

# The General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

*The Gospel to All the World in This Generation.*

Cable Address: "Adventist."

222 N. Capitol Street, Washington, D. C., U. S. A.

October 8, 1903.

Dear Brother White:--

Last evening I had a long talk with Dr. Paulson regarding the troubles between the General Conference and the leaders of the medical work. I need not tell you that he is altogether opposed to the course some of us are taking. He thinks that we are bent on war and division, and that we will be justly held responsible for a failure to work together in harmony and brotherly love. That is the cry that is now being raised. But I turn the attention of all to the communications that we are receiving, and I tell them to go to Sister White and make their complaints against her for creating strife and disunion. She keeps sending into the field communications, which, if acted upon, must place us at variance with the movement at Battle Creek. But I tell them all that what she sends out accords with the judgment and conscience of a large number of our ministers, and that we believe that they are messages from God, and that they should be obeyed. And I also point out that in not a single instance that I am aware of have any of us gone beyond the instruction given in the Testimonies. While we may not have been as wise and judicious at all times in our manner of doing, yet so far as the real position we have taken is concerned, we have kept well within the range of ground taken by Sister White.

Now I am sure you will receive plenty of complaints charging Brother Prescott and myself with a determination to create division. But

I want to assure you that we have no such desire, and we are not knowingly taking any such course. It is true, we are called upon to take our stand against some evils pointed out by the Testimonies, and it is this stand that gives these men a chance to charge us with carrying on an inter-Nicene war.

I called Dr. Paulson's attention to our whole attitude regarding the "Living Temple." I pointed out to him the attitude of the majority of the General Conference Committee and of our ministers generally toward the theological teaching of that book. I showed him that for years we had given that teaching careful study, and had lined up from the Atlantic to the Pacific against that teaching. We can not accept it. We believe it is subversive of this whole movement; and yet we have never made an open attack upon the book. We have never written an article nor given a public address openly against "The Living Temple." We have held back. I told him that there were fifty preachers burning to open fire on that teaching, which they believe to be positively dangerous; yet not one of them had written an article to my knowledge against the book.

Then I showed him that while we have been quiet, and have held back, he and others have taken it upon themselves to carry on the most high-handed, persistent, aggressive effort to not only place that book in the hands of our people, but to get our <sup>young</sup> people to read it, and to engage in its sale. I showed him that he was, without consultation whatever, going directly against the wishes of his brethren, and doing a work that was exceedingly offensive to them. I asked if I did not have the same right to write an article to our State papers against the teaching of that book that he had to write up advertisements and flaming commendations for the book. He acknowledged of course that I had. Then I pointed out that I had not done it, while he had kept the matter for months before the people, so that he could not justly charge me with a spirit of deter-

mined opposition and warfare against the medical brethren.

Well, we talked for hours; but of course we could not come to an agreement. But my talk with him was a very valuable one to me. Now I want to tell you just what was finally agreed upon by him and me.

I said to him, "Doctor, what you call the Battle Creek idea, the new philosophy, being taught by Dr. Kellogg and his associates, is, in its new features, vitally and fundamentally <sup>different from</sup> ~~opposed to~~ the old teaching of the third angel's message." He acknowledged that it was.

Then I said: "Being fundamentally different, it is positively antagonistic. It excludes some of the fundamental truths of the third angel's message as developed by the pioneers of this movement." He acknowledged that it did.

Then I said: "Being antagonistic, one or the other will have to surrender its ground. Both can not exist and be carried on together." He acknowledged this to be true.

Then I said: "You believe with Dr. Kellogg and a few others, that the Battle Creek idea is right, that it is divine truth, that it is new light given to this people, leading them on in advance of the light given by the pioneers; and you believe it so firmly that you are altogether unprepared to surrender your position." He said that was so.

Then I said: "The only possible basis of harmony and cooperation is for me either to be silent regarding the Battle Creek idea, allowing it to be spread broadcast throughout the denomination, and taught to all our young people, while holding my old views, or to surrender some of my views of the third angel's message." He assented to this position.

