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Goodloe Harper Bell, Pioneer Seventh-day Adventist Christian Educator

Allan G. Lindsay
Andrews University

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Andrews University
School of Graduate Studies

GOODLOE HARPER BELL
PIONEER SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHRISTIAN EDUCATOR

A Dissertation
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

by

Allan G. Lindsay
June 1982
GOODLOE HARPER BELL
PIONEER SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHRISTIAN EDUCATOR

A dissertation
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ABSTRACT

GOODLOE HARPER BELL
PIONEER SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHRISTIAN EDUCATOR

by

Allan Gibson Lindsay

Chairman: George R. Knight
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.
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<td>Document File.</td>
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<tr>
<td>EGWRC-DC</td>
<td>Ellen G. White Research Center. Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GC Archives</td>
<td>General Conference Archives. Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GC Bulletin</td>
<td>General Conference Bulletin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>Manuscript.</td>
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<tr>
<td>RH</td>
<td>Advent Review and Sabbath Herald.</td>
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<td>SDA Year Book</td>
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<td>SSW</td>
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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* 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.

The short article in the Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia 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* 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* 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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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. 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. 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.

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, A. W. 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.

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


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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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In 1967 Derek Beardsell completed his M.A. thesis on George Royal Avery. 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*,

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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


²See, 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.

³Biblical 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.

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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 Colledale, 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.

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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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schools were still rare. "Unschooled, uncontrolled youngsters loitered in the streets, assaulting and insulting passersby, stealing, wrecking, setting fires." 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." 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. 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. 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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1Coit, The Sweep Westward, p. 10.
2Ibid.
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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1For a detailed account of Goodloe Bell's ancestry, see appendix A.


3For 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.


\(^4\)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 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.

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. 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. 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. Michigan was then

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1Biographical Record of Muskegon and Ottawa Counties, p. 226, and Biographical History of Northern Michigan, p. 553.


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."

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. 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.
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.


³For 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...

\(^1\)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
element 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 evi­
dence. 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

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 birth­
place 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

\(^1\)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.


\(^4\)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. 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.

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

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. Barthold, 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:

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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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\(^1\)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 township of Chester. Chester had been surveyed in

\(^1\)A number of different spellings of the name of the town are found, including Casinova, Cassinovia, Casinovia, Casanova, Cazenovia, and the present spelling, Casnovia.


\(^3\)Ibid, p. 294.


\(^5\)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

⁵Deed 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.


²Biographical Record of Muskegon and Ottawa Counties, p.226

³In 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.

⁴Th Census--1860, Town of Cazenovia, County of Muskegon, Michigan, p.30.

⁵Bartholf, "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." 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." 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

¹Bartholf, "Goodloe Harper Bell." p. 103.
⁴Battle 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, 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. 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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1For 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.

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

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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

\(^1\)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.

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."^ 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."  

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.


^2General 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"

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 attended school, however, was 3.4 months per year. 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."

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. The school year was lengthened, textbooks

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.


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

¹Ibid., p. 163.

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:

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.

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." 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. These men campaigned against the evil of rote learning—the learning of words and rules.

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

¹Ibid., 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 pedo-
gogy. Meyer stated that for all the wisdom of such teachers as
Hall, Page, and others, it made little difference in most class-
rooms. 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. . . ."\textsuperscript{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 proba-
bility 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

\textsuperscript{1}Meyer, \textit{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. 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." The Primary School Law recom­

mended 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." The visit­
ing inspector was to be compensated at the rate of one dollar per
day for the time spent in discharging his duties.

An important part of the duties of the inspectors, as out­
lined in Section 85 of the Primary School Law, was the public exami­
nation of prospective teachers in regard to "moral character, learn­
ing, 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, spell­
ing, geography, grammar, and arithmetic. Much stress was placed

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, Superinten­
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.

¹School 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.


4. Attendance very irregular.

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.)

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." 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."  

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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, 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

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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^1Bartholf, "Goodloe Harper Bell," p. 103.

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. 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.

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. 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.


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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^2Joseph 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."

^3James 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. 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." 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.

In 1855 the members of the church erected their first small batten meetinghouse on Cass Street near Hewitt's home. 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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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. In this small building the young but growing denomination chose its name in 1860.

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.

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

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


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:

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. . . .

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.

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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1Ibid.
for the venture. 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. 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."

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. Among those

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


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

¹J. C. Bartholf, "Goodloe Harper Bell," YI 47 (February 9,
1899), p. 103.
²W. C. White, "Pioneer Pilots in Christian Education,"
Founders Golden Anniversary Bulletin 1874-1924. Emmanuel Missionary
College Bulletin, Berrien Springs, Michigan, 1924, p. 26, AUHR.
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


[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 he 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.

Evidently Bell stayed long enough in 1866 to come under the particular influence of one of the other patients, S. Osborne, 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

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 Shepardsville, 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.

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. 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. 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

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:

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

¹W. C. White, "Memories and Records," p. 1, DF256, EGWRCAU.


We have had a thorough trial of a school at Battle Creek, under most favorable circumstances, and have given 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

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

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

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

¹Cadwallader, History, p. 21.
²From 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,


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

²"West End, Once Home of Pretentious College," The Battle Creek Moon-Journal (Michigan), April 18, 1923, p. 12.
³Edson White, "The Early Schools," p. 46.

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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

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.

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 stu-
dents 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,

¹J. O. Corliss, "Divine Providences," RH 96 (March 6,

²G. 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, 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.

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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1Elder 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 Casisovia [sic] church was admitted into the Conference. See RH 33 (May 25, 1869):173.

2G. 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

¹A 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.

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

³_RH_ 32 (August 18, 1868):144 (emphasis supplied).

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.

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

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

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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^1Ellen G. White to Brother King, February 19, 1870, Letter 1, 1870, EGWRC—OC.

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

^3Bell 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.”

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, proved to be a responsibility that Bell carried for most of the time until 1882. The

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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."\(^3\)


\(^2\)A. M. Driscoll; "A Talk with the Children," *YI* 18 (November 1, 1870):164.

\(^3\)G. H. Bell, "Salutation," *YI* 17 (July 1869):52.
Will 3e a Missionary?" "How to Overcome Sirs." 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

1These articles are found in the following issues of Youth's Instructor: July 1869, pp. 50-53; August 1869, p. 60; September 1869, p. 58; 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,

²YI 18 (April 1, 1870):56.
³YI 18 (October 15, 1870):160. Webster's Dictionary gives one meaning of "recruit" as "to regain health."
⁴YI 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 enemies³ 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

¹The 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.


invited those "who have been witnesses of or sharers in, his acts of benevolence," to provide statements 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.  

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."  

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.  

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During that session his colleagues elected him treasurer of the General Conference, a director of the Health Institute, vice-president of the Publishing Association—and therefore one of its trustees, and he was re-elected editor of the Youth's Instructor.

He was also appointed a member of the General Conference Auditing Committee. After the General Conference had closed, the Michigan Conference met and appointed Bell as its treasurer and a member of its Auditing Committee. Furthermore the conference recommended to the Battle Creek Church that he be ordained as an elder of that church.

In addition to these responsibilities, Bell served on a

1Ibid.

2The 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.


6Ibid.
committee of five charged with prescribing a course of study for the newly organized Ministers' Lecture Association. 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. 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.

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

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


\(^3\) 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.

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


\(^3\)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

¹This 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."

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.

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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

¹Bid., 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.

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, 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."  

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.  

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.
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.

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."^1

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:bid., p. 15.  
^2:bid., p. 4.

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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."

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."

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. But 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

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

2Ibid.

3It 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.

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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1S. 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." 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?^1^

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

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.

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." 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

2 Ibid.
for mental culture without moral loss.\textsuperscript{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."\textsuperscript{2}

The place was the old two-storied print shop in which Bell had previously taught his school.\textsuperscript{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."\textsuperscript{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

\textsuperscript{1}Geo. Butler, "Our School at Battle Creek," RH 39 (June 4, 1872):197.


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

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."

By July the number of students had increased to twenty-five and the grammar class numbered between forty and fifty. 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."

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. . . ." Nevertheless, mixed with his

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

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

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


^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

³Like 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.\footnote{Vande Vere, The Wisdom Seekers, p. 19.}

Brownsberger commenced his teaching on September 15, 1873, with Miss Mary Welsh assisting him.\footnote{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," \textit{RH} (August 5, 1873):64.} 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 erected 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."\footnote{Geo. I. Butler, "The Next Term of School," \textit{RH} 42 (November 25, 1873):192 and \textit{RH} 42 (December 2, 1873):200.} 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

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.
feelings under Christian discipline, and meekly and coopera-
tively took up duties assigned him.

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. 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. 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 prac-
tice, she stressed education of the physical man and the proper

1Spalding, Origin and History, 2:121.


3Only 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.

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.2

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


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.

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." 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." 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." Nevertheless, it is significant that in 1882, when

1Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 3:159.
3Brownsberger, "Personal Experiences," p. 4, Brownsberger Collection, AUHR.
4Battle 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. 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

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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\(^2\) 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

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

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

\(^1\)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.


\(^3\)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

\(^1\)Ibid.


\(^3\)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. 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. 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.

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. The superintendent was


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

4The 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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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


²I 8 (June 1860):44-45.
scholars and one teacher had commenced at Genesis 1 and were studying from three to four chapters a lesson. 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." 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. One school told with pride that from June 21 through July 8 the thirty scholars had memorized 2,580 verses. Another reported that some of the children memorized from forty to fifty verses a week.

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

\[1\] YI 8 (August 1860):64.
\[3\] 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.

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

²See, 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.
³The 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

¹Lewis, "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.
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. 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. 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.


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* 8 (March 15, 1870):46.

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.

\(^1\) Lewis, "Sketches--No. 5," p. 151.

"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."

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."

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. 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 lessons2 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, 


2Miss 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," VI, April 1, 1870, p. 54.

3Ibid.
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

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

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


⁴The 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

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.

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

¹Ibid.

²Drury 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."

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." 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, 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."

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.

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. 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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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. . . .

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

¹It 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.


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

¹Fairfield, "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, ed

¹N. D. Richmond, “Our Sabbath-School at Battle Creek,” YI 17 (November 1869): 86.
²Reavis, I Remember, p. 91.
³Ibid., 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.” 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.  

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.” 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

1 Ibid.
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." 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. 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. 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

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


^2The 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

¹Plummer, 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

\(^1\)See pp. 68-71 above.

\(^2\)G. H. Bell, "Hints on Sabbath-School Teaching," \textit{VI} 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.

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, 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. 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

\[1\] G. H. Bell, "Hints on Sabbath-School Teaching, V 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.

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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

\(^1\)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," YL 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.


the Battle Creek ñime 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 contri-
bution, also contributed, when carried to excess, to his abdication
of the office. His overzealous desire for thoroughness and organi-
zation 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 "machi-
nery" twice to describe the system in operation at Battle Creek.²
Nearly two years later, when Ellen White wrote concerning the prob-
lems 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,

¹E. S. Walker, comp., Battle Creek City Directory for 1880
³See pp. 73-77 above.
and in working order, 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.

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. But she was sounding a warning which she had occasion to repeat often during the next ten years.

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2ibid., p. 15.
3ibid., 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.'" 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."

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." The reaction, which came within nine months, is described in the next chapter.

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1Eva Bell to W. C. White, March 22, 1880, EGWRC--GC.
2Eva Bell to Sister Mary White, May 31, 1880, EGWRC--GC.
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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¹G. I. Butler to W. C. White, February 22, 1882, EGWRC--GC.
²G. I. Butler to W. C. White, May 25, 1882, EGWRC--GC.
³G. I. Butler to W. C. White, September 17, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

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he served as superintendent at Battle Creek. 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

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

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

¹The 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.


³A 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."

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.

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. 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."

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Lesson 1, YI 17.

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

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

3The 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.

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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¹G. H. Bell, "Bible Lessons for Youth," YI 18 (February 1, 1870):23.

²G. 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

¹RH 40 (June 18, 1872):8.
³Ibid., 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

¹ibid., pp. 15-16.

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. 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). 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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1RH, September 15-November 24, 1863.

2Uriah 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.

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

²Bell, Progressive Bible Lessons for Youth, p. 16.
³Plummer, 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. 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

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 Barnabas 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.”²

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

¹G. H. Bell, Bible Lessons for the Sabbath School—No. 8 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Review and Herald, 1887), n. ii.


³G. H. Bell to W. C. White, August 8, 1978, EGWRC--GC.
year, commenced a new section entitled "Sabbath School Department." Sabbath school lessons in two new series by Bell were published in each issue of the paper until January 1879. 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

[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.
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. . . .

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. But his tireless pen continued to write. These lessons were immediately followed by two more series that appeared in the Youth's Instructor.


3The 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."

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. ² This was Bell's final series


²G. H. Bell to W. C. White, May 24, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

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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¹In 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.


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." 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. 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.

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1Plummer, 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.

2Plummer, 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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¹D. M. Canright, "Our Sabbath-Schools," RH 51 (March 14, 1878):84.
²Ibid.
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


\(^2\)“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 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

¹Ibid.

²G. H. Bell to W. C. White, August 21, 1878. EGWRC-GC.
careful instructions for the completion of the weekly, quarterly and yearly reports. 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." 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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1See 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 5, 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.

2G. 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

\(^1\)"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. 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.

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.

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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2See 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.

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

¹Ibid.


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

^1Michigan Tribune (Battle Creek), October 4, 1879, p. 3.


^3G. 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:

¹SDA Year Book 1883 (Battle Creek, Mich.: Seventh-day Adventist Pub. Assn., 1883), pp. 40, 43, 45.

²For 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.

1Lewis, "Sketches—No. 8," RH, April 21, 1885, p. 247.
2SDA Year Book 1885, p. 70.
3Ibid. 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.

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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

¹For 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.


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

¹Ellen G. White, Testimony for the Battle Creek Church, p. 10.


³SDA 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.

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.

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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1G. H. Bell, "Teaching for the Love of It," SSW 2 (October, 1886):53.

2Ellen 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."

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.

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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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

¹Second 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. 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." 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 and was published in all the subsequent annual catalogues.

1The "common branches" included the subjects of reading, writing, grammar, arithmetic, geography, and spelling.

2Second Annual Catalogue 1875-76, pp. 5-6.

3Ibid., 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

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.

1Uriah 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."

2Second Annual Catalogue 1875-76, p. 4.

3G. 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. 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."

In addition to teaching Botany, Bell is also described as the College's first "Instructor in Vocal Music." 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, archi-
tecture, 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 inter-
vals, the major, minor, and chromatic scales." The lessons were
designed not only to enable the student "to sing readily and cor-
rectly," 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

1J. C. Bartholf, "Goodloe Harper Bell," YI 47 (February
9, 1899):105.

1938. Local History Collection, Willard Library, Battle Creek,

3Third Annual Catalogue 1876-77, p. 52; Fourth Annual Cata-
logue 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 fellowhelpers, and all unite in words of commendation of the ability and deportment of the students generally.

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." Then in November, Bell conducted the Thanksgiving services at the Battle Creek church with Elder S. N. Haskell and Professor Brownsberger.

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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.

Reavis believed that Bell was "no more severe in his discipline

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than he was required to be under the existing circumstances.\textsuperscript{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-aideing regulations necessary to being a master in successful educational work.\textsuperscript{2}

Of the many experiences Reavis had with "the Bell system of discipline" he related one concerning Dan T. Jones, from Missouri.\textsuperscript{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.

Dan Jones was a bright student but he moved slowly and

\textsuperscript{1}ibid. \quad \textsuperscript{2}ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{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." \\
\textsuperscript{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

¹Ibid. ²Ibid., 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

¹Diary--Mrs. O. A. Johnson, 1877-78. February 9, 1877. AUHR.
²Ibid., 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. 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." 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." 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

1:bid., August 29, September 10 and September 17, 1877.
2:Diary--O. A. Johnson, 1877-78, May 22, 1878, AUHR.
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.

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

\(^1\):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."^  

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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^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

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. . . ."

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.

When the new school term opened on April 4, Avery was overjoyed to see Bell still teaching. "Our good old Prof. Bell is back again after all 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 Danielis, worked in the garden "planting beans, pumpkin seeds etc.,

\(^{1}\) 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

¹Ibid., May 31, June 1, 1876.

²Ibid., June 10, 14, 1876.
trip on the steamboat at the expense of Profs. Bell and Brownsberger.

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."

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

1:bid., June 23, 1876. 2:bid., 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.

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 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

Because he carried such a heavy work load, he often employed student helpers to assist him. 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.
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."

**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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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 Brownberger shared

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.

¹Second 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.

²The 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.

³Second 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." 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.

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."

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1Fourth Annual Catalogue 1877-78, p. 54.
2"College Notes," The College Board 3 (April 1879):i2.
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.

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."

The title of the Battle Creek College journal was later

1G. H. Bell, "Completeness," Battle Creek College 1 (January 1877):3.

2Ibid.
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.

\(^1\)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

¹Ibid.
²G. H. Bell, "Hints to Young Teachers," The College Record 3 (April, 1879): 13.
³College 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.

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. The *Fifth Annual Announcement* for 1879-80 indicated there were 215 in the Teachers' Course.

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. 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

1Bell, "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.

4Ibid., 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.

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 siege."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

¹Michigan Tribune (Battle Creek), January 31, 1880, p. 3.

²G. 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 to 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.

\(^1\)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

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."  

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."  

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 behalf. 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.
Nevertheless, as they worked together, their differences "imperceptibly [sic] vanished," and "out of it all grew to the end that highest esteem and friendship that should always exist between fellow laborers."

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." 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. 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:bid.
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. 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.

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. 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

1College Board Minutes, July 24, 1881, p. 83.


responsibilities. 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.

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. 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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1College Board Minutes, December 20, 1881, pp. 98-99.
2Ibid., November 18, 1878, p. 35; July 8, 1880, p. 68; White, Testimony for the Battle Creek Church (1882), p. 29.
3Ibid., August 28, 1881, p. 68.
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.  

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."  

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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1Seventh 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.

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," 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, requested that it be read to the conference delegates,

1S. 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).

2Vande 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

¹White, Testimony for the Battle Creek Church (1882), pp. 3, 7.

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

¹:bid., pp. 18-19.
school work.\textsuperscript{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."\textsuperscript{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

\footnotetext{1}{"The General Conference Business Proceedings," RH 59 (January 3, 1882):11.}

\footnotetext{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.
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.

The members of the faculty received it on Friday morning, January 6. Butler later identified it as "the cause of precipitating this crisis." 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.

In an endeavour to bring reconciliation, the board invited

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 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. 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

1The chief protagonists were McLearn, Miller, and Osborne though Neilsen also opposed Bell.

2College 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 school² 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

¹C. W. Stone, A. B. Oyen, and J. H. Kellogg to Ellen G. White, April 9, 1882, p. 6.
²Brownsberger 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.
³C. W. Stone, A. B. Oyen, and J. H. Kellogg to Ellen G. White, April 9, 1882, pp. 6-7.
⁴College 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 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 [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.

Those who opposed Bell did not hesitate in their attempt to destroy his influence by "bringing to public notice in the most

\(^1\) 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.

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."

1C. W. Stone, A. B. Oyen, and J. H. Kellogg to Ellen G. White, April 9, 1882, p. 8. Early in 1880, the Battle Creek Nightly 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.

2G. 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.

¹W. A. Spicer, "An Early Crisis in Our Educational Work," RH 121 (February 24, 1944):3.

²The 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.

³Ibid., 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.


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." 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." 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

\(^1\) 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.

\(^1\) 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

\(^1\)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.

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 feet 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.

1G. 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.”

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."

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 were published in 1882 and revealed the author's

1The Nightly Moon (Battle Creek), March 7, 1882, p. 2.

2G. 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.

3White, 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, 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

1Ellen White's letter to Smith on February 27 is known only by his reference to it in his letter of March 14 to her.

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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.

Ellen White wrote a long and very significant reply to this letter by Smith. 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.

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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1U. Smith to Ellen G. White, March 14, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

2Ellen 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.

3Ibid., 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.\(^3\)

\(^1\)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

¹Ibid., p. 74.
²White, "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." 

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. 

Ellen White requested Smith to read her letter of March 28 to the Battle Creek church. 

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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 Creek Church (1882), pp. 73, 77.
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.\textsuperscript{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.\textsuperscript{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.

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\textsuperscript{1} White, "Important Testimony," Testimony for the Battle Creek Church (1882), pp. 35, 37.

\textsuperscript{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

¹Ellen 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.

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."

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1 Bell, "Hints to Young Teachers," The College Record, April 1879, p. 13.

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:

¹See 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.

²Tragically, 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.

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.

1Bell, "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.
The two years Goodloe Bell spent at South Lancaster, Massachusetts, were the last years he was employed in full-time teaching by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, though he continued his activities in Christian education until the day of his death. His recent experience at Battle Creek College had left him in poor emotional and physical health, but it did not deflect him from his commitment to teaching. Nearly ten of his thirty-one years of teaching had been spent in the church's first college. It was propitious for both Bell and the church that at the same time he resigned from Battle Creek College, the church was extending its educational program with the establishment of two new schools. In contrast to his experience at Battle Creek College, Bell was now in charge of a school. He had the opportunity to put into practice his convictions concerning the combination of work and study within the context of a strong Bible-based program. This chapter traces his career at South Lancaster from 1882 through 1884 and describes the key features of his educational philosophy exemplified in his

1Sidney Brownsberger opened a school in Healdsburg, California, on April 11, 1882, and Goodloe Bell commenced the school at South Lancaster, Massachusetts, on April 19, 1882.
leadership role at the South Lancaster school. It also examines the factors that contributed to his resignation in 1884.

Until early 1882, Battle Creek College was the only Seventh-day Adventist church-operated school in existence. On December 2, 1881, however, at the twentieth annual session of the General Conference, it was recommended that preparatory schools be established where students could pursue "such branches of study as it will be necessary for them to master before entering the College at Battle Creek." No locations were specified; only that they were to be established "in such places . . . as the General Conference may recommend."¹

Planning a New England School

Elder S. N. Haskell, the president of the New England Conference, was convinced of the necessity of a school to train gospel workers for the New England region.² Battle Creek College was too far away for the young people in the east and therefore failed to meet the needs of the church in the northeast. The recommendation, however, did not intend that the preparatory schools should take the place of Battle Creek College. In April 1882, Haskell further

¹ "General Conference," RH 59 (December 26, 1881):786.

clarified the purpose of the General Conference by stating that it was:

... to provide schools where brethren and sisters desiring to fill some position in the cause can have a preparatory drill upon those points in which they are deficient, and which are especially necessary to make one useful in the cause of God, and also where children can have the benefit of good influences while receiving a proper education.

With such an object in view, Haskell wrote to W. C. White on New Year's Day, 1882, and requested him to confer with Bro. Bell in Battle Creek and ask him if he knew of "a good woman teacher with "good moral stamina" who could "keep her own counsels" and manage a "good-sized school." She would also need to be "a good Bible student." Haskell's wife thought he would have to go "'over on to the other shore' to find such a teacher..." Bell failed to find one that met the specifications.

On February 4 and 5, the New England Conference met in their quarterly meeting. An important item on the agenda was "the propriety of establishing a Seventh-day Adventist school at some point in New England." The Review and Herald notice advertising the meeting described the intended curriculum in broad terms: the study of the common branches, the study of the Scriptures, and instruction in practical missionary work. No decision on the

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2 S. N. Haskell to W. C. White, January 1, 1882, EGWRC--GC.
4 ibid.
location of the school was made, but in the discussion the delegates suggested that "arrangements should be made to connect manual labor with the school."\(^1\)

In the meantime, the crisis at Battle Creek College was reaching such proportions that both G. I. Butler and S. N. Haskell, who were members of the college board, had been urged to come to Battle Creek to give counsel. Butler had arrived on January 17, but Haskell, suffering from poor health, was delayed and did not arrive until mid February,\(^2\) just before Bell's altercation with Henry McLearn on the stairs. Haskell had been kept informed of the developing crisis during the previous weeks since he, Butler, and Smith constituted the General Conference Committee, but he arrived too late to have any influence upon Smith's attitude. His major concern now was to find a teacher for his New England school.

