed not only for the youth but also to advance the interests of the Sabbath school work. It continued publishing Bell's lessons after the Review and Herald ceased to print them, but with a change in the age level for which the series were intended. The two new series were designed for children from ten to sixteen and for youth above sixteen. Weekly lesson sheets had previously been mailed to the youth, but this ceased with the publication of the lessons in the Youth's Instructor. Bell advised children under ten to use his Bible Lessons for Little Ones, the first of his series of eight lesson books. Adult Bible classes should study his "Lesson Sheets for Bible

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[1]The series for youth ceased to be published in the Review and Herald on January 2, 1879, p. 3. Those for Bible classes continued until the issue of January 9, 1879, p. 11.

Classes."[1] Thus, by 1879 he had the satisfaction of seeing the Sabbath schools provided with lessons suitable for four different levels.

The church leadership appreciated Bell's work for the Sabbath schools and a few paid public tribute to his prodigious efforts on behalf of Christian education. W. C. White, for example, in March 1879, wrote:

> We now have Bible lessons from the careful pen of Prof. G. H. Bell, suited to the wants of every grade of S. S. scholars. For the little children we have the book, "Bible Lessons for Little Ones," containing lessons for a year, which are admirably adapted to the wants of scholars under ten years of age. For the children between the ages of ten and fifteen we have a series of lessons commencing with the history of Joshua. . . . For the youth a series was begun in the Review and is continued in the Instructor, treating on Bible history beginning with creation. . . . For the Bible class we have a series of Lessons on Prophecy. . . .[2]

The lessons that had commenced in the Youth's Instructor in 1879 continued for many months. On October 20, 1880, Bell concluded the series for youth after 121 lessons had been published. The 108 lessons for children finished three months later.[3] But his tireless pen continued to write. These lessons were immediately followed by two more series that appeared in the Youth's Instructor

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[1]Preamble to Sabbath school lessons published in YI 27 (January 1, 1879):3.

[2]W. C. White, "Sabbath-School Lessons," RH, March 6, 1879, p. 80; also James White, "Sabbath-Schools," RH 52 (August 22, 1878): 68; and "What Do You Study?" RH 52 (December 12, 1878, Supplement): 3.

[3]The children's lessons concluded in YI 28 (January 19, 1881):11.

until March 21, 1883. One was called "Scenes in the Life of Christ"[1] (113 lessons) and the other, "New Testament History" (127 lessons).

During his preparation of the lessons on "Scenes in the Life of Christ," Bell left Battle Creek to take up the position of principal of a new school in South Lancaster, Massachusetts. Soon after his arrival there he wrote to W. C. White, who had evidently written to him offering some criticisms of the lessons. Bell expressed his gratitude and said he would try to profit by them. He explained that many of the lessons had been written "under very unfavorable circumstances." He had had no help since the previous fall, and many times it had seemed "absolutely impossible to write the lessons." He added,

> It seems to me that there are not many, except your mother, [Ellen G. White] who would have worked under such conditions as I have worked. I say this only as an apology for my poor work. Eva [his daughter] has written two or three lessons for the second division, otherwise the work has been all my own.[2]

When Bell concluded the two series on the "Life of Christ" and "New Testament History" on March 21, 1883, he indicated that he would continue writing lessons but in only one series, which would be based on the book of Acts.[3] This was Bell's final series

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[1]Concerning Bell's lessons on the "Life of Christ," Elder G. I. Butler commented: "Bro. Bell is doing a good work in preparing the questions and giving the matter proper direction" ("The Sabbath-School Lessons and the Life of Christ," RH 59 [May 2, 1882]:281-82).

[2]G. H. Bell to W. C. White, May 24, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

[3]G. H. Bell, "Two Ways of Looking at Things," YI 31 (April 4, 1883):59.

of lessons to appear in the denominational journals. They concluded in the Youth's Instructor of June 25, 1884.

Thus for a period of fifteen years, Bell had been writing lessons for the Sabbath schools. He had brought together his love for Scripture and his orderly, systematic thinking to produce graded Bible lessons that were a blessing to thousands and that continued to be used for the next twenty-five years.[1] During the period of his leadership the Sabbath school work had advanced considerably and most of the credit must be given to Bell who had labored so intensely and unselfishly, often under most difficult and pressing circumstances, to accomplish such a great change.

Leader in Organization

Bell's contributions, however, were still more extensive. His third major contribution to the Sabbath school work was through his participation and leadership in the state and general Sabbath school associations that developed in 1877-78.

As a result of Bell's work as Battle Creek Sabbath School superintendent and as editor of the Youth's Instructor, a number of Sabbath schools significantly improved their efficiency during the early 1870s, particularly those that benefited from personal visits by Bell and others interested in Sabbath school work. Some attempts to grade classes were made, superintendents and other

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[1]Bell's Bible Lesson books were recommended for use in Seventh-day Adventist intermediate schools in 1903. See Convention of the Department of Education of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Held at College View, Nebraska, June 12-21, 1903 (South Lancaster, Mass.: South Lancaster Printing Co., 1903), pp. 132-33.

officers were appointed for regular terms, and there was a greater unity of operation in a number of Sabbath school programs. In all of this the Sabbath school at Battle Creek tended to be the model and thus Bell's influence on the operation of the school there was especially significant.[1]

There were many schools, however, that were not so favorably situated because they were beyond the personal influence of enthusiastic leadership. When the editorship of the Youth's Instructor passed out of Bell's hands in 1871, the Sabbath school tended to be neglected. Between 1873 and 1875 particularly, the journal gave Sabbath schools little promotion. Often during the 1870s, Sabbath school programs were omitted when the itinerant ministers arrived to take the Sabbath services.[2] An April 1878 report revealed the condition of many of the schools:

> Many of our churches have no Sabbath school. Others are poorly managed. We have been surprised to find the little interest that has been taken for the children in some of our churches. In some places there is a Bible class for men and women, while the children are left to attend a Sunday-school.[3]

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[1] In December 1878 the membership of the Battle Creek Sabbath School was given as 387. The next largest school in Michigan was Spring Arbor with 71 scholars. See "Report of Michigan Sabbath-School Association, quarter ending December 28, 1878," YI 27 (February 5, 1879):23.

[2] James White, "Sabbath Schools," RH 52 (August 22, 1878):68.

[3] Executive Board--SDA Sabbath-School Association, "Sabbath-School Organizations," RH 51 (April 18, 1878):128. In a report on the number of Sabbath schools in Michigan late in 1878, 53 of the 128 churches had no schools. See "Report of the Michigan Sabbath-School Association," YI, February 5, 1879, p. 23. D. W. Reavis provided an interesting insight into the condition of the Sabbath schools in Ohio in 1879, prior to the formation of the state association, in I Remember, p. 114-15.

Need for Centralization

Some felt a centralized organization which would provide leadership and educational expertise and to which the different schools would report and be accountable was needed. Among these was Goodloe Bell, and in the summer of 1877 he presented the matter to a teachers' meeting at Battle Creek. The group appointed a committee to develop some plan "whereby all Sabbath schools within the boundaries of the same State might be brought into touch with one another, to promote unity of action and system."[1] According to Plummer, the plans submitted by this committee resulted in the organization of a state Sabbath school association, not in Michigan, but in California.[2] In September 1877, J. Edson White attended the California Conference campmeeting near Yountville in Napa County. On Saturday afternoon, September 15, he delivered an address in which he strongly promoted the work of the Sabbath school and urged the formation of a state organization. The response was enthusiastic. It was resolved that plans to perfect the Sabbath school association would be undertaken at the next state quarterly meeting.[3]

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[1]Plummer, From Acorn to Oak, p. 28. In the Sunday school movement an interest in the development of a nationwide convention system and a series of interconnected annual county and state meetings had commenced in the late 1860s. By the mid 1870s a Sunday school organizational network had been established in most of the American states. See Lynn and Wright, The Big Little School, pp. 95-97.

[2]Plummer, From Acorn to Oak, p. 28.

[3]"Camp Meeting," ST 3 (September 27, 1877):293. J. E. White's address was reproduced in "Sabbath-School Address," ST

General and State Associations Formed

When the General Conference met in March 1878, many delegates came "specially anxious that something should be done for the Sabbath-schools, and resolved to do their utmost to bring the subject before the Conference though none knew anything of the feelings of the others." Dudley M. Canright felt this was remarkable and that it showed evidence of the working of the Holy Spirit upon the church.[1] The entire fourth session was devoted to the consideration of Sabbath school interests, which were in need of "a systematic and uniform method." There were now about 600 schools meeting each week, involving from eight to ten thousand children and young people who needed instruction in Bible knowledge.[2] It was therefore resolved that "a General S. S. Association should be organized by our people, with State Conference auxiliary associations."[3] Bell was appointed as one of five who constituted a committee on Sabbath school interests to draft a constitution for the new association. On the evening of March 4 the General Conference adopted this new constitution. In addition, the nominating committee recommended that D. M. Canright should serve as

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September 27, 1877, pp. 294-95. In his address White spoke appreciatively of Bell's Progressive Bible Lessons for Youth. He said that "for a work of its size, it seems almost impossible that so much ground should be covered in so thorough a manner . . ." (ibid., p. 294).

[1]D. M. Canright, "Our Sabbath-Schools," RH 51 (March 14, 1878):84.

[2]Ibid.

[3]"Business Proceedings of the Third Special Session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists," RH 51 (March 7, 1878):77.

the association's founding president and that Bell should be the recording secretary for the coming year. D. M. Canright, G. H. Bell, and W. C. White were also appointed as a committee to draw up the constitution for the state Sabbath school associations.[1] Bell, therefore, played a leading part in the setting up of the General Association. He now had much greater opportunity to implement many of the principles and methods he had promoted earlier in the 1870s.

On April 21 and 22, 1878, at the quarterly meeting of the Michigan Conference, the subject of a state Sabbath School organization was considered. Ten days earlier the Review and Herald had published the suggested state constitution drafted by Bell, Canright, and White.[2] The conference now adopted the constitution and officers for the state association were appointed. Bell became its first president.[3]

Those present at the meetings made a number of important and influential decisions relating to the future operation of the Sabbath schools in the state. They resolved that the morning was the best time to conduct the Sabbath school and that it should precede the church worship service. They also agreed that every member of the church should be encouraged to attend the Sabbath school and that a school should be organized in every church where

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[1]See "The Sabbath-School Work," RH 51 (March 14, 1878):85.

[2]"The Michigan Sabbath-School Association of Seventh-day Adventists," RH 51 (April 11, 1878):120.

[3]"Organization of the Michigan Sabbath-School Association," RH 51 (May 2, 1878):143.

no school was operating. It was also planned that a complete course of lesson books should be prepared and used in all schools.[1] These were far-reaching decisions, ones that would spread to all other state associations on the continent and eventually overseas. In the implementation of these decisions, Bell's role as recording secretary of the General Association and president of the Michigan State Association was therefore a most significant one.

A Recording System

One of the major tasks to which Bell first directed his organizational ability was the preparation of a "complete system of Record Books." He thought that the secretaries in the Sabbath schools did not report their statistics "because they have no record; and they have no record because they do not know how to keep it." Thus he decided to modify the basic outline of the record books he had introduced to the Battle Creek Sabbath School in the late 1860s and print them for all Sabbath schools. Describing the Class Record Book to W. C. White, Bell said,

> The class book differs from anything we have had, but I think you will like it. You see the records are all positive, no record of imperfect lessons or absence being carried into the summaries. We keep a record of what has been done, not of what has not been done.[2]

An examination of these record books reveals Bell's customary thoroughness and attention to detail. He made provision for marking punctuality, attendance, and scholarship and included

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[1] Ibid.

[2] G. H. Bell to W. C. White, August 21, 1878. EGWRC--GC.

careful instructions for the completion of the weekly, quarterly and yearly reports.[1] He also designed books for the state association secretaries and for his own records in the General Association. To W. C. White he explained that "the plan of records may look complicated," but he was "sure it will prove simple when it is used." He assured White that both Uriah Smith and Dudley Canright had given it "a hearty approval."[2] Bell's record books were soon published and distributed to Sabbath schools across the continent. They were a significant factor in bringing uniformity of action in the Sabbath school work as well as being the means by which an ever extending work might be more efficiently organized.

Sabbath School Growth

At the General Conference in March 1878, the delegates voted to organize state Sabbath school associations. California had anticipated this decision the previous year, but with such official encouragement a number of other states followed in 1878. When the first annual session of the General Sabbath-School Association met in October, Bell reported that twelve state associations had been formed. Eight of these had a total membership of 5,851

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[1]See Class Record of the Battle Creek Sabbath-School (Battle Creek, Mich.: Review and Herald Pub. House). This record was kept by Geo. R. Avery for his Sabbath-School Class 4, Division 6, in 1879, G. R. Avery Collection, AUHR. See also G. H. Bell, The Complete Sabbath-School Record and Register (Battle Creek, Mich.: Review and Herald Pub. House, n.d.), AUHR. For a description of all the Sabbath school record books available from the publishers in 1879, see "Sabbath-School Record Books," YI 27 (December 10, 1879):211-12; For instruction on how to fill out the records, see "Hints about the Record Books," SSW 1 (April 1885):25.

[2]G. H. Bell to W. C. White, August 21, 1878, EGWRC--GC.

scholars, and seven of the twelve reported a total of 177 Sabbath schools.[1] As a result of the leadership provided through the state associations and General Association these figures increased dramatically in the ensuing years.

The system of Sabbath school associations that Bell had helped to develop contrasted with the Sunday school state organizations that were being set up during the 1870s. In June 1880, Eva Bell reported on her visit to a Michigan Sunday school convention, at which the delegates had "a spirited discussion" on organization. She noted that they had no state association nor working state president or secretary. The state was divided into districts, counties, and townships with their respective presidents, but they were not responsible to a state president. Eva Bell felt that "if they would only accept our simple plan, it seems to me they might avoid much of the trouble."[2]

Promoting the Sabbath School

Bell served in the General Sabbath-School Association in several different capacities for a total of nearly ten years. He was recording secretary for the first two years of its operation and later was appointed president for two terms (1880-81 and 1882-83) and vice-president for one year (1881-82). For six years he served on the association's executive committee, and for seven

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[1] "General Sabbath-School Association," RH 52 (October 24, 1878):129.

[2] Eva Bell to W. C. White, June 16, 1880, EGWRC--GC.

years he was a member of the publishing committee.[1] He withdrew from his official Sabbath school responsibilities in 1887.

The Michigan Sabbath-School Association also benefited from his enthusiastic leadership from 1878 to 1881. He was its founding president from April until October 1878, and for the remainder of the time a member of its executive committee.[2]

These responsibilities gave him the opportunity, which he relished, of visiting the Sabbath schools in different localities and of conducting Sabbath school conventions. In May 1879 he spoke at the convention in Spring Arbor. One of those who heard him described his Saturday afternoon talk.