Now, Brother White, this is exactly the situation I have seen for nearly a year. I have been just as positive as I have been of my own existence that a new teaching, and a new movement, had been established in Battle Creek; that this teaching was fundamentally different from the

old teaching of Seventh-day Adventists, and that it was antagonistic to that teaching and subversive of it. I have believed that this movement under the third angel's message was being attacked, not openly but stealthily, by the most dangerous movement Satan could bring to bear upon it; and that in the end one or the other of the movements would have to go down.

From my long conversation with Dr. Paulson, every one of these points has been made clear, and my position has been confirmed. As surely as we live, the integrity of this movement under the third angel's message is on trial today in this controversy. The most stupendous and terrific blow that Satan has ever attempted to deal against this movement is now being made. It is no personal scrimmage between a few men. The soundness of our positions is being questioned. The broad ground work is being changed; the integrity of the Spirit of prophecy is involved in it. In fact as I view it, the survival of this whole movement is at stake. We dare not surrender a single inch of our ground. God will hold us accountable if we do this. We must reaffirm our positions; we must set forth the teaching of this message. We must not temporize with this evil thing that has raised its head against this last movement of God in the earth. I can not do it and be true to my judgment and my convictions.

I know very well that a number of brethren on the opposite side are crying "kingly authority," and domination, and a relentless warfare, and all that; but, Brother White, as surely as we live, we have got to stand for the truth and the movement and the light God has given us as a people. If we surrender to this thing, our cause is ruined. I can be banished from this country; I can be put out of office; I can suffer anything, rather than compromise this truth, and form any harmonious cooperation whatever with this new movement.

Dr. Paulson acknowledged freely that it was a new movement, and that we ought not to be surprised if new light has come. He holds that there is a human element in the Testimonies and in the Bible itself, and that God dwelling in us givessus a knowledge and a teaching that makes us judges of both the Bible and the Testimonies of what is truth divine and what is human and fallible. This doctrine is to be repudiated. It is unsound and corrupt. You leaven our young people with that idea, and neither the Bible nor the Spirit of prophecy will hold them.

But now I must close and go to the meeting. I felt that I must tell you of this conversation; but language fails me when I try to set before you the terrible dangers that I see in our present controversy. If it were simply a personal matter, how gladly I would drop it all, and surrender any personal rights for harmony and peace. But I tell you again, it is not a personal matter. It is a question of the integrity of this whole movement. It is a question of the survival of truth and error. If the Battle Creek idea is sound, then I will have to surrender my ground, and mark out a new platform, and this Dr. Paulson said I would have to do in time if I lived. But I know better. I know that the old land-marks and pillars of truth and teaching of the pioneers of this movement ~~are~~ in harmony with the Word of God. I know that the Spirit of God led the pioneers, and also instructed them through the Spirit of prophecy, and that a sound gospel basis was laid and settled, never to be changed. God will maintain this movement. It is divine. It is his last exposition of the gospel in all its fulness and clearness to the world in its closing struggles.

Nothing would please the devil more than to bring in new light contrary to this message, and switch the people off; and he is doing it in the most seductive and treacherous and dangerous way possible. If he would rise up in open opposition, he could do nothing; but to leaven

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the minds of our young people and our brethren and sisters with a heathen philosophy, lying so near the line of truth that it is hard to be detected, is the most dangerous attack he could make.

It is precisely what was done to wreck Israel soon after Sinai. It is precisely what has captured all the Oriental nations--India, China, Japan, and Africa. It is the same old idolatry and heathenism that swung the people away from their allegiance and their light that God gave them. And the day will come when this hideous thing will be unmasked, and our people will be told in plain words just what it means. It may not have come yet. I shall not rush into the battle; but I do feel free to open my heart to you, and tell you just what I see and how I feel.

I wish you would read this to your mother, and I beg of both of you to give me counsel and instruction should you see that I am in error. I am standing in a most responsible position, and I want to be true to my God, to my brethren, and to this great and grand movement to which we have all given our lives these many years.

Yours for the triumph of this message,

R.