**Bell Appointed Principal**

Within a day or so of Bell's resignation on February 20, Haskell had secured his services as principal of the South Lancaster school. Haskell may well have been a little anxious about offering the position to Bell. He doubtless knew of Bell's sensitive personality and his clashes with both peers and students. In 1882, however, there were very few educators within the ranks of the Seventh-day Adventist Church with sufficient educational experience

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to take charge of such a school. Perhaps Haskell reasoned that South Lancaster was far from the problems of Battle Creek, and the school would be so small at first, there would be very few on the staff. Haskell had no doubt, however, about Bell's ability to teach thoroughly and faithfully, and his willingness to promote the principles of Christian education as well. The constituency in New England probably first heard of the appointment of their school's principal when they opened the February 28 issue of the Review and Herald. G. I. Butler and S. N. Haskell announced that Sidney Brownsberger was to be in charge of the new school on the west coast at Healdsburg, and Bell was to superintend the South Lancaster school "in connection with Sabbath-school labor in New England."

Edith Sprague, who was one of Bell's supporters on the Battle Creek College faculty and who resigned at the same time as Bell, was to be the assistant teacher. Butler and Haskell thought it best to give strong support to Bell's past work in view of other comments that doubtless were being circulated.1

Bell's Curriculum

In his usual thorough way, Bell lost no time in formulating a statement of his educational philosophy and of the features of the curriculum he proposed for the school. On March 7 he published a description of the studies to be taught and of the school's objectives. He intended to teach "only such studies as are absolutely

needed to fit our young people for service in the cause."

The Course of Study will embrace English Language; Mathematics; Geography; Human Physiology and Hygiene; and Bible History; together with practical instruction in Tract and Missionary Work, and in the most useful of the Agricultural, Domestic and Mechanic arts. English Language will embrace Reading; Penmanship; Grammar, Composition, especially letter-writing; and the most useful portions of Rhetoric.

Bell's teaching specialty was English, and in his comments on how the subject would be taught, he stated that the emphasis would not be on grammatical parsing and analysis but on "logical and rhetorical analysis," which meant a consideration of "the thought, and relation of ideas, and the most appropriate forms of expression." Language, he said, should be "so simple and direct as to be easily understood, so clear that none but the right meaning can be conveyed by it, and so energetic as to arouse the activities of other minds." Reading, too, was an important study because it implied "the power to appreciate and express the thoughts of the loftiest minds." Bell was not only concerned with the mechanics of reading but also with teaching the student "to discriminate between good thoughts and bad; to know what to admire, and what to condemn; what to embrace; and what to reject."

The subject of health was to occupy a significant place in Bell's course of study. A practical knowledge of health was "all-important" because "good health" was "so essential to happiness" as well as to vocational success. His aim, therefore, was to


2Ibid.
provide the practical knowledge that would enable his students "to avoid sickness, and promote the best physical conditions."

As a Christian educator, however, Bell placed the greatest emphasis upon Bible study. It alone could provide that "moral and religious instruction" which was the essential element of a good education. The Bible also contained "ample resources for the development of the highest faculties of the human mind." Bell regarded the Bible as giving "the only complete history of the world" as it traces "the origin and destiny of our globe."

It contains the deepest and truest philosophy, the grandest poetry, the loftiest imagery, the tenderest pathos, the most exquisite conceptions of the sublime and the beautiful. It sets before us the noblest heroes, and the only perfect example, that the world has ever seen. It opens to our view the glories and mysteries of a world to come.

In the previous chapter it was noted that Bible lectures did not become an integral part of the study of all students in Battle Creek College until at least the winter of 1881 when the school board took steps to introduce such a program. Prior to that time Elder Uriah Smith conducted Bible lectures only for those who wished to attend. Many students therefore completed their courses without any Bible subjects being required. Their only contact with a systematic study of Scripture was the study of Bell's Sabbath School series in his weekly Sabbath School hour at Battle Creek church. For this reason, Bell stated that the study of the Bible,

1Ibid.

2Battle Creek College Board Minutes 1877-1890. December 20, 1881, p. 99; December 27, 1881, pp. 99-100, AUHR.
which he believed to be worth more than all other studies combined, "deserves more than one hour's study in a week."

Bell did not devote much space to his description of the work-study concept, though it was to be a significant innovation as far as Seventh-day Adventist education was concerned. In Ellen White's first article on education in 1872, she had urged:

We are reformers. We desire that our children should study to the best advantage. In order to do this, employment 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. Much can now be gained by connecting labor with schools. In following this plan, the students will realize elasticity of spirit and vigor of thought, and will be able to accomplish more mental labor in a given time than they could by study alone.

Battle Creek College, during the 1870s, was never able to attain to this ideal. The church leaders did not grasp the educational implications of such a program. Their purchase of only twelve acres for the location of the college and the subsequent sale of five of those acres as lots for the homes of the teachers prevented the organization of any agricultural labor at the school. Bell was

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3Both Goodloe Bell and Uriah Smith bought lots from the subdivision that was separated from the college property. Land Sale Indenture--the Seventh-day Adventist Educational Society to Goodloe H. Bell, Register of Deeds, County of Calhoun, Marshall, Michigan, Book 96, p. 14. See also Book 94, p. 29 and College Board Minutes, November 18, 1878, pp. 35-35; July 18, 1880, p. 68.
frustrated by the limitations imposed on such a program by the location of the college. In 1879, at the fifth annual session of the Seventh-day Adventist Educational Society, he spoke in favor of the need for students to spend a regular portion of time in physical labor, "though he knew not how this could be secured."¹

When he wrote the description of his proposed curriculum for the South Lancaster school in March 1882, the introduction of a work-study program was high on his list of priorities. For Bell, useful employment while studying played a significant role in character development, as well as providing more immediate beneficial results in the students' mental and physical development. He wrote:

Some may wonder how time can be spared for such useful employments. To such it may be said that actual demonstration has proved that pupils can advance faster when giving two or three hours a day to labor than they can when they spend all their time in study.²

Bell's philosophy of education led him to state that the school would aim at making the teaching "eminently practical--to give actual skill in doing things rather than in merely telling how to do them." The principles taught would be given a practical application with the minimum use of technical terms, formal rules, and definitions. He continued by stating an important principle of teaching which distinguished his instruction from that given by many educators of his day.

¹"The Fifth Annual Session of the Seventh-day Adventist Educational Society," College Board Minutes, p. 56.

By these means, the memory will be relieved of an enormous load, and will thus be in a condition to grasp with vigor those objects that come within its proper sphere. The teaching will not aim at recitational effect, but rather to quicken the perceptions, cultivate the imagination, strengthen the judgment, develop a refined taste, and awaken an interest that will deepen while life shall last.

To those who thought that such practical aims in education were inconsistent with true culture, Bell stated that they were taking "too narrow a view of practicability." He then gave an illuminating and well-written definition of practicability:

Whatever arouses thought, creates a desire for wisdom, or promotes a love for truth; whatever leads to serious reflection; whatever helps us to discover and admire the beauty, wisdom, and goodness manifested in the works of God; whatever stirs up love for mankind, or reverence for the Creator—-all these are eminently practical, and have a powerful bearing upon a person's usefulness in any department of labor.

Anticipating the later direction of Piagetian theory, Bell believed that mental growth is "by assimilation rather than by accretion; for the mind must grow by its own activities." The practical end of education was the harmonious development and perfection of "the noblest specimens of Christian manhood and womanhood that can be produced in the tainted atmosphere of these degenerate times." The means by which such an end was attained were "simple and natural." "Learning to do well some of the commonest duties of life" provided much of the "needed discipline." It was this fact, wrote Bell, "together with the hope of divine help," that gave him courage to undertake the role of leadership in this new school.

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1: Ibid. 
2: Ibid. 
3: Ibid.
Preparation for Opening Day

It had been originally hoped that the school would open on April 1 or before. This date, however, was too soon to allow for the necessary preparations. In the Review and Herald of March 28, S. N. Haskell called for a general meeting at South Lancaster on April 8 and 9, at which time plans for the school would be considered and definite arrangements made for its commencement which was expected about April 16.

Goodloe Bell and his eleven-year-old son, Omar, left Battle Creek in the evening of April 4, resolving to forget the past and look to the future. Bell later wrote to W. C. White that before his departure he made everything right with the officers of the college and the Review office. He added,

They have dealt honorably and generously with us. I have nothing to regret but that I have not been a better man. If my character had been perfect, how much better I might have stood against those who oppose the right! But the past is past, and I mean to learn useful lessons from it.

Bell and his son arrived in South Lancaster on April 6 and found that the small Massachusetts village, situated on the banks of the Nashua River and about thirty-five miles west of Boston, gave "an air of rural quietness that is very grateful to the tired mind."

The "commodious and hospitable home" of Elder S. N. Haskell

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3 G. H. Bell to W. C. White, May 24, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

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provided lodging for them both. Bell's love of nature responded to the natural beauty of the town. He later wrote of "the venerable elms" along the streets, the orchards, and the "wide, rolling meadows" with their solid stone wall fences, the groves and miniature lakes that appeared to be the work of "Nature's own hand." He appreciated, too, South Lancaster's rich historical setting.\(^1\)

Bell arrived in time to attend the meetings on April 8 and 9 which were "of unusual interest" and were well attended. School matters occupied a considerable portion of the time. It was reported that there was a "most perfect accord" between the school committee and the teachers as to the purpose for the school. On the afternoon of April 9, Bell delivered an address "on the true objects of education and the best methods of securing them." His words met with a "hearty response" from those present.

In his report of the meetings he later wrote that "the prospects for the school are very encouraging" and that "the probabilities are good for a fair attendance this spring, even on the short notice given." Haskell, who was the moving force behind the school, was particularly encouraged by the meetings and hoped that "a goodly number of those who attend the school will become laborers in the cause of God." The first term of the school, he advised, was to continue for ten weeks, with the opening date finally set for Wednesday, April 19.\(^2\)


When Bell announced the opening date for the school, he added significantly, that it was "the anniversary of the battle of Lexington" in 1775. It is likely that Bell suggested this date, for it meant much to him and to his maternal ancestors. His mother's grandfather, Timothy Blodgett (1740-1831), had fought in that battle in Captain John Parker's Company. Timothy's wife, Millicent, later reported how she had to leave "the oven full of her good baking" and take her three little children, including Bell's grandfather Samuel, who was then under one year old, in the adjacent woods as the British approached. Bell may well have hoped that the Lexington "shot that was heard around the world" might symbolise on a smaller scale the influence of his new school. He wrote:

We trust there can be built up here a good school of moderate size, that will furnish some earnest workers for the cause, and that, by arousing an interest in education, will help rather than hinder the prosperity of the other schools of our denomination.

The days before April 19 were spent in a flurry of activity at the school house. Ella Graham was living in South Lancaster in 1882 and kept a diary of the year's events in the town which she liked to call "Adventville." She was among the students who


1Bell, "South Lancaster and the School," p. 250.


3Bell, "South Lancaster and the School," p. 250.
enrolled on the school's opening day and the entries in her diary, brief as they were, for the few days prior to the opening, give a glimpse of the hectic preparations. "April 16. The folks cleaned the school-house... April 18. Went down the street—everything in a rush."\(^1\) When Bell saw the school house, he may well have recalled the old Review and Herald print shop in Battle Creek where he had opened the first church-supported school ten years before. The South Lancaster school house had also been previously used for other purposes. Once a small carriage shop, eighteen by twenty-four feet, it had been converted into the first Seventh-day Adventist chapel in South Lancaster in 1873. Five years later, when a new church was built, it had been abandoned, only to be relocated, scrubbed, and painted in 1882 to be Bell's Massachusetts school.\(^2\)

The School Opens

When the nineteen students entered the school on the morning of April 19, the three teachers, Professor Bell, Miss Sprague, and Miss Huntley, together with Elders Haskell and Robinson, were there to greet them. Haskell later reported that the number of students was larger than expected and that the students "manifested much interest in the school." At some point in the opening remarks, reference was made to "the matter of connecting manual labor with

\(^1\) Ella Graham Diary for 1882, April 16 and 18, G. Eric Jones Library, Atlantic Union College, South Lancaster, Massachusetts.

mental training," but evidently neither Bell nor Haskell thought it wise to thrust such an innovation upon the students. Rather, "it was referred" to the students "to act in reference to it as they might see fit, and to make such suggestions as would be agreeable to themselves."¹

The response of the students was heartening to the school's leaders. After school had closed on that first day, Orville Farnsworth, who was then twenty-three years of age and was among the oldest pupils in the school, chaired a meeting of the students and spoke in strong support of the manual labor idea. He said he was anxious to have the school start right and thus meet with the approval of God. Evidently during the day the young men had met together and had drawn up several resolutions which he presented to the afternoon meeting. The students indicated that they were motivated by the desire to show their appreciation of the efforts and sacrifice that had been made on their behalf by those who had founded the school. They requested, therefore, that the school board provide them with one acre of land for cultivation, and they resolved to donate to the school the proceeds from the sale of the crops. The young ladies voted to be "responsible for the laundry work, and for all necessary repairs in the clothing of the young men who donate their time in cultivating land for the benefit of the school." They added that they would be "glad to help in any other

¹S. N. Haskell, "Opening of the South Lancaster School," RH 59 (April 25, 1882):265. See also First Record Book, of South Lancaster Academy, pp. 4-6, Memorabilia Room, Founders Hall, Atlantic Union College, South Lancaster, Massachusetts.
way whenever opportunities present themselves."¹

When Haskell reported the events of the opening day to the readers of the Review and Herald, he said that Professor Bell and Sister Sprague would remain "at least a year, and we know of no reason, if the Providence of God favors it, why they may not remain as long as a school is needed."² Bell was happy to remain in the school at least for a time, for he wrote to W. C. White in May 1882, "Since I have put my hand to this school, I would like to see it well organized and firmly established before I leave it, if God will bless my efforts in that way."³

In his organization of the school, Bell taught the most advanced classes. Miss Sprague was the teacher of the primary classes and Miss Huntley instructed the missionary class. There was no attempt to arrange a regular course of study at first. The subjects taught were Bible, English, physiology, arithmetic, book-keeping and missionary methods. During the next few weeks after the school opening, five more students arrived, making a total of twenty-four. There were twelve boys and twelve girls, all of whom were from the New England states except Bell's son, Omar. Fourteen of the twenty-four were between sixteen and twenty-four years of age.⁴ Bell did not find the students "hard to control,"

¹Haskell, "Opening of the South Lancaster School," p. 265.
²Ibid.
³G. H. Bell to W. C. White, May 24, 1882.
⁴First Record Book, pp. 4-5; Purdon, That New England School, pp. 34; G. H. Bell, "South Lancaster School," RH 59 (July 11, 1882): 441-42.
and he reported to White in May that their interest was growing "beyond my fondest expectations." Many others from the local community attended his evening physiology class which contained "between 40 and 50." He was particularly surprised by the students' response to manual labor. He wrote:

The willingness of all to take hold of manual labor without compensation astonishes me. I hope it will continue. It seems as though God meant to show his special approval of this particular feature.

It is clear that the manual labor innovation was a significant part of the school's program. When the school board met on April 25, it strongly approved the resolutions made by the students the week before. After Haskell had spoken to the board on the object of the school, a period of discussion followed on the question of manual labor. "The decided opinion" was that "such labor is absolutely necessary to the success of our School and the well being of those who attend it." The board also recommended that Bell should visit different parts of New England "so far as his time and strength would allow." It was felt that this would not only benefit the churches but "greatly enhance the interests of the school for coming terms."2

At the end of the first term Bell reported that the school had been "characterized by good behavior and regular attendance on the part of the students, with a steadily increasing interest in study." He had been gratified "to watch the gradual emancipation of

1 G. H. Bell to W. C. White, May 24, 1882.
2 First Record Book, April 25, 1882, p. 3.
minds from the habit of merely memorizing their lessons to the
luxury of thinking for themselves, and the enjoyment of intelligent
study." Now that "the experiment of connecting physical labor with
the school" had been tested for a whole term, the results "more than
met the highest anticipations of those who advocated it." Bell
attributed to this feature of the school "the uniform steadiness and
sobriety" of the students.1

Plans for Second Term

During the summer of 1882 the school board prepared and
distributed at the camp meetings a four-page circular entitled "New
England School." It stressed that the object of the school was "not
merely to furnish facilities for mental culture" but "to strengthen
and develop characters" that would qualify the students "to be
burden-bearers in society, or strong workers in the cause of God."
A school that was concerned about the mental, moral, physical, and
spiritual development of its pupils should teach "correct habits of
life as carefully as correct habits of thought." Reflecting Bell's
keystones, the circular stated that "young people should be trained
to habits of promptness and thoroughness, in study, in labor, in
the duties of life, and in the work of God."2

The board felt it should again stress the importance of
physical exercise in useful employment as an essential part of the

1Bell, "South Lancaster School," pp. 441-42.

2Circular--"New England School," p. 1. Published by the
School Committee and located in the First Record Book of South
Lancaster Academy.
school's program. "Nothing serves the purpose of exercise so well as useful labor; and those who are too young to work are too young to leave home," the circular declared. The relationship that was considered to exist between such employment and the building of character was well expressed in a paragraph listing the advantages of labor:

It can be regulated according to the age and strength of the student; it can be done under the oversight of the teacher, and thus evil influences can be prevented; it gives the pupil skill and efficiency that may prove serviceable to him in after life; it has a good effect upon character; for it not only shields the pupil from bad associations and evil influences, but brings him into contact with some of the duties of life, gives him a habit of performing them, and prepares him to take responsibilities when his school-days are over; it promotes health, relieves the brain, creates cheerfulness and contentment, thus enabling the student to apply his mind so well that he can really accomplish more in his studies than he could in giving his whole time to them.

Bell's suggested school program for the second term, therefore, incorporated three hours of labor each day at times "not favorable for study." One hour followed breakfast, another followed the dinner hour, and the third preceded the evening meal at the end of the day. The board, however, decided that the students should now receive some remuneration for their work.²

Prospective students, their parents, and the church constituency in general, were also notified of the school's requirements

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¹Ibid., p. 2.

²Ibid., pp. 2-3. See also Maria L. Huntley, "New England School," RH 59 (August 15, 1882):527. During the first month of the second term, the value of the labor was $51.50 for the twelve young men and $52.25 for the eleven young women who participated. See First Record Book, p. 12.
and operation in a Review and Herald article by Miss M. L. Huntley, School Board Secretary, two weeks before the beginning of the second term. The school administration planned to make the domestic arrangements "as much like a well-regulated family as possible." The teachers would eat their meals with those students who did not board with their parents. Each day's activities were closely regulated and it was hoped that the students would "submit cheerfully" to the school's rules and "the wishes of the teachers." The religious activities of the school were most important and students were expected to attend the weekly Sabbath services and the mid-week prayer meeting. Daily Bible study occupied an important place in the five and one-half hours devoted to class recitations.¹

The board members may well have been sensitive to the criticism that the school's program was "too severe, or too monotonous," for they included in their circular the assurance that there was provision for "abundance of sleep, neither the labor nor the study will be heavy, and both will be occasionally relieved by some harmless recreation." They hastened to remind everybody, however, that "youth who are to work well in life must be gradually accustomed to the harness."²

Though the South Lancaster School Board intended that Bell should continue at that school for the coming year, Bell himself was not so sure. He was having considerable trouble with his eyes and,  

¹Ibid.

Interestingly enough, the Battle Creek College Board on May 8 voted to invite him "to take his old position in school, if school continues" during the following year.¹ One month later the board again voted to encourage him to return to the city "to take treatment for his eyes." Bell replied, but did not respond positively one way or the other. He said he had written to Ellen White for counsel and was awaiting her reply. At the meeting of the Battle Creek School Board on July 23, however, a letter to the board from Ellen White was read. She advised them not to give Bell a teaching position because the condition of the church in Battle Creek was such that it would hinder his work in the school.²

School in a Church

When the school in South Lancaster opened on August 30 for its second term, the increased enrollment had forced the board to abandon the old carriage house and relocate in the two-room unfinished basement of the church. The students and their teachers

¹Battle Creek College Board Minutes, 1877-1890, May 8, 1882, p. 126. Because of the continuing problems in the Battle Creek Church, the college board finally voted that the school should close for the 1882-83 school year. For G. I. Butler's explanation giving the reasons for the school's closure, see "Unpleasant Themes," RH 59 (September 12, 1882):586-87, and "Our College at Battle Creek," RH 60 (July 31, 1883):489-90. This latter article, with the exception of three paragraphs, was subsequently reprinted in the Battle Creek Nightly Moon, August 9, 1883, pp. 1-2. On the following evening, the same newspaper published Alexander McClean's explanations of the closing of the school. See The Nightly Moon, August 10, 1883, p. 1.

²Battle Creek College Board Minutes 1877-1890, June 19, 1882, p. 131; July 23, 1882, p. 135.
remained there for the rest of Bell's stay at the school.¹

A total of forty-eight students registered for the second term. Sixteen of them were returning after their first term of study. Among the new students was Bell's youngest daughter, Junia, who had come from Battle Creek to be with her father and younger brother, Omar. The school also welcomed another teacher to the staff when Miss Euphemie Lindsay took charge of the intermediate classes.²

In August, Bell felt stronger in health than he had at the opening of the school in April. The evidence seems to indicate that he had also been making a genuine effort to learn from his mistakes at Battle Creek. Elder G. I. Butler, the General Conference President, spent a short time at South Lancaster prior to the opening of the second term. He had decided to send his twin sons, William and Hiland, to Bell's school. In a letter to Ellen White, Butler told her that Miss Edith Sprague had commented to him about the "great change in Brother Bell, and that he was very kind to the scholars and they thought much of him." Bell's prayers evidently revealed his intentions not to repeat past problems for one church member told Elder Butler that "it was very affecting to hear him pray for God's help to enable him to overcome his besetments and weaknesses." Though his health was improving, his eyesight was

¹See Purdon, That New England School, p. 35.

²First Record Book, pp. 8-9. This book which was written at the time the events occurred gives Miss Lindsay's first name as Euphemie. Rowena Purdon's later historical account gives it as Euphemia. See Purdon, That New England School, p. 38.
very poor" and his friends thought that he was "in great danger of losing it." Butler said that sometimes he couldn't see "to read his own writing." ¹

Bell's kindness was not always perceived as such by those who needed discipline. One student many years later remembered him as the "most strict disciplinarian I have known." When five boys had gotten into trouble, Bell took them "one by one down underneath the church" and whipped them with a birch rod. One of these delinquents, Walter R. Andrews, later recalled Bell's method: "If a boy yelled, he put it on until he stopped... And if he didn't yell, he put it on until he did! Now I know, because I was one of the five boys and I yelled." ²

Impressions of a Visitor

In spite of the few such occasions requiring discipline, the school's general tone was positive and visitors were impressed. B. L. Whitney, for example, reported his visit to the school in 1882 and said that it was "altogether different from the ordinary school," because the teachers aimed "to lead the student to think for himself, rather than to memorize the facts and rules laid down in text books..." The South Lancaster school's superiority "to the best grades of our public schools," Whitney believed, was due to

¹G. I. Butler to Ellen G. White, August 24, 1882, EGWRC--GC.