> In his quiet but clear and earnest style he pictured the work of the true teacher, showing that he should ever labor with earnestness and with hope, never satisfied with present attainments, and never discouraged if the highest attainments are not reached at once.[3]

He explained how to encourage backward and careless students and said that "the teacher cannot expect the class to be more prompt, thorough, and earnest than he is himself." The next morning he

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[1]See the records of the business proceedings of the General Sabbath-School Association's annual sessions in RH 51 (March 14, 1878):85; RH 52 (October 24, 1878):129; YI 27 (November 26, 1879): 200; RH 56 (October 21, 1880):263; YI 29 (December 28, 1881):215; RH 59 (December 26, 1882):788; RH 60 (December 4, 1883):765; SDA Year Book 1885 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Seventh-day Adventist Pub. Assn., 1885), p. 69; SDA Year Book 1886 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Seventh-day Adventist Pub. Assn., 1886), pp. 68, 72; SDA Year Book 1887 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Review and Herald Pub. House, 1887), p. 68.

[2]See the records of the business proceedings of the Michigan Sabbath-School Association's annual sessions in RH 51 (May 2, 1878): 143; RH 52 (October 17, 1878):125; YI 27 (October 8, 1879):171; RH 56 (November 4, 1880):295.

[3]"The Sabbath-School Convention of Spring Arbor," YI 27 (June 11, 1879):96.

gave another talk on the subject of singing in Sabbath school.[1] After describing the visit of G. H. Bell and W. C. White to this convention, M. B. Miller wrote, "When either of these brethren can be present at the Sabbath-schools in different places, I would advise all within reasonable distance to attend and to take their children with them."[2]

On July 26 and 27, at a Sabbath school meeting at Potterville, Michigan, Bell spoke on the aims of the Sabbath school showing that "the legitimate work of the S. S. is to promote the study of the Bible." He also spoke on "How to Learn the Lesson," at the end of which he effectively demonstrated the skills of teaching and learning by modeling a well-taught lesson before those present. He "took a class of little ones, and taught them a lesson which they had never studied before. The children became quite animated and all present seemed very much interested in hearing the children learn the lesson."[3] The following weekend Bell attended the Michigan camp meeting at Eaton Rapids and cared for the Sabbath school interests there, and then in September he spoke a number of times in support of the Sabbath school work at the Vassar camp-meeting.[4] Significantly, one of the Battle Creek daily newspapers

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[1]Ibid.

[2]M. B. Miller, "Spring Arbor," RH 53 (June 19, 1879):198.

[3]Eva Bell, "Sabbath-School Meeting at Potterville, Mich." YI 27 (August 13, 1879):131.

[4]"First Camp Meeting," RH 54 (August 7, 1879):52; D. W. Reavis, "The S.S. Work at Vassar Campmeeting," YI 27 (September 24, 1879):163-64.

noted in its edition of October 4, 1879, that "Last Tuesday, Prof. Bell of the College, returned from Lyons where he had spent a week's time in his favorite recreation--the Sabbath-School work."[1]

At the General Sabbath-School Association annual session in December 1881, the delegates were resolved to improve the efficiency of the Sabbath school work and to bring "uniformity of action" throughout the conferences. They therefore voted that the General Conference should give consideration to this, and "if thought advisable, invite Prof. Bell to devote more of his time to this great branch of our work, and visit the different conferences. . . ."[2] Within a few months, however, Bell left Battle Creek for South Lancaster, Massachusetts, circumventing this plan, at least as far as the vicinity of Michigan was concerned. But in May, 1882, Bell wrote to W. C. White and indicated that the church leaders wanted him to visit "leisurely" the Sabbath schools in the vicinity of South Lancaster, as well as prepare Sabbath school lessons as far ahead as he could.[3]

Later that year, in December, Bell traveled from South Lancaster to Rome, New York, to attend the meetings of the General Conference. Among the meetings he attended were those of the American Health and Temperance Association. He was voted to be

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[1]Michigan Tribune (Battle Creek), October 4, 1879, p. 3.

[2]Report of the General Conference and other Anniversary Meetings of the Seventh-day Adventists, Dec. 1-19, 1881 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Seventh-day Adventist Pub. Assn., 1882), p. 41. See also "The General Conference Business Proceedings," RH 59 (January 3, 1882):11.

[3]G. H. Bell to W. C. White, May 24, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

one of a committee of three to investigate the advisability of a Children's Pledge, and on December 14 this committee rendered its report. They favored the preparation and circulation of the pledge: "I do solemnly promise that with the help of God, I will not use tobacco in any form, and that I will not drink tea or coffee, beer, wine, cider or any liquid containing alcohol." Four days earlier, Bell had been appointed president of the General Sabbath-School Association, and doubtless with his encouragement the meeting voted that Sabbath schools should cooperate with the health and temperance work, "especially in the matter of circulating the children's pledge among Sabbath schools."[1]

Before concluding this section on Bell's contribution through the General and State Associations, his authorship of numerous articles that appeared in the Youth's Instructor between 1879 and 1883 should be recorded. Some of these articles provided background material on Bible geography for a more meaningful understanding of his Bible lessons. The majority of them, however, gave a careful and thorough coverage concerning Sabbath school teaching and organization.[2]

Very significant gains in interest and support of Sabbath school work were made in the years immediately following the organization of the Sabbath school associations. C. C. Lewis reported the rapid increase in interest during the years 1877 to 1879:

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[1] SDA Year Book 1883 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Seventh-day Adventist Pub. Assn., 1883), pp. 40, 43, 45.

[2] For a list of articles published in the Youth's Instructor and written by Bell between 1879 and 1883 on the work of the Sabbath school, see appendix F.

> A careful examination of the volume of the Review for 1877 shows that the Sabbath-school work was mentioned thirty-three times, while a like examination of the Review for 1879 reveals two hundred and thirty-nine such references.[1]

Much of the credit for this growth must go to Bell who worked so tirelessly to strengthen this department of the church program of Christian education.

Editor of the Sabbath-School Worker

Bell made his fourth and final significant contribution to the Sabbath school work as a founding co-editor of the Sabbath-School Worker. In 1884 he returned to Battle Creek from South Lancaster and retired from his full-time teaching career. Nevertheless, he continued to serve on the executive and publishing committees of the General Sabbath-School Association until 1887. Thus when the decision was made in November 1884 that this association "publish a quarterly for teachers to be edited and managed by the Publishing Committee,"[2] Bell assisted in editing the paper until he was no longer a member of that committee. Two of his former students, W. C. White and J. E. White, were his co-editors in 1885.[3] Throughout 1885 and 1886, the 16-page journal was published quarterly, and in 1887 and 1888 it became a monthly supplement of the Youth's Instructor. Bell, however, served only until the end of 1887.

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[1] Lewis, "Sketches--No. 8," RH, April 21, 1885, p. 247.

[2] SDA Year Book 1885, p. 70.

[3] Ibid. In 1885, the names of W. W. Prescott and Mrs. M. J. Chapman were added to the Publishing Committee of the General Sabbath-School Association. See SDA Year Book 1886, p. 72.

During this early period the Sabbath-School Worker provided no lesson helps, only articles on organization and teaching methods. Bell's long experience and expertise enabled him to continue to influence the development of the Sabbath school work through his pen, if not by his bodily presence. Unfortunately, no correspondence by Bell concerning the journal is known to exist. One is dependent only upon the articles which appeared above his name to determine the emphasis and direction he gave to the paper. He appeared to have been no longer concerned with organization, the foundation of which he had previously laid so well. His articles now were centered on the qualities of a Christian teacher and his teaching methods.[1] Characteristic of himself, he stressed three qualities: faithfulness, thoroughness, and hard work.[2] His last article in 1887 was entitled "The Great Object Defeated." Its opening sentence epitomized the major goal of this Christian educator. "The great object of Sabbath-school teaching should be to affect the heart and life of those who are taught."[3] It would appear that he had learned a lesson from Ellen White's comment six years earlier. She had written that "the Sabbath-school work at Battle Creek runs like a well-regulated machine, but there is

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[1]For a list of Bell's articles published in the Sabbath-School Worker and in its Supplement in the Youth's Instructor between 1885 and 1887, see appendix G.

[2]G. H. Bell, "Faithfulness as an Element of Success," YI 35 (September 7, 1887):171; "Thoroughness," YI 35 (May 4, 1887):86; and "Don't Be Afraid of Hard Work," YI 35 (October 5, 1887):191.

[3]G. H. Bell, "The Great Object Defeated," YI 35 (December 7, 1887):235.

too little of the real heartwork which alone can make the school a success."[1]

Bell withdrew from all official Sabbath-school work at the end of 1887. He had been associated with it for nearly nineteen years. During that time he had the satisfaction of seeing so many of his ideas become a reality in the operation of Sabbath schools not only across the continent of America but in Canada and overseas in such places as Australia and Europe.[2] For this reason it was fitting that in the year prior to his withdrawal, the delegates of the General Sabbath-School Association voted at the annual session to amend its constitution. Henceforth it would be called the International Sabbath-School Association.[3]

Conclusion

In the nineteenth century the most influential educational facility conducted by the Seventh-day Adventist church for its members was the Sabbath school. No other single individual during this period exerted a greater impact upon its development than did Goodloe Bell. At times he worked too hard, driving himself beyond the limits of his physical endurance. The difficulties he experienced were brought on partly by his own personality, as well as by his demands for perfection from others, and the problems

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[1]Ellen G. White, Testimony for the Battle Creek Church, p. 10.

[2]SDA Year Book 1888 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Review and Herald Pub. House, 1888), pp. 61-62.

[3]SDA Year Book 1887, p. 69.

he faced at Battle Creek College in 1881-82, described in the next chapter. These would have crushed a man with less determination, sense of calling, and love for his work. In October 1886, Bell wrote for the Sabbath-School Worker an article fittingly entitled "Teaching for the Love of It." In it he described not only the Sabbath-school teacher's experience, but possibly his own:

> He will have trials, but they will only make him love his work the more, and the difficulties he meets will call out faith and courage, so that the final joy will make him forget all the pain he had suffered. Instead of murmuring at hard work, he will continually praise God for giving him work to do.[1]

In 1881, when Bell was the butt of so much criticism, Ellen White wrote a paper that was read before delegates of the General Conference and leading workers in the Review and Herald Office, Sanitarium, and College. Among her concerns were the strong feelings of many against Bell at that time. She recognized the weaknesses in his personality but said that he deserved "respect for the good which he has done." She asked that he be dealt with "tenderly" because he had

> . . . performed the labor which three men should have shared. . . . He toiled when others were seeking rest and pleasure. He is worn; God would have him lay off some of these extra burdens for a while. He has so many things to divide his time and attention, he can do justice to none.[2]

Then, three months later in a letter to Uriah Smith, she spoke more directly about Bell's great contribution to the Sabbath school

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[1]G. H. Bell, "Teaching for the Love of It," SSW 2 (October, 1886):53.

[2]Ellen G. White, Testimony for the Battle Creek Church, p. 19.

work. To his training in the Sabbath school, many owed "much of their usefulness." She believed that the Lord had "commended his thoroughness as a teacher" and that his "labors in the College and the Sabbath-school, have exerted an influence upon our people from the Atlantic to the Pacific." Referring to the Sabbath school work among others she said that "In some branches of the work, he had done more than any other man among us, to disseminate light and knowledge."[1]

And, indeed, he had. As superintendent of the Battle Creek Sabbath School he had introduced organization and uniformity of action into its operation which were eventually adopted by all Seventh-day Adventist Sabbath schools. His Sabbath school lessons were published in the journals of the church for many years. He was the first Seventh-day Adventist to author a series of graded Sabbath school lesson books which provided a concise and well organized system of Bible study for Sabbath schools as well as for some day schools during the next quarter of a century. He played a most significant leadership role in the organization of the General and state Sabbath school associations, and strongly promoted the work of the Sabbath school. His many articles in the denominational journals gave careful instruction on how to conduct a successful school. As one of the founding co-editors of the Sabbath-School Worker, he gave special emphasis to the qualities and teaching methods of the Christian teacher.

It is interesting to note that with the longer perspective

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[1] Ibid., pp. 30, 31, 37.

provided by time, J. C. Bartholf should write in Bell's life sketch after his death in 1899:

> It is but just to say that the present high efficiency attained by this organization [the International Sabbath-School Association] and the Sabbath-schools it represents, is due to his efforts more than to those of any other one person.[1]

Nevertheless, Bell's work as a Christian educator extended also into the Battle Creek College, the foundation of which was traced in the last chapter. The next chapter resumes the description of his teaching and experience there until 1882.

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[1] J. C. Bartholf, "Goodloe Harper Bell," YI 47 (February 9, 1899):104.

CHAPTER 4

PIONEER TEACHING AT BATTLE CREEK COLLEGE

1875-1882

Bell had founded the first Seventh-day Adventist church-sponsored school in 1872, and in chapter two its development was traced until 1875 when the new college building was opened and the school was given its official name. This chapter resumes the account of Bell's contribution as a pioneer Christian educator in the Battle Creek College from 1875 through 1882. Though known as a stern disciplinarian, Bell taught in a manner that was distinguished for its thoroughness, precision, and clarity. The teaching of subjects was subordinated to his teaching of students, for his goal was to prepare them for the greatest usefulness in this life, and for fellowship with God in the world to come. During these seven years he taught a wide range of subjects to hundreds of scholars, many of whom received from him not only a thorough education but also the impress of his dedication to God.

In spite of his Christian commitment, however, Bell possessed certain personality characteristics which made him unpopular with some of his students and his peers. These characteristics were exacerbated by problems in his home, the pressures of his excessive responsibilities, increasingly poor health, and the appointment of a new school president in 1881. All of these were

significant factors in the onset of the worst crisis experienced by the church in its educational work up to that time. This chapter traces Bell's teaching career at Battle Creek College from 1875 through 1882. It also examines and gives particular emphasis to the development of the 1882 crisis, since that dispute resulted in Bell's withdrawal from the college and the closing of the school for one year from 1882 to 1883.

The new school building which had been opened on January 4, 1875, was an imposing brick structure. It had been built in the form of a Greek cross, and was situated on an elevation in a quiet part of the city. The building contained three stories and was divided into halls, study areas, and recitation rooms. The basement was arranged for classes in chemistry and natural philosophy, and contained the chemical laboratory and scientific apparatus. Two rooms of equal size divided both the first and second stories. Each room was capable of seating eighty students. On the third floor there was a lecture hall where the students met for daily worship and for special classes and occasions. Bell conducted his classes in the room known as No. 3.[1]

For the 1875-76 school year, the faculty consisted of S. Brownsberger (Principal), U. Smith, G. H. Bell, J. H. Kellogg, together with five teachers of foreign languages and three teachers

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[1]Second Annual Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Battle Creek College for the College Year 1875-76 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Review and Herald Steam Book and Job Print, 1876), p. 20; Third Annual Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Battle Creek College for the Year 1876-7 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Review and Herald Steam Book and Job Print, 1877), p. 10.

in the common branches.[1] The college bulletin for this year described the three major principles controlling the administration of the college: first in importance were the moral and religious influences; second, the guarantee of protection from those influences that had undermined the character of many other institutions of learning; and third, thoroughness, which was identified as forming "the leading feature in the labors of the Faculty."[2] Though all three principles reflected Bell's concerns, the third in particular pointed to Bell's influence in the school. All one knows of Bell indicates that he scorned giving students a superficial knowledge of subjects. Rather, he required them to understand principles and avoid the mere memorization of verbal forms. It is significant that the teachers at the college adopted the motto "not how much, but how well," which first appeared in the Second Annual Catalogue[3] and was published in all the subsequent annual

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[1]The "common branches" included the subjects of reading, writing, grammar, arithmetic, geography, and spelling.

[2]Second Annual Catalogue 1875-76, pp. 5-6.

[3]Ibid., p. 6. It is of interest that the adoption of this motto by teachers was encouraged by the very influential educator, David P. Page, in his Theory and Practice of Teaching, first published in 1847. He wrote:

> The motto of the wise teacher should be, 'NOT HOW MUCH, BUT HOW WELL.' . . . It is better that a class should make but very slow progress for several weeks, if they but acquire the habit of careful study and a pride of good scholarship . . . than that they should ramble over a whole field, firing at random, missing oftener than they hit the mark, and acquiring a stupid indifference to their reputation as marksmen, and a prodigal disregard to their waste of ammunition and their loss of the game. (David P. Page, Theory and Practice of Teaching [New York: E. L. Kellogg & Co., 1894], p. 239).

bulletins while Bell was teaching at the school.

In 1876 Bell was forty-four years of age and had twenty-five years of teaching experience behind him. He was the oldest member of the faculty both in terms of age and teaching experience. He was, for example, older than Uriah Smith by one month. Sidney Brownsberger, the principal, was thirty-one, and the newly appointed Dr. J. H. Kellogg was but twenty-four years of age and just out of medical school.[1] As the senior member of the teaching staff, Bell's impact upon the educational program at the college would probably have been considerable.

College Teacher

Bell is listed in the Second Annual Catalogue as Professor of English Language and Mathematics for 1875-76.[2] According to the diary of one of his students, however, he was also teaching American history in 1876 and commenced a class in botany in the spring of that year.[3] In addition to these responsibilities, Bell played a significant part in the Normal Department which was first

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This motto harmonized well with Bell's philosophy, and it is possible Bell may have taken it from Page, but the connection has not been established.

[1]Uriah Smith was born on May 2, 1832, whereas Goodloe Bell's birth was April 7. See Eugene F. Durand, Yours in the Blessed Hope, Uriah Smith (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1980), p. 19. The years for the birth of Brownsberger and Kellogg are found in the Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, rev. ed. (1976), s.v. "Brownsberger, Sidney" and "Kellogg, John Harvey."

[2]Second Annual Catalogue 1875-76, p. 4.

[3]G. R. Avery Diary, February 8 and April 4, 1876, GRAC, AUHR.

advertised in the 1875-76 catalogue. In this department, the subjects known as the "common branches" were studied to accommodate all who wished to develop their understanding of the basic subjects, but the Normal Course was especially for the benefit of those who were "seeking a preparation for teaching." Of the 267 students attending the college in 1875-76, 123 were registered in the Normal Course.[1] Bell's contribution to this department is discussed in greater detail below.

Bell had commenced to teach botany in the spring of 1876, and in the Third Annual Catalogue (1876-77), he is first listed as the Professor of Botany in addition to his instruction in English. Bell's knowledge of the subject was impressive. He was well known for his delight in leading students into the hills and fields surrounding Battle Creek in search of botanical specimens. In April 1880, one of Battle Creek's newspapers reported:

> The Botany class at the College . . . is prospering finely. Prof. Bell, with his usual enthusiasm for the study, has explored the fields and forests far and near, but alas! there are no flowers.[2]

In addition to teaching Botany, Bell is also described as the College's first "Instructor in Vocal Music."[3] J. C. Bartholf was a student at Battle Creek in the mid 1870s and he later wrote the lifesketch that appeared in the Youth's Instructor a few weeks after Bell's death. Bartholf wrote that Bell was "an ardent admirer

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[1] Second Annual Catalogue 1875-76, pp. 24, 18.

[2] Michigan Tribune (Battle Creek), April 10, 1880, p. 3. See also, Avery Diary, April 25, 1876.

[3] Third Annual Catalogue 1876-77, p. 4.

of beauty shown forth in nature and language, but he was also a great lover of all phases of art,--painting, music, statuary, architecture, etc."[1] His love for music encouraged him at some point in his life to learn to play the flute.[2] Evidently his knowledge of music was enough to enable him to teach the rudiments of music reading to the students who gathered daily in the college chapel for their lessons. A course in vocal music was first described in the 1875-76 catalogue, so it is possible Bell may have commenced teaching it at that time, but he is not described as the instructor until the following year. He continued teaching music until the arrival of Professor C. W. Stone in 1879.

In his vocal music course the pupils were required "to become familiar with all musical characters, the different intervals, the major, minor, and chromatic scales." The lessons were designed not only to enable the student "to sing readily and correctly," but also "to develop a pure taste and a love for good music." According to the timetable for 1877-78, during the last forty-minute period of each day, Bell would go to Room No. 5--the main lecture hall on the third floor--and teach his students from the 160 charts in Mason's "Series of Music Charts" and from a graded course of Music Readers.[3]

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[1] J. C. Bartholf, "Goodloe Harper Bell," YI 47 (February 9, 1899):105.

[2] Charles Horace Giles, "Stories of Old Advent Town," ca. 1938. Local History Collection, Willard Library, Battle Creek, chap. 3, pp. 23-24.

[3] Third Annual Catalogue 1876-77, p. 52; Fourth Annual Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Battle Creek College for the

With the enrollment of 267 students in 1875-76, a spirit of confidence arose among the teaching faculty and hopes for the continued success of the college ran high. James White reported to the church constituency in June that Professor Brownsberger was

> . . . very happy and hopeful in his work. Prof. Bell and the lady teachers in our school are true fellow-helpers, and all unite in words of commendation of the ability and deportment of the students generally.[1]

Bell's helpfulness extended beyond the college. Apart from his leadership in the Battle Creek Sabbath School, described in the previous chapter, he participated in other church activities. The campmeeting conducted at Lansing in September 1877 was regarded as "the best ever held in Michigan or any other place," and a large number of students committed themselves to Christ. Leading out in the work for the youth were Professors Brownsberger and Bell together with W. C. White. In a letter to her son Edson and his wife, Ellen White wrote that the three men were concerned with how to control such a large number of students, but "God helped them, and united His power to their effort."[2] Then in November, Bell conducted the Thanksgiving services at the Battle Creek church with Elder S. N. Haskell and Professor Brownsberger.[3]

College Year 1877-8 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Review and Herald Publishing House, 1878), p. 68.

[1]Second Annual Catalogue 1875-76, p. 18; James White, "Eight Weeks at Battle Creek," RH 47 (June 1, 1876):172.

[2]Ellen G. White to Edson and Emma White, September 28, 1877, Letter 19, 1877, EGWRC--GC.

[3]Michigan Tribune, December 5, 1877, p. 3.

As Some Students Saw Him

Bell's personal qualities prevented him from ever achieving popularity, yet he had an affectionate regard for his students and many enjoyed his companionship Others, however, feared him more than they admired him. Yet, afterwards, former students spoke of their love for the man--his dignity, simplicity, boyish enthusiasm, and consummate skill in teaching--and of their respect for his thoroughness and industry.

A few students have left accounts of Bell's teaching at Battle Creek College in their diaries or biographical accounts. These provide intimate glimpses of Bell as a teacher and friend of youth.

Drury Reavis

Drury W. Reavis was a student at the college for more than three of the years Bell was a teacher there. In his book I Remember, he entitled one of his chapters "Prof. G. H. Bell, a Great Disciplinarian." He pointed out that many of the students regarded him as "a far too stern disciplinarian," but added,

> . . . in view of the fact that he had a conglomerate student body, the great majority of whom were full-grown men and women from socially-neglected places, who had acquired a loose decorum, even severe discipline was necessary if reforms were to be achieved, for some were so calloused in their ways that a mere hint or suggestion was not sufficient to work any change in them.[1]

Reavis believed that Bell was "no more severe in his discipline

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[1]D. W. Reavis, I Remember (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assoc., n.d.), p. 110.

than he was required to be under the existing circumstances."[1]

After completing college, Reavis began teaching school himself. When Bell heard he had been given "a hard school," he wrote to Reavis and gave him some counsel on how to be a successful teacher.

> He said he considered the entire life of his students an exemplification of his work, of which he was very jealous; that the success of his students was his success, and their failure was his failure Among the many excellent things he commanded me to carry out was, first of all, order, with thoroughness and promptness in every detail. These were his keystones, reinforced with all the other strength-aiding regulations necessary to being a master in successful educational work.[2]

Of the many experiences Reavis had with "the Bell system of discipline" he related one concerning Dan T. Jones, from Missouri.[3] In the 1870s, every student at the college was given a number which identified him in all the classes he attended. Each teacher had a student secretary who called these numbers when the teacher asked a question during the lesson recitation. Reavis said:

> No member ever knew when his or her number would be called, but all who had been long in Professor Bell's classes did know that the instant the number was called, its owner was to be on his or her feet, and the answer given promptly.[4]

Dan Jones was a bright student but he moved slowly and

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[1]Ibid. [2]Ibid.

[3]Jones later became secretary of the General Conference, and in 1893 led the first group of Seventh-day Adventist missionaries to Mexico. See Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, rev. ed. (1976), s.v. "Jones, Dan T."

[4]Reavis, I Remember, p. 111.

spoke only after careful thinking. Only two of his subjects gave him any trouble--grammar and rhetoric--and these were taught by Professor Bell. Reavis sat next to Jones in class and was present one day when the class secretary called Jones's number, thus requiring him to answer Bell's question when he was not expecting it. The question required him to read a long paragraph, so he began to hunt deliberately for the passage before standing up. Bell could not tolerate the slow response and, being inclined toward sarcasm at times, said, "Mr. Jones is evidently asleep. Some one please awaken him." Jones replied apologetically, while remaining seated, that he was not asleep but was "hunting the paragraph." To this Bell replied, "'Hunting! Hunting!! Do people in Missouri hunt sitting down? Are you too weak to get up? Boost him, Brother Reavis, boost him!'"[1]

Because of Bell's "hard, thorough work," Reavis believed that "many of the best workers in the denomination owed their success to him." In his estimation, Bell was "the most complete, all round teacher of order and general decorum" he had ever met.[2]

Sarah Skinner

Sarah Melissa Skinner was also a student at Battle Creek College in 1877 and sat in several of Bell's classes. Both Sarah and the young man whom she married during that year, O. Andrew Johnson, kept diaries, and their daily accounts provide added insight into Bell's teaching style and relationship with his

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Ibid., p. 110.

students. On February 9, for example, Bell related "a very amusing story" in the singing class. Later in the period another "laughable incident" occurred when one of the young students "had the misfortune to drop his pipe from his pocket." Bell's reaction was not recorded.[1]

Sarah suffered from bad eyes which the doctors diagnosed and were treating as "granulated eyelids." She found Bell a sympathetic teacher because he had trouble with his own eyes. He had excused her from two of her studies on account of her eyesight. Finally, on February 14, she wrote, "I asked Brother Bell to excuse me from the grammar class. He said he would excuse me from writing but would like to have me take part in the recitation. I think he is very kind." Two weeks later, however, Bell excused her from the grammar class entirely. "He said he would like to have me visit the class as often as I could. He thought it would be better to leave the class than to loose [sic] my eyesight."[2]

Sarah returned to college in the fall after her marriage and was told that she should study "that terrible subject rhetoric." During the following months she often mentioned that she was searching for examples to fulfill Bell's assignments. At times she was not very successful and was "very glad" that she was not called upon to recite. On September 17, she was thankful she had spent the morning hunting for examples because that afternoon "Bro. Bell made a few remarks for the benefit of certain members or the

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[1]Diary--Mrs. O. A. Johnson, 1877-78. February 9, 1877. AUHR.

[2]Ibid., February 14, and March 1, 1877.

class, who had failed to bring in examples." She remained in the class till the end of the term and doubtless gained a greater understanding of grammar and style from her literature probes, which was what Bell had intended.[1] In May 1878, when Andrew Johnson and his wife were bidding farewell to other students and friends, Andrew's diary recorded that they "called on Prof. Bell."[2] No other member of the faculty evidently received such a visit.

Charles Giles

Another student who attended the college in the late 1870s was Charles H. Giles. Soon after his return to the school after a brief absence, Giles said he had an experience which was to affect his life "in several respects for more than fifty years." Bell invited him to join his botany class. Giles had never studied the subject before and he soon became "an enthusiastic member." He often accompanied his teacher on his early morning walks as he searched for botanical specimens for class analysis. Bell reinforced the growing friendship by also teaching Giles how to play the flute. Giles reported, "We were soon playing duets together."[3]

Giles later married Bell's daughter, Eva, and therefore he enjoyed a special relationship with Bell. He has written about it in a discerning and helpful comment:

> I grew very fond of the Botany teacher. He had not had the advantages of a traditional education, had never

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[1] Ibid., August 29, September 10 and September 17, 1877.

[2] Diary--O. A. Johnson, 1877-78, May 22, 1878, AUHR.

[3] Giles, "Stories of Old Advent Town," chap. 3, pp. 23-24.

> been to college nor had any collegiate degrees. He had never studied any foreign language, ancient or modern, and knew very little of Grecian or Roman history. But he was as thoroughly grounded in his knowledge of English language and literature as I was in the classics. He was a grinding student and a born teacher in any subject to which he devoted himself. He had weak eyes, and was glad to have me read to him, and in doing so, I became acquainted with many English writers that were strangers to me. I entered his class in rhetoric and received from him a thorough grounding in sentence construction and punctuation, which often stood me in good stead in later years, and I cultivated through his coaching a discriminating appreciation of good writing and good literature from which I still derive great satisfaction and pleasure.[1]

Giles was in his eighties when he recorded his impressions of Bell. Nevertheless, he still possessed (ca. 1938) Bell's flute and book of tunes, many botanical specimens which they had gathered together, his copy of Brown's Grammar of English Grammars, and many of the books from which he had read aloud to Bell. Giles found Bell "understanding and sympathetic," and one with whom he developed "a very dear friendship."[2]

William Spicer

W. A. Spicer wrote a brief but significant account of the impact upon him of Bell's teaching in English literature while Spicer was a student at Battle Creek College. In 1884 a small group of young people were meeting together for "general literary discussion." He recalled that they avoided the discussion of fiction, and he attributed this to "the influence of our old English language teacher, G. H. Bell. . . ." Spicer said that he did not

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[1] Ibid., p. 24.