²Walter R. Andrews, typescript of his chapel talk for Founders' Day, 1948, pp. 4-5, G. Eric Jones Library, Atlantic Union College, South Lancaster, Massachusetts. Walter Andrews was listed as a student in the winter term in 1882-83 (see First Record Book, p. 23).
the fact that it was concerned with "the acquirement of true knowledge, which may be made of practical value in life." 1

The operation of the school also impressed Whitney. He thought that it came "nearest to the model of a well regulated family" of anything he had ever seen. Bell's influence was seen in the "order, system, and thoroughness" so evident in the education of the students, not only in their studies but as they carried out their work and other responsibilities in the school. The "promptness and alacrity" with which the students participated in the work assigned them testified to "the practical value of a system which combines systematic physical labor with study in the routine of student life." In spite of the fact that Bell and the other teachers were working for sixteen hours of each day to carry out this plan, Bell reported that his health was "much better than he anticipated" and "his interest and courage in the work" was increasing. 2

The feature of the school that was more important to Whitney than all the others, however, was "the religious interest manifested among the pupils." The daily Bible lessons, the morning and evening prayers, the familiar talks by Bell and the other teachers on "the importance of devoting the life to the service of God," together with the faith of the teachers, had resulted "in the awakening of


2Ibid.
deep religious interest" among the students. Some had become Christians and nine were baptized on October 8.¹

Early in November, Haskell returned from a six-month trip to Europe.² The school had doubled in its enrollment since his departure early in May, and he was convinced that "the special blessing of God" had accompanied the school. Haskell believed that a person's usefulness did not depend so much on how much knowledge he acquired as upon how he used the God-given powers of mind and body he possessed for the improvement of society. The cultivation of proper habits determined the direction of life. Haskell therefore pointed with pride to seeing the fifty young men and women in the school "without written rules, carrying out a system, and conducting themselves with so much propriety that there is harmony among them all from the oldest to the youngest. . . ."³

Bell's Teaching Methods

Much of this emphasis given in the school must be attributed to Bell's leadership and views on education. In December he travelled from South Lancaster to Rome, New York, for the meetings of the General Conference. The two meetings held on December 10 were entirely devoted to remarks made by Bell in regard to education in general, and the methods he used in conducting the school. He

¹Ibid.

²See Ella Graham Diary for 1882, May 4 and November 3.

explained that "the popular method of filling the student's mind
with that which is not practical, and hurrying him through a certain
course in order that he may obtain a diploma, is not true
education." True education, he said, began

. . . on the inside . . . with that which is practical. It
builds up and strengthens a symmetry of character that by
and by, in after life, will show itself in some grand, good,
and noble work for the world.

Bell's promotion and encouragement of the plan to divide the
students' time into "labor, study, and recitation hours" had
produced results that were seen in "physical health, mental
discipline, and progress in study."²

As a teacher of English Grammar, Bell instructed his stu-
dents using methods³ that contributed considerably to their "mental
discipline and progress in study," though his methods would not be
so considered one hundred years later. Teachers in the nineteenth
century expected their students in grammar to be able to analyze the
parts of a sentence, and Bell was no exception to this rule. Rowena
Purdon related how some workmen, many years ago, were tearing out an
old partition in the basement of the old church where Bell conducted
his classes between September 1882 and June 1884. In a crevice of
the plaster they discovered a roll of papers, yellow with age.
Among them was a copy of the January 1883 Youth's Instructor and

1"General Conference," RH 59 (December 26, 1882):786.
2Ibid.
3A study of Bell's approach to the teaching of English is
presented in chapter 6 of this dissertation.
several class exercises in English and arithmetic by one of the pupils. Bell's pattern of sentence analysis was obvious. The unknown student whose knowledge of analysis was greater than his/her knowledge of punctuation, wrote:

The old man lost his book in the fire man is the subject lost is the predicate book tells what he lost his tells whose book in the fire tells where he lost his book fire names the place old describes the man in shows the relation between fire and lost the tells that a definite fire is meant.

Another item found by the workmen was a letter written by Bell's own son, Omar. His teacher was evidently away sick at the time. He wrote, "January 12, 1883. Dear Teacher, We hope you will be well soon. I have to study my lessons so goodbye. Yours with regards, Omar Bell." The boy had written "love" and then crossed it out and replaced it with "regards."  

In spite of Bell's penchant for thoroughness and his strict discipline, he did not forget the need for relaxation. At the board meeting on December 21, 1882, he was happy to approve of the provision of some special recreation at Christmas time. The seventy-nine students who registered for the winter term enjoyed sleigh rides and the box of oranges and bushel of nuts given as extras for dinner that day.  

Four months later, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the opening of the school, Bell led his students down to the Nashua River where some boats awaited them.

1Cited in Purdon, That New England School, pp. 35-36.
2Cited in ibid., p. 36.
3First Record Book, December 21, 1882, p. 27.
They rowed upstream to a pine grove, about halfway between Lancaster and Clinton, and enjoyed lunch and some games on the river bank. In the afternoon, they met together for a program which included a recitation entitled "The Frog Got Drunk" by Walter Andrews. The rarity of such occasions, however, must have increased their enjoyment.

**Policy Problems**

The rigor of the school's general program did not discourage an increasing number of students who came each term to be educated and to prepare for the work of the church. The growth of the school, however, brought added pressures upon Bell. With the prospects of an increased enrollment during the second term of the school, the board rented two private homes to be used as dormitories, and moved the old school building to serve as the dining room between the two homes. The circular on the school released during the summer of 1882 had indicated that "a teacher shall room in each building where students room, overseeing and assisting them during their study hours." The students would also "eat at a common table with their teachers." With the prospect of a man and his wife coming to the school in the winter to assist in the management of the school, the board decided at its meeting on December 3 to give them special oversight of the boarding homes, though Bell was to have the general oversight. Sensitive to potential problems, the

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1 Andrews, Founders' Day Chapel Talk, pp. 3-4.


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board stated that there should be "frequent consultations" so that "no one should act independent of the others."\(^1\) It would appear that the couple who were expected did not arrive and Bell found the administrative load increasingly heavy. On January 14, 1882, the board again discussed "the propriety of employing additional help in the boarding house, so as to relieve Bro. Bell of some of his burdens."\(^2\) There is no record that the board at this time arrived at any decision, but a conflict developed concerning the issue.

Two weeks later, Elder S. N. Haskell wrote to Ellen White concerning progress in the school. He felt that God was blessing the school but there was "danger of serious difficulty" resulting from a policy Bell was adopting in the school management. Bell thought that "the students and teachers in the school should of themselves do all the managing of the boarding house." Haskell and others, on the other hand, felt that a woman with no responsibilities in the school should be in charge and "be prepared to act as a mother to the children from 10 to 15 years of age especially and look after their interests beyond what the teacher in the school can do." Haskell recognized that his view would require a change in many of Bro. Bell's ideas concerning the administration of the boarding house, and he confessed, "This is where the difficulty comes."\(^3\)

\(^1\) First Record Book, December 3, 1882, p. 18.
\(^2\) Ibid., January 14, 1883, p. 28.
\(^3\) S. N. Haskell to Ellen G. White, January 27, 1883, EGWRC--GC.
Indications of friction developing among the school staff and management were evident at the board meeting that met the day after Haskell had written to Ellen White. Bell made some remarks "respecting the oversight of the students" and this was followed by "a free conversation between the teachers, respecting their feelings toward each other, and the management of the school." Both Haskell and Bell were strong-minded men, and Haskell in particular, regarded the South Lancaster school as his, similar to the way Bell regarded the Battle Creek school as his. It is significant that in February 1883, G. I. Butler wrote to Ellen White that he thought that the school was going "as well as could be expected under all the circumstances, though the peace of heaven has not fully dropped down here yet." In spite of the differences between Bell and Haskell, however, they were united in their faith in Christian education and its goal of preparing young people for Christian service.

The combination of work and study continued to be a strong feature throughout the period of Bell's leadership in the school. In fact, in March 1883 the board took action to have trades connected with the school "so that with physical labor the students may have the opportunity of learning some useful trade while attending it."

The implementation of this action during the next twelve months enabled Haskell to report in the following December that tentmaking

\[\text{\small \text{\cite{First Record Book, January 28, 1883, p. 32.}}}\]

\[\text{\small \text{\cite{G. I. Butler to Ellen White, February 18, 1883, EGWRC--GC.}}}\]

\[\text{\small \text{\cite{First Record Book, March 25, 1883, p. 40.}}}\]
had been commenced in the school and that during the winter cobbling and dressmaking would be added. By the spring of 1884 he expected that "not less than five different kinds of useful employment" would be represented.¹

At the board meeting in March 1883 Bell was invited to remain for another year at the school "and sustain the same relation to the school as in the past."² Haskell had no doubts about Bell's ability to teach, but he may well have begun to question his ability to administer the school. He was particularly anxious about the school since he was leaving South Lancaster in the spring to spend some months in California. Furthermore, Bell's health did not appear to be good. There had already been a change in the staff for the spring term when Henry Veysey replaced Miss Edith Sprague whose health had failed. In view of Haskell's departure, the plans for the school building program were postponed until his return in the fall.³

**Down But Not Out**

By the end of the spring term in 1883 Bell, now fifty-one years old, was exhausted. In June he left the village to hermitize, he said, "by the banks of a beautiful but lonely pond." He remained

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¹S. N. Haskell, "Meetings in Massachusetts and New York," RH 60 (December 18, 1883):794.

²First Record Book, March 25, 1883, p. 41.

³First Record Book, pp. 37, 41.
there for nearly a month, but it brought him little improvement. On
July 6, he wrote to W. C. White:

I never was so badly used up as I have found myself at the
close of this school year. . . . I am troubled with
congestion of the brain. . . .
. . . As to my plans for the future, I cannot say that I
have any; and in my present condition I dare not attempt to
make any. Things do not always appear to me at such times
as they really are. I am afraid to trust my judgment. A
good night's sleep sometimes changes the whole aspect of
affairs. . . .

Bell said that he was waiting for his "head to cool off," and that
he would be glad to receive some good advice from any friend.
Though worn in body and mind, he felt he had done his best for the
school. He wrote:

I have tried my best to give some faint expression of my
ideal of a good school. My success, poor as it may be, has
been better than I had any reason to expect, and I have come
out as strong as could be expected, and more so. . . .

Before the new school year commenced, Bell returned to
Battle Creek to take treatment at the sanitarium which was operated
by one of his former students, Dr. J. H. Kellogg. While in Battle
Creek he received a letter from Ellen White which she had written in
May but had not mailed until August 4. The contents of this letter
are not known but its general tenor may be surmised from Bell's
reply. It evidently contained reproof for his conduct at the
school. A lack of primary sources, however, prevents an accurate
reconstruction of the nature of Bell's difficulties except those

1 G. H. Bell to W. C. White, July 6, 1883, EGWRC--GC.
2 Ibid.
that have been suggested above and what we know of Bell's personality. Ellen White's letter must also have included some practical spiritual help because Bell not only expressed sorrow for his "course of conduct" and "for wounding the cause I profess to love," but also gratitude for counsel. He wrote:

"I trust your writing will not be in vain. I never experienced so great a change of thought and feeling as I have since reading your letter, especially in so short a time. Although full of cutting reproof, your words are mild, and there has been evident care not to wound unnecessarily. A bruised reed you have not broken."

Bell believed that had he lived "near God" and been more self-denying, he would not be in the situation in which he now found himself. He felt that "the immediate cause" of his predicament was "a fevered brain, brought on by over anxiety and want of sleep," yet, had he trusted God more, he would have been "saved from this over anxiety." He admitted that he thought "too much as though everything depended on my efforts." Evidently responding to something Ellen White wrote, he said, "I will try to regard others as not only better but wiser, than myself. I hope I may be able to act more like a gentleman and a Christian."

It would appear that Ellen White's letter had not discussed Bell's future work at South Lancaster. He wrote that "if it is best" he would like to return to the school, 

"... and try to show by my actions the sincerity of my convictions. If it is not best for me to teach any longer,

1G. H. Bell to Ellen G. White, August 17, 1883, EGWRC--GC.
i will cheerfully retire, although [will] have to do so with regret. Have you any advice in the matter?

When he wrote this letter to Ellen White, Bell probably knew that she was due to arrive in Battle Creek on the same day, Friday, August 17. On the morning after her arrival, she spoke at the Seventh-day Adventist Tabernacle and remained in the city for some days. The following Tuesday, Bell met Ellen White and they had "a long talk" together. She felt that Bell was bearing so many responsibilities that he could do justice to none. He was making the mistake of educating the people to depend upon him instead of upon God. In the school he needed to display more tolerance and courtesy toward his students. Reporting her conversation with Bell to her son and daughter-in-law two days later, she wrote,

I told Brother Bell he must do his work, which was to teach. That he must not stand to pick up every little flaw and mark every misdemeanor, but he could do much by talking kindly to the school, laying down the principles of action. He must maintain his position as a dignified teacher—not that dignity that will not heed the counsels of others, but that kindness, that courtesy that will win his way into the hearts of his students.

Bell was grateful for the talk. Later that day he wrote to Mrs. White to express his appreciation for it. It had "caused hope and courage to spring up in my heart," he said. "If I can only be humble, and resist every temptation, I think I can see my way through."

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1:bid.


3:Ellen G. White to W. C. and Mary White, August 23, 1883. Letter 24, 1883, EGWRC--GC.

4:G. H. Bell to Ellen G. White, August 21, 1883, EGWRC--GC.
Bell departed from Battle Creek for South Lancaster on Monday, September 3, 1883, to commence his last year in connection with a denominational school. He probably was encouraged, upon his arrival, to hear the reports of the recent New England campmeeting. It had convened between August 23 and 28 at the fairground on the edge of the city of Worcester which lay about seventeen miles south of South Lancaster. In the discussion on the subject of Christian education, S. N. Haskell reminded those who attended the meeting that he believed that the primary object of Seventh-day Adventist schools was the training of Christian workers. He added, “This was the controlling thought in establishing a school at South Lancaster,” and in this respect the school was “far more successful than our most sanguine expectations.” Haskell pointed to the fact that during the previous summer, about thirty students of sixteen years of age and older had engaged in work as canvassers, colporters, and preachers. The unusually large number of those who

1 G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, August 29, 1883, George Royal Avery Collection, AUHR.

2 While training of the church workers was an important objective, Ellen White’s model for Christian education, which Bell strongly supported, placed greater emphasis upon the development of character. In an article entitled “Our College,” that was published in 1880 (not to be confused with the paper “Our College” that was read at Battle Creek in December 1881), Ellen White wrote: “The education and training of the youth is an important and solemn work. The great object to be secured should be the proper development of character, that the individual may be fitted rightly to discharge the duties of the present life, and to enter at last upon the future, immortal life” (Testimonies for the Church, 9 vols. [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1962], 4:418).
were not Seventh-day Adventists at the campmeeting, he said, "was largely attributable to the colporter work done by the students who went from the school."¹

Bell received further confirmation of the impact and success of the Christian educational program at the school in the baptism that was conducted on October 21. Six of the nine who were baptized were students. Haskell reported that this made a total of twenty-nine students who had been baptized "since the school commenced." In a letter to Ellen White, Haskell said that some of these had been "wild swearing fellows" when they first came to the school. Others had experienced a religious conversion at the school but were baptized at their home churches.²

During Bell's last year at the school, Haskell's confidence in his administrative ability deteriorated noticeably. On October 24 Haskell wrote to Ellen White that he thought Bell was trying to do the best he could, but Haskell was doubtful if he would "ever learn to adapt himself to a change of circumstances so as to make a success." He thought that the difficulty seemed to be "in his being the principal of the school."³

Bell also recognized that he had made some unwise decisions


²Haskell, "Report from New England," p. 685. In his letter to Ellen White on October 24, Haskell said that five of the nine were students. S. N. Haskell to Ellen G. White, October 24, 1883, EGWRC--GC.

³S. N. Haskell to Ellen G. White, October 24, 1883, EGWRC--GC.
since the beginning of the autumn term. When he wrote to Ellen White on October 29, he said that he wished he had "something really good and encouraging to write. I have gained some precious victories since I saw you; but, alas, I have made some bad mistakes." Bell again expressed gratitude to Ellen White for "the reproof" she had given him, as well as for her "kind words of encouragement," which had already helped him "in many trying times." Much of her advice he had found "by actual test to be just what I needed." He said that he had often had occasion to recall her words about "keeping on the whole armor." As was often the case earlier in his experience, Bell said that he was "much troubled for want of sleep," which made him fearful of doing "some rash thing."1

Significant progress in the development of the school took place at the end of November when a ten-day series of meetings was conducted in South Lancaster. Ellen White was present and added her appeals on behalf of the school. When the need to buy land and erect permanent school buildings was set before those gathered at the meetings, a total of $12,500 was pledged, which greatly heartened the school board. Within forty-eight hours of the close of the meetings, a deed was taken for over twenty acres of "the most desirable land in the village" on which to erect suitable buildings.2

Notwithstanding all she knew of Bell's problems in the

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1 G. H. Bell to Ellen G. White, October 29, 1883, EGWRC -- GC.
2 S. N. Haskell, "Meetings in Massachusetts and New York," RH 60 (December 18, 1883):793.
school, Ellen White was impressed with her contact with the teachers during these meetings. Evidently Bell was making a sincere effort to demonstrate Christian leadership, for she later wrote of her visit:

The school here has been productive of much good. . . . The Lord has been fitting up the teachers; he has been bringing them nearer to himself. Professor Bell has been drawing near to God, and his rich blessing has rested upon him.

Soon after the meetings closed, the necessary legal steps were taken to incorporate the school. On the morning of December 4, 1883, D. A. Robinson was sworn in as temporary clerk in the office of John T. Dame, a justice of the peace. The group of seven men, including Bell, then adjourned, and six of the seven met at Haskell's home later that day. They approved a constitution and bylaws for the proposed corporation and then elected the officers. Haskell was chosen as president and Bell was elected auditor. The six present chose themselves and C. E. Palmer as the board of trustees for the new corporation which was officially certified as the "South Lancaster Academy" on December 12, 1883.  

The winter term commenced on December 5, but it was a difficult one for both Bell and the school. He seems to have increasingly alienated himself from those connected with the school. By mid-January he and his daughter, Junia, were living with a man named Johnson. Haskell was concerned to hear that Bell rarely came into

1E. G. White, "Notes of Travel," RH 61 (January 15, 1884): 34.

2Record of Meetings of Stockholders of South Lancaster Academy, pp. 36-38; p. 9., The President's Office, Atlantic Union College, South Lancaster, Massachusetts.
the boarding house. "We have had a number of meetings for consultations, and have always sent him a special invitation, but he has not been able to get around so as to come." Haskell thought that Bell was sick, but he felt that his imagination affected his health. He added, however, that he believed that Bell "does the very best he can."  

By March, Haskell, as chairman of the board, was expressing doubts about the school ever being a success with Bell in charge. He thought that Bell was "too narrow in his ideas, and too shortsighted." Ever protective of the reputation of his school, Haskell disapproved of Bell's "unwise moves and imprudent remarks to students" which led people to speak against the school. Haskell believed that Bell "would be a useful man in the school" but not as principal. He wanted someone "who could command respect in town" and felt that Sidney Brownsberger would do well at South Lancaster. With the prospects of his trip to Australia in 1885, Haskell also needed someone in whose hands he could confidently leave the school while he was away. Brownsberger, however, could not come, and Haskell resigned himself to Bell remaining as principal as long as he chose to stay at the school.  

In April, Bell published the first number of an eight-page monthly, The True Educator. It was "devoted to a discussion of the best methods of education, treating particularly upon the question

1S. N. Haskell to W. C. White, January 15, 1884, EGWRC--GC.
2S. N. Haskell to W. C. White, March 24, 1884, EGWRC--GC.
of combining physical and mental labor." The description given in
the Review and Herald provides the only known description of its
contents, since no copies of this first number appear to be still
extant. Among the contributors were S. N. Haskell, E. G. White, G.
H. Bell, and D. A. Robinson. The Table of contents included the
following:

Our Object.--The Bible in School.--Healdsburg
College.--Thoughts on Discipline.--Kindness, True and
False.--Training School for the Indians.--Our Paper.--Labor
Connected with Study.--True Education.--The South Lancaster
Academy.--Special Course.

It was hoped that as soon as possible, all the typesetting, proof­
reading, and press work would be done by students as part of the
trades program that had been introduced twelve months before. 2

With the coming of the spring, work commenced on the main
school building which would be completed after Bell had left the
school. Among his last responsibilities at the school was the
organization of a special course in missionary work which was to be
conducted in the last three weeks of the term that ended on May 16.
When Elder D. A. Robinson advertised the course in the Review and
Herald, he referred to it as being "in some respects . . . the most
important we have had." Classes were presented in Bible readings
and missionary work, and Bell conducted a special exercise in
language each day. 3 Perhaps it was more indicative of the quality

1 "The True Educator," RH 61 (April 15, 1884):244.
2 Ibid. See First Record Book, March 25, 1883, p. 40.
3 D. A. Robinson, "Special Course at South Lancaster," RH 61
(March 18, 1884):192. It was later reported that six ordained

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of the relationship between Bell and Haskell than a true evaluation of Bell's language teaching that Haskell should write somewhat depreciatively of Bell's class. In a letter, Haskell wondered if there was "not danger of carrying the criticisms of language to [sic] far. I have thought so, and thought the influence of it on a certain class of minds was to make them critics."

After the close of the school year in May 1884, Bell returned to his home in Battle Creek, but he gave no notice of any intention to either resign or return. Even as late as July 20, Haskell wrote that he did "not know whether he [Bell] intends to come back here or not at the school." Haskell indicated, however, that he was not going to urge him to return, even though he had expected him to remain at the school. Haskell had faced the same uncertainty during the previous two summers, because Bell had never agreed to take charge of the school for any specified period. This time, however, Bell chose not to return to South Lancaster. Unfortunately, practically no primary sources appear to still exist relative to Bell's withdrawal from the school. Poor health was without doubt a major factor. Rowena Purdon attributed his resignation to ill health and the increasing responsibilities of the ministers and nearly all the colporters, canvassers and other missionary workers in the region attended the special course. A total of fifty-five enrolled, including some academy students who were also present. See S. N. Haskell, "Meeting at South Lancaster, Mass.," RH 61 (June 3, 1884): 368.

1 S. N. Haskell to Ellen G. White, May 13, 1884, EGWRC—GC.
2 S. N. Haskell to Ellen G. White, July 20, 1884, EGWRC—GC.
The evidence between 1882 and 1884 certainly points to a constant health problem that caused him to deteriorate during the last six months of his term of office. Bell's constitution was never robust. His inclination to take on too many responsibilities affected both his physical and mental well-being. During the first year at South Lancaster, for example, he was president of the General Sabbath School Association, and he remained as a member of the Association's executive and publishing committees during the second year. His poor health limited the effectiveness of his leadership in the school and strained his personal relationships with others. His sensitive nature and unwillingness to receive advice only added to his problems. On his own admission he had not always been circumspect in his actions and thus it was best that he did not return to South Lancaster Academy. Both Haskell and the students recognized that Bell had been a successful teacher but not a very successful principal.

Bell's Influence Continues

Though bodily removed from South Lancaster, his work, however, lived on through his students. Of the seven new teachers who came to South Lancaster Academy in the 1884-85 school year, five had been students of Bell: Miss Emma M. Farnsworth, Miss Fannie Dickerson, Miss Mary Chapin, Miss Mary Gould, and Mrs. Sara J. Hall.

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2 Ibid., p. 45.
Mrs. Hall was the only one of the five who had been taught by Bell at Battle Creek College, and she had imbibed much of the Bell spirit. Myron Wehtje, the historian of South Lancaster Academy, has regarded her as "the most influential teacher in the academy's first quarter century." She remained on the faculty almost continuously until her death in 1910.¹ Mrs. Hall was a firm advocate of Bell's method of teaching English, and she expected her students to master Bell's Natural Method in English and his Guide to Punctuation. Rowena Purdon, who was one of her students in the 1880s, wrote of her:

When she gave a passing mark to a pupil, it was absolutely certain that he understood the construction of the English sentence, his subjects and predicates just naturally agreed, and he knew the reason why."²

Barbara Phipps tells the experience of her father, Burton Phipps, who spent more than seventy years of his life as a student, teacher and administrator in the Seventh-day Adventist church. Phipps came to South Lancaster Academy in 1907 and was taught by Mrs. Hall. On one occasion when Mrs. Hall asked Phipps to recite on the section in book no. 4 of Bell's series on obsolete words, he gave what he considered to be a "very good synopsis." Mrs. Hall, however, did not think so and told him he had not prepared his lesson. Burton Phipps replied, "Mrs. Hall, when we finish our English class here, we'll either be G. H. Bells or Mrs. Halls."³

¹Wehtje, And There Was Light, p. 51.
²Purdon, That New England School, p. 23.
³Barbara Phipps, Test Tubes and Chalk Dust (Berrien Springs, Mich.: University Printers, 1976), pp. 29-30. The function of this
Two of Bell's personal qualities that impressed his students were his thoroughness and his love of the beautiful. Mrs. Hall reflected these qualities of her former mentor and thus extended Bell's influence at South Lancaster for many years. One who taught with her on the staff of the academy wrote:

Mrs. Hall's pupils, now scattered far and wide, will always be grateful to her for her insistence upon well-learned lessons, for the thorough training that she gave in the use of their mother tongue and for the love of the beautiful in literature which she awakened in them.