[2] Ibid., p. 25; chap. 4, p. 13.

remember that Bell ever said much about not reading "the so-called high-class fiction. He had simply led us by another way. . . ." He compared Bell with the old Mississippi River pilot who was asked by a passenger whether he knew where "every sunken stump or hidden rock" was on the river. The pilot replied, "Oh no, I don't know that, but I know where they are not." In Spicer's estimation, Bell was "a good teacher" because he had charted "a clear course in the study of literature without having much to say about what not to read."[1]

George Avery

The student who wrote more fully on Bell than any other was George Royal Avery from Locke, Michigan. Avery was twenty years old when he first came to Battle Creek College in 1875 and was assigned to Bell's English class. Thus began a lifelong friendship that brought mutual benefit and satisfaction to both in the years that followed.

In his first year Bell taught Avery grammar, history, arithmetic, composition, and writing. On January 11, 1876, Avery wrote, "Prof. Bell felt pretty jolly this P.M. and things passed off very finely." By later in the month Bell had evidently won his heart in the composition class, for Avery recorded in his diary, "My private opinion is that this exercise is the most interesting in the school, at least with which I am connected." There was no

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[1]W. A. Spicer, "No Time to Lose," RH, November 17, 1949, p. 3.

monotony in Bell's classes, for he was able to bring together information from his extensive reading that both interested and amused the students. On January 28, 1876, for example, he told his history class how "the attempt of Montgomery and Arnold to capture Quebec . . . failed on account of the mosquitoes. . . ." Three days later, Bell called on Avery to read his prepared "historical questions," and to his surprise and joy, Bell "actually said they were excellent and comprehensive." Avery basked under this praise, and responded to Bell's psychology, noting in his diary, "History is a favorite of mine consequently I shall do my best," and on the following day, "Prof. B.[ell] gave our history class considerable praise."[1]

With Bell's encouragement and Avery's subsequent improvement in history, his marks in other subjects also began to improve. On February 9, Avery noted that "grammar begins to look a little brighter," and in the following week: "Really grammar begins to be a more interesting study." By the time four more months had passed Avery could write, "I shall grow to like grammar as well as any other study if I keep studying it under Mr. Bell." When Bell failed to call for the student's compositions on February 24 and gave them an extension of time until the following Monday, Avery exclaimed, "Prof. Bell is one jolly good man else I am in luck. . . ."[2]

During March, Bell was ill and at least one member of his

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[1]Avery Diary, January 11, 27, 28, 31, February 7, 8, 1876.

[2]Ibid., February 9, 16, June 13, February 24, 1876.

class looked forward to his return. Avery wrote on March 16, "I wish Prof. Bell would come." On the following day he was overjoyed to enter the classroom after chapel exercises to see him seated "in his old chair . . . and as in the days of yore he instructed and amused our history class. . . ."[1]

Avery's enthusiastic response to Bell and his teaching was not shared by all, even in 1876. Though no documentation is available there must have been some difficulties in his relationships because in March a rumor circulated that Bell might be dropped from the college at the General Conference session in April. Two weeks later Ellen White wrote to her husband:

> In reference to Brother Bell: He may move unwisely, but it would not do to separate him from that college. Small matters may arise that need correcting in Brother Bell, but I should not make any move without [unless] most positive inconsistencies arise. . . . You are on the ground and if you converse with Brother Bell yourself, you may learn that there are two sides to the story.[2]

When the new school term opened on April 4, Avery was overjoyed to see Bell still teaching. "Our good old Prof. Bell <u>is</u> back again after <u>all</u> and the botany class was organized first this morning." Like Charles Giles, Avery's lifelong interest in plants was aroused by Bell's enthusiastic teaching of the subject.

In April, Avery was sawing wood one afternoon after school when Bell passed by and invited him to accompany him on his plant-hunting expedition. "Certainly I could not refuse," he wrote,

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[1]Ibid., March 16, 17, 1876.

[2]Ellen G. White to James White, April 4, 1876, Letter 3, 1876, EGWRC--GC.

"so we took a tramp away off across the fair ground to the northwest collected [sic] roots and catkins." Two days later his diary recorded his exhuberance: "And Botany Oh! Botany its just splendid."[1]

Avery's diary provides the only record of the sadness that entered Bell's life in May 1876. On Wednesday evening, May 24, his daughter Clara, aged about seventeen years, passed away. Clara had attended the college for a short time and her death was a shock to all. The students responded spontaneously and generously to the suggestion of donating some money to help with the burial expenses. On Friday they appointed a committee of five to convey a message of sympathy and the donations to "so noble a teacher." The funeral service was held at 11 a.m. on Saturday morning in place of the normal weekly worship service. Afterward, nearly all the students of the college and the Sabbath school with "quite a procession of carriages" formed in procession to the Oak Hill cemetery "where the scene was truly affecting."[1]

Bell was back teaching on Monday. In spite of his grief, he did not miss the opportunity of offering to students the gift of his companionship. It was now spring and planting time. On the following Wednesday after school, Avery and Bell worked together in Bell's garden until sundown "planting sweet corn and string beans. . . ." The next day Avery and another student, Arthur Daniells, worked in the garden "planting beans, pumpkin seeds etc.,

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[1]Avery Diary, April 4, 10, 12, 1876.

[2]Ibid., May 25, 26, 27, 1876.

and having an invitation [from Bell] to stop I did and had some assistance on my grammar lesson."[1]

Bell seemed to be the kind of teacher who aroused strong responses, either positively or negatively, depending upon the behavior of the student. Avery noted on one occasion, "G. H. Bell is a terror to evil doers allow me to say but a most faithful friend to right in every form." Nevertheless, Bell did not hesitate to give praise when he thought an honest effort was being made. A short time before the end of the school year, Avery wrote, "Teachers compliments [sic] actually. Yes, Prof. Bell noticed the condition of my grammar paper and made it known in the class to my unspeakable joy."[2]

On the last day of the 1875-76 school year all the students assembled in the chapel for the closing exercises. After the singing of two or three songs, Bell made "a few remarks" which were followed by the singing of another piece "with much difficulty." Then Principal Brownsberger commenced his speech and "was getting along finely when he was interrupted by Mr. Bell who told him he had gone far enough." When Brownsberger asked Bell to explain himself, Bell told him that someone wanted to see him below. Avery recorded in his diary:

> Then the secret was out and all the busses in town were employed to take us to Goguac [Lake] where we had a pleasant

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[1]Ibid., May 31, June 1, 1876.

[2]Ibid., June 10, 14, 1876.

> trip on the steamboat at the expense of Profs. Bell and Brownsberger.[1]

It was a generous gesture on their part, for their incomes were limited. The informal association doubtless provided some happy memories for the students who were about to return to their homes.

Avery, however, did not return home immediately. He may have needed to raise some money for his fare home, for on Sunday, June 25, he spent three-quarters of the day hoeing Bell's garden. He found the work "rather slow as the ground had not been cultivated," so he thought he should apologize to his teacher for completing so little ground. "Mr. Bell said, 'It's slow work to hoe ground like that. I know it by experience. But I tell you Geo. that looks neat it's done just right.' I concluded not to apologise to him anymore."[2]

Bell followed through his contact with Avery for many years after he left the college. Among the many letters he wrote to Avery was one written in August 1878. Bell expressed surprise that Avery had "kept up a habit of study. This is what I call having the spirit of a scholar." Describing the true scholar, Bell wrote, "He studies, not only for the love of knowledge, but for the enjoyment he finds in study." Bell felt that in Avery's love of study, he found "a spirit somewhat akin" to his own. But he counselled Avery:

> Now do not do as I have done, and defeat all your good purposes by destroying your health.
> Another thing you must be sure to remember, and that

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[1] Ibid., June 23, 1876. [2] Ibid., June 25, 1876.

> is, that your interest in spiritual things must take the lead of all other interests. You must not neglect the study of God's word, even to study his works.[1]

As a Christian educator Bell placed Bible study high in his priorities and encouraged his students to do the same. But he had good reason to warn Avery to be careful not to destroy his health. His predilection to take on the work of three men[2] weakened his constitution and in the late 1870s laid some of the foundation for the crisis of the early 1880s.

It has been pointed out that 1878 brought Bell many extra responsibilities in the Sabbath school work. Yet he still carried on his teaching at the college. The daily program indicates that he met his first class at 9:00 a.m. and continued until 5:00 p.m. with a two hour break in the middle of the day. His daily timetable for 1877-78 was as follows:

9:00	-	9:40	Botany
9:40	-	10:20	Analysis
10:40	-	11:20	Grammar 1st Special
11:20	-	12:00	Grammar 1st Teacher Group A
2:00	-	2:40	English Literature
2:40	-	3:20	Grammar 2nd Special
3:40	-	4:20	Rhetoric
4:30	-	5:00	Vocal Music.[3]

Because he carried such a heavy work load, he often employed student helpers to assist him.[4] One such helper in the 1870s was

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[1] G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, August 14, 1878, G. R. Avery Collection, AUHR.

[2] E. G. White, Testimony for the Battle Creek Church (Oakland Cal.: Pacific Press Pub. House, 1882), p. 19.

[3] Fourth Annual Catalogue 1877-78, p. 68.

[4] In 1878 the College Board voted to make $2 a week available to Bell to pay for "such assistance as he may need." See Battle

Alma Lucille Wolcott. When she later recalled her experience as Bell's assistant she wrote:

> As I look back upon those days it seems to me that I was always correcting papers, writing lessons on the board or teaching lessons. Of course I enjoyed it and I think he appreciated what I did. Once he told me that had he not found it so hard to get along financially he would have been glad to pay me for my work, but added, "I always felt that the experience you gained well repaid you for the time spent."[1]

Teacher of Teachers

Among Bell's most noteworthy achievements while he was a teacher at Battle Creek College was his contribution to the work of teacher education. By this means he transmitted his ideals and philosophy to many students. Because there was at this time no established system of Seventh-day Adventist church schools, these young teachers apparently entered the public-school system. Nevertheless they carried with them the principles and methods he instilled into them during their period of training.

The Normal Department was first advertised in the Second Annual Catalogue in 1875-76. There were fifty-eight students in the first and second years of the course and sixty-five in the third and fourth years.[2] The common and primary branches pursued

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Creek College Board Minutes, 1877-1890, January 10, 1878, p. 15, AUHR.

[1]Autobiographical Sketch of Mrs. G. W. Caviness (Alma Lucille Wolcott Caviness)--AUHR.

[2]Second Annual Catalogue 1875-76, p. 18. Since the 1875-76 catalogue is the first to mention a Normal Department, those students listed in their third and fourth years probably completed the course requirements in another department which taught the common branches. The departments listed in the previous year's

in the Normal Course were described as being for all who wished to study the basic subjects, but "especially for the benefit of those who are seeking a preparation for teaching" in the "District, Grammar and High Schools" of the state. The chief aim of the course was to "qualify teachers for their work, to increase their skill in teaching, and to send them forth filled with the spirit of their profession."[1] There was at this time, however, no "model school" attached to the college, where the teacher trainees could practice their skills.[2] They learned their teaching methods "by observation in the general class work and the practical instructions from the teachers" and by conducting "the class exercises, under the supervision of the teacher in charge." In addition, during the latter part of the course, weekly lectures were delivered on a number of educational topics.[3]

Until 1877 it would appear that Bell and Brownsberger shared

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catalogue were the Collegiate, Grammar, Intermediate and Primary. See First Annual Catalogue of the Officers and Students of the Battle Creek College for the College Year 1874-75 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Review and Herald Steam Book and Job Print, 1875), p. 16.

[1]Second Annual Catalogue 1875-76, pp. 24, 36, 37. Weekly lectures were given on the following topics: "Principles and Methods of School Government; Grading and Classification; Objects and Aims of Education; School Laws; The History of Education; the Essentials for the Progress of the Pupils--on the part of teachers, on the part of pupils; Relations of Teachers to Pupils, to Parents to Society" (ibid.). For a list of the subjects in each year of the teachers' course see Fourth Annual Catalogue 1877-78, pp. 55-56.

[2]The fifth annual catalogue advised that in the autumn of 1879 a "Model School" was opened for those preparing to teach so that they "may not only observe the methods employed, but may practice them in various grades." See Fifth Annual Announcement of Battle Creek College for the College Year 1879-80 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Review and Herald Publishing House, 1879), p. 5.

[3]Second Annual Catalogue 1875-76, p. 36.

these Normal Course topics between them, but with the addition of C. C. Ramsey to the faculty that year, the topics were slightly modified and were divided among Brownsberger, Bell, and Ramsey. In 1877-78 Bell taught "Primary Instruction," "How to Teach the English Language," and "Grading and Classification of Pupils in District Schools."[1] When the lectures were given in the following year it was reported that those by Bell and Ramsey had been "well attended," and that they were "interesting" and "highly profitable." Many people, however, were not convinced of the importance of teacher training. They felt that only a knowledge of the common branches was necessary and that there was no need to be trained in methods of instructing and governing schools.[2]

Bell's long years of experience in teaching children in district schools made him a valued instructor in teaching methodology. In the first number of the new college paper, Battle Creek College, he published two articles for the benefit of teachers: "English Grammar" and "Completeness." In the former he stated:

> It is universally admitted that grammar is not so well taught as mathematics and other studies. Teachers are most deficient just where the greatest skill is needed. It is an abstract study, and young people unaccustomed to such exercises find it difficult to trace the subtle relations of thought, as they are obliged to do, in determining the office and dependence on words. . . . To take the undisciplined mind of a youth and train it to distinguish the uses and modifications of words, to trace their relations, and mark the nice distinctions that must be made in the study of language is no easy task.[3]

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[1] Fourth Annual Catalogue 1877-78, p. 54.

[2] "College Notes," The College Board 3 (April 1879):12.

[3] G. H. Bell, "English Grammar," Battle Creek College 1 (January 1877):6.

In the second article Bell enunciated one of the most distinguishing features of his own teaching practice. He introduced his article by saying, "Completeness should be a characteristic of everything done in the school-room." This was true, he explained, not only because completeness was a prerequisite to success in the acquirement of knowledge but also "because it promotes a habit more valuable than even knowledge itself." Of the teacher it should be said that "whatever he undertakes should not only be carefully and thoroughly done, but should be completed." Bell's counsel was that each subject should be "divided, and subdivided" until finally reduced to individual lessons. Providing insight into his own teaching method, he continued his explanation:

> Each lesson should then be carefully and deliberately taught, illustrated by numerous examples, and forced upon the attention by frequent questions; then there should be a recapitulation, in which the most important thoughts should be made to stand out in bold relief; and last of all the class should be shown just what preparation they are to make for the next recitation, and just how to make it.[1]

Bell lamented that many teachers undertook too much at each recitation and that there was "no more fruitful source of evil in our schools than the prevailing habit of incompleteness in the work of both teachers and pupils." He confessed that the habit was "not easily cured," as he had "fully proved by his own experience."[2]

The title of the Battle Creek College journal was later

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[1] G. H. Bell, "Completeness," Battle Creek College 1 (January 1877):3.

[2] Ibid.

changed to The College Record. It is unfortunate that few numbers of these two journals are known to exist,[1] because Bell may well have written more extensively for those aspiring to be teachers. In 1879, however, he did write two articles under the title "Hints to Young Teachers." In the first of these, captioned "Importance of the Work," he wrote two sentences that are significant because they reveal his commitment to teaching even in times of unpopularity. Describing the teacher, he wrote:

> He has a higher work before him than merely to please his pupils or their parents,--a higher work than to secure a popular reputation as a teacher, or even to give useful instruction. He must discipline the mind, teach correct habits of thought, and cultivate refined tastes in his pupils.[2]

As a Christian educator Bell taught in the light of eternity. Character training was the teacher's raison d'être. He continued:

> Much of the future usefulness of the youth and children of our land depends upon the training they receive at school. Their happiness both in this world and in the world to come will be largely affected by their school life. The teacher molds, not only mind, but character.[3]

To accomplish this Bell urged the young teachers to (1) secure the highest possible culture, (2) be a constant learner, (3) improve every opportunity no matter how poor it may seem, and (4) be what you want your pupils to become.

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[1]The Andrews University Heritage Room possesses only one (January 1877) of the four issues of the Battle Creek College, together with two of the second volume (July and October 1878) and two of the third volume (January and April 1879) of The College Record.

[2]G. H. Bell, "Hints to Young Teachers," The College Record 3(January 1879):6.

[3]Ibid.

The securing of the highest possible culture was best achieved by associating with those who already possess it. "There is only one way in which this can be done," Bell wrote, "and that is by reading the best authors." If the teacher would buy just one book at a time and carefully read it before buying another, he would soon "fill his shelves with good books and his mind with good thoughts." But the book that afforded "the best mental discipline as well as the best moral instruction" was the Bible.[1]

Bell's second article on "Hints to Young Teachers" was concerned with wages and honesty. He told the trainees to avoid being anxious for high wages for they were only apprentices "experimenting somewhat at the expense of others."[2] His own wage in 1880 was thirteen dollars a week,[3] but he believed that

> The money you receive is a small part of your pay. Your highest reward should be in the discipline of your own mind and character, and in the satisfaction of doing good. Your work requires the exercise of judgment, self-control, love, patience, perseverance, and a firm trust in God. The daily exercise of these qualities will tend to strengthen them, and thus build up a sound character,--a character that will give you the respect of society and fit you for usefulness. The highest aim in life is to honor

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[1] Ibid.

[2] G. H. Bell, "Hints to Young Teachers," The College Record 3 (April, 1879):13.

[3] College Board Minutes, March 17, 1880, p. 61, AUHR. Eva Bell wrote in August 1880, that her father's wages had been reduced $10 a month since January. See Eva Bell to W. C. White, August 1880, EGWRC--GC. The Battle Creek College Board Minutes state that Bell's wages had been $15 a week prior to January 1880, compared with $13 a week after January 1, 1880. See College Board Minutes, June 16, 1878, p. 23, and March 17, 1880, p. 61.

> God by making the most of the powers he has given us and then using them for the good of others.[1]

The Teachers' Course attracted a high proportion of the total number of Battle Creek College students in the late 1870s. In the 1877-78 school year, for example, there were 235 students in the course of which 143 were in their first year.[2] The Fifth Annual Announcement for 1879-80 indicated there were 215 in the Teachers' Course.[3]

In the Autumn of 1879-80 an "Eight Weeks Drill" for teachers was introduced into the college program. This was "designed for the benefit of teachers in the district schools who have not the means and time to take a thorough course of study. . . ." Because class drills of the common branches were to be included, the course also provided an opportunity for those who wished to prepare for the public school teachers' examinations. In addition, instruction was given in the best methods of teaching and in general school management.[4] Six of the college professors shared the instruction and though no names were given, it can be assumed that Bell was certainly one of them.

When his students left the college Bell did not forget them. He continued to take an interest in the development of their

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[1]Bell, "Hints to Young Teachers," The College Record, April 1879, p. 13.

[2]Fourth Annual Catalogue 1877-78, p. 48.

[3]Fifth Annual Announcement 1879-80, p. 32.

[4]Ibid., pp. 3-4. See also advertisement in The Nightly Moon (Battle Creek), August 15, 1879, p. 2.

teaching careers. In the winter of 1880 one of Battle Creek's newspapers reported:

> Last Tuesday Prof. Bell of the college, accompanied by a small party of students, visited the school of Mr. Peter Howe, about eight miles southwest of the city. Mr. H. is an old student of the college, and is especially indebted to this professor for much careful training. Prof. B. takes a little recreation every winter in visiting his old pupils who have now become teachers, and are engaged nearby.[1]

Bell's Problems Increase

By 1880 Bell was suffering from overwork. For several years prior to this, the end of the school year had found him exhausted. The previous chapter pointed out the extra responsibilities he assumed in connection with the general and state Sabbath school associations in and after 1878. In the summer of 1878 he went to North Bloomfield, Ohio, where he reported that he was "gaining in health, but it is slowly!" He added, "I am trying to do the very best I know in living up to the laws of health in every respect." His courage was good, but with an indication that all was not well with his teaching at the college he wrote that "it seems almost like hoping against hope to believe that I can go through the next year's seige."[2]

In the late spring of 1880 he was suffering from "dumb-ague" and was very weak. His daughter Eva wrote to W. C. White on June 16 saying that if ever her father "gets life enough to hold up his

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[1] Michigan Tribune (Battle Creek), January 31, 1880, p. 3.

[2] G. H. Bell to W. C. White, August 8, 1878, EGWRC--GC. See also his letter to G. R. Avery, August 14, 1878, GRAC, AUHR.

head, he is going tc write to you, now that school is out." Usually in the summer Bell and his family set up their tent at Gull Lake about eleven or twelve miles from Battle Creek. Bell always enjoyed the water and he hoped to regain his strength in the quietness of the locality.[1] Two months later, in August, Eva wrote again to White that though her father had been "very much run down when school was out in June," he was "feeling stronger and better than he did, but ague seems to be hanging about him."[2]

The school year that began in the autumn of 1880 was the last full year that Bell taught at Battle Creek College. His relationships both with his students and his peers were deteriorating, and much of this was due to certain weaknesses in his personality. Ellen White, a sympathetic but discerning contemporary, wrote in 1880, for example, that he had sometimes placed mature students "in the most embarrassing positions" by his "sarcastic remarks for their deficiency in knowledge."[3] Yet Bell himself possessed a very sensitive nature and was easily hurt "if he imagined that he was in thought or look or word ridiculed." He could not understand that there were "minds just as sensitive as his own to sarcasm or ridicule or censure." She said that he was "naturally severe, critical, and exacting," and he needed to be constantly on guard

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[1]Eva Bell to W. C. White, June 16, 1880, EGWRC--GC.

[2]Eva Bell to W. C. White, August 1880, EGWRC--GC.

[3]Ellen G. White, MS 3, 1880. The last quotation is an interlineation in the copy of this manuscript at the White Estate vault, Berrien Springs, Michigan. It is written in Ellen White's own handwriting.

against these tendencies. She was concerned, too, that in his teaching of grammar he had carried matters "to great extremes" requiring a degree of thoroughness that would very rarely be essential.[1]

It is not known to what extent Ellen White's remarks in 1880 were read and circulated. They were incorporated, however, into a larger paper that was brought to the attention of the church and college leadership late in 1881. Their impact and implications at that time are considered in greater detail below.

Brownsberger Departs

Bell was not the only member of the teaching staff weighed down with problems in 1881. The principal, Professor Brownsberger, was also suffering from poor health that was probably aggravated by his concerns over the college. It was felt by some that the institution was moving away from its original purpose.[2] In addition, the administrative officers of the college were facing increasing disciplinary problems with the students scattered in the private homes of the West End. In May 1881, Brownsberger was replaced by a member of the faculty, Professor Charles W. Stone, who was invited by the board on May 16 to serve as acting principal until the end of the school year. The minutes for May 5, 1881, were the last to record Brownsberger's presence. His resignation was not noted, but a Battle Creek newspaper reported that he had

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[1] Ibid.

[2] See for example, White, Testimony for the Battle Creek Church (1882), pp. 3, 9.

left the city for Ohio on the evening of May 16, "having been obliged to resign on account of ill health."[1]

There is every indication to believe that Bell would have been sorry to see Brownsberger go. They had enjoyed a good working relationship during the eight years they had shared the heavy responsibilities of operating the first Adventist college. On the occasion of the golden anniversary of the founding of the college, Brownsberger wrote that he considered the work of Professor Bell as "one of the most important factors that contributed so much to the success of the school."[2]

On another occasion Brownsberger wrote of his admiration for Bell as an educator. He pointed out that those teachers who persistently seek "to inculcate in youth the principles necessary to the formation of a perfect character" are rarely appreciated. Most young people resist such efforts on their bahalf. In Brownsberger's estimation, "Prof. Bell possessed the highest ideals of true education. . . . In his relation with students we need seek no further exoneration of Prof. Bell than is found in his sincere and earnest zeal to place his pupils on the way to a realization of his lofty ideals." Brownsberger admitted that his and Bell's temperaments and backgrounds were very different, and that at first there were "differences of opinion in regard to methods."

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[1] Michigan Tribune (Battle Creek), May 21, 1881, p. 3.

[2] S. Brownsberger, "Reminiscences of Sidney Brownsberger," Founders' Golden Anniversary Bulletin 1874-1924. Emmauel Missionary College Bulletin, Berrien Springs, p. 48, AUHR.

Nevertheless, as they worked together, their differences "imperceptably [sic] vanished," and "out of it all grew to the end that highest esteem and friendship that should always exist between fellow laborers."[1]

The graduation conducted at the end of the 1880-81 school year was the third such occasion since the college had opened. According to a newspaper report it "differed from the exercises common to such occasions."[2] Usually each member of the graduating class delivered an oration. This year, for the first time, the class decided to invite a speaker to give an address. They chose the well-known clergyman, Dr. A. T. Pierson of Detroit, who spoke on the theme, "The Training of the Man." Following the address, Professor Bell presented the diplomas to the fourteen graduates. It was fitting that Bell should be invited to do this, because he would not participate again in a graduation at Battle Creek College. In the absence of Professor Brownsberger, Professor C. W. Stone, the acting head of the school, closed the program with a brief address.[3] The school year had ended and Bell was glad of the respite. He could not have dreamed of the storm that would soon break around him.

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[1]S. Brownsberger, "Notes and Incidents," p. 3, M. E. Olsen Private Papers (Courtesy of Mrs. Alice Olsen Roth), GC Archives.

[2]Michigan Tribune (Battle Creek), June 18, 1881, p. 3.

[3]Ibid.

A New College President

When the college board members met on July 24, 1881, they voted to invite Dr. Alexander McLearn to become the new president of the college. At the same meeting Bell was offered the position of Professor of English Literature.[1] McLearn, a Canadian, was the same age as Bell. He had been a Baptist minister prior to his accepting the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist church just a short time before assuming the presidency of the college. The board members believed that his Doctor of Divinity degree would bring prestige to the growing institution even if it did not guarantee his understanding of Adventism.[2]

Within the next few months events with far-reaching implications altered the government of both church and college. On August 6, Elder James White, who had given such strong leadership in both institutions, passed away. A few weeks later his widow, Ellen, left Battle Creek for California.[3] She, too, had been closely associated with developments at the college. Her pen and voice had often guided students and faculty since its founding. Then on December 20, the college board voted that Uriah Smith should be the new chairman in place of George I. Butler, the General Conference president, who was often absent because of his

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[1] College Board Minutes, July 24, 1881, p. 83.

[2] Emmett K. Vande Vere, The Wisdom Seekers (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1972), p. 42.

[3] Virgil Robinson, James White (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1976), pp. 299, 304. See also Vande Vere, Wisdom Seekers, p. 29.

responsibilities.[1] Smith was inexperienced in college administration, and though he lived next door to Bell on West College Street, he was not kindly disposed toward him.[2]

Late in August the board met with some of the faculty and Bell asked the board if there was to be an Eight Weeks Teachers' Drill in the fall, similar to those that had been organized the previous two years. Bell, who was closely involved with the program, thought it was a good advertisement for the school. C. W. Stone and A. McLearn, however, led out in opposing the Drill and the vote went against Bell's suggestion.[3] Later in the meeting, the chairman, W. C. Gage, introduced the subject of discipline. The board members were "unanimous" in stating that the new administration should strictly enforce the college rules. Charles C. Ramsey said that not enough attention had been paid to rule enforcement during the previous year. Bell thought that the faculty were not at fault. Both McLearn and J. S. Osborne, the new Professor of Mathematics, expressed themselves "as believers in rigid discipline." The school year had not opened, however, and McLearn had not yet discovered that it was one thing to affirm the need for "rigid discipline" in a board meeting, and quite another thing to practice it in the day-to-day operation of a school.

In the estimation of the board, the rule requiring the

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[1]College Board Minutes, December 20, 1881, pp. 98-99.

[2]Ibid., November 18, 1878, p. 35; July 8, 1880, p. 68; White, Testimony for the Battle Creek Church (1882), p. 29.

[3]Ibid., August 28, 1881, p. 88.

greatest enforcement was rule number five in section four of the school's "Rules and Regulations." It stated:

> Students must refrain from flirtation, courtship and all appearances of the same, during the College year. They shall not go to the rooms of the opposite sex to visit except by permission of the Faculty. Gentlemen must not escort the ladies upon the street, or to or from public gatherings.[1]

It would appear that not only the students but also McLearn felt that the rule was too strict. Perhaps he hoped to win the students' confidence and approval by softening it. Certainly, his association with other educational institutions had done little to prepare him for the conservative attitude to this kind of behavior held by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Neither did his brief association with the church provide him with an understanding of the principles of Christian education promoted during the previous decade by Ellen White.

When Brownsberger paid a brief visit to Battle Creek early in 1882, the College board members told him that McLearn "was introducing a spirit in the College of a very worldly character. The discipline was relaxed and the standard of true education was being lowered."[2] S. N. Haskell, a member of the board, later wrote to W. C. White that "McLearn objects to any restriction being placed upon the boys and girls associating together. His course is to

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[1]Seventh Annual Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Battle Creek College for the College Year 1880-81 with a Full Announcement for 1881-82 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Review and Herald Job Press, 1881), p. 23.