Bell had not taught in vain.

Ellen White supported Bell's withdrawal from full-time teaching. She wrote to him in September 1884 and counselled him that it was better for him not to teach again in the schools of the church, in view of his past difficulties and some personal problems in his own life. Bell's decision to resign from full-time denominational employment brought to an end his direct contact with the Seventh-day Adventist school.

Conclusion

Bell was at South Lancaster for only two years, but they were important years for the development of the institution. He assisted in the making of decisions that determined the direction of

chapter has not been to present a complete coverage of the history of the South Lancaster school between 1882 and 1884, but rather to examine Bell's role during that period. For a readable, thorough and more complete account of the period see Wehtje, And There Was Light, pp. 1-48.


2 Ellen G. White to G. H. Bell, September 11, 1884. Letter 26, 1884, EGWRC--GC.
the school for many years ahead. His teaching implanted Christian principles into the lives of many students who later became leaders in the work of the church. Pioneering work is always difficult, but Bell had pioneered in a successful program that connected physical labor with mental discipline. He believed that this was vital to the work of character development, and Bell, above all, was concerned about the development of the character of his students. An integral part of this emphasis on physical development was his instruction in physiology and hygiene.

For Bell, "true education" meant a practical education. He stressed the importance of the basic subjects in language and taught them with an emphasis on the development of the processes of thought. A practical education, however, was one that also gave balanced treatment to the physical, mental, and spiritual development of the student, and thus he introduced Bible study as a regular and most significant part of the school program for every student. He had worked hard at considerable personal sacrifice to lay a good foundation upon which others could build.

Nevertheless, at the same time, it is recognized that his personal difficulties limited the effectiveness of his influence and leadership as they had at Battle Creek College. He found it difficult to take the initiative in administration. He was often harsh in his dealings with students, sensitive to criticism, and he did not always relate well with his peers. All these difficulties were intensified by his poor health.

His work as a Christian educator, however, was not yet
finished. Bell's faith in God, and his personal qualities of persistence and endurance would not permit him to withdraw from helping the youth of the church. During the remaining fifteen years of his life, he continued to make a significant impact, particularly through his private tutoring, his highly acclaimed series of English textbooks, and his educational labors on behalf of the home. The next chapter examines his contribution as a teacher of English and a writer of English textbooks. Chapter seven treats his other educational activities during his years of retirement until the time of his death in 1899.
During his career at Battle Creek College, Bell had taught a variety of subjects including botany, vocal music, and arithmetic. Nevertheless, the subject that lay closest to his heart and the one in which he particularly excelled was English. He had been the first to head an English department in any Seventh-day Adventist college. English teaching was his specialty at both Battle Creek College and at South Lancaster Academy. His crowning achievement, however, was the preparation of a series of English textbooks which were enthusiastically acclaimed, not only within the Seventh-day Adventist church but also by many educators in the public school system. Bell prepared the five volumes in the series from 1896 through 1898, completing the final book in the year before his death. He wrote them especially for the schools of the church, and thus some of the distinguishing features of his philosophy as a Christian educator are revealed in them. In the description and analysis of Bell's contribution to the study of English that

1 See pp. 325-26 below.

2 The titles of the five and the dates of their publication were: Primary Lessons from Life, Nature, and Revelation (1898); Elementary Grammar (1896); Complete Grammar (1896); Rhetoric and Higher English (1897); and Studies in English and American Literature (1898).
follows, these features are particularly examined.

The series of five were not, however, the first textbooks Bell had written. During the 1880s he wrote three others\(^1\) which dealt largely with the principles of grammar. Altogether, these eight textbooks constitute not only a statement of his methods in teaching English, but even more important, are an expression of his faith as to the contribution the study of English can make to the development of character. A study of their content and purpose, therefore, is a significant part of this dissertation.

**Changes in English Teaching**

So that Bell's contribution might be more clearly understood it will be helpful, first, to examine the state of English teaching in American schools during the latter half of the nineteenth century. After 1850\(^2\) the rapid growth of secondary schools produced...
significant changes in the development of curricula in secondary education. John Stout has analyzed the development that occurred in the high schools of the North Central American states between 1860 and 1918. He stated that "in no other field have the changes been so radical and important as in the field of English." He noted that this change was marked in three ways: in the increase in the amount of time devoted to English; in the increasing uniformity of English requirements among the schools, and in the relative emphasis placed upon the different English subjects. Rhetoric and grammar, for example, received less attention, while literature received more.¹

It was not until the end of the century, however, that the study of English emerged from its subordination to the study of the classics. As the aims of secondary education were modified, they were perceived to be not only directed towards preparing students for college or university but for adult life in any sphere. G. R. Carpenter, F. T. Baker, and F. N. Scott, authors of one of the first textbooks on methods in English, stated in 1903 that the latter part of the nineteenth century had been especially marked by much discussion of two important questions:

"... first, whether it would or would not be wiser to decrease greatly the use of Latin and Greek as instruments of secondary education, or indeed, as a rule, wholly to do away with them; and second, whether ... it would be possible to use the modern languages as a means of securing the mental discipline and other beneficial effects that have

long been thought to be best secured by training in Latin and Greek.

They added that the progress that was then being made (in 1903) in the teaching of English Literature, for example, seemed to show that such instruction served "better than Latin and Greek the purpose of awakening and organizing the aesthetic side of the boy's nature and of building up in him a sound taste for good literature." ²

In the 1870s a change occurred which raised the status of the study of English in the secondary schools. Harvard University in 1873-74 instituted an entrance examination in English which gave recognition to the need for grammatical and rhetorical accuracy in the use of English. Students demonstrated their expertise in these areas by the writing of a short English composition on one of several English classics. ³ Though not welcomed by the preparatory schools, many of which at that time gave practically no instruction in English, this action gave much impetus to its study. In 1894 Yale University further reinforced the development and status of the English curriculum by requiring at entrance a knowledge of the content of some of the classics, no longer merely as


the basis of tests in writing, as in the Harvard requirements, but on the knowledge of the literary masterpieces for their own sake.¹

As a teacher of English in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Bell was giving instruction in grammar, rhetoric, and literature at a time when the foundations of the subject of English were being laid in the school curriculum. Modifications in both content and teaching methodology were being made and, in both of these areas, Bell demonstrated that he stood among the progressive educational thought-leaders of his time.

An examination of the eight English textbooks that Bell published between 1881 and 1898 reveals that they covered the three divisions of grammar, rhetoric, and literature. The emphasis given to these three areas, however, was by no means equal. Six of the volumes covered different aspects of grammar, one dealt with rhetoric, and one with English and American literature. Such unequal treatment reflected Bell's basic concerns with grammar, in the teaching of which he excelled² and for which he was most often remembered.

To properly appreciate Bell's contribution in these three divisions of English it is proposed to consider the educational and historical context for each division followed by a brief analysis of

¹Ibid., p. 282.

²According to W. C. White's recollections, it was Bell's remark to his older brother, Edson, in 1867, that "grammar properly taught, was one of the most interesting studies in the world," that led to Bell being first invited to teach grammar in Battle Creek. See W. C. White, "Stories Re Early Education in Battle Creek," p. 1, DF256, EGWRC--AU.
the content and purpose of the texts Bell wrote within that division. The greatest emphasis is placed upon grammar inasmuch as Bell's primary interests lay in that direction. Attention is also given to the impact of Bell's textbooks upon the educators of his day, both within and without the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

How Grammar Was Taught

W. M. Baskervill and J. W. Sewell wrote in 1895: "Of making many English grammars there is no end; nor should there be till theoretical scholarship and active practice are more happily wedded."1 Certainly many nineteenth-century writers, apparently dissatisfied with the grammar texts already in existence wrote new ones, in an attempt to bridge the gap between theory and practice. In spite of the attempts of so many authors to make grammar a meaningful and useful study, the basic attitude, however, remained unchanged. According to Robert Pooley of the University of Wisconsin,

Eighteenth century attitudes toward language and grammar as developed in England almost completely dominated the teaching of grammar in the United States until the close of the nineteenth century and set a pattern which persists to the present [1957].2

Charles Fries has pointed out that the eighteenth century grammars aimed to teach English people correct English. Their

purpose was to reduce the language to rules based upon the rules of Latin grammar or upon "reason" but not upon common usage.¹ This artificial prescriptive form of grammar was well represented by Robert Lowth's Short Introduction to English Grammar (1762). Lowth viewed linguistic change as a corruption of the language and wanted to keep it in an unchanging form. His method, therefore, was to prescribe rules of grammar, illustrating them with correct and incorrect examples drawn from standard authors. "Correctness" in English usage was the **summum bonum** in the study of grammar. Certainly there were some in the eighteenth century who opposed this view. Joseph Priestley, for example, in his Rudiments of English Grammar (1761), criticized the dependence upon the rules of Latin grammar to explain English and considered usage as the only just standard of any language.²

In the period immediately following the American Revolution, the study of English grammar became an important part of the school curriculum in the United States. Noah Webster's Plain and Comprehensive Grammar appeared in 1784 and was well accepted until Lindley Murray published his English Grammar Adapted to the Different Classes of Learners in 1795. Murray later added three more texts.³ These books reached a combined total of over 120


³These were his Abridgement (1797), An English Grammar, in Two Volumes (1814), and English Exercises (1802). See Pooley, Teaching English Grammar, p. 24.
editions of 10,000 copies each, so more than a million copies of Murray's grammar books were sold in America before 1850. Murray, however, copied almost exclusively from Lowth and thus the prescriptive form of grammar dominated American education during the first fifty years of the nineteenth century. Murray focused attention upon the individual words in the sentence by giving rules for parsing and identifying the parts of speech. His grammar dealt almost exclusively with words, their classification and forms (etymology) and their uses (syntax). The dullness of his parsing exercises may well account for the hatred toward grammar manifested by many children in the nineteenth century.

About the middle of the nineteenth century, however, two texts appeared that had considerable influence. Samuel Greene published *The Analysis of Sentences* in 1847 and in 1881 Goold Brown produced his *Grammar of English Grammars*. Pooley refers to Brown's volume as "the epitome of the eighteenth-century tradition." Its

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2An example of a parsing exercise for a short sentence selected from Murray's *English Grammar* is:

"Wisdom or folly governs us. Wisdom, a common substantive; or a conjunction; folly, a common substantive; governs, a verb active, indicative mode, present tense, third person singular, agreeing with its nominative case 'wisdom or folly,' according to Rule III, which says etc.; us a personal pronoun, first person plural, in the objective case, and governed by the active verb 'governs,' agreeably to Rule XI, which says, etc." L. Murray, *English Grammar Adapted to the Different Classes of Learners* (York: Wilson, Spence and Mawman, 1795), p. 143.

more than one thousand pages of fine print include rules to be memorized, exercises to be parsed, and quotations to be "corrected." Brown quoted Nugent as saying, "Grammar is the art of reading, speaking, and writing a language by rules." The rules were, of course, his rules, for he condemned both his predecessors and contemporaries. Like most of his contemporaries, he was strongly deductive in his approach and had great faith in the benefits of parsing. He stated, "In the whole range of school exercises, there is none of greater importance than parsing."

Brown's Grammar of English Grammars is of interest to this study because Goodloe Bell possessed a copy of the book and wrote numerous annotations in the margins. Due to what we know of a man of Bell's disposition Bell would have held the book in much respect for its organization, thoroughness and scholarship. To what extent he followed its method of teaching grammar, however, is considered below.

Pooley states that Brown's Grammar of English Grammars . . . marked the pinnacle and decline of the traditional concept of language and grammar as derived from the eighteenth century. Tendencies already visible in earlier grammars became more and more pronounced, so that by the third

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2 For example, among those Brown berates are Noah Webster (ibid., p. 33), Lindley Murray (p. 37), Murray's successors (p. 38), Samuel Kirkham (p. 47), and Roswell Smith (p. 126).

3 Ibid., p. 110.

quarter of the century a new theory of grammar was superseding the old, bringing with it a new attitude toward language itself. Yet with the changes in theory, much of the specific subject matter remained unchanged, appearing in text after text . . . carried along by the weight of tradition.

The seeds of change had been sown in the late 1820s by Roswell Smith's inductive approach to grammar. Samuel Greene further developed this method. This new theory of grammar involved analyzing the whole sentence, and identifying the major sentence elements. In contrast, the older system (e.g., Lindley Murray) "emphasized the parsing of individual words, generally giving all words in a sentence equal attention, and said very little if anything about sentences as a whole."^2

Brown believed that "the only successful method of teaching grammar is to cause the principal definitions and rules to be committed thoroughly to memory, that they may ever afterwards be readily applied."^3 Greene, on the other hand, stressed that children understand grammar more from what they have to do than from what they commit to memory. In the second half of the nineteenth century, therefore, grammar teaching was a battleground where the successors of Greene with their functional view of grammar fought with the successors of Brown who argued for logic and reason, and were strongly opposed to the appeal to custom and usage.

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1Pooley, Teaching English Grammar, p. 25.


3Goold Brown, The Institutes of English Grammar (1825), Preface, quoted in Pooley, Teaching English Grammar, p. 27.
About the middle of the nineteenth century a system of diagramming sentences was linked with Greene's approach. Though slightly modified by many different grammarians, this device proved a valuable aid in the formal work of parsing and analysis of sentences. The diagrams were developed most fully by Bell's contemporaries, Brainerd Kellogg and Alonzo Reed, in their *Higher Lessons in English*.\(^1\) Published lists of textbooks indicate that this text was one of the most widely used books after 1890, the time Bell was writing his series. Their preface indicates that they were avoiding the approaches of two classes of grammar textbooks prevalent in the late 1800s. One class presented technical grammar under the headings of Orthography, Etymology, Syntax, and Prosody\(^2\) and demanded much memorizing of definitions, rules, and formal word parsing. In the other class, a miscellaneous collection of lessons in Composition, Spelling, Sentence-analysis, and Technical Grammar

\(^{1}\)A simple example of one of their sentence diagrams is given below.

**Diagram for the sentence: They offered Caesar the crown three times.**

\[\text{They} \quad \text{offered} \quad \text{the} \quad \text{times} \quad \text{three} \quad \text{Caesar} \quad \text{crown}\]


\(^{2}\)An example of such a grammar is Wm. H. Maxwell, *Advanced Lessons in English Grammar* (New York: American Book Company, 1897).
was presented "without unity or continuity." The approach of Reed and Kellogg was

... to trace with easy steps the natural development of the sentence, to consider the leading facts first and then to descend to the details... Unless the pupil has been systematically trained to discover the functions and relations of words as elements of an organic whole his knowledge of the parts of speech is of little value.

Stout, however, considered that their extensive use of the diagram as a means of analysis "resulted in a continuation of the practice of emphasizing formal analysis and parsing." He charged that "a knowledge of grammar as an end in itself and mental discipline, in spite of all statements to the contrary, continued to constitute the chief aim in the teaching of grammar, so far as the texts themselves were concerned, to the end of the century."²

**Grammar at Battle Creek College**

Significant changes, therefore, were taking place in the teaching of grammar in the middle of the nineteenth century when Bell commenced his teaching career. Nothing is known about his language teaching prior to his arrival in Battle Creek, though he stated in 1877 that he had been engaged in teaching grammar for twenty-five years.³ While he was teaching at Battle Creek College, he wrote an article on "English Grammar" for the first issue of the new college paper—Battle Creek College—which had appeared in

¹Reed and Kellogg, *Higher Lessons in English*, pp. 5-6.
²Stout, *Development of High-School Curricula*, p. 126.
January 1877. This article gives some insights into his views of the subject and how to teach it. He stated that the importance of grammar study "can hardly be overestimated." Doubtless reflecting his own experience, he said that "a few years ago" the country schoolteacher was confronted by parents who were not "anxious, or even willing, to have their children study grammar." He admitted that teachers had more difficulty teaching this subject than other studies,¹ but he feared that "very many teachers" were satisfied if their students could recite the textbook rules and definitions and demonstrate their ability to analyze and parse. Such mechanical study of grammar failed to "cultivate the judgment" or to "exercise the power of discrimination" with the result that both the student and the teacher did not like the subject.²

Bell also lamented that grammar often had "very little practical value" and stated that the fault lay in the "course of instruction." He then set out his teaching method.

The pupil should first be taught that which he can most easily comprehend, which will be most useful to him, and

¹This was an opinion shared by others. In 1880 I. N. Demmon wrote, "I am aware that grammar is badly taught in the schools, perhaps worse than any other subject. The difficulty of the subject calls for a higher grade of teachers than do most other studies, and we should expect as a result to find more bad teaching of this subject than any other. . . . Text-books, too, are in many cases inferior. . . . What we need today is better text-books and better teaching of them" ("The Place of Technical Grammar in the Schools of Today." Forty-Fourth Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction of the State of Michigan with Accompanying Documents for the Year 1880 [Lansing: W. S. George & Co., 1881], p. 270).

which will best prepare him to take another step. The intricacies of every subject should be omitted at first, only the most plain and obvious facts being introduced. These should be made familiar by numerous and oft-repeated examples from both teacher and pupil; in fact, everything should be taught from examples, and not from formal statements and definitions. Rules and definitions are important, but they should come in as clear and concise statements of what has been learned by actual investigation.

The judgment of the pupil should be freely called into exercise at every recitation. In grammar, as in music a little instruction should be followed by much practice.

This article by Bell indicated that even in the 1870s he was not following the popular custom of presenting a rule-oriented course with little practical value. It would, appear, however, that Bell at this time was overemphasizing grammar, at least within the context of the purposes of Battle Creek College.

Ellen White, with her husband James, had helped to found the institution for the purpose of preparing ministers and other gospel workers for the church. Because of the pressing need for such workers to be trained quickly, she urged the college leadership to be careful in the selection of subjects presented to the ministerial trainees. In this context she said, in 1880, that Bell

... might have done his part in sending forth these men with much greater knowledge, if he had not made grammar his idol, and kept the minds under his charge drilling upon grammar, when they should have been receiving a general education upon many subjects.2

She added that he had "wronged the students" by making grammar "the one all-important study." Because he had not encouraged them "to have an equal opportunity for other studies," some had left the

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1bid.

2Ellen G. White, "Our College," MS 3, 1880, EGWRC--AU.
college "with only half an education." Very few would need their minds confined "to such a thoroughness," and Bell, in her estimation, had carried the matter "to great extremes," injuring his usefulness and creating great dissatisfaction.¹

Bell evidently responded to this counsel in a positive way, because two years later she had occasion to write again concerning the college. At that time she noted that Bell had "in time past given undue prominence to the study of Grammar, making it the all-important subject." Then she added that "not withstanding his efforts to correct this error, his usefulness has been greatly injured." Again she expressed her regret that he had carried his thoroughness to "great extremes" and had produced such dissatisfaction.²

Bell's First Grammar Textbook

It was in the late summer of the year between these two communications from Ellen White that Bell published his first grammar textbook, Natural Method in English.³

In the preface Bell explained that he had given the book this title because it was "an attempt to present a natural method" of teaching language. His course of instruction was developed not

¹Ibid.
²Ellen G. White, Testimony for the Battle Creek Church (Oakland, Cal.: Pacific Press Publishing House, 1882), pp. 9-10 (emphasis supplied). The accuracy of this assessment concerning the dissatisfaction Bell had aroused at the College in 1882 has been considered in chapter four.
³Bell wrote the preface for the 1st edition on May 29, 1881.
with primary reference to the parts of speech but "to meet the

demands of thought--first showing a need and then how that need is

supplied."¹ In one of his later books he described more fully what

he meant by this statement:

As we look upon nature our attention is attracted by count­

less objects, for all of which we must have names, before we

can talk about them. In these objects we observe various

conditions and qualities. Now when we wish to show that

these properties exist in a thing, we must add to its name, c e r t a i n

words that denote these properties; that is quality

words. Just so it is that to talk of actions we must have

action words; and when we wish to show the time, place, or

manner of an action, we must have words for that purpose.

We also need words to show the relation of ideas to one

another. Thus it is that language is made to serve our

needs; . . . ²

Among the significant features of the book was the very

extensive selection of examples used to illustrate the concepts
taught. Bell took pains to make the examples easy to understand and
to illustrate only the special point in each lesson. He believed

that a combination of inductive-deductive teaching was most
effective, though he claimed to stress the inductive approach in

most of his lessons. Grammatical analysis was subordinated to

understanding the thought being expressed. This was of "the utmost

importance," he said, "for how often the pupil becomes wholly

oblivious to the meaning of a sentence while giving it grammatical

analysis."³ Because of his emphasis on the importance of the mean­

1G. H. Bell, Natural Method in English, 2nd ed. (Battle


2Bell, Familiar Talks, p. 1 (emphasis his).

3Bell, Natural Method, pp. v, vi.
and tended to follow Greene's focus on a consideration of the whole sentence.

We must not overlook an aim Bell first stated in this volume and repeated in his later texts, for it demonstrates his overriding goal in the study of all branches of language. It was, for example, a delight to him to observe "the peculiar fitness, force and beauty of rhetorical figures" in language usage. He pointed out that the name of the figure was "of little consequence, "but it was important "to show why it is appropriate, and what gives it its chief charm," so that the learner could develop an appreciation for the beauty and adaptability of the language. Then he stated that his ultimate aim was "to cultivate such a love for the study of language as will finally lead to the formation of a correct taste."  

To Bell language was dynamic and quite capable of expressing themes of great beauty and truth. Within the Christian context he believed that mastery of language could only enrich one's appreciation of life and contribute to the development of a noble and symmetrically balanced character. Bell enunciated this principle, however, more fully in his later volumes.

_Natural Method in English_ contained 432 pages and 288 carefully structured lessons that were profusely provided with examples for drill and illustration taken from the Bible as well as such writers as Longfellow, Bryant, Goethe, Whittier, Milton, Shakespeare, Lamb, Wordsworth, etc. His lessons generally were developed

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1. Ibid., p. vi.

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around the headings of Instruction, Exercise or Consideration of Examples and Seat Work.\(^1\) Models for parsing and analysis without the aid of diagrams were included, but the usual distinction between grammar and analysis was discarded. Both were presented simultaneously in a natural way and the emphasis was on thought. Many of the principles of rhetoric were also interwoven naturally with the instruction.

In his occasional remarks to teachers, Bell showed a sensitivity to the needs of children. Before Lesson 1 he wrote:

> If we would arouse the minds of children, and awaken in them a permanent interest in any subject, we must lose no time in giving them a permanent interest in any subject, we must lose no time in giving them something to do. To that end, the first exercises in this book are made so simple that every child can take part in them.\(^2\)

Bell believed that by following this policy, the child would become "courageous and hopeful. He has been victorious in the first encounter, and expects to conquer in those that are to follow."\(^3\)

Evidently the book was very well received. Within three months from the printing of what was advertised as "an entirely new method of presenting the principles of the English language,"\(^4\) the first edition was exhausted. A publisher's note in the second enlarged edition stated:

\(^1\)Lesson 183 from Bell's Natural Method is reproduced in appendix C.

\(^2\)Bell, Natural Method, p. 1.

\(^3\)Ibid.

\(^4\)See advertisement in the back of G. H. Bell's Guide to Correct Language (Battle Creek, Mich.: Giles and Holser, 1882), AYHR.
The favor accorded to it by the public far exceeded our most sanguine expectations. Leading educational men hail it as a grand step in the right direction. Experienced teachers say that they have been anxiously wishing for the development of just such a method.

Since the Seventh-day Adventist church in 1881 operated only one denominational school, practically all of these books must have been sold to public schools. At least some of these public school teachers would have enthusiastically promoted Bell's book because he had taught them at Battle Creek College.²

The publisher's advertising circular for the book carried testimonials from the New England and National Journal of Education; C. F. R. Bellows, a professor at the State Normal School at Ypsilanti; J. Estabrook, principal of the Normal Department of Olivet College; A. J. Daniels, Superintendent of Schools, and A. E. Strong, high school principal in Grand Rapids; A. P. Haupt, teacher of the German Natural Method Schools; D. Moury, of the Normal Department, Tennessee University, Nashville; and P. Swart, Superintendent of Schools, Elkart Co., Indiana.³

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¹Bell, Natural Method, p. iii.

²An advertising circular prepared by the publishers of the Natural Method described Bell as being "widely known on account of the rapidity with which his pupils acquire a thorough and practical knowledge of the English language. . . . Scores of teachers attribute to his instruction their marked success in teaching a study which is generally dry and uninteresting." See advertising circular—The Teaching of the English Language Made Rational, Practical, Successful by the Use of the Natural Method in English by G. H. Bell (Battle Creek, Mich.: Giles and Holser, 1882), p. i, AUHR.

³It is recognized that derogatory appraisals are not printed by publishers in their advertising circulars. Nevertheless a sample of these testimonials should be recorded: New England and National
A "Guide to Correct Language"

In the following year Bell published his 98-page Guide to Correct Language. This was intended for reference rather than study and was divided into three parts. Part I was "Practical Grammar" and included many examples both for illustration and drill purposes. Part II contained a manual of 184 rules of punctuation classified according to the different construction in language. Bell called his approach "a new and entirely different plan" and explained that "instead of being at once taught all the uses of the comma, or of any other mark, we are told how to fully punctuate such constructions as the Series, the Participle Phrase, the Adjective Phrase, etc." His rules were accompanied by numerous examples from Bible verses and other literature. Part III listed and illustrated 45 rules for the use of capitals. Significantly, Bell stated that the rules given were "sanctioned by the best of scholars."^{1}

A survey of Bell's textbooks impresses the reader with his

Journal of Education: "We hail this book as a grand step in the right direction;" J. Estabrook: "I am sure that the work will rank high among textbooks on English Grammar;" H. R. Haupt: "It is years in advance of the common methods of instruction;" D. Moury: "I cannot too highly commend it to both teachers and students." See advertising circular--The Teaching of the English Language, p. 18, AUHR.


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very extensive reading and knowledge of literature. In addition to
the examples used to illustrate his rules, he listed in his Guide to
Correct Language 165 miscellaneous examples largely selected from
prose and poetry. All his examples were correctly punctuated, and
over each mark was placed the number of the rule which required it.\(^1\)
The last twelve pages contained an additional 209 examples that
could be used as exercises.

To accompany his Guide to Correct Language he prepared a
Punctuation Chart, 28 x 42 inches, that could be purchased either in
book form on heavy board, or mounted on rollers. This was
advertised as being "indispensable to the school room, minister's
study, editor's office, proof-reading room, or in fact, any place
where a writer may wish to ascertain at a glance just the marks
needed for the sentence he is writing."\(^2\)

**Textbook for Private Study**

The last textbook Bell wrote in the 1880's was published on
his return to Battle Creek after being principal of the South
Lancaster School. Entitled *Familiar Talks on Language*, it was also
a book on grammar. Its sole purpose, he said, was "to afford proper
instructions and exercises for those taking lessons by correspon-
dence," to which further reference is made in the next chapter. He

\(^1\)A sample page containing punctuation rules and illustrative
examples from Bell's Guide to Correct Language is reproduced in
appendix H.

\(^2\)Advertising prospectus for Bell's Natural Method, Guide to
Correct Language and Punctuation Chart, George Royal Avery Papers--
"The Fireside Teacher," AUHR.
felt that both the style as well as the many questions and exercises made the book especially valuable for private study.¹ Bell was still writing the "talks" in February 1886, though the date of publication is given as 1885.² He commenced writing the volume in 1885. His son Omar was printing the "talks," Bell said, as fast as he could write them.³ That year, therefore, was given as the publication date.

The book contained thirty talks with 150 lessons based upon them. Since it was written especially for home study, Bell expanded his explanations of the most important concepts. His remarks on his basic approach to grammar study are therefore worthy of special note. He wrote:

Through language we become acquainted with the thoughts of our fellow men; through language we learn the wisdom of past ages; and through language the will of Heaven, and the way of eternal life, are made known.

In order to make the study of language interesting, we must study the thought, as well as the expression of it. The want of this has made grammar a dry study, and always will make it so, no matter what ingenious methods may be devised to remedy the evil. The only way is to first study the thought, and its demands on language, for expression; then we become interested, and even delighted, in seeing how language meets those demands.

¹ G. H. Bell, Familiar Talks on Language, Pocket edition No. 1 (Battle Creek, Mich.: D. Omar Bell, 1885), pp. i, ii.
² On February 22 Bell wrote to G. R. Avery that he had completed twenty-five "talks" and had five more to write. See G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, February 22, 1886, George Royal Avery Papers, AUHR.
³ Ibid.
⁴ Bell, Familiar Talks, p. 1 (Emphasis his).
No records have been found of the extent to which the three grammar books written by Bell during the 1880s were circulated during the late 1880s and early 1890s. Bell's Natural Method, in particular, appeared to remain popular and was still being used in the early 1890s by some Seventh-day Adventist schools and colleges.\(^1\) Twenty years later its popularity was revived through its revision by W. E. Howell.\(^2\)

**Bell's Series of Five**

In 1891 and again in 1892, William T. Bland, who was then in charge of the Department of English Language and Literature at Battle Creek College, spoke with Professor Bell in regard to his Natural Method text. Bland indicated that he had replaced this book with others "that were considered more up to date, and more suitable to our class work." He suggested to Bell that if he could revise and update the book, he would use it at the college. Bell replied that it would not be profitable to do so because he thought that the circulation would be confined "almost entirely to denominational schools."\(^3\)

The matter does not appear to have been raised again in any

\(^1\) C. B. Hughes and C. C. Lewis, for example, both reported using the book in their schools in the early 1890s. See "In the Matter of the G. H. Bell Estate. Answering the Claim of A. R. Henry, Administrator against the General Conference Association"--Exhibit 5, Group 3, General Conference Association Document Series, GC Archives.

\(^2\) See pp. 328-29 below.

\(^3\) "In the Matter of the G. H. Bell Estate," Exhibit 5.
formal way until March 1896. At a meeting of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference Committee on March 18, Elder O. A. Olsen, the General Conference President and a former student of Bell's, raised the question of supplying the Adventist schools with a new textbook on language. He referred to Bell's Natural Method "now being used by some of our schools" and stated that the book was "rather larger than necessary." He wondered whether Professor Bell might revise it and prepare a graded series "applicable to all the needs of our educational work." It was voted that a small committee should interview Bell and report back to the meeting.¹

The following day the committee indicated that they had spoken with Bell who had proposed to them an outline of a series of five textbooks on language. (Bell, however, may have been working on the series prior to this time, because two books in the series were printed within five months).

Books 2 and 3 in the series would cover much of the content in the Natural Method, "omitting the most difficult features ... and the most difficult examples under them." Bell indicated that his chief effort would be "to make the whole course thoroughly practical from the start." Among the reasons given for producing such a series were: (1) Small books would sell better than large ones; (2) It would place "this somewhat unusual method" more within the reach of inexperienced teachers; (3) Bell believed he had improved his method during the fifteen years since writing the

¹General Conference Committee Minutes, March 18, 1895, pp. 139-40, GC Archives.
Natural Method; (4) "By the choice of examples and the method of instruction "it was believed that minds might be led more nearly in harmony with Seventh-day Adventist faith and practice; and (5) Many leading teachers within the denomination had been calling for a series to cover the ground of the three grammar texts Bell had written in the 1880s.

After "thorough consideration" the General Conference Committee voted to invite Bell to prepare his series. After the motion had been carried Elder Olsen explained why he had called for the books to be prepared. He was particularly concerned that the church would soon have a large number of small schools in the South where such a series as was proposed would be of great value to the teachers. ¹

Five thousand copies of Books 2 and 3 in the series had been printed by August 1896, and one thousand of each had been bound. By September 8, it was reported that 291 copies of Book 2 had been sold and 278 copies of Book 3. ² Book 4 was ready by September 1897, and Books 1 and 5 were released in 1898. ³

These five books represent the full flowering of Bell's method of teaching English and were planned, Bell claimed, so that

¹General Conference Committee Minutes, March 19, 1896, pp. 154-56.

²"In the Matter of the G. H. Bell Estate," Exhibit 0, p. 1.


Three Textbooks on Grammar

Three of the volumes covered the principles of grammar with much the same basic approach as the three earlier volumes. Book I, however, was not a grammar. Rather it was to serve as "an introduction to that study" for children from nine to twelve years of age. Its primary object was "to teach language," which Bell believed was best accomplished in an "indirect manner." In other words, no technical terms were introduced, yet children were taught to recognize the function of words, phrases and clauses. "The first thing to be done," Bell said, was to "arouse thought and promote habits of close observation."

\begin{enumerate}
\item Ibid., pp. 4, 6. An exercise from \textit{Primary Language Lessons} that illustrates this approach is: "Example--The tower of the old castle fell into the stream. 1. What fell into the stream? 2. Was it the castle, or the tower, that fell? 3. Where did it fall? 4. What tower fell? 5. What kind of castle was it? 6. What word names the thing that fell? 7. What word names the thing that the tower was a part of? 8. What word names the thing that the tower fell into? 9. What word describes the castle? 10. What word tells what the tower did?" Ibid., p. 30.
\end{enumerate}
The lessons in the first volume were based on short stories selected from the New Testament and from nature. Leaves, a worm, the flower, a spider, the toad, birds, and a sunflower seed were all subjects of Bell's facile pen. He urged teachers to give their pupils writing exercises on nature studies. With overtones of Pestalozzi, he suggested that the children should examine natural objects and then write on them. From his own experience as a writer he said:

The teacher cannot begin too early in guiding the young writer to put something of himself into every original production—some of the thoughts, feelings, motives, which the study of his subject has awakened in him.

Books 2 and 3 in the series completed Bell's writing on grammar. They repeated his earlier emphasis on the importance of a consideration of the thought in the study of language. He was careful, therefore, to select both the sentences for exercises and class drill and the models for analysis that were "interesting for the thought they express."

Bell was ever concerned with the development of facility and accuracy of expression, but he disagreed with the idea later expressed by Chubb that grammar as the science underlying the art of correct writing was best developed by imitation.\(^2\) Good expression was not acquired by memorizing the words of others, Bell maintained, but by "careful and continual practice in the use of one's own

\(^1\)ibid., p. 11.

words." "Invention" was "better than imitation."*  

He also believed that good taste in language was acquired by "association." If students were continually associating with the best thoughts in their exercises, "a love for the concise and beautiful in thought and style is steadily, and certainly, though unconsciously attained." This was most important to Bell. He was essentially a Christian educator and therefore whatever was related to the development of a noble and balanced character was supremely significant. Through association with what is beautiful, the student secured a culture "of inestimable value, since it leads the learner to select and enjoy the best reading our literature affords, and to shun the coarse and vulgar because it is offensive to the taste." In his Complete Grammar he included only a few exercises in correcting bad grammar because he believed that "association with the good will have a better effect than constantly searching for the bad. . . . In language as well as in morals," he said, "the atmosphere of purity, beauty and truth begets a healthy life."*  

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**Ibid., p. iv.** Other grammars published in the 1890s also included examples selected from good literature but their purpose for doing so was not so closely linked with character development as was Bell's. Mary Hyde, for example, said that such examples trained the pupil "to look to the usage of the best writers and speakers for the laws of language," and formed in him "the habit of thoughtful reading." Baskervill and Sewell included many examples from "standard" authors "to show the student that he is dealing with the facts of the language, and not with the theories of grammar." Mary F. Hyde, Advanced Lessons in English (Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1894), p. iv; Baskervill and Sewell, An English Grammar, p. 3.

*Bell, Complete Grammar, p. iii. It is of interest to note that during the decade from 1885 to 1895 "one of the most difficult
These were the hallmarks of Bell's teaching in grammar.

Bell's method of teaching grammar contrasted with the formal approach to the study of language so prevalent in his day. Dull recitations and memory drills had no part in his teaching, at least in the latter part of his life. Nearly thirty years after Bell had completed his language series, one author in his discussion of "the prevailing method" of teaching grammar, lamented:

Recitations are given over exclusively to reciting set classifications, stereotyped definitions, formal rules and memorized lists. Grammar is still a memory subject rather than a rational study; for the din of monotonous repetitions...is still to be heard in most schools.

Those students who had been taught by such methods under other teachers may not have found the change to Bell's methods an easy one. In the winter of 1895, Bell taught a grammar class in Battle Creek. He appreciated, he said, not only the students' kindness to him, but also their patience. In a letter to Mahlon Olsen, a former student in his language class, he wrote: "...and you know patience is required on the part of those who have studied other grammars, learning more form than anything else." ²

problems relating to secondary work in English" was the part played by the correction of "bad" English in grammatical and idiomatic expressions." David J. Hill says that "at that time text books most in use concerned themselves largely with exercises of this kind, and many colleges made a point of including such texts in their entrance requirements" (Principles of Rhetoric and Their Application, quoted in Stout, Development of High-School Curricula, pp. 127-28):

¹ Paul Klapper, Teaching English in Elementary and Junior High Schools (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1925, p. 308 (emphasis supplied).

Contemporary Views on Grammar Teaching

Before concluding this examination of Bell's textbooks and philosophy of grammar, it would be profitable to note the recommendations that were made concerning the teaching of this subject about five years after Bell had published the grammar texts in his series. The first complete American manual on method for the total English program appeared in 1902 when Percival Chubb published The Teaching of English in the Elementary School and the Secondary School. This was followed the next year by another manual with exactly the same title but authored by George R. Carpenter, Franklin T. Baker and Fred N. Scott. These two volumes probably present the best prevailing views on methodology at the turn of the century.

Chubb wrote about "the recent reaction against the old-fashioned grammar grind" and how "opinion has swerved to the extreme of excluding formal Grammar altogether from the Elementary School, and of ranking it as a High School study." This was the view expressed in the Report of the National Committee of Ten on Secondary Schools (1894) which held that formal grammar should not be studied until the age of thirteen years. More recently, however, Chubb observed that its study was recommended "in some form or other in the upper Grammar Grades," but without the heavy formal emphasis.¹

The first volume of Bell's series, Primary Language Lessons from Life, Nature and Revelation, written for children "from nine to twelve years of age" was therefore in harmony with this trend.²

¹Chubb, The Teaching of English, pp. 204-5.
²Bell, Primary Language Lessons, p. 3.
Chubb believed that grammar as an art was taught by practice, using the pedagogical technique of "imitation." Its study was essential to the work in composition and to the study of literature. In view of Bell's strong emphasis on the importance of ascertaining the thought of a sentence, it is significant that Chubb should urge that grammatical analysis was involved in "thought analysis." Chubb also condemned the common type of language textbook of his day in which the child's intelligence was insulted "by trivial and uninteresting exercises." Such exercises isolated language from life and treated language "not as a vehicle of expression called into play in the effort to impart or reproduce information, thought, fancy."

Carpenter, Baker, and Scott reiterated Chubb's emphasis on the importance of thought by stating that "a training in thought" was grammar's "most important" function. They claimed that "in the elementary school, as in the high school, the analysis of the sentence--that is, the analysis of thought [was] the most valuable exercise in connection with the study of grammar." This was best accomplished not by a deductive method, as it was "usually taught in the United States and England," nor inductively, as was the custom in Germany, but by a combination of both methods. Nevertheless, they urged that principles and examples should be kept close together and "start by preference with the example." These authors also discussed the choice of a grammar textbook. They felt that the

order of subject presentation was not so important but "clearness of statement, aptness, interest, and sufficiency of examples are points of great consequence. . . . The examples ought, further, to be taken from good literature. . . ." They also suggested that sentence analysis should be kept simple and "so far as possible, be done without the help of diagrams."\(^1\)

In the light of these principles it is here demonstrated that Bell's texts on grammar anticipated many of the recommendations that were later made by these English specialists soon after the turn of the century. This may account for the enthusiastic acceptance of Bell's texts by those who came into contact with them.

Bell's last two books in his series of eight were devoted to rhetoric and literature. It is probably best to examine these two books within their historical context before concluding with a final assessment of the series as a whole and of its impact upon others.

How Rhetoric Was Taught

According to Stout, "changes of considerable importance" took place in the textbook presentation of rhetoric during the last forty years of the nineteenth century.\(^2\) Up to about 1880 the approach to the subject had been formal and artificial and was usually not accompanied by practical exercises or compositions. An example of this kind of textbook was Richard Whately's *Elements of  

\(^1\)Carpenter et al., *The Teaching of English*, pp. 146, 149, 199, 148, 151, 204.

\(^2\)Stout, *Development of High-School Curricula*, p. 126.
Rhetoric that included such chapter titles as: "Of Propositions," "Of Arguments," "Persuasion," "Perspicuity," "Elegance," etc. It was concerned neither with composition nor grammatical rules but with argumentation.\(^1\)

About 1880 two movements combined to stimulate high-school interest in rhetoric and composition.\(^2\) First, the schools began to realize the importance of the subject, and second, college entrance examinations were being initiated to test students' ability to write. Particularly through the influence and writings of Professor Barrett Wendell and Professor F. N. Scott in the 1880s, a marked change appeared in "the amount and character of high school work in English." Two essential ideas developed: (1) in writing, practice was more important than theory; and (2) "correctness" in writing was to be more descriptive of the sentence and paragraph than of the word or phrase. These ideas had the effect of increasing the amount of writing and lessening the formality of the instruction in rhetoric. Greater attention was paid to structure than to correctness of detail. Toward the end of the century, however, the practice of high-school students writing daily compositions was not


\(^2\)"Rhetoric" was defined as the "formal or systematic instruction in the theory of expression." "Composition" was the instruction and practice in the art of expression, e.g. essay-writing, etc. Earlier in the nineteenth century, rhetoric was taught but not composition. See Carpenter, Baker, and Scott, The teaching of English, pp. 219–20.
so prevalent partly because of the stronger emphasis being given to literature.¹

Carpenter, Baker, and Scott pointed out that the study of rhetoric presupposed a knowledge of grammar, but that teachers disagreed at the end of the century whether rhetoric should be taught formally or incidentally. They said that three opinions existed: first, that rhetoric could be taught alone as theory; second, that rhetoric consisted of a minimum amount of theory accompanied by considerable practice in writing; and third, that no formal study of rhetoric was necessary inasmuch as the student learned that through his writing.²

The first of these opinions had been generally rejected by the end of the century. The third was held by many experienced teachers, but Carpenter, Baker and Scott in their manual for English teachers recommended that a brief course in systematic rhetoric, accompanied by a carefully selected set of graded exercises for practice purposes, was of greatest benefit.³

Bell Writes on Rhetoric

In his book on rhetoric Bell aimed to provide a practical treatment of the essentials of good language. He divided it into six parts examining choice of words, sentences, qualities of style, rhetorical figures, composition, and preparing copy for the press. Bell continued to develop his basic concept of language by stating

¹:ibid., p. 219.
²:ibid., pp. 219-20.
³:ibid., p. 222.
that "rhetoric lays hold of the thought, and seeks to present it in
the most attractive and vigorous manner."¹ He pointed to the Bible
as "one of the best of studies for promoting clear, strong, direct,
and beautiful expression."² For example, in his discussion on the
use of suitable or proper words, he wrote:

The sublimest as well as the most touching passages of
the Bible have the same characteristic simplicity. Some
eminent critics think that the passage, "And God said, Let
there be light: and there was light," is the sublimest
expression ever penned in the English language. Let any one
try to rewrite in different words Judah's appeal to Joseph
in behalf of Benjamin, and he will begin to realize the
exquisite wording of the Bible text.³

Unlike many of his contemporaries, Bell's style of writing
was simple and unadorned.⁴ He did not strive for effect for ef­
fact's sake. He wrote concisely and persuasively and tried by
precept as well as by example to lead his students to adopt the same
principles.

Bell's last and largest book in his series was entitled
Studies in English and American Literature, the preface for which he
wrote on June 14, 1898, seven months before he died. Literature
occupied a special place in Bell's life. The lives of many of his
students were influenced for good through the noble ideals and great

¹G. H. Bell, Rhetoric and Higher English [Battle Creek,
²Ibid., p. 82.
³Ibid., p. 96.
⁴See appendix B for a sample of Bell's writing style in
a selection of four of his original essays written while he was
at South Lancaster. See also Bell's article, "Good English: What
thoughts Bell shared with them from the words of the world's great writers. Bell wrote in his preface that this book "differs from most of its kind, both in plan and purpose." Before examining its plan and purpose then, we need to consider the nineteenth century developments in literature as a subject in the English curriculum.

How Literature Was Taught

Stout, in his analysis of the development of high-school curricula in the North Central states between 1860 and 1918, stated that of all the subjects in the English curriculum literature was the one "in which the most important changes took place from the standpoints both of amount and character of subject matter." The term "literature" largely referred to English literature though more American writers were included toward the end of the century.

Extracts from the works of great authors appeared in the first American reader: Noah Webster's American Selection of Lessons in Reading and Speaking in 1785. Short selections from a relatively large number of authors continued to be the focus of the school reading program through the first half of the nineteenth century. The emphasis at the time, however, was on the improvement of reading and declamation rather than the treatment of literature as a fine art. By 1865, Joseph Mersand said that

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1See, for example, Mahlon E. Olsen, "Recollections of Prof. G. H. Bell," YJ 68 (May 18, 1920):4-5.


3Stout, Development of High-School Curricula, p. 129.
... students were studying English and American literature, not in order to declaim it or to perfect their reading voices, but to develop taste in appreciation and to acquire facts of historical development of both English and American literature.

Stout traces three stages of development in the instruction in literature during the last forty years of the nineteenth century. The first stage was that already mentioned—many short selections from a large number of authors. McGuffey's Sixth Reader, for example, included 150 selections from more than a hundred authors in a book of 400 pages. The Student's Reader by William Swinton had 113 selections in 419 pages. George R. Cathart published his Literary Reader in 1875, and in contrast to McGuffey and Swinton had more American literature among his 179 selections from 68 authors. In Cathart's preface he claimed his book was uncommon because it introduced a liberal representation of American literature. 2

Stout's second stage described the shift from the study of literature itself to its history. During the late 1860s textbooks appeared such as William Spalding's History of English Literature with an Outline of the Origin and Growth of the English Language (1867). Spalding did not include any biographies, but he did discuss the events of each period. Those literary history textbooks more commonly in use, however, emphasized the biography of authors. In fact, later books laid so much stress upon the authors' lives and paid so little attention to their works that the superintendent of


Stout, Development of High-School Curricula, pp. 131-32.
the Chicago schools stated in his 1883 Annual Report that "the time devoted to English Literature is often expended on the history of unimportant and forgotten authorities with little appreciation or knowledge of real literature."^1

The third stage was marked by an emphasis upon the "classics". In other words, the emphasis moved away from the writer to his writings, which were studied as "wholes" rather than as "fragments". Introduced about 1885, this approach became quite general by 1890. Textbooks with the historical and biographical emphasis, however, persisted until the close of the century and provide an interesting contrast to the literature text produced by Bell in 1898. For example, Reuben Halleck's History of English Literature (1900) contained the biographies of more than one hundred authors that overshadowed some "very meager quotations" accompanied by their critical analysis.2

Bell, however, claimed that his literature text differed "from most of its kind, both in plan in purpose."3 An examination of Bell's volume against the historical background traced above helps one to evaluate this claim.

Bell's Textbook in Literature

Bell presented his book of more than 590 pages in two parts. Part I provided a historical outline from the origins of English

\[^1\]Annual Report of Board of Education, 1883, p. 62, quoted in Stout, Development of High-School Curricula, p. 133.
\[^2\]Stout, Development of High-School Curricula, p. 133-34.
\[^3\]Bell, Studies in English and American Literature, p. 3.
literature to the nineteenth century. He focused more particularly on the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries and briefly outlined the biographical facts on thirteen, twenty-six and thirty-one specific authors, respectively, in these centuries. The facts given, however, are directed mainly to those biographical details that make the authors' writings more meaningful. Bell suggested that time in school was better spent in a study of the truths their writings reveal, because it was not always profitable to study the personal traits of authors. Knowledge of their "foibles or disagreeable habits . . . cannot make us wiser, and should not make us happier. . . ." He added, "What we want is the best an author has to give us,—thoughts that inspire, and language that teaches the art of expression." At the end of Part I, Bell included 744 questions to review the whole section.