[2]Brownsberger, "Notes and Incidents," p. 4.

break down all such discipline and give loose rein for courtship and a visiting together of both sexes." Haskell admitted that this suited "a majority of the students,"[1] but it did not suit Bell, who was deeply committed to upholding both the standards and regulations of the school. Discipline and order were essential components of his life and, in his opinion, they formed an essential basis for the successful operation of a school. He was not only the oldest member of the faculty but he had been with the school for the longest period. In a special sense it was his school, for he had given it birth, nurtured it in its infancy, and jealously cared for its growth.

Ellen White's Counsel

Bell's fears were confirmed in December when a paper entitled "Our College" by Ellen White was read in the College chapel at the time of the General Conference. Mrs. White, who was in California,[2] requested that it be read to the conference delegates,

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[1]S. N. Haskell to W. C. White, January 30, 1882, EGWRC--GC. See also G. I. Butler to W. C. White, January 29, 1882, EGWRC--GC. McLearn later wrote to Ellen White and described his methods of discipline. He said that when a student broke a school rule "we seek a private interview, and after a kind and faithful conversation, we kneel in prayer and ask God's help. We have seldom failed of good results." He added that the student left "subdued and tearful, and I know of no case where this has been repeated" (A. McLearn to Ellen G. White, April 11, 1882, EGWRC--GC).

[2]Vande Vere incorrectly states that Ellen White returned from California to attend the meetings and read the paper herself. See Vande Vere, The Wisdom Seekers, p. 44. She remained in California, however, and the paper was read by another. See Ellen G. White Biography File, December, 1881, EGWRC--AU.

and the leading workers in the Review and Herald Office, the Sanitarium, and the College. Her opening words set the tone of the article: "There is danger that our College will be turned away from its original design." She felt that "for one or two years past there has been an effort to mold our school after other colleges," contrary to its original purpose. Ellen White, however, subordinated any problems concerning discipline to larger issues which she felt were at stake. She made a strong appeal for a more comprehensive education of the character based upon a strong program of Bible study. This had been neglected. "Our school was established, not merely to teach the sciences, but for the purpose of giving instruction in the great principles of God's word and in the practical duties of everyday life."[1]

In this paper she repeated much of what she had previously written in 1880 concerning Bell and his relationships with his students. She warned him of his critical and exacting personality, the "undue prominence" he gave to grammar, and of an overemphasis on the machinery for conducting the Sabbath school. Nevertheless, her warnings were set in the context of a stirring appeal for all the teachers to represent Jesus to their students. "You must not only profess to be Christians, but you must exemplify the character of Christ."

The final four paragraphs of the paper concerned the

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[1]White, Testimony for the Battle Creek Church (1882), pp. 3, 7.

[2]Ibid., pp. 9-10, 13-15.

attitudes being demonstrated by the teachers towards Bell. If the words had been heeded, the crisis that broke about a month after the paper was read would not have occurred. Ellen White charged that many of the teachers were accusing Bell "of unkindness, harshness, and severity," but some of those who condemned him were "no less guilty themselves." She knew that Bell had "not always moved wisely." He had not been as willing "to modify his methods of instruction, and his manner of dealing with his students, as he should have been." But no man was perfect. "Let him be dealt with tenderly," she appealed. "Let those who are so eagerly searching for his faults, recount what they have done in comparison with him." She urged Bell to guard against showing a combative spirit, and cautioned the teachers to avoid encouraging the students in their faultfinding.

None could then visualize the fulfillment of her concluding prediction: "This complaining spirit will increase as it is encouraged . . . and a spirit of dissatisfaction and strife will rapidly increase. . . . Shall this evil be corrected? . . . Will they [the teachers] labor in humility, in love, and harmony? Time will tell."[1] It did, more quickly than any realized.

During the same General Conference at which the above paper was read, it was voted to invite Bell to spend more of his time visiting the different conferences in the promotion of the Sabbath

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[1] Ibid., pp. 18-19.

school work.[1] This action disturbed the college board in view of the loss of confidence it would produce among those who had come to the college to be taught by Bell. When the board enquired why Bell should be asked to leave his school work, they were told that it was because he "was not properly appreciated by his associates and that he had been treated in such a manner that he did not feel free to work with his associates, or at least felt that they were rather working against him and injuring his influence." W. C. White and S. N. Haskell were upset by the inconsiderate treatment Bell had received from some of the teachers and they felt he should "not be left where his talents and labors were not appreciated, to be abused and crushed." The college board members indicated that they were not prepared to sit by and "see a useful man, a pioneer in the work, driven from his post of duty by men of little experience. . . ." The board, therefore, resolved on December 20 to urge Bell to stay at the college, "at least till the end of the [school] year."[2]

At the same board meeting at which this resolution was taken, the members responded to Ellen White's appeal earlier in December by appointing a small committee to study ways of making Bible study more prominent in the college. This committee reported to the next meeting of the board, and it was voted that Uriah Smith

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[1] "The General Conference Business Proceedings," RH 59 (January 3, 1882):11.

[2] C. W. Stone, A. B. Oyen, and J. H. Kellogg to Ellen G. White, April 9, 1882, pp. 1-3, EGWRC--GC. See also College Board Minutes, December 20, 1881, p. 99.

and Goodloe Bell should "take charge of the Biblical course. . . ."[1]

During the week between December 20 and 27 the board had approached Bell with the request to remain at the school. He indicated, however, that he was unwilling to continue his school work "unless he had some guarantee that the obstacles in his way in school should be removed." He felt he needed some indication from the board to sustain his position, in view of the fact that McLearn and most of the teachers were against him, and that McLearn had curtailed some of his privileges in the control of his class room.[2]

A Crisis Develops

Accordingly, the board meeting on December 27 appointed a committee consisting of C. W. Stone, A. B. Oyen, and J. H. Kellogg to consult with Bell and "to devise some plan whereby he may be left more free in his work."[3] The committee members did not wish to extend his jurisdiction beyond what it had been in the past under Brownsberger. Nor did they want to intrude upon the rights of the other teachers. When they had completed the document they doubtless thought that it fulfilled these criteria well. It stated:

> It is the opinion of the committee that in consideration of his long experience as a teacher, and especially of his long and intimate connection with the school, Proff.

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[1] Ibid., December 27, 1881, p. 100.

[2] C. W. Stone, A. B. Oyen, and J. H. Kellogg to Ellen G. White, April 9, 1882, p. 4; G. I. Butler to W. C. White, January 19, 1882, EGWRC--GC. This last letter is dated 1881, but its contents clearly indicate it should be 1882.

[3] College Board Minutes, December 27, 1881, p. 100.

> [sic] Bell is entitled to a degree of liberty and independence in the arrangement of the department under his care, which it would not be proper to accord to him under other circumstances. In accordance with this view we hereby authorize Prof. Bell to take entire charge of admitting students to the classes in English language and of the grading of such classes, and promotion of students in the same, and to exercise the same authority in the Bible classes under his care in connection with Eld. Smith.
>
> We also authorize Prof. Bell to have charge of the order and discipline of the room in which his recitations are held.
>
> It is, of course, expected that the liberty thus granted to Prof. Bell will be used in such a manner as will not interfere with the interests of other departments of the school, or with the rights and privileges of other teachers.[1]

The members of the faculty received it on Friday morning, January 6. Butler later identified it as "the cause of precipitating this crisis."[2] The reaction came swiftly. By Friday evening, a "majority of the Faculty" had sent a paper to the board stating that they would not continue teaching unless the document was rescinded.

Over the weekend, some of the board members visited all of the teachers except McLearn, Osborne, and Miller and all withdrew from their resignation threat. They stated that they had been "misinformed as to the intent of the paper or had been influenced to sign it without seeing any real reason for so doing." McLearn would not allow the board members to see Osborne and Miller.[3]

In an endeavour to bring reconciliation, the board invited

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[1] Ibid., January 8, 1882, p. 103.

[2] G. I. Butler to W. C. White, January 19, 1882.

[3] C. W. Stone, A. B. Oyen, and J. H. Kellogg to Ellen G. White, April 9, 1882, p. 5. According to S. N. Haskell's account only Dr. J. H. Kellogg visited the teachers to explain the document. S. N. Haskell to W. C. White, January 30, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

A. McLearn, J. S. Osborne, E. B. Miller, and C. H. Nielsen[1] to their meeting on Sunday morning, January 8. The only two members absent from the seven-man board were G. I. Butler, the General Conference president, and S. N. Haskell. The meeting was called to explain "the nature and intent" of the document under question. Dr. J. H. Kellogg stated that it was not intended to confer on Bell "any rights or privileges" that he or any other department head should not have. Since Bell had thought, however, that his rights had been curtailed, the board had drawn up this paper defining his work rather than conduct a long investigation into the truth of the charges. The faculty members present indicated that they had at first misunderstood the document's intention, and three of them said they would be willing to continue teaching if a similar document was sent to all department heads. Though McLearn at first agreed, he later changed his mind and said he would resign as president unless the document was withdrawn or an investigation of the differences between himself and Bell be conducted. If it could be proved that he had "at the least curtailed Prof. Bell's rights," he would consent that the document was just.[2] According to the account later written by three board members, C. W. Stone, A. B. Oyen, and J. H. Kellogg, McLearn indicated with considerable emphasis that he would not give Bell any

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[1]The chief protagonists were McLearn, Miller, and Osborne though Neilsen also opposed Bell.

[2]College Board Minutes, January 8, 1882, pp. 102, 104. See also G. I. Butler to W. C. White, January 19, 1882; S. N. Haskell to W. C. White, January 30, 1882.

more privileges than other teachers enjoyed. He saw no reason to recognize Bell's long period of service at the school with any special favors.[1]

In the estimation of these three board members, the recalcitrant faculty members, with the exception of McLearn, would have yielded their strong opposition, had they not observed that the Board chairman, Uriah Smith, was sympathetic to their cause. Before the meeting concluded, Eli Miller "broke out into the most terrible tirade against Bro. Bell, representing him as a man of very bad character, wholly unfit to have any influence whatever in the school." McLearn added that Bell had "driven" Brownsberger from the school[2] and that "he would destroy any man who had anything to do with him." He demanded an investigation into the differences between himself and Bell.[3] It was finally voted that all who had any charges against Bell were to "present them in writing, and to bring up everything so that the whole matter may be considered in a conclusive manner. . . ." They were to present their charges to the board at the meeting the next evening and then on the following Sunday, January 15, beginning at 8 A.M., the board would commence the investigation.[4]

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[1]C. W. Stone, A. B. Oyen, and J. H. Kellogg to Ellen G. White, April 9, 1882, p. 6.

[2]Brownsberger did not know that McLearn had made this statement and when given the opportunity to speak in a church business meeting at Battle Creek concerning the imbroglio, he completely cleared Bell of any wrong action towards him. See S. N. Haskell to W. C. White, January 30, 1882.

[3]C. W. Stone, A. B. Oyen, and J. H. Kellogg to Ellen G. White, April 9, 1882, pp. 6-7.

[4]College Board Minutes, January 8, 1882, p. 105. It is not known why the procedure of holding meetings of investigation

Meetings of Investigation

The next evening, January 9, five board members met at Uriah Smith's home. An indication of the mood within the college was provided by the first item of business: the behavior of a student who had used "insulting language toward Prof. Bell." It was moved that he be suspended for a week unless he confessed his wrong. The second item also concerned Bell. The board voted to restore his wages which had previously been reduced due to a "misunderstanding." The main agenda item, however, was the presentation of the charges that had been handed to the chairman since the previous meeting. The board heard three sets of charges: Bell against McLearn, McLearn against Bell, and Miller against Bell. Bell's charges against McLearn concerned Bell's teaching privileges and McLearn's critical attitude towards him. McLearn's charges against Bell involved "wilful misrepresentation," "slanderous persecutions," and "harsh . . . treatment of students." Miller's charges were of a more serious nature. Miller accused Bell of having a critical spirit against the church leadership, being a "political schemer" in the Sabbath school, and of indiscreet behavior toward the opposite sex. In addition, a statement signed by 176 students was received. It gave their "opinion in regard to the existing troubles" and included a request that "Eld. McLearn be retained in the College." After discussing the charges the board adjourned until

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was followed. The board had not faced this kind of situation before and may have been unsure of how to deal with it. Prior to this time, however, the church had conducted investigations into the character charges made against James White.

the following Sunday, January 15, when the investigation was due to begin.[1]

The board hoped that the investigation could be conducted "in as quiet and orderly a manner as possible." The intensity of the feelings aroused throughout the school, the church, and even the community, however, made this exceptionally difficult. The charges were considered in eight different meetings that varied in length "from two to eight hours each." Students and others gave their testimony and were questioned by the board or by some of the faculty, a number of whom were present at each meeting.[2] The strain upon Bell was intense and was reflected in a letter his daughter wrote about this time.

> I feel so about father. Poor man, I really fear he will not live a year. You know he has worked so long and hard for the College, and he so dreads to see it worked into a fashionable school--and a weak one at that. . . . The new principal has taken a violent dislike to father, and spares no pains to treat him with contempt. . . . Last night he was called before a combined meeting of the Board and Faculty, where Elder McLearn, aided by Miller and Osborne abused(yes, I must say it) [him] most shamefully.[3]

Prior to the beginning of the investigation meetings, the board sent an urgent invitation to G. I. Butler, the General Conference president, to be present. He arrived in Battle Creek on

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[1]College Board Minutes, January 9, 1882, pp. 106-7.

[2]Ibid., p. 107; January 15, 1882, pp. 110-11.

[3]This extract is from an undated and unaddressed letter by Eva Bell. Though filed at the Ellen G. White Estate, Washington, D.C. under "G. H. Bell. Miscellaneous Correspondence File 1892-3," the events described in the letter clearly point to a date late in 1881 or early in 1882.

January 17, two days after the meetings had commenced. On January 19, Butler wrote to W. C. White that "we have on our hands a terrible crisis in the College, the worst we ever had." Since his arrival he had attended two night meetings till 1:00 or 2:00 A.M.[1] He later reported that one of the meetings continued till 5:00 A.M.[2] Butler was greatly disturbed over the bitter spirit being manifested by many, not only towards Bell but also towards W. C. White, S. N. Haskell, and J. H. Kellogg. Some, including Uriah Smith, were accusing the former two men of a conspiracy to replace McLearn with Bell late in the previous year.[3] Because Kellogg was a firm supporter of Bell, who was his former teacher, he was also strongly opposed. Late in 1882 Kellogg wrote to Ellen White:

> My effort to defend Bro. Bell from what seemed to me to be a deliberate attempt to ruin him has made me obnoxious to the majority, and I have been slandered, even worse than Bro. B. himself.[4]

Those who opposed Bell did not hesitate in their attempt to destroy his influence by "bringing to public notice in the most

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[1]G. I. Butler to W. C. White, January 19, 1882.

[2]G. I. Butler to W. C.White, January 29, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

[3]G. I. Butler to W. C. White, January 19, 1882. See also J. H. Kellogg to W. C. White, June 21, 1882, EGWRC--GC. The conspiracy charge was later strongly denied by both Haskell and White and the matter dropped. See G. I. Butler to W. C. White, February 22, 1882, EGWRC--GC; S. N. Haskell to W. C. White, February 22, 1882, EGWRC--GC; and C. W. Stone, A. B. Oyen, and J. H. Kellogg to Ellen G. White, April 9, 1882, pp. 11-12.

[4]J. H. Kellogg to Ellen G. White, November 3, 1882, EGWRC--GC. See also G. I. Butler to W. C. White, February 20, 1882, EGWRC--GC; J. E. White to Ellen G. White, January 20, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

glaring and exaggerated light every fault or weakness, no matter how trivial or private the fault may have been, nor how long ago the error may have been committed." McLearn and Miller were the most bitter in their persecution of Bell. In spite of the board's request to the teachers to keep the investigation private, some informed the students of the progress of the meetings. The students conducted mass meetings "at which Bro. Bell was hissed and jeered even to his face," and they sent daily reports to the Battle Creek Nightly Moon newspaper which kept the community informed on the events in the West End.[1]

In view of the intensity of the feelings against him from so many, it would appear that Bell retained his composure well, particularly since one of the charges concerned his sharp speech. Butler spoke of his calm speeches as opposed to McLearn's "strong expressions" and "language unbecoming of a man of his profession."[2]

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[1]C. W. Stone, A. B. Oyen, and J. H. Kellogg to Ellen G. White, April 9, 1882, p. 8. Early in 1880, the Battle Creek Nighly Moon published a series of attacks on the church, its leaders, and the moral standards the college was endeavouring to uphold. See the issues for February 7, p. 1; February 8, p. 1; February 11, p. 3; February 12, pp. 2-4; February 14, pp. 2-3; February 18, pp. 1-2; February 22, p. 3; February 27, pp. 1, 3. The paper justified its attitude in the issue of February 21, p. 3. When the crisis of 1882 broke, this paper was foremost in its attacks upon Bell and in its support of McLearn and the students. Comments on the 1882 college crisis by the editor, students and those for and against Bell, were published in the issues of January 10, p. 1; January 11, p. 1; January 23, p. 2; January 25, p. 1; January 26, pp. 1-2; January 30, p. 1; January 31, p. 1; February 1, pp. 1, 2; February 4, p. 2; February 7, pp. 1-2; February 22, p. 1; March 7, p. 2; March 10, p. 1; August 9, pp. 1-2; August 10, p. 1. The other Battle Creek newspapers made very little comment on the events. See for example, Michigan Tribune, January 28, 1882. p. 3; Battle Creek Daily Journal, January 26, 1882, p. 4.

[2]G. I. Butler to W. C. White, January 29, 1882.

Many years later, W. A. Spicer, who had been a student at the college during the investigation, described his recent meeting with one of his classmates. His friend recalled being called in to testify at one of the investigation meetings. She said she remembered Bell's answer before the group. "Brethren, I can tell you that all that these children have testified is perfectly true, and I am sorry that it is a fact."[1] All that is known of the primary evidence from the time of the investigation confirms that Bell accepted with humility and regret those charges against him that were sustained.

The meetings of investigation continued from Sunday, January 15, through Monday, January 23.[2] The board met on January 24 to vote on the charges made in the light of the evidence that had been presented. The charges that Bell leveled against McLearn were:

> 1. At the beginning of the college year, Elder Maclearn [sic] expressed a desire that I should take the same duties and responsibilities that I had held in the school heretofore; but there seems to have been on his part, either a drawing back from that statement, or a lack in understanding what it implied.
> 2. There are some reasons for supposing that Elder A. Maclearn [sic] has tried to weaken the confidence of others in my character and in my teaching, without having first presented my faults to me, and given me an opportunity to set myself right.[3]

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[1]W. A. Spicer, "An Early Crisis in Our Educational Work," RH 121 (February 24, 1944):3.

[2]The description of all eight meetings was given in the board minutes under the date of January 15, though they continued until the day before the Tabernacle meeting on January 25. See College Board Minutes, January 15, 1882, pp. 108, 110-11, 113-14.

[3]Ibid., p. 108.

McLearn's charges against Bell were:

> 1. Willful misrepresentation in stating as reasons for not joining with the Faculty in Chapel exercises, that I denied him opportunity to address the school etc.
> 2. The same offense by stating that I forced him to admit a class to the study of English Grammar against his will and better judgment.
> 3. Unprovoked and slanderous persecutions.
> 4. Harsh and ungentlemany [sic] treatments of students.[1]

When the vote was taken, Bell's first charge against McLearn was sustained, with Uriah Smith giving the only vote against the decision. The board was unanimous in stating that Bell's second charge was not sustained[2] though Butler later wrote to White that most of the board "had no doubt of its truthfulness but we did not have evidence enough to prove it."[3]

McLearn's first charge against Bell was not sustained by five board members. Uriah Smith, however, voted to sustain the charge.[4] McLearn's second charge was also not sustained, though Smith again voted contrary to the majority. The third charge was rejected by all the board, but the fourth charge was sustained unanimously.

Miller's charges were also voted upon at the same meeting.

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[1] Ibid., pp. 108-9.

[2] Ibid., p. 111.

[3] G. I. Butler to W. C. White, January 29, 1882.

[4] On January 24, the vote on this charge was not taken because testimony on it was expected from California. The vote was taken on the following day, however, even though the testimony had not arrived. See College Board Minutes, January 15, 1882, pp. 112, 113-14, and January 25, 1882, p. 114.

His first charge concerning Bell's critical attitude toward church and college leadership and students was not sustained, though Smith again disagreed. The second charge that accused Bell of politically scheming in the Sabbath school was dismissed as irrelevant. Butler said it was "inconsistent in itself."[1] The board did, however, respond to the third charge concerning Bell's indiscreet behavior towards the opposite sex by passing a vote of censure upon him "for conduct, which, while not shown to have been prompted by wrong intentions, was of such a character as might give rise to suspicion of unworthy motives."[2] Considering Bell's attitude of rigidity towards upholding the standards of behavior among the students, this censure must have been an embarrassment both to Bell and to the board. Bell's actions, though not deserving of stronger disapproval, would have served only to weaken the board's authority in the eyes of the students.

Following this, a censure was also passed upon McLearn because of the authority he had wrongfully assumed "to give students permission to violate rule no. 5, sec. 4, relating to the association of the sexes. . . ." The board considered that he had thereby encouraged "a laxity in discipline directly opposite to the policy and principles" of the college. Before the meeting closed, the board requested Butler to present at a public meeting on the evening of the next day the results of its investigation "as may seem proper." McLearn objected, but Smith acquiesced so long as

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[1]G. I. Butler to W. C. White, January 29, 1882.

[2]College Board Minutes, January 15, 1882, pp. 112-13.

Butler would state where Smith had rendered a minority vote.[1]

Prior to the meeting on the following evening, January 25, the board met at 3 P.M. with the faculty so that the decisions made the previous day could be explained to them. Bell was present and, according to Butler, "made an excellent confession, all that could be asked of him." He said that he accepted both the charge sustained against him (that of harsh and discourteous treatment of students) and the censure passed upon him. He hoped "by example" to show that he heartily repented of his conduct. On the other hand, McLearn thought initially that the censure on himself was not justifiable. When it was explained that it was upon his conduct rather than his motives he accepted it and asked forgiveness of the board for his heated expressions. Before the meeting adjourned to enable all to attend the evening meeting, the faculty indicated unanimously that they accepted and would abide by the board's decisions.[2]

A large crowd came to the Tabernacle that night. The meeting opened with the song "Hold the Fort," which was described as "very suggestive to say the least of it," by one of the city's newspapers next day.[3] Butler fully explained each charge and why the board concluded as it did in each case. When he reached

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[1]Ibid., pp. 113-14; G. I. Butler to W. C. White, January 29, 1882.

[2]College Board Minutes, January 25, 1882, pp. 114-17.

[3]The Nightly Moon (Battle Creek), January 26 1882, pp. 1-2. This was the first of a number of articles published in the Moon that referred to the events as the "college circus."

McLearn's fourth charge concerning Bell's harsh treatment of students, "all at once there was the loudest kind of cheering by clapping of hands apparently from a hundred or more persons."[1] Butler rebuked them severely and appealed for Bell to be treated in a Christian manner. Bell had confessed his harsh speech both in public and private, and therefore the congregation should abide by the Golden Rule in their attitude to Bell.[2]

After Butler had finished speaking, McLearn arose and not only defended his administration and actions but also declared that the faculty did not agree with the board's decisions, in spite of their earlier promise. The Nightly Moon reported that McLearn "made a fair, honest and candid statement," and that the students, sympathetic with McLearn, "went home in a rage." After the meeting closed the board met briefly and decided they would wait for further developments before taking any action.[3]

Faculty Revolt

During the next two days the dissidents among the faculty made it evident to the students in the morning chapel exercises

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[1]G. I. Butler to W. C. White, January 29, 1882. Several reports commented on this response by the students. The number of those who stamped their feet and clapped varied from 50 to 200. Compare with C. W. Stone, A. B. Oyen, and J. H. Kellogg to Ellen G. White, April 9, 1882, p. 9; J. E. White to W. C. White, January 26, 1882, EGWRC--GC. See also Battle Creek Daily Journal, January 26, 1882, p. 4.

[2]"Remarks by Eld. G. I. Butler, Eve of January 25, 1882," L. E. Froom Personal Collection 12, GC Archives. This is a complete verbatim report of Butler's address in the Tabernacle that evening.

[3]The Nightly Moon (Battle Creek), January 26, 1882, pp. 1-2; G. I. Butler to W. C. White, January 29, 1882.

that they were not satisfied with the board's decisions. On the night of January 26 they requested to meet with the board and pressed their demands for a minority report. Uriah Smith had consistently voted against the rest of the board and gave strong support to McLearn and those with him. Butler was embarrassed and greatly disturbed by Smith's stand since he, Smith, and Haskell constituted the General Conference Committee. Butler told Haskell that he felt that Smith was "the recognized head of the opposition to the Board. They look to him, quote him and he counsels with them I am certain, and I feel very sure gives the rest of us away by telling them what we say on the Board." Adding to the confusion was a petition that was being circulated at this time among the church members asking for the presentation of a minority report from Smith.[1]

The next Sunday afternoon the board met again to consider the attitude of McLearn, Miller, Osborne, and Nielsen and their influence upon the students at the college. The four men joined the meeting and after "a long discussion" three of them were asked to resign. Smith again voted against the motion and advised them not to do so. In view of their refusal, the majority of the board felt it wiser not to insist, at least for the time being, because of the reaction that could be expected.[2]

Following this meeting, the crisis at the college appeared

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[1]Ibid.; G. I. Butler to S. N. Haskell, January 30, 1882. EGWRC--GC. Smith later said he had a petition "with between 200 and 300 signatures for him to give a minority report." See G. I. Butler to W. C. White, February 22, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

[2]College Board Minutes, January 29, 1882, pp. 117-19.

to abate for a short time. The damage, however, had been done as far as Bell was concerned. The community was torn apart with the majority giving support to Smith, McLearn, and their supporters. Ellen White, now living in California, received a number of letters on the crisis but wrote none until mid-February and advised her son, W. C. white, to do the same.[1]

There were a few who publicly rose to Bell's defence, though some did it anonymously. For example, a letter appeared in the Battle Creek Nightly Moon under the pseudonym of "Defender" on January 30. The author defended Bell on each of McLearn's and Miller's charges but admitted that the charge against Bell's ungentlemanly behavior to students was "to a certain extent . . . just." Nevertheless the writer continued:

> There is . . . some excuse for this; some young gentlemen (?) and ladies (?) have attended his classes only to sit and sneer both at him, and his instruction; any but a milk and water man would use severity on such occasions. . . .
>
> Prof. Bell's system of teaching is directly at variance with the popular system of show and superficiality. Pupils who have had a thorough drill in his school in former years pronounce his method far in advance of educational systems in general. In years gone by, when he was struggling alone to sustain the Adventist school, there was amazing progress made in his classes, and a kind, homelike spirit pervaded the whole school, that has not existed since. To be sure, he was sometimes severe, and gained the temporary ill will of some pupils; but this very treatment served to awaken many a dull mind that without it would have been dozing today.[2]

Bell continued to teach at the school, but under conditions that must have been increasingly more difficult. The strain upon

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[1]Ellen G. White to W. C. White, February 7, 1882, Letter 1a, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

[2]The Nightly Moon (Battle Creek), January 30, 1882, p. 1.

him, he later wrote, had been "severe," and naturally his family suffered as well. His daughter, Eva, took sick on February 2 and "could not sit up for about three weeks." For two weeks before February 2, she said she

> . . . walked like one in a dream, scarcely knowing what went on around me. . . . Father was frightened at me and said he believed the trouble would crush me first. Well the poor dear man, he did bear up better than I did, but he came out of it alive, and that was about all.[1]

The Denouement

Events came to a head at the school at the end of a week during which Bell had been quite sick. On Friday afternoon, February 17, Bell was ascending the first flight of stairs when Professor McLearn's son, Henry, about six feel tall, came up behind him. Hearing a noise from behind, Bell turned and "saw him coming up the stairs in a rude manner." He spoke to him, asked him to explain his conduct, and told him to stop. Henry, however, "rushed up against Bell and pushed him backwards up the stairs," using threatening and insulting language. "Bell kept telling him to stop . . . and put his hand on his arm and held on to him." After a brief struggle, Professor McLearn appeared on the steps and his son broke Bell's hold on him and got away. In spite of the fact that Bell was "dizzy" and "could hardly stand up," Professor McLearn censured him in front of the students standing nearby, but failed to reprove his son.

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[1] G. H. Bell to W. C. White, May 24, 1882, EGWRC--GC; Eva Bell to W. C. White, July 6, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

An unpleasant verbal exchange between McLearn and Bell followed, after which Bell left the building and reported the matter to Butler and Smith. Butler later wrote that "the proof is positive that Bell did not put his hand on the boy till he rushed against Bell and would not stop." To Professor McLearn's credit he later suspended his son and on the following Sunday, February 19, the board officially expelled him from the school and justified Bell's action "in correcting an insurbordinate student."[1]

Bell, however, had had enough and by February 20, Butler reported that he had resigned.[2] Apparently, W. C. White suggested to Butler that Bell could take up a teaching appointment on the Pacific Coast, possibly in the new school that was being opened in April at Healdsburg.[3] But Bell remained at Battle Creek through March and on the occasions when he had to pass through the college grounds from his home behind the school, it was reported that he suffered "excessively from apple cores and other missiles . . . if the students are around and the Prof's [sic] are not. They

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[1]G. I. Butler to W. C. White, February 20, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

[2]Ibid. Bell's resignation was reported in several Battle Creek newspapers. See The Citizen, February 25, 1882, p. 1; Michigan Tribune, February 25, 1882, p. 3; The Nightly Moon, February 22, 1882, p. 1. Some years later, Bell wrote to Brownsberger about a happy reunion with some of his former students at Battle Creek. He wrote, "The cordial greetings of the evening made me forget for the moment that I was hissed out of the College when I left it." Some of those present at the reunion were those who had previously participated in the hissing. See Brownsberger, "Notes and Incidents," p. 5. This reunion may well have been the one Bell attended in Battle Creek with many of his former students in 1895 when "a pleasant time was spent recalling past associations. . . ." See "Editorial Notes," The General Conference Bulletin 1 (February 13, 1895 - Extra No. 4):144.