Part II contained the selections from different authors grouped under nine headings together with a tenth section containing short extracts. The nine major sections are listed in Table I below, together with an analysis of their content. As an aid to visualizing the relative emphasis given in Bell's selections, the following figures are provided: the percentage of prose and poetry in each section, the percentage of the total number of selections in each section, and the percentage of the total number of pages in each section. (Percentages have been rounded to nearest whole number).

\[\text{Ibid., pp. 19, 20.}\]
TABLE 1
ANALYSIS OF TOPICS IN BELL'S
STUDIES IN ENGLISH AND
AMERICAN LITERATURE
(All Figures Given in Percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Prose</th>
<th>Poetry</th>
<th>Total Selections</th>
<th>Total Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In honor of the Creator</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education, morals and religion</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies in nature</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home scenes and influences</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies in character</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descriptive and narrative</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public speeches and patriotic sentiment</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A survey of the authors and selections reveals some interesting facts. Bell's attitude toward Shakespeare, for example, stands in contrast to the increasing attention that was being given to his plays by the high schools and colleges in the 1890s. Bell did describe him as being the "central sun" among the galaxy of bright dramatic writers during the period from Wycliffe to Milton.
His writings, he said, abound in "passages of gravest wisdom, the purest motives, the most delicate appreciation of honor, the tenderest feeling, the tersest and aptest expression. . . ." But because of Shakespeare's cultural milieu, they also contain "relics of coarseness too vulgar for a refined taste, and unfit for indiscriminate reading. They are a most perfect mirror of human nature in all its phases, but some of those phases would better be forgotten than studied."^ Bell rejected the idea that so long as literature was true-to-life it was worthy of the Christian's study. Good literature must be uplifting and ennobling if it was to contribute positively to the development of character.

Bell used no selections from Shakespeare in his nine major sections. He did, however, include in his collection of short extracts one two-line selection and a longer selection from Henry VIII in which Wolsey addresses Cromwell with the famous lines:

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Had I served my God with half the zeal
I served my king, He would not in mine age
Have left me naked to mine enemies.
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Another omission from the selections in Part II was anything from the writings of John Milton. Bell did, however, discuss Milton's contribution as both a prose writer and a poet in Part I, and gave some brief excerpts from several of his works,^ as well as a discussion of some of the objections raised against "Paradise Lost."

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^Bell, Studies in English and American Literature, pp. 65-66.

^Quoted by Bell, ibid., pp. 505-6.

^Ibid., pp. 75, 76, 88-92.
Reference has been made in the previous chapter to Bell's love for the poetry of William Wordsworth. It would be expected, therefore, that he should feature him strongly in his volume on literature. Bell referred to Wordsworth as "one of the best of our modern English poets," and stated that his theme was "the influence of nature upon the character of men." If Wordsworth worshipped nature, he did so only because he believed it to be "an expression of the character of God." Bell included two of Wordsworth's poems, "Nature and Innocence" and "An Evening Excursion on the Lake," in his section "Studies in Nature." Though he recognized that the poet was often obscure to his readers, he described him as "one of those poets whom we learn to love more and more as we become better acquainted with them."^1

The poet Bell quoted most often and the one to whom he devoted the most space was William Cowper. Bell was drawn to Cowper as he was to Wordsworth because he shared with both men a love for nature and for all things beautiful. Bell categorized him:

As a moralist, he was faithful, yet not stern. As a satirist, he was keen without being bitter. . . . It would be hard to find in all the annals of literature a writer whose views are so wholly in keeping with the teachings of the lowly Nazarene.3

As a Christian educator, Bell was concerned with the development of character. It is pertinent, therefore, to also briefly examine a sample of his literature selections to determine the kinds of literature he used to contribute to this aim. Bell

^1Ibid., p. 135.  
^2Ibid., p. 127.
devoted forty-four pages and seventeen selections to his section entitled "Studies in Character." He included only four poems--by Whitman, Longfellow, Wordsworth, and Dunbar. The majority of his prose selections were from biographical accounts or historical essays on such people as George Washington, St. Paul, Abraham Lincoln, Joan of Arc, and Mary Queen of Scots. Only two fictional excerpts were included in this section: a selection "The Carpenter," from the writings of George Eliot, and one entitled "May and November," from The House of the Seven Gables by Nathaniel Hawthorne.¹

Bell, in fact, used little fiction in his book. Apart from these two references he included a short excerpt from Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin, a description of "The Panther" from James Fenimore Cooper's The Pioneers, and two selections from the writings of Charles Dickens. He used all four extracts in the section "Descriptive and Narrative."²

Of all his textbooks, this book on literature most clearly reveals Bell as a Christian educator. He acknowledged that all true wisdom comes from God who has revealed Himself not only in nature and in the Bible, but also "in his influence on the inner consciousness of men." Some men who are more sensitive to this revelation of God and his love become thereby interpreters of truth. They are still human, however, and "thus the light that shines through them is often more or less obscured. . . . In literature, as in mining, . . . the sands of error must be washed from the pure

¹Ibid., pp. 346-92.
²Ibid., pp. 401-12.
gold of truth." In spite of the imperfections of the human channel, there are many writings, he said,

... whose chief tendency is in the right direction,--writings that will bring us into closer contact with nature, into truer sympathy with humankind, and into a better attitude for receiving the truth and light with which the great All-Father is ever trying to impress us.

Bell introduced his second part with an impressive essay on "What Constitutes Literature." Literature can be classified in many ways, but he suggested only two: Knowledge Literature and Power Literature. The purpose of the second was to inspire and quicken the whole man. He described it further:

It gives play to the intellect, but not to that alone. It works most powerfully on the moral and emotional nature of man. It teaches, enlightens, convinces; but it does more. It has power to make men feel,--and not only to feel, but to act. It touches the heart, and thus creates motives. It shows man his relation to God, to his fellow men and to nature, inspiring in him a love for all. Thus it gives him the highest power for usefulness; since love is the only real power for good.

Bell also acknowledged the existence of another kind of power literature that worked on man's baser nature, debasing and...

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2: The important question to be considered in the study of literature, according to Bell, is what literature is most useful. His illuminating answer to this question is reproduced in appendix D.

3: This distinction was not original with Bell. Thomas De Quincey discussed the difference between books that communicated knowledge and those that communicated power, and said that "all that is literature seeks to communicate power." De Quincey, however, gave credit to Wordsworth for this distinction. See David Masson, The Collected Writings of Thomas De Quincey, 14 vols., new and enl. ed. (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1890), 10:48.

4: Bell, Studies in English and American Literature, p. 200.
brutalizing him. He could only class this as literature in its "brodest and lowest sense."\(^1\)

It is clear from this examination that the plan of Bell's final volume was indeed different from the majority of similar textbooks in the 1890s. This difference sprang from his different purpose,\(^2\) which he stated plainly in an introductory section entitled "Suggestions to Teachers."

The first thing to be considered is the primary object for which the study is to be pursued. It is pleasant to know who wrote this or that book, and to know the history and peculiarities of noted authors; but all this does not necessarily ennable one's character, discipline his mind to more vigorous thinking, or materially improve his language. It is not studying literature, but simply its history.

The real study of literature is the becoming acquainted with such writings as are by their intrinsic worth valuable to all people in all times. Such is the Bible; and such are all writings whose tendency is to call into healthy action the nobler attributes of our nature, thus contributing to the building up of a beautiful and symmetrical manhood.

But to become fully acquainted with such writings is to drink in of their spirit,—to be stirred by the motives and emotions that prompted them. Here is where the help of the teacher is most needed. Reading aloud with the class is one of the best things a teacher can do. His enthusiasm, his appreciation, his sympathy with the thoughts and motives of the author, will be contagious. . . .

This leads us to the paramount object of studying literature in schools; namely, the developing of so pure a taste that the learner will be able to discriminate at once between real literature and trash. The time will come for our pupils when they cannot have parents, teachers, or friends by their side to tell them whether or not a book is good reading. They must learn to recognize for themselves the moral tendency, the literary character, the trend of influence, which constitute the inherent power for good or

\(^1\)ibid., p. 201.

evil of any piece of writing. There is but one way for teachers to inculcate this, and that is by getting their pupils so thoroughly enamored with what is true and beautiful that they will instinctively turn away from everything of an opposite nature.

What Others Thought

Bell's language series were advertised, actively promoted and enthusiastically received by many teachers within the denomination. According to J. H. Haughey, Bell expected that the sales would be confined almost exclusively to Seventh-day Adventist schools. A number of church educational administrators including C. B. Hughes, J. E. Tenney, C.C. Lewis, J. H. Haughey, and J. W. Lawhead wrote of the benefit the books had been in their schools. Professor Frederick Griggs, principal of South Lancaster Academy, commented:

There is in the educational work at the present time, a strong tendency to return to natural methods of teaching, and Bell's language books stand as leaders in this educational reform. The excellence and beauty of all the examples used, is to be specially noted, and students who become familiar with these examples, acquire a taste and a love for the very best in literature.

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1Bell, *Studies in English and American Literature*, pp. 5-6.

2After Bell's death, A. R. Henry, administrator of his estate, claimed damages against the General Conference Association, charging that it "had neglected to advertise and introduce and to use diligence in promoting" the sale of Bell's language series. His claim was not sustained. See "In the Matter of G. H. Bell Estate," Exhibit 0, Group 3, General Conference Association Documents Series, GC Archives. See also A. G. Daniells to W. W. Prescott, February 25, 1907, GC Archives.


Dr. J. H. Kellogg, internationally known superintendent of the Battle Creek Sanitarium and a former pupil of Bell's, said that the professor's language series was

. . . the best set of textbooks for thorough instruction in the English language with which we are acquainted. Professor Bell has a genius for teaching and his work as a teacher has borne the test of time. . . . His method is natural, simple, easy of comprehension, interesting. The senseless brain-fatigue, formalities, and drills of the old-style textbook are conspicuous by their absence in this series of books. The aim of the author has been to give the student a practical command of the English language. His aim is not to teach grammar, but to develop in the pupil the capacity to make correct use of the English language in writing and speaking. . . .

It is not known to what extent the series entered the public schools. Certainly some public school educators were impressed by them. In January 1899, The Christian Educator told its readers that Bell was "perhaps best known to the educational public" as author of these books. It continued by saying that they were "being used not only in the public schools of Michigan but in many other schools and homes throughout the United States." E. E. Lockerby, Superintendent of the Public Schools in Preston, Minnesota, after examining the first four books in the series, recommended them highly. Lucy M. Sickels, Superintendent of the State Industrial Home for Girls in Adrian, Michigan, also told of her appreciation of

the books. In December 1897, she ordered 225 copies of the grammar books for the school and in the following year expressed her delight with them. "We would not have another grammar in the school-room," she wrote. She felt that the books were meeting a long-felt want in the institution.1

Bell's series continued to be used in Seventh-day Adventist schools for a number of years. At the educational conference conducted by the church in 1900, it was reported that most schools were using the series, in part or in whole. It is significant, however, that one administrator said that Books 2 and 3 were not liked as well as Bell's first text on grammar, and suggested the possibility of a revision.2 Three years later, at the education convention at College View, Nebraska, Professor Griggs said that he believed that Professor Bell "was raised up to do a work" in providing the church with such "good, plain help on language." Though not agreeing with every detail of Bell's approach, he felt that the general method was "helpful and good." W. A. Colcord, who was then teaching at Union College, Nebraska, reported that he had "fallen in love with Professor Bell's method of teaching language over the old-fashioned way of studying it." Yet it would seem that the last two volumes in the series were not as well accepted as the first three. Only Books 1 to 3 appeared in the report of the committee that made

1 These testimonials were published in "Bell's Language Series," RH 75 (September 13, 1898):595.

2 The Educational Conference, August 1-9, 1900, Mt. Vernon, Ohio, p. 17, Group 47, GC Archives.
suggestions on courses of study for elementary and secondary schools.¹ Three years later at another educational convention, Books 2, 3, and 4 were particularly recommended. Book 5 did not appear.²

One can only conjecture why this was so. Book 5 may have been used in the colleges and therefore would not have appeared among the books listed for the academies. John O. Waller suggests that Bell's combination of a literary history with a book of readings, in spite of its clear orientation toward character development, may have been "too liberal for denominational educators" who, at the turn of the century, were "passing through a period of extreme reaction against all things 'worldly.'"³

Bell's grammar and rhetoric books, however, continued to remain popular. When someone at the 1906 education convention suggested that these books be replaced, there was "such a storm of protest that nothing more was heard of the matter."⁴ Five years later, in the fall of 1911, enough interest was still being shown that a committee was appointed and recommended the revision of

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¹ 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. 72-73, 129-34, AUHR.


Bell's language texts. W. E. Howell was appointed to take charge of the work and he accepted the task on the understanding that the book to be revised was not any of the language series, but the older book, Natural Method, upon which Books 2 and 3 had been largely based. Howell said that he wanted to retain "as far as is consistent with its adaptation to present needs, the genius and charm of that book."\(^1\) Howell later said that 500 letters had been sent to experienced teachers to enquire which of Bell's books should be revised. They had clearly indicated his Natural Method which, Howell said, had been written when Bell was "at his best, being in the prime of his teaching experience."\(^2\)

In the preface to his revision, Howell noted that "to revise the work of a master is at once a serious and a delicate task." Nevertheless, he was led to do so by two "inducements." First, his "keen appreciation of the merits of the method and the matter presented in this book;" second, his concern to see grammar become "a delightful rather than an irksome study" to children.\(^3\)

Howell published a manual to accompany the revision and pointed out the two extremes in grammar texts. The older grammars, he said, stressed the individual words and their parts of speech. Later grammars "with a reaction characteristic of all reform" went to the opposite extreme of considering the sentence as a whole and

\(^1\) General Conference Education Department Staff Minutes, 27th Meeting, March 27, 1912, p. 43, AUHR.


\(^3\) Ibid.
devoted all too little time to a knowledge of parts of speech. The danger of following too exclusively either the word or sentence method was that either tended to ignore the laws of thought. This middle position, Howell called, "the king's highway." Bell would have been pleased he was travelling it.

Conclusion

The completion of the series of English textbooks was Bell's last major undertaking before his death in 1899. They represent the full flowering of his nearly fifty years as an outstanding instructor in English. They also reveal many of his distinguishing characteristics as a Christian educator whose life and teaching had such a significant impact not only upon his own generation but also upon those his students later taught.

Bell's theory of teaching required him to give a practical literary education, the basic principles of which were the following:

... that we learn by doing; that practise makes perfect; that example is more powerful than precept; that true education is a development—a growth,--and not a manufacture or an accretion; that ability can neither be borrowed nor lent; that strength and skill come through exercise, and not by imitation.

He believed, therefore, that the student should "be kept forever doing."

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Guided by these educational principles, Bell taught his students the importance of clear thinking, simplicity of expression, and pureness of language. He was sensitive to the awesome power of language to mold the character of men. It was therefore his concern to cultivate in his students the formation of correct taste for what was good and ennobling in literature and expression. For Bell language was the means of communication not only between men but between God and man. The language of the Bible provided the revelation of God to the human race. Bell therefore integrated his faith with the learning process by upholding the scriptures before his students. He used its object-lessons in his teaching, its precepts in his textbook examples, and he urged his pupils to obey its commands.

In his textbooks Bell stressed the positive and recognized the importance of the principle of association. "By beholding we become changed" was true not only in the realm of spiritual growth. Bell believed that students who associated with the best thoughts would unconsciously develop a love for the best in life. This was important to Bell because he taught for this life and for the life to come. His students were candidates for eternity, and it was his responsibility to prepare each of them to fill that place appointed for them by God. The student who could think clearly, express himself concisely, and appreciate all that was beautiful in life was better fitted for Christian service.

The preparation of his English textbooks was not the only activity that occupied Bell's closing years as a Christian educator. His other activities are the subject of the next chapter.
Fig. 6. G. H. Bell about 1890.

Fig. 7. G. H. Bell in the late 1890s.
CHAPTER 7
YEARS OF RETIREMENT
1884-1899

When Bell returned to his home in Battle Creek in 1884, after his two years at South Lancaster, he chose to retire from denominational employment. Fifteen more years of his life remained, but they were not years of idleness. No man with Bell's temperament or his commitment to Christian education could suddenly withdraw from the classroom and relinquish all claim to instructing others in the principles of Christian living. The previous chapter examined Bell's English textbooks, particularly his series of five, the preparation of which occupied the years just before his death. This chapter concludes the study of Bell's life with an examination of the other educational activities that filled the period of his retirement. His concern for home education and culture led him to publish the monthly journal *The Fireside Teacher*. He also established the first private correspondence school among Seventh-day Adventists. In addition, he tutored students, some of whom later testified to the great benefits received from their association with him. The chapter concludes with the record of the tragic circumstances of his death and the response of his former students to it.
The Cozy Club

It is a sad fact of life that those who are most cultured and have a deep appreciation for the expressions of man's creative ability through the arts are often lonely figures. They find few with whom they may share their love of beauty wherever it may be found. Bell was one such individual who always enjoyed the companionship of those who delighted in the expression of noble ideals and themes of beauty and truth. Not long after the beginning of his retirement, therefore, he organized the Cozy Club which met regularly at his home.

Few records remain of its organization and membership, but one of the most enthusiastic members was Winnie Loughborough. It appears that Bell organized the club in 1885 with the purpose of meeting to discuss works of prose and poetry. In December 1885 the club was meeting every Thursday night. At one meeting Winnie Loughborough reported reading such selections as Elizabeth Browning's "Courtship of Lady Geraldine," "The Cotter's Saturday Night" by Robert Burns, humorous sketches from Mark Twain's Innocents Abroad, and selections from J. G. Holland and J. T. Trowbridge. Miss Loughborough reported to George Avery that "the present members were thoroughly enjoying the experience" and urged him to send to them "an original composition" once a month for them to discuss.


Winnie Loughborough to G. R. Avery, December 9, 1885, GRAC, AUHR.
The attendance at the meetings of the club fluctuated, with only three being present one evening in May 1886. Bell had related a story, and one of the three present later wrote: "You'd laugh to see how often he has a story in preference to anything else, when he used to decry stories. Perhaps he thinks it won't hurt this crowd." Though the membership was never large, it continued to meet for at least the next two years. Its form, however, changed early in 1888. It became more "like a literature class" which met five evenings a week from five to six-thirty to study English literature. In February 1888, Bell was evidently seeking to impart to the other club members his love for Wordsworth, because they were then reading Wordsworth's "Excursion." Winnie Loughborough was soon captivated by Bell's introduction to the poet. She confessed to Avery that she "did not expect to like it, but I have been most happily disappointed, and have nothing forever to say but in favor of the poet." 

Publishing "The Fireside Teacher"

Early in its existence the club members began to consider the prospects of publishing a paper that would report their

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1 Winnie Loughborough to G. R. Avery, May 16, 1886, GRAC, AUHR. The three present were G. H. Bell, W. Loughborough, and A. Swedberg. In the same letter it was reported that Bell's son-in-law, Charles H. Giles, was among those who no longer attended the weekly meeting. At a meeting of the Cozy Club earlier in 1886, there was an attendance of six people. See Winnie Loughborough to G. R. Avery, February 24, 1886, GRAC, AUHR. In July 1886, the Battle Creek Daily Journal reported that the Cozy Club members would meet at A. Swedberg's home because Bell, his wife, and son would be camping at Gull Lake for several weeks. See Battle Creek Daily Journal, July 10, 1886, p. 3.

2 Winnie Loughborough to G. R. Avery, February 5, 1888, GRAC, AUHR.

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activities and include readings of cultural interest and inspiration. According to Winnie Loughborough, Bell was to take charge of the paper "so we can be sure of good editing." They hoped to print the first issue in December 1885 or soon after. It was felt that the paper had to be self-supporting and therefore club members would need to canvas for subscribers. When December came, however, the prospects were "slim" because of the difficulty of finding "copy" for the paper. Bell's eyes were also presenting a problem. Some of the club members were doing his letter writing to relieve his eyesight which was "gradually failing him."

In spite of such a physical handicap, Bell was not to be turned aside from his purpose. He had never been one to give up in the face of opposition or difficulty. His plan was to prepare a literary and educational magazine that would be especially adapted to home culture. In an advertising brochure he explained that religious topics would be excluded, not because of any "lack of reverence" for the Bible but "because that field is already so fully and so ably covered."

Nevertheless, Bell was both a Christian and an educator and his purposes for the paper embraced both spheres. As a Christian, Bell desired to present literature that would "turn the mind

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1Winnie Loughborough to G. R. Avery, October 26, 1885, GRAC, AUHR.

2Winnie Loughborough to G. R. Avery, December 9, 1885, GRAC, AUHR.

3Advertising brochure--The Fireside Teacher, GRAC, AUHR. On the back of this brochure, Bell printed an order form for recording subscriptions to the journal.
towards the good and beautiful that still remains in nature and in humanity,—something that will remind us of a Creator's loving care over the humblest of his creatures." Bell believed that "such reading will dispose the mind to thoughtfulness, and prepare it to receive wholesome truths of any kind." As an educator, he intended "to cultivate a taste for study, and for that kind of reading that will teach us to enjoy the sweet blessings of everyday life. . . ." If he could accomplish such an object, he felt that it would bring "peace and happiness into many homes."  

Early in 1886 Bell purchased a printing press with type for $350 and proposed that the anticipated costs of preparing the journal for a year ($680.25) be initially met by four Cozy Club members: Winnie Loughborough, Edith Sprague, George Avery, and himself. By charging $0.75 for a year's subscription they would need 907 subscribers to regain the cost, but it was thought that they could count on only half that number in the first year. When Bell invited Avery to have a share he said he would not feel satisfied unless he had Avery's "hand, heart, and head with us."  

Bell's son, Omar, then fifteen years of age, commenced the printing of the cover late in March, and Winnie Loughborough reported that two paid subscriptions had been received from people who had "walked by faith, having seen only the cover." The printing was delayed, however, when Omar injured his hand "quite severely" in 

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1:bid.

2Winnie Loughborough to G. R. Avery, March 17, 1886, GRAC, AUHR; G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, March 18, 1886, GRAC, AUHR.
the press on the afternoon of May 16. Fortunately, the Review and Herald publishing plant was able to send a boy to work under Omar's direction, and the printing was resumed within a few days. The first issue of the journal bore the date of May 1886 on its masthead.1

A two-page prospectus explained the special features of the journal. The themes that Bell planned to include were the following: Literature and Authors; Historical and Biographical Sketches; Characters and Customs of Strange Peoples; Lessons from Nature; Bird Life; the World of Plants; Educational Articles; A School Room Department that contained instruction on Arithmetic, Grammar, Punctuation, Composition and some principles of Rhetoric; A Question Department; the Cozy Club; and the Fireside, where Bell would talk "in an easy manner with his readers," or muse "on the day's impressions."2

Since first coming to Battle Creek in the late 1860s, Bell had had considerable experience in publishing. He had been editor of the Youth's Instructor and in addition had published his Bible lessons, numerous articles for the journals of the church, and several textbooks by the mid 1880s. Then, in 1885, he had been appointed one of the editors of the new Sabbath-School Worker. His editorship of The Fireside Teacher, however, unlike his other

1Winnie Loughborough to G. R. Avery, April 2, and May 16, 1886, GRAC, AUHR.

2Advertising prospectus--The Fireside Teacher, GRAC, AUHR. This prospectus was prepared early in 1887 and is fully reproduced in appendix J.
publishing ventures, was assumed without the financial help of
the church or the full-time support of others. Bell was also handi-
capped by his poor vision.

It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that he should
express uncertainty about the future of the journal even as early
as May 1886, when the first issue was released. He wrote to his
former student, George Avery, that it was hard for him

... to get good selections because I cannot see to
read enough to go through the multitudinous pages that
have to be, skimmed over in order to find anything that
we can use.'

He said he felt "uneasy" about continuing the paper, but he would
do so as long as he was able to push it. He was anxious to estab-
lish the paper "not only financially, but editorially." Neverthe-
less, by June he was more encouraged when he saw 120 names on the
subscription list.2

Bell was supported in his venture by those few to whom
he was constantly appealing for copy for the paper. George Avery,
Edith Sprague, Winnie Loughborough, and Eva Bell Giles (Bell's
married daughter) wrote regularly, though usually under fictitious
names.3

Avery, in particular, was one upon whom Bell felt he could

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1 G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, May 30, 1886, GRAC, AUHR.
2 Ibid; G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, June 14, 1886, GRAC, AUHR.
3 Bell signed his articles with either "H" or B. G. Harper;
Edith Sprague with Thetis; Winnie Loughborough with Margaret Carter,
and George Royal Avery with A. G. Royal. See Winnie Loughborough
to G. R. Avery, May 16, 1886.
depend and in whom he could confide. Bell's letters to Avery throughout the life of the journal reveal his moments of loneliness, despair, hope, and joy. Bell wrote, for example, in September 1886, "I get lonesome, because there are so few that care for the things that I do." His loneliness reflected the difficulties faced by such a journal, the contents of which were educational and moral rather than lighthearted and entertaining. Bell later lamented to Avery, "It is so hard to get people to read anything except news and nonsense."¹

Hard as it was, Bell was not to be deflected from his aim of making the Fireside Teacher "very different from a popular newspaper." He wanted it to be "a good literary journal." He wrote concerning it in January 1887:

> It must be a real teacher if I can possibly make it so. If I can realize my ideal on it, it will never be popular with the multitude, but will be much appreciated by a class whose good opinion I should be much gratified to enjoy. Yet I mean to bring it within the reach of every honest, thinking mind, no matter how humble in life or how poor their advantages may have been."²

In spite of the initial financial arrangement, the journal did not begin to pay for itself in dollars and cents, but Bell thought it had done "so much better than I expected it would that I praise God every day for the progress he has allowed it to make."³

At the end of the first volume of the Fireside Teacher

¹G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, September 6, 1886, GRAC, AUHR; G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, January 6, 1887, GRAC, AUHR.

²G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, January 12, 1888, GRAC, AUHR.

³bid.
in April 1887, Bell explained that he had hoped to meet a want that had "not hitherto been supplied. . . ." He was trying to reach those who had to work instead of attending school, those who were poorly taught at school, and the thousands in middle life who had been inadequately educated to qualify them for the duties of parents. The "uncalled-for testimonies . . . from every quarter" that spoke of the journal "in highest terms" gave him much satisfaction. 1 His commitment to make it as successful as he could may be seen from his statement to Avery: "I can as heartily pray for the success of the Fireside Teacher as for anything I ever undertook [sic]. . . ." 2

His hopes were set back somewhat when Omar left him for some time early in 1887 to be married. 3 This came at a time when Bell's wife had been ill since the previous October and still could not stand or walk five months later. Bell found the expense of doctor's bills and professional nursing care "enormous for a poor


2 G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, January 6, 1887.

3 G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, February 16, 1887, GRAC, AUHR. Omar married Louisa F. Randolph on February 12, 1887, near the village of Patricksburg, Owen County, in Indiana. Subsequently one daughter, Clara Frederika, was born to the union on December 11, 1887. Omar deserted his wife on November 8, 1890 and went to Sweden, leaving her and his child in the care of Goodloe Bell and his wife until Bell's death. A few months after Bell's death Louisa divorced Omar Bell. See Louisa F. Bell vs. D. Omar Bell, State of Michigan, Circuit Court for the County of Calhoun, in Chancery, No. 7-416, University Archives and Regional History, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan.
man to meet,” yet, he urged, the *Fireside Teacher* "must go. I expect it to succeed."¹

By March 1887 there were 410 subscribers and by the end of April it reached its peak of 503.² This total fell considerably short of the 907 needed for the journal to pay for itself, even though Bell paid agents to canvas for subscriptions.³

George Avery was one of the agents whom Bell constantly prodded for more subscribers. Avery’s close relationship to Bell and his talent for writing encouraged Bell to offer some helpful criticism of his articles on the world of plants:

> Do not be in a hurry to get over your subject. Do not try to be very formal about it. Let the form be like the skeleton of the body, hidden from the unpracticed eye. . . . Put in your own thoughts and feelings very freely. . . . Draw largely from your own experience. You have seen countless things that people all around you have failed to notice. Again, many people see things without learning anything from them.

The year 1888 was a crucial period for the magazine, and an increasingly difficult one for Bell’s health. It began with Bell writing, “If ever a journal needed help on the part of its contributors, this one needs it now,” and adding a postscript to

¹G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, March 7, 1887, GRAC, AUHR.

²Ibid., and G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, April 28, 1887, GRAC, AUHR.

³See G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, December 11, and 21, 1887, GRAC, AUHR. The number of subscribers may have exceeded 503, but no higher number was ever reported in the Bell-Avery correspondence.

⁴G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, May 16, 1887, GRAC, AUHR.
another letter, one month later—"Copy is awfully scarce!"\footnote{G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, January 12, and February 7, 1888, GRAC, AUHR.} Nevertheless with the optimistic enthusiasm of one much younger, Bell planned to enlarge the magazine from twenty-six to thirty-two pages, and arranged for the Review and Herald publishing plant to take over printing it with the May 1888 issue. It is not surprising to read, therefore, that Bell was "crowded beyond all measure" in May. He reported that he had worked the previous Monday night until 1 A.M., and he was "at it again at four. The next night I slept but little more. This morning I got up at half-past one.\footnote{G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, March 2, April 29, and May 3, 1888, GRAC, AUHR.}"

The excessive work load was beginning to weigh very heavily on Bell. In May he wrote to Avery that he had "no copy" for the next issue and "was in a poor condition to make any." He felt that his Battle Creek contributors were unlikely to produce anything in time. For the first time Bell confided: "We have come to the turning point with the F. T. [\textit{Fireside Teacher}]. It must advance now, and do it soon, or it will go down and so rapidly as to surprise us all." Though the appearances were ominous, he kept talking courage and prosperity. It [the \textit{Fireside Teacher}] must be early; it must be bright and fresh; it must be kept vigorous and healthy, even to the day of its death. It must never lead the life of a consumptive."\footnote{G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, May 4, 1888, GRAC, AUHR.} A few days later, Avery wrote to his friend, Lilla Hough, that Bell was "growing old and feels that this may be his
last enterprise. He says, 'I am not ashamed to leave the *Fireside Teacher* to the world as my last work.'¹

In July Bell was depressed by the lack of support from his contributors. Only Avery had written material for the August issue. Bell had done his best with it, but he said he could not be responsible for the work of a worn-out machine.

It is a bad time in life to be dropped by old friends and experienced helpers, but it may be a necessary experience, in order that I may realize how utterly worthless I am when left to myself.² Yet his depression was not due to the lack of appreciation for the journal expressed by its readers. On the following day he again wrote to Avery and said, "We seldom hear anything but good words for the *Fireside Teacher*."³

Avery would have agreed, for in his methodical way, he kept a list of his subscribers and of some of their testimonials concerning the magazine. Charles C. Lewis of Battle Creek College was a regular subscriber and wished that all his students received it, for "it would greatly aid them in forming a correct literary style and a taste for good literature." Professor Edwin Barnes, also a teacher at Battle Creek College, read "all of it" before he read anything else. Avery reported that the paper was even read by C. S. Hartwell, U.S. Consulate at Tientsin, China.⁴

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¹G. R. Avery to Lilla M. Hough, May 7, 1888, GRAC, AUHR.
²G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, July 26, 1888, GRAC, AUHR.
³G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, July 27, 1888, GRAC, AUHR.
⁴G. R. Avery, Financial Records 1888-1889 (Fireside Teacher Subs.), GRAC, AUHR.
Toward the end of summer 1888, Bell's health was quite poor. He was suffering from tonsilitis and thought he had "never had a more dubious time." As a result, his editorial work was "sadly behind." To his loyal supporter, Avery, he wrote: "It seems that every one else (but GRA) has dropped the F. T. like a cold potato." But he was not yet ready to give up. "It is poor health on the down hill side of life that is the hardest thing for me to contend with."¹ His "poor health" continued for more than six weeks, yet he "was not at all discouraged." As a Christian educator, Bell taught others not only by precept but also by example, for he added, "God rules, and what he is willing to allow I am willing to endure. He is good; praise his name!" His difficulties were compounded in October when his son Omar, who with his wife and baby was now living with Bell, contracted typhoid fever.²

It would appear that increasing feebleness and poor health coupled with the difficulty of receiving copy from his contributors forced Bell to discontinue the journal in June 1889. Bell had earlier expressed the hope that his journal would remain vigorous and healthy until the day of its death.³ The final issue in June 1889 gave no hint that it was the last to be published. Bell's wish was fulfilled.

¹G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, September 1888, GRAC, AUHR.
²G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, October and December 9, 1888, GRAC, AUHR.
³G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, May 4, 1888.
During the thirty-eight issues of the magazine a wide variety of authors, topics, and literary styles were presented. Bell himself wrote twenty-two major articles during the three-year period, beside the instruction he gave in school subjects in each issue and his discussions under the title of "The Fireside." Bell's philosophy of life and his counsel for home living was especially evident in "The Fireside" columns. A survey of these reveals such topics as "How to Find Time," "Kind Words," "Thanksgiving," "Simplicity of Manners an Aid to Success," "Little Things," "The Happy Life," "Pressed Leaves," and "Habits of Accuracy." Bell's co-laborers in the Cozy Club also contributed many articles. In addition numerous literary pieces were included from better-known authors and from other magazines.

Bell had worked hard at great personal sacrifice in his effort to bring his educational expertise that had so long been directed towards the school and the church into the home. He had dreamed of cultivating the aesthetic attitudes of his church by entering the homes of its members through his magazine. He hoped to see a refining and ennobling of all who would open their minds to thoughts that were pure and uplifting. But to all human appearances he failed. When Lilla Hough heard that the journal had ceased publication she wrote:

\[\text{For a chronological list of Bell's articles that appeared in the \textit{Fireside Teacher}, see appendix K.}\]

\[\text{These selections have been taken from the \textit{Fireside Teacher}, vol. 2, pp. 94, 118, 166, 276, 304, and vol. 3, pp. 52, 318, and 350.}\]
... it was a great burden to Bro. Bell no doubt, he is growing feeble very fast—and perhaps cannot last many years longer. ... Indeed Bro. Bell has done a grand and noble work in his day, and his reward is just in the future.

George Avery’s intimate association with Bell enabled him to evaluate Bell at a deeper level:

... I think very few appreciate or realize the pressure of adverse circumstances under which he constantly works. I used to think him "bluff" and almost inexcusably harsh to some others—I know that I am sometimes that way myself. Really there is no excuse for anything wrong but I think and honestly that there is not a man of a thousand who could or would do the work which he does for the pay which he gets, and not break down under discouragements. ... I never knew him to mis-appreciate a case of genuine faithfulness.

**Pioneering a Correspondence School**

Bell’s retirement years were occupied by three significant pioneering ventures in the Seventh-day Adventist church. Two of these have already been considered: the writings of his series of English textbooks, and his journal for the home. The third was the establishment, for the first time in Seventh-day Adventist educational history, of a correspondence school. Though this was not officially sponsored by the church, it was advertised in the journals of the church and many took advantage of it.

Study by correspondence in the modern sense first developed in England, Germany, and the United States about the middle of the last century. The first teaching by mail in America was undertaken in 1840 by Isaac Pitman who taught shorthand to his students.

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1 Lilla Hough to G. R. Avery, July 28, 1889, GRAC, AUHR.
2 G. R. Avery to Lilla Hough, June 10, 1889, GRAC, AUHR.
by means of postcards. His pupils transcribed Bible passages into shorthand onto postcards and mailed them back to him. More than thirty years later, in 1873, the Society to Encourage instruction at Home was founded in Boston and functioned continuously until the death of its founder, Anna Ticknor, in 1897. In the 1870s, college educators in increasing numbers also began to teach through the mail.¹ One of the most enthusiastic champions of the correspondence school and perhaps its most noteworthy pioneer was Dr. William Rainey Harper. In 1879 at Chautauqua, New York, he undertook to teach a course in Hebrew which was later publicized as the Correspondence School of Hebrew in 1882.² In the following year, an association of instructors from various colleges and universities formed a "Correspondence University" in Ithaca, New York, with the object of supplementing the work done in other educational institutions by sending courses through the mail.³ Thus by 1885 correspondence schools were becoming a visible part of the American educational scene.

In May 1885, Bell first sent out circulars offering to teach pupils in "grammar, composition and rhetoric" by


²Harper became the first president of the University of Chicago when it was opened in 1891. He established in the university a correspondence division in which college courses were offered by mail. See ibid.

³A Cyclopedia of Education, 1911 ed., s.v. "Correspondence Schools."
correspondence. In the following month the *Review and Herald* carried a notice advising that Professor Bell had adopted a plan to help those who wished to increase their proficiency in the English language. Bell proposed "to adopt a method, now coming into favor, of teaching by correspondence." George I Butler, President of the General Conference, expressed "great confidence" in Bell's methods of teaching language. Many had demonstrated the efficiency of his system of instruction, he said, by their work as proof-readers and teachers, etc. He added, "There are a great many people who know how to do half work where there is one who can do a thorough job. Prof. Bell is one of the latter class." Those living in distant places could now receive "the benefit of his thorough instruction" by mail.¹

Quite a number of people responded and Bell later reported that their success was "in the main . . . remarkable." The lessons were given in the form of "familiar talks, accompanied by questions and exercises. . . ." The questions attached to each talk were divided into five lessons. When the student had studied each talk and completed the exercises, he sent them to Bell who corrected them and wrote criticisms and comments to help the student's understanding.²

Bell evidently used these "familiar talks" as the basis


² *Circular--A New Departure in Teaching*. See also G. H. Bell, "Language Lessons by Mail," *SSW* 1 (October 1885):70.
for the material he prepared for his textbook *Familiar Talks on Language* which was finally printed in 1886. He said that he wrote this book especially "for those taking lessons by correspondence." Subsequent to its release, this book was used by Bell as the textbook for his correspondence lessons.

Little else is known of Bell's correspondence work. It is not known how long it continued, though Bell makes reference to it in some of his letters during the next two or three years. In February 1887, for example, he wrote to Avery saying that during the previous week he had received twenty-five lessons in the mail "to be looked over, corrected, and answered." He had mailed them the previous day, but the overwork had made him "pretty nearly sick." Then, nearly twelve months later, he wrote that he had been "attending to some lessons by correspondence."

In spite of the little that is known, however, tribute must be paid to Bell for the initiative he took in attempting to broaden the education of those who availed themselves of this opportunity. Bell described teaching by correspondence as opening up "a new and unexpected way to a literary advancement. . . ."

The principle that motivated Bell to work so hard in the publication of *The Fireside Teacher* and in the establishment of

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2 G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, February 16, 1887, GRAC, AUHR.
3 G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, January 12, 1888.
4 Circular—A New Departure in Teaching.
his correspondence school was his commitment to the development of the mind of his fellow men. This was woven into all his instruction and made it distinctive and rewarding to those who received it. In an undated manuscript entitled "True Culture," he enunciated his philosophy of mental development that contributed so much to the spirit of his teaching. He likened the growth of the mind to the plant world.

The operations of natural growth are simple and silent, yet powerful; and the growth of the mind is no exception. Knowledge is the food of the mind, and thought is the means by which that food is digested. Whoever would attain the mental stature of a noble manhood, must give his mind fresh supplies of knowledge as fast as his thought is able to digest and assimilate. This supply may be found in books, in travel, in associating with people of culture, or by communing with nature; but it will be richer if obtained more or less from all these sources.

Such culture, when gained, was not to be used for the glorification of man but "to benefit mankind." As a Christian educator, Bell recognized that "this doing good to others is the real fruit of every noble life. It is in this that the man is perfected and God is glorified."^1

In The Fireside Teacher Bell labored to give the mind of his readers "fresh supplies of knowledge." He included in its pages some of the best that literature had to offer, stories of other lands, and fascinating facts from the natural world. For similar reasons he instituted his correspondence school. It has

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^1 G. H. Bell, "True Culture," p. 2, undated manuscript in the GRAC, AUHR.

^2 Ibid., p. 3.
been demonstrated in the previous chapter that Bell's special contribution to the teaching of grammar was the emphasis he gave to the expression and understanding of thought. One of Bell's aims in his correspondence work through his *Familiar Talks on Language* was to develop discrimination in thought among those whose mental and cultural growth had been interrupted by the circumstances of life.

The Seventh-day Adventist church did not formally organize a correspondence school until 1909, ten years after Bell's death. His influence, however, extended into its establishment and operation for many years. The first three principals of the school were all taught by Bell, either at Battle Creek College or as a private tutor in his retirement years. Warren E. Howell, the first principal, was appointed in 1909. He was succeeded by Charles C. Lewis in 1913 and Mahlon E. Olsen in 1923. In addition, though the school was originally called by the simple name, "Correspondence School," C. C. Lewis changed it to the "Fireside Correspondence School."² No direct connection with Bell's "Fireside" chats on home education in his *Fireside Teacher* has been established, but its name recalled the impact of the idea which he had initiated in the Seventh-day Adventist church in 1885.

¹See Bell's *Familiar Talks on Language*, pp. i, ii.

Bell left the formal classroom in 1884, but he tutored private students in his home for many years. In January 1888, he reported, for example, that he had been "teaching nine hours a day," besides attending to his correspondence lessons, editing The Fireside Teacher, and performing other duties. He continued his private tutoring until the time of his death. Among the students who particularly appreciated his tutorship was Mahlon Olsen. His recollections provide an intimate glimpse of Bell as a Christian educator.

Olsen recalled his first introduction to Bell on a June morning, probably in 1892 or 1893. He stated that Bell's "fame

1G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, January 12, 1888, GRAC, AUHR.

2Mahlon Olsen (1873-1952) became a prominent educator and administrator in the Seventh-day Adventist church. He graduated from Battle Creek College in 1894 and received his Ph.D. in English at the University of Michigan in 1909. He later served as principal and president of South Lancaster Academy and Lancaster Junior College (1917-1920) and was chairman of the English department at Union College, Nebraska (1920-1923). In 1923 he was appointed president of the Fireside Correspondence School. See Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, rev. ed. (1976), s.v. "Olsen, Mahlon Ellsworth."

3Since Olsen graduated in 1894 and he stated that he studied with Bell, "with some interruptions, through the rest of my college course, and in fact till Professor Bell died some five years later," he must have begun his study with Bell about 1892 or 1893. Some details of Olsen's recollections appear to be faulty, however, for he refers to Bell having a farm and orchard near Lake Goguac. The evidence seems to indicate, however, that Bell did not purchase this land until the fall of 1893. He did not start developing the orchard until the spring and summer of 1894, when Olsen graduated. See M. E. Olsen, "A Teacher of the Olden Time," p. 9. M. E. Olsen Private Collection (courtesy of Mrs. Alice Olsen Roth), GC Archives; Land Sale Indenture--George R. Burnham et al to Goodlough [sic] H. Bell, Register of Deeds, County of Calhoun, Marshall, Michigan, Book 129, p. 488; G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, February 18, 1894, GRAC, AUHR.
as an English teacher of rare charm and thoroughness" aroused his desire to study literature under his guidance. Coming to Bell's home on College Avenue, Olsen found him sitting on the back porch "dressed in a suit of blue jeans with an old straw hat on his head." Olsen did not find his personal appearance striking, "but there was the keen eye, the vigorous alert carriage that belong to the man who keeps young. There was a remarkable freedom from care and worry." Once Bell was convinced that Olsen was not wanting to be rushed through a literature course just to get a grade, he agreed to teach him. Olsen wrote: "Thus began the most satisfying and the most fruitful part of my education."¹

Sometimes the schoolroom was the room that Bell had built especially for that purpose on the side of his house.² On other occasions, Bell and Olsen rode their bicycles "to some deep wood where birds and squirrels kept us company. Sitting down on a fallen log we discoursed on the deep things of life, and Professor Bell was a wonderful companion on such trips." Olsen said that Bell was not a talkative man, but he was "an excellent listener," and thus "it was not always what he said, but what he somehow inspired his pupil to think and to say" that made the impression. On still other occasions, the recitation was conducted in his garden. Olsen


remembered the occasion when Bell introduced him to Keats for the first time. They were sitting under a honeysuckle vine surrounded by the songs of birds and the beauty of flowers and shrubbery. Olsen exclaimed, "What a setting for the poem beginning:

'A thing of beauty is a joy forever, it cannot die
Its loveliness increases. . . .'

As we read on, . . ." he continued, "we seemed to be listening to a great teacher who was interpreting to us the beauty of God's handiwork which was revealed to us . . . in that lovely garden."¹

In Bell's method, names and dates and the authors themselves were subordinated to their published works. He frequently compared the writings of different authors and when he wanted to introduce an author of special importance he "would gently prepare the way, and excite my curiosity by telling me some of the things he thought I might expect such an author to do for me."²

This was particularly true when Bell introduced Olsen and his brother (who was also being tutored by Bell) to his favorite poet, William Wordsworth. He told the two young men, then in their twenties, that the reading of Wordsworth's poems would mean much to them "in after life" and that they would "come to look on the woods and fields with a deeper sympathy and interest than before." After some weeks of exposure to the poet, Olsen later wrote that "it was indeed an experience we shall not forget." They had gained, he said, not only "an appreciation of good poetry," but "an

²Olsen, "Recollections of Prof. G. H. Bell," p. 5.
admiration for the works of God in nature that we had never had before." \(^1\)

Olsen described Bell's teaching goals and methods in the following words:

That I should approach each masterpiece with becoming humility, and with a desire to get from it all that it had for me personally; that I should stay by it long enough not only to understand its message, but to make it a permanent part of my own life henceforth—this seemed to be Professor Bell's aim as a teacher. He always kept himself in the background. I was making a voyage of discovery; with every new lesson, new and interesting things were to be seen and experienced. The teacher was the guide who had been that way before, but for whom every scene had fresh interest, every object some new phase to appreciate and admire. His gracious presence, his rare tranquility of spirit, seemed to breathe a benediction on all the things we read, and the homely room where most of the reading was done seemed instinct with peace. \(^2\)

Another student who was tutored by Bell in grammar and rhetoric during his retirement years was Arthur W. Spalding. \(^3\) He said that Bell was "a friendly man, yet exacting in his teaching requirements. He believed in associating with his students outside as well as inside the classroom." Spalding, who later became an English teacher himself, particularly noted the "clearcut,


\(^2\) Ibid.

\(^3\) Arthur Whitefield Spalding (1877-1953) became a notable educator, author, and editor in the Seventh-day Adventist church. Among his educational responsibilities was his period of service (1903-1906) as head of the English department at Emmanuel Missionary College in Berrien Springs, Michigan. He later founded the Home Commission of the General Conference and devoted much time to working for children and youth. See Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, rev. ed. (1976), s.v. "Spalding, Arthur Whitefield."
direct, and concise" methods in Bell's English teaching. He testified to "the interest and enthusiasm he aroused, the thoroughness in study he required, and the brilliant illumination of his subject that he always brought to the task."¹

Spalding's evaluation was written many years after his experience with Bell, and therefore may have been tinged with the kindness often bestowed by the passage of time. But this was not so much the case with George Avery's testimony to Lilla Hough which was more contemporaneous with his experience of Bell's teaching.² Bell had taught Avery at Battle Creek College and was tutoring Lilla Hough in October 1888. In his letter to Lilla, Avery said that he hoped she would "follow out his [Bell's] thorough instruction and advice." In his own experience "again and again" he had "found them to be excellent." Then he added:

His work doesn't seem to show in any very attractive outward form, but I tell you the truth when I say I would rather be under his instruction for 3 months than that of any other teacher that I ever knew for a year; but to get the full good of it one must throw himself, so to speak, into his hands, and accept his plans, for what he has to give is like strong vigorous seed which though it grows slowly at first will in the end result in a healthful fruitful plant.

To support his point, Avery listed the names of eleven well-known.


²It is recognized that Avery's evaluation is also biased because the records indicate that Bell and Avery maintained a friendly and supportive relationship for many years beyond Avery's classroom experience.

³G. R. Avery to Lilla Hough, October 28, 1888, GRAC, AUHR.

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leaders in the church at the time who were, with "hundreds of others just as good," taught by Bell. He said that he honored Bell

... for having told me what I ought to be, and for having helped all that he could along the way. Just submit to be helped and show your appreciation of his work including corrections. Work using all the common sense at your command, then never think of giving up and he will bring you through all right.