[3]G. I. Butler to W. C. White, February 20, 1882.

also never fail to give three cheers for 'Old Hermit,' as they have dubbed him."[1]

Both Ellen White and her son, W.C. White, were living in California and did not become involved in the fracas until mid-February, at which time Mrs. White replied to some letters Bell's opponents had written to her. She wrote to Martha Amadon and Ransom Lockwood who were active in their support of McLearn. These letters have evidently been destroyed, but Butler reported reading the letter to Martha Amadon at a public meeting. He noted that Ellen White "had no sympathy with the spirit here which wanted to crush Bell for standing up for discipline and the right . . . and that while Bell was faulty . . . those against him were more faulty than he."[2]

Smith Receives a Letter

These letters were the first of a number of communications that passed between Ellen White and the Battle Creek church. A few letters, such as those above, were to individual members, and in nearly every case have not been preserved. Those to the Battle Creek church[3] were published in 1882 and revealed the author's

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[1] The Nightly Moon (Battle Creek), March 7, 1882, p. 2.

[2] G. I. Butler to W. C. White, February 22, 1882. See also G. I. Butler to W. C. White, February 26, 1882, EGWRC--GC; S. N. Haskell to W. C. White, February 22, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

[3] White, Testimony for the Battle Creek Church (1882). This booklet contained four communications written over a period of nearly a year, together with an extract from a previous message that was relevant to the 1882 situation. See also Ellen G. White, Special Testimony to the Battle Creek Church, August 3, 1882, n.p., EGWRC--AU.

deep concern throughout that year over the attitudes displayed by so many towards Bell. The letter in which she most fully described her views of the crisis and of Bell's role in it was written to Uriah Smith on March 28, 1882.

Smith had written to Ellen White on March 14 in response to a previous letter from her on February 27,[1] in which she evidently invited him to express his point of view concerning the crisis. Smith told her that he believed "McLearn came here with the sincerest intention to do right. . . . But within three days after the commencement of the school last August, Bro. Bell conceived that his rights were infringed upon by Bro. McL., and here was the beginning of the trouble." Smith denied that discipline was ever the issue. He felt that McLearn had "a standard of discipline as high as anyone, but he takes a different method to secure that result. . . ." He confessed that he himself was doubtful of the method's long-term success but there had been fewer violations of the rule by the students during McLearn's administration than previously. In supporting McLearn he felt he was "standing for the right" because he believed McLearn to be "a Christian gentleman whom we better not lose if we can help it." He regretted that the majority of the board had "placed themselves in an attitude of hostility to him from the first." He explained that he had voted against the action of the board to ask the three faculty members to resign because he thought it inadvisable to make such

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[1]Ellen White's letter to Smith on February 27 is known only by his reference to it in his letter of March 14 to her.

a break in the middle of the school term. It was better to wait till the end of the school year and then make the necessary changes.[1]

Ellen White wrote a long and very significant reply to this letter by Smith.[2] She indicated that she was "made sad" by its contents. At the beginning of her letter she drew attention to the critical spirit that had been evident in the Battle Creek church for some time previously and said that she believed that this crisis was merely the end result of that development. She devoted the first six pages of the letter to discussing the root cause of the problem, which was that many in the church were "living without prayer, without thoughts of Christ, and without exalting him" before those around them. They had no communion with God, because they were not united by faith to Christ. The result, she said, was pride, jealousy, strife and an unforgiving spirit, all of which were being directed to Bell.[3]

She wished to "be clearly understood" when she declared that she had "no sympathy with the course that has been pursued toward Bro. Bell." Some in the church had opposed him since he first came to Battle Creek because he was, they said, "too thorough, too exacting, too critical." She recognized that "in some respects"

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[1]U. Smith to Ellen G. White, March 14, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

[2]Ellen White's letter in its published form was twenty-one and one-half pages long and is preserved in her "Important Testimony," Testimony for the Battle Creek Church (1882), pp. 19-41.

[3]Ibid., pp. 20, 22-24.

his behavior in the schoolroom was "not right." He had injured himself by his injudicious speech and had "alienated the affections of his students." But some of the children with whom he had to deal were "a disgrace to the church and to the name of Adventists." Bell was often burdened not only by the wrong course of the children but by the bitter opposition of the parents when their children had been restrained or reproved.[1]

Sympathetically, she pointed to some of the causes of Bell's loss of self control: his "overwork, unceasing care, with no help at home, but rather a constant irritation." Bell had trials to bear of which many knew little. He did not enjoy the benefits of a happy home life, upon which "a man's energy and success, as well as his happiness, depends. . . ."[2] Later in the year, in a paper entitled "Workers in Our College," she wrote that his arduous labors for the Sabbath school work had often left Bell little time to spend with his family, and therefore he had "little opportunity to win the affections of his children or to give them needed restraint and guidance." Evidently his wife did not control their willfulness and as a result, he had "frequently gone to the school-room so weighed down with perplexing, unhappy thoughts, that it seemed almost impossible for him to give attention to present duties."[3]

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[1]Ibid., pp. 26-27.

[2]Ibid., pp. 27, 30.

[3]White, "Workers in Our College," Testimony for the Battle Creek Church (1882), p. 75.

In the day school and Sabbath school work he had "labored too hard," and under the strain of overwork, he had "made some mistakes," but "not half so grievous, however, as those of persons who have cherished bitterness against him."[1] In her letter to Smith she said that some church members had "gone back over his history for years" and had "searched out everything that was unfavorable. . . ." In so doing, she added they had not only caused him "the keenest suffering," but they had "treated with injustice" one to whom they and their children owed "a debt of gratitude," which they did not realize.[2]

Though Ellen White was cognizant of Bell's character weaknesses, she spoke appreciatively of his efforts as a Christian educator. There were many young people who were "indebted for most valuable traits of character to the knowledge and principles received from Bro. Bell." She commended his thoroughness as a teacher. In addition to teaching his students "that an education cannot be acquired without close application," he had taught them "self reliance, and inculcated sound principles," and helped them realize that they were "responsible for their time, their talents, their opportunities." Many of the students who had received so much benefit from Bell's instruction, however, were those who testified against him in the eight meetings of investigation. Ellen White wrote that "in some branches of the work, he has done more

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[1] Ibid., p. 74.

[2] White, "Important Testimony," Testimony for the Battle Creek Church (1882), pp. 28, 35, 29.

than any other man among us, to disseminate light and knowledge. . . . There is not a man among us who had devoted more time and thought to his work than Prof. Bell." Yet many in the church had "shown no respect for the excellencies of a character established by years of faithfulness."[1]

In her later paper "Workers in Our College," she also described Bell as possessing "naturally a love for system and thoroughness" which had become "habit by lifelong training and discipline. . . . His labors are of real worth because he will not allow students to be superficial." Because he possessed these characteristics he had been opposed when he first established a school in Battle Creek. Had he not been so persevering he would have given up his efforts to continue the school. In Ellen White's estimation, there "had not been in the cause of God a more hearty, earnest, thorough workman than Bro. Bell." In her last words in this paper concerning him, she wrote:

> Let his brethren consider, without prejudice, or envy, the work he has been doing for years, to promote the educational interest in Battle Creek; let them consider the other branches of labor that have fallen upon him, and then compare their own work and its results with his industry and achievements; their wages with his remuneration, and see how these will stand in review before themselves and before God.[2]

Ellen White requested Smith to read her letter of March 28 to the Battle Creek church.[3] Prior to writing it she had

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[1]Ibid., pp. 30, 31-32, 37-38.

[2]White, "Workers in Our College," Testimony for the Battle Creek Church (1882), pp. 73, 77.

[3]Smith, however, delayed in reading it for reasons explained in White, "The Testimonies Rejected," Testimony for the Battle

mistakenly been told that Bell was no longer in Battle Creek. The news had no doubt reached her on the west coast that Elder S. N. Haskell had invited him, soon after his resignation from Battle Creek College, to be the principal of a new school in the east. Ellen White did not wish the contents of her letter to Smith to come before Bell.[1] By the time the letter reached Battle Creek, however, Bell had probably left the city. He departed for South Lancaster, Massachusetts, on April 4.[2]

It was a move that Bell must have welcomed, because it gave him the opportunity not only to leave the turmoil and bitterness of Battle Creek behind him but also to lay the foundations of a new school. Some of the distinctive features of the program of Christian education that Ellen White had urged for the Battle Creek College had never been adopted. Bell regretted this and resolved to implement these in the new school. The extent to which he was successful is traced in the next chapter devoted to Bell's two years as the founding principal of the South Lancaster school.

Creek Church (1882), pp. 41-66. See also G. I. Butler to Ellen G. White, May 3, 1882, EGWRC--GC; G. I. Butler to Ellen G. White, May 16, 1882, EGWRC--GC; Uriah Smith to Ellen G. White, August 10, 1882, EGWRC--GC. The estrangement between Smith and Bell continued until they were reconciled in 1891 when Smith asked Bell's forgiveness for the way he had treated him nine years before. See Ellen G. White to Uriah Smith, December 31, 1890, Letter 40, 1890, and Ellen G. White, MS 3, January 9, 1891, EGWRC--GC.

[1]White, "Important Testimony," Testimony for the Battle Creek Church (1882), pp. 35, 37.

[2]G. H. Bell, "South Lancaster and the School," RH 59 (April 18, 1882):249.

Conclusion

This chapter has considered Bell's career as a Christian educator at the Battle Creek College from 1875 to 1882. It has reviewed his very significant contributions there as the first teacher in English, history, mathematics, botany, vocal music and teacher education. No man is indispensable, yet Bell's role in the early years of the college brought him close to being so regarded. Even late in the decade when the faculty had been enlarged Ellen White responded to the suggestion that Bell should spend more time in the Sabbath school work and less in the college, by pointing out that she "did not see how he could be spared from the College."[1]

Yet it was not just Bell's abilities as a teacher that made his career at Battle Creek College so memorable. The features that left their deepest mark on students were those that distinguished him as a Christian educator. Bell was most concerned about the development of character. His emphasis on thoroughness and order was related to the character development which alone prepared the student for the eternity of life possible to man through faith in Christ. His commitment to the principles of the Bible as the basis for all educational life and to a relationship with Jesus Christ as the means for spiritual growth were paramount in his life. Bell's philosophy of Christian education was influenced by his belief that education prepares the student for the total

[1]Ellen G. White, "Important Testimony," p. 31.

period of existence possible to him. The teacher must teach with eternity in view. Preparation for eternal life was therefore an integral part of his teaching. Education as character training and as a preparation for eternity were, therefore, hallmarks of Bell's approach to teaching. His counsel to young teachers reflected his own philosophy when he said:

> Young teacher, remember that you have given into your hand the most important work on earth,--the molding of mind and character; and that when all the powers of your mind and body are given to your work, you will be able to do it none too well.[1]

As an educator Bell believed that life was not meant to be easy. Having no time for drones, he demanded much of his students. Some responded to his challenge and to his judicious praise by making a greater effort. They thereby reached heights they would otherwise never have attained. Others not only rejected his advice but resented the man who gave it. One of his students during the Battle Creek years, wrote of Bell:

> In his well-conceived system of education there was no room for the shirk or the drone; every student of his had to deserve the name of student, by studying; there was with him no royal road to education, no "flowery beds of ease" on which his pupils could be borne forward, by some mystic power, to the heaven of culture, refinement, and fitness for the stern realities of mature life; they must needs work, dig deep into the hidden treasures of wisdom, and sweat the honest sweat of constant, faithful industry, before they could expect to find the gems of knowledge that should prove in after-years to be indeed and in truth a "savor of life unto life."[2]

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[1] Bell, "Hints to Young Teachers," The College Record, April 1879, p. 13.

[2] J. C. Bartholf, "Goodloe Harper Bell," YI 47 (February 9, 1899):102.

For some of his contemporaries, Bell set the standards too high. It was unfortunate that his outstanding personal qualities of thoroughness and faithfulness were mixed with the inclination to be sharp and sarcastic in his speech which limited his effectiveness as a teacher. His inclination to drive himself too hard in the late 1870s, when added to his frail health, the conditions in his home, and his sensitivity to the slights of others, exacerbated his deteriorating relationships with others. These factors, therefore, also contributed to the crisis in which he found himself in 1882. He was not treated sympathetically by the staff, the majority of whom were young and had little experience either as teachers or in the work of the church.[1]

To Bell's credit, however, he did not allow the traumatic events at Battle Creek to embitter him. A lesser man would have succumbed to the pressures of the situation and turned against the church, as did Alexander McLearn.[2] Bell, however, knew his weaknesses, yet was repentant of them. An awareness of his humanity did not turn him aside from continuing to strive to be what he wanted his students to become. He could well have considered more carefully in his own experience, the implications of parts of the following statement that he wrote for teachers in 1879:

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[1]See C. W. Stone, A. B. Oyen, and J. H. Kellogg to Ellen G. White, April 9, 1882. Eli Miller, perhaps Bell's chief protagonist, had graduated from Battle Creek College in 1879. J. S. Osborne joined the staff at the same time as Alexander McLearn in the autumn of 1881.

[2]Tragically, McLearn later left the Seventh-day Adventist church and campaigned actively against it. See W. B. Hill, "Dodge Center," RH 63 (November 16, 1886):716.

> Few teachers realize how much their example is imitated. The teacher's manner toward his pupils should be such as to betoken earnest friendship and sincere interest. He should make all feel at home in his presence, but should never descend to trifling and frivolity. He must be a man of promptness and faithfulness. He should be an example of that order and neatness that he would like to see in his pupils,--in short, he should strive earnestly to be what he would like his pupils to become. It may be true that few good teachers have attained to the degree of excellence here set forth; but he who does not constantly strive to do so, will never grace his profession, or be a blessing to the young.[1]

It is fortunate that Bell did not cease to strive. Though his best years were now behind him, he still had much to give. The new school at South Lancaster would benefit from receiving it.

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[1] Bell, "Hints to Young Teachers," The College Record, January 1879, p. 7.

Fig. 4. The South Lancaster School with G. H. Bell, Staff, and Students (1882).

Feb. 5. G. H. Bell's Home on College Avenue, Battle Creek.