According to Bell's son-in-law, Charles H. Giles, many of the pupils privately tutored by Bell during his retirement years later "scattered over the world, and often wrote to him expressing their appreciation of and gratitude for his superior teaching, and for the inspiration he had been in their lives." Some of these students, who knew of Bell's love of plants, gathered, mounted, and sent botanical specimens to Bell "from Europe, Asia and Africa, as well as South America." Many years after Bell's death, Giles said that he still had these specimens in his possession.  

Other Activities

Even though retired, Bell continued to serve his church on the occasions when he was invited to do so. In 1890, he was one of a number of teachers who were associated with Dr. J. H. Kellogg to give instruction in a special course conducted in Battle Creek for thirty health and temperance missionaries.  

\[1\] ibid. (Emphasis his.)


had been one of Bell's students in his first school in 1867 or
1868. He had also strongly supported Bell in the crisis at Battle
Creek College in 1882, and he appreciated his teaching methods.
In 1894 Kellogg wrote a discerning comment to Ellen White not
only about Bell's teaching, but also about his weakness in adminis­
tration:

Our primary and intermediate grades have not been nearly
so well taught during the last ten years as when Bro. Bell
was teaching, ten years ago. I have always deeply regretted
Bro. Bell's disconnection with our schools, as no one has
ever begun to fill his place as a teacher of the primary
branches and of English. Those who have been the best
teachers in the school have been his pupils. His unfortu­
nate weakness in government has seemed to debar him from
participating in the work to any great extent.

In 1895, the church advised its ministers and Bible workers
of an English language course that was to be part of a Bible School
in Battle Creek during the winter of 1895-96. The announcement
indicated that Bell would have to dismiss some of his private pupils
in order to participate in the school. Bell, now sixty-three
years old, enjoyed this brief return to the more formal classroom
situation. On December 23, 1895, he wrote to Mahlon Olsen that
he was liking his work at the Bible School "more and more, and
all the members of my classes are as kind to me as they possibly

1 J. H. Kellogg to Ellen G. White, June 28, 1894, EGWRC--GC

2 J. H. Durland, "English Language Course in the Bible School
at Battle Creek," RH 72 (October 15, 1895):672. This Bible School
was designed to broaden the education of those who intended to
enter the ministry or some other branch of church work but who
had had limited experience. It continued for twenty weeks from
October 30, 1895, until March 15, 1896. About fifty attended.
(March 17, 1896):176.
could be." Bell also appreciated their patience, for he knew that "patience is required on the part of those who have studied other grammars, learning more form than anything else." The beginners class was doing especially well. Concerning his advanced class of only six students, Bell said:

I am giving them punctuation for breakfast, dinner, and supper, and I presume they long for a change of diet; but I think if they can stand the drill a little longer, the field will open up before them, and look much brighter and prettier than it did at first.

Bell was also occupied about the same time in preparing copy for a small book, The Gospel Reader. By December 1895, he indicated to M. E. Olsen that he had written nineteen chapters of what finally became thirty-five Bible stories that were published in 1896. This book was a companion volume to the more elementary Gospel Primer that J. Edson White prepared particularly for his work in the south.

J. E. White and Bell also collaborated in the preparation of a volume, Christ Our Saviour, which was a simplified and adapted version of some of the writings of Ellen G. White (Edson's mother) on the life of Christ. Bell prepared at least three of the chapters.

1G. H. Bell to M. E. Olsen, December 23, 1895, M. E. Olsen Private Collection, G. C. Archives.

2[G. H. Bell], The Gospel Reader (Battle Creek, Mich.: International Tract Society, 1895). Though Bell's name does not appear on the title page of the book, contemporary evidence, such as the letter referred to in the following footnote, indicates he was the author.

3G. H. Bell to M. E. Olsen, December 23, 1895.
on the last scenes in Christ's life and Edson felt they were "good." ¹

Favorite Recreational Pursuits

In his retirement years Bell enjoyed two recreational activities that brought him not only much pleasure but contributed to a restoration of his health. ² They were riding his bicycle and caring for a small farm that he purchased near Goguac Lake, Battle Creek.

In the days when "A Bicycle Built for Two" was being sung and accompanied by the sound of whirring wheels all over the world, Battle Creek had a large and enthusiastic bicycle club. F. W. Gage, one of the cyclists, estimated the unofficial membership to be about 200 riders. The oldest among them in the 1890s was Professor Goodloe Bell. By that time safety bicycles with pneumatic tires were being introduced, but the roads were poor. Thus the 200 members, including Bell, paid one dollar each to construct a bicycle path, two to three feet in width, between Battle Creek and Kalamazoo. A newspaper account said of Bell: "There was no fear in his attitude when he rode the bicycle path, his long grey beard streaming behind him in the wind. He was one of the most ardent of local riding fans."³

¹ J. Edson White to Ellen G. White, October 10, 1895, EGWRC--GC. See E. G. White, Christ Our Saviour (Battle Creek, Mich.: International Tract Society, 1895).

² Bell wrote to M. E. Olsen in 1895, for example, that he was "in very good health." See G. H. Bell to M. E. Olsen, December 23, 1895.

³ This information is taken from an undated and unidentified newspaper clipping entitled "In the Good Old Summertime" found

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Bell's other recreational interest was the purchase and development of a small farm. In October 1893 he bought three acres not far from the northeast end of Goguac Lake in a new development called Rural Park. At that time a water tower stood at the southwest corner of what are now called Capitol and Columbia West Avenues. Bell identified his acreage as being a little over a quarter of a mile due east from that point, at what is today Griffin Avenue. J. H. Haughey had bought seven acres adjoining his on the west, and Bell's daughter-in-law, Louisa, owned two acres to the north. Bell planned to till the five acres belonging to him and Louisa.

In February 1894 Bell wrote to Avery asking for advice on what fruit trees he could grow on his "ranch." He wanted to plant pears, plums, peaches, a few dozen apple trees, strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, and fifteen to twenty grape vines, in

\[\text{in "Battle Creek Scrapbook," (4 vols.), collected by Henry Wiegmink, vol. 2, p. 96, Willard Library, Battle Creek, Michigan. From the content of the article, it would appear to be dated about 1930. The newspaper accounts of the death of both Bell himself in 1899 and his daughter Eva in 1931, made reference to Bell riding his bicycle on the streets of Battle Creek. The account of 1899 stated: "Prof. Bell has been a familiar figure on the streets of our city for many years. He usually rode a bicycle, and his long, flowing beard, and his classical features could not but attract the attention of all" (Battle Creek Daily Journal, January 17, 1899, p. 1). Many people evidently predicted he would die "as the result of being struck by a vehicle on the street." See Battle Creek Moon-Journal, February 27, 1931, p. 22.}

addition to planting a garden and reserving one acre for field corn to feed his hens. Avery subsequently listed his recommendations for which Bell expressed gratitude in his short letter of March 4, 1896. Bell apologized for its brevity, but his eyes were "very bad indeed, and it is only with pain," he said, "that I can use them at all."^1

Though Bell and his family continued living at his home, he spent much of the growing season of each year developing his farm. In December 1896 he purchased an adjacent lot and later added four more, so that he was developing eight acres of his own land at the time of his death. By this time also he had built a house and barn on the land and owned a horse, cow, and sixty chickens.2

Bell had been reared a farmer in New York, he had farmed in Lisbon prior to coming to Battle Creek, and he had encouraged the agricultural program at South Lancaster. Now he gained deep satisfaction from this close contact with nature on his own "ranch." When drought struck in 1895, Bell's response to it was indicative of his attitude to the troubles he had faced earlier in his career. He was never one to give up when things went wrong. Thus his letter to Avery on March 8, 1896, which is a revelation of his

^1G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, February 18, 1894; G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, March 4, 1894, GRAC, AUHR.

characteristics of persistence and endurance, is quoted below at

length.

Last year was almost a failure. I had my ground in fine
condition, procured the best of seed, and planted every
thing in good season. I cultivated betimes, and scarcely
a weed was allowed to grow. . . . The drought came on
and stayed on. The dust rose in clouds . . . and nothing
could grow. I had an acre and a half of sweet corn that
did not produce an ear. . . .

We set out seventy-five fruit trees. . . . No trees
were ever set out with greater care or pains-taking; yet
nearly half of them died, and most of the others might
better have died. . . . Of a thousand raspberries set
out with the greatest care, perhaps a hundred or a hundred
and fifty are living. . . .

I had a fine horse, fat as a pig, and in the very best
condition. I went out one morning, and found her
dead. . . .

I bought three hundred feet of pipe, with pieces of
hose to join the different lengths. This I attached to
the windmill tank. . . .

. . . I turned my watering pipes on the raspberries.
But as fate would have it, we just then had a whole
week of weather with so little wind that the windmill scarcely
moved. The raspberries were almost literally cooked on
the bushes.

One afternoon I set out one hundred and thirty five
tomato plants. . . . Neglecting them for two days, I went
back to find that the cut worms had gnawed off all but
eight or ten of them."

Yet, after such a recountal of woes he could recog-
nize the blessings he had received from his tutoring. He added:

"My teaching this year has been as pleasant as my garden-
ing has been unprofitable. [ . . . ] will say now that I
have not had a difficult or disagreeable pupil in all win-
ter. It seems wonderful. I did not look for such a happy
experience, and did not suppose that it would ever fall
to my lot. The Lord be praised, and may his goodness lead
me to repentance and a fulfillment of his will in me."

1 G. H. Bell to G. R. Avery, March 8, 1896, GRAC, AUHR.

2 Ibid.
Bell's agricultural pursuits were only one evidence of his lifelong love of nature. His faith in God and in the Bible led him to see God's handiwork in the beauty of the world about him. One newspaper account later identified him as Battle Creek's "pioneer naturalist." It has previously been noted that he delighted to lead his students in nature rambles as together they searched for specimens for his class in botany at Battle Creek College. In his literature classes his devotion to God and His world was evident in his treatment of the poetry of Wordsworth, Cowper, and Keats. It is significant that the section to which the most pages were devoted in Bell's textbook, Studies in English and American Literature, was that entitled "Studies in Nature."

One of Bell's former students, Mary A. Steward, recalled a reception that Bell and a number of his students had attended a short time before his death. Bell had told them of the book on nature study that he was then preparing. She continued,

He told us how he loved the work; how it had been his dream to write such a book, and how he hoped it would lead the little ones who should study it, to love nature and the God of nature.

James Bartholf confirmed that Bell was preparing a series of four

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1 For an illustration of Bell's great love of nature see his essay "My Forest Friends" in appendix B.

2 Battle Creek Moon-Journal, April 18, 1923, p. 12.

3 See table 1, p. 318 above.

4 Mary A. Steward, "We Mourn," (Battle Creek) Church and Sabbath-School Bulletin, p. 120. This page is located in the George Royal Avery Collection, AUHR, but the exact date is not given. It was most likely January 21, 1899.
books on nature study at the time of his death. He had completed the 'copy' and drawings for the first volume, and "fondly desired to finish the series." Barthoř hoped that the book would "soon be published, so that the rising generation may have the benefit of his superior knowledge of nature."\(^1\) But as far as can be determined, the manuscript was never published.

A Tragic Death

Bell continued his teaching activities and his participation in church, cultural, and social affairs until his last day. His death came suddenly and tragically on Monday, January 16, 1899, as a result of what the two major Battle Creek newspapers called "one of the most horrible" and "one of the saddest runaway accidents in the history of the city."\(^2\)

In the early afternoon Bell had driven out to his farm from his home on College Avenue to obtain some of the products of his garden.\(^3\) When he had loaded them into his carriage with

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\(^1\) James C. Barthoř, "Goodloe Harper Bell," YI 47 (February 9, 1899):105. This manuscript was listed in the Inventory made for the Probate Court after Bell's death, but its location thereafter is not known. See Inventory--Probate File--Goodloe Harper Bell, Book 97, p. 66.

\(^2\) The first of these descriptions is found in the Battle Creek Daily Journal, January 17, 1899, p. 1. The second newspaper account is also taken from a Battle Creek newspaper and dated January 17, 1899. The clipping, however, which is filed in the Ross Coller Collection in Willard Library, Battle Creek, is not identified. It is most likely to be the Battle Creek Daily Moon, but this cannot be verified because no copies of this paper for 1899 are known to still exist. This clipping will be identified as the Daily Moon for January 17, 1899, in following footnotes.

\(^3\) Uriah Smith's account stated that Bell was driving from his farm "to listen to the recitations of some of his private pupils..." "A Sad Calamity," RH 76 (January 24, 1899):64.
the help of C. D. Builard, the gardener and caretaker of his property, he started for the city at about 4:15 P.M. He had turned onto Capital Avenue and was approaching Territorial Avenue when his horse became frightened at a flying piece of paper and plunged forward at a furious pace. Bell tried desperately to regain control as he crossed Territorial Avenue, but the carriage struck one of the street-car trolley poles and he was thrown forward. His feet became "caught under the seat and his head and body hung over the front of the carriage, the horse kicking the helpless man in the head and body at every step." As the carriage proceeded along Capital Avenue towards the intersection with Meachem Avenue, Bell's head was either hit by the horse's heels or by the frozen ground. The maddened animal continued down the Meachem Avenue Hill toward the city and finally broke loose, leaving Bell unconscious and bleeding profusely from his severe head wounds. Neighbours summoned help and the patrol wagon took Bell to the surgical ward of the Battle Creek Sanitarium where Dr. J. H. Kellogg examined his injuries. Bell's head, however, was too badly fractured, and Dr. Kellogg gave no hope for his recovery. Half an hour after Bell reached the hospital, he quietly passed away at 7:00 P.M. without ever regaining consciousness. 

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1This description gives the present street names for the Battle Creek streets identified in the newspaper accounts of Bell's fatal accident.

The press, both of the city\textsuperscript{1} and the church,\textsuperscript{2} gave a thorough coverage of Bell's death and of the funeral that followed on Thursday afternoon, January 19, at 2:30 P.M. The mourning family invited Uriah Smith, Bell's reconciled antagonist of earlier days, to conduct the service in the Battle Creek Tabernacle. He later reported that the congregation was the largest ever gathered there for any similar occasion since the funeral of James White in 1881. Bell's last day of life, he said, "as many before it, was spent going about doing good, and in kindness to the poor."\textsuperscript{3}

The Battle Creek Daily Journal reported that the funeral service for "our honored and greatly esteemed citizen" was held "in the midst of marked evidence of public and private mourning." Many of Bell's former students were present and four of them, Dr. J. H. Kellogg, Dr. E. J. Waggoner, J. E. White, and J. C. Bartholf, spoke of "their warm personal regard for the deceased and of the deep appreciation of the noble work he had accomplished." The profuse floral tributes were a noteworthy feature and, according to the newspaper account, were "expressive of the deep interest Prof. Bell has always taken in plant life." Thirty of his students

\textsuperscript{1}See Battle Creek Daily Journal, January 17, 1899, p. 1; January 18, 1899, p. 4; January 19, 1899, p. 4; January 20, 1899, p. 4; The Daily Moon (Battle Creek), January 17, 1899, p. 1; The Sunday Record (Battle Creek), January 22, 1899, p. 5.


\textsuperscript{3}Smith, "A Sad Calamity," p. 64.
gave a floral design in the form of an open book composed of white Chinese primroses surrounded by a border of roses. On the open pages the words "Close to Nature's Heart" were inscribed in purple violets. The newspaper said that this was the title of the book on nature that Bell had nearly completed.

A quartet, two of which were members of the faculty of Battle Creek College, sang five selections that were among Bell's favorites, for "next to flowers," it was said, he "loved music in scarcely less degree." After the service, six of his former students acted as bearers and he was buried in the Oak Hill Cemetery. A tombstone was subsequently erected over his grave. It reads: "A teacher of youth for more than forty years. They rest from their labors and their works do follow them."

As Students Remembered Him

Mary Steward

Bell's death shocked both the Battle Creek church and the community. In the Battle Creek Church and Sabbath-School Bulletin that was published for the Sabbath following his fatal accident, 

1Battle Creek Daily Journal, January 20, 1899, p. 4. See also Steward, "We Mourn," p. 120.


Smith, "A Sad Calamity," p. 64. Nearly four months after his death, Bell's daughter Clara, who had died in 1876, was reburied in the same plot as her father. His wife Harriet was also buried there after her death on November 14, 1906. See Cemetery Records--Plot 117A, Oak Hill Cemetery, Battle Creek; and Record of Deaths--Calhoun County, Book 3, p. 243, County Office, Marshall, Michigan.
Mary Steward wrote: "We are mourning in Battle Creek, for we have lost a friend, a teacher, a father. Into thousands of homes all over the world the news of Professor Bell's death will bring a feeling of personal loss." Those whom Bell had taught at Battle Creek College were "especially sad" at the passing of one "who lived so near to nature's heart." She described the results of his teaching with words that Bell, the naturalist, would have particularly understood and appreciated:

... we have come to realize more and more what he did for us,—how he planned and worked for our good; how anxiously he watched for the germination and growth of the seeds of truth and justice and integrity he had tried to plant in our minds; how he rejoiced when he saw the leaf and fruit appear; how he pruned us when he thought we were going wrong; how he studied to help us develop the best that was in us. And many of us will gladly acknowledge that whatever of success we have attained, is due, in great measure, to his fostering care and training.

The specter of death tends to inhibit the recall of unpleasant experiences from the past. Probably few remembered many of the details of the events at Battle Creek College in 1882, or the degree to which Bell himself may have contributed to them. There were many, however, who recalled his influence upon their lives and were thankful that they had received the discipline of such a teacher. Some of these expressed in a public way their appreciation of his teaching methods, of his expertise as an educator, and of his example and instruction as a Christian. Because of their breadth of treatment and perceptiveness, two of them are examined next.

1Steward, "We Mourn," p. 120.
The first was the lifesketch written by James C. Bartholf, a former student at Battle Creek College. Eulogistic in content, it was published three weeks after Bell's death in the *Youth's Instructor*. Bartholf paid particular tribute to Bell's qualities of character that made such an impact upon his students:

If one thing more than another characterized the life of this great educator, it was faithfulness, thoroughness, and unyielding fidelity to truth. The great secret of his wonderful achievements as a teacher was the fact that it was his constant effort to impress upon the developing life and character of his students these same sterling and essential qualities, without which real success in life is absolutely impossible.

Bartholf pointed out that Bell had little patience with "the shirk or the drone." His students had to study. He required them to work, "dig deep," and "sweat the honest sweat of constant, faithful industry."  

Any evaluation of Bell as an educator must take into account that he was denied the opportunity of ever graduating from college or university. Nevertheless, at an early age he was motivated by such a deep love for books that, when coupled with his thoroughness in learning, enabled him to gain the vast knowledge so evident later in his life. Bartholf included in his lifesketch a paragraph that Bell had written entitled "Self Education" that appeared in the second to the last issue of the *Youth's Instructor* of which


^bid.

^See Bell's essays on his early experiences with books in appendix B.
Bell was editor. Bell exhorted his young readers:

It is certain that your education depends more upon your own effort and perseverance than on the opportunities you enjoy.

Never be discouraged, then, because home duties prevent you from attending school, or from reading as much as you would like. Remember that many of the greatest and best men of earth have never enjoyed the advantages of a school education. Yet they were educated men, in the best sense of the term. . . . They thought and studied while they labored; as you, too, may do. They filled up all their spare minutes in the eager pursuit of knowledge, or in seeking strength and wisdom from above.

Follow their example, and you may also become truly educated, great, and good.

Bartholf devoted considerable space to relating Bell's life story and listing his contributions as a Christian educator. He also described some facets of Bell's character that have not been stressed, but which evidently exerted a strong influence upon those who knew him well.

Bell was not only "passionately fond of nature," but he had "a most keen and delicate appreciation of every refined and elevating expression of the beautiful" in "all phases of art,--painting, music, statuary, architecture, etc." Bell believed that "solid truth was the foundation of all true beauty." Nature's beauty was "nothing but absolute conformity to the true." It was this view, therefore, that led Bell to teach grammar and the skills of writing so thoroughly. According to Bartholf, Bell reasoned that "the only sure basis of genuine beauty of thought-expression, on the written or the printed page, is absolute correctness in

\[G. H. B e l l , \text{"Self Education," Yi 19 (February 1, 1871):10. This was quoted by Bartholf in "Goodloe Harper Bell," p. 102.}\]
the use of language." He added, significantly, that Bell's "insistence upon exactness and precision in this respect arose, therefore, from, and witnessed to, his intense love of the beautiful."^1

In an attempt to set Bell within his own generation and evaluate his educational contribution, particularly in the field of English, Bartholf wrote:

In the realm of English classic thought there have been few men better versed; few men more learned in the science and philosophy of the language; few men more conversant with the exquisite beauties brought to light through this medium; few men with a better appreciation of what constitutes really good literature; few men with a loftier ideal, a higher standard of excellence, or who could read with more discrimination and judgment, or could use good English to better or nobler purpose, than he.2

George Royal Avery

George Royal Avery wrote an account giving his impressions of Bell as a Christian educator in a seven-page manuscript entitled "Personal Recollections of an Ideal Teacher." Avery, of course, enjoyed a special relationship with Bell, having maintained contact and friendship with him for many years after Avery left Battle Creek College. Avery was drawn to Bell because they both believed that "a thing worth doing was worth doing well."3 He also shared Bell's love of literature and botany which forged a special bond between them. These factors need to be considered in evaluating Avery's assessment of Bell. Nevertheless, his document provides

^1bid., pp. 104-5.  ^2bid., p. 105.

^3George Royal Avery, "Personal Recollections of an Ideal Teacher," p. 2, GRAC, AUHR.
a helpful insight into Bell's qualities and teaching methods, at least as Avery perceived them. Even after the passage of years, he could still recall many of Bell's sayings and illustrations.

In introducing his "personal friend" to his readers, Avery described a number of Bell's notable characteristics. He thought that Bell was conspicuous for possessing the "rare" quality of heartiness. He "always manifested it and always appreciated it," Avery said. But he was contemptuous of indolence. Bell often reminded his classes that thousands died each year because they were too lazy to breathe. He urged them to breathe deeply for five minutes every hour of the day for a week. The practice, Bell said, had saved his life.¹

Bell, however, did not always practice what he preached. According to Avery, Bell constantly appealed to his students to avoid overworking and especially overstudying with no physical exercise. One can only conjecture, however, how much better Bell's own health may have been if he had followed this advice. Nevertheless, he was a teacher who was concerned about the physical development of his students.²

One of the secrets which led to "his great success as a teacher was that he made learning so beautiful and interesting that one could not help remembering it." A favorite expression of Bell's was, "If you are not interested in it don't try to remember it." He despised notetaking. He was more concerned to teach in such a way that the student had the information in his head

¹Ibid., p. 3. ²Ibid.
rather than on paper. Thus when he had taught something, "he delighted to drop it, turn it over and learn it all over from a different viewpoint." In fact, Avery often found that the class periods were too short because Bell had held the interest of his students so well. Bell's reply to those who wanted more time was: "When we get over yonder we shall have time enough, no it will not be time it will be eternity for everything."1

Bell's students knew him as a man who despised compromise. He often told his students of the neighbor who visited his father and said, "Mr. Bell, of two evils I choose the less." The reply of Bell senior was: "Mr. Jones, of two evils I will take neither one; the right is good enough for me." Bell's inability to compromise doubtless contributed to some of the problems in his personal relationships, but some of his students, at least, were impressed by the lesson he taught them.2

The training of the mind was an integral part of Bell's educational program. Nevertheless the mind had to be subject to man's will. Students often heard him say, "That individual who has trained his mind to obey him is already a scholar." His emphasis on mind training led him to avoid teaching by the "cramming-method," which discouraged the active use of the child's ability to think. Children's heads were not hollow. They had the power to think, to choose, and to act. A significant feature of his

1:bid., pp. 6, 4. (Emphasis his.)
2:bid., p. 4.
teaching was his use of what he called the "natural method" in which "each new thought became the parent of the next." Avery claimed that Bell strongly promoted the inductive method of teaching, rarely introducing definitions until the student was acquainted with the concept being studied.  

In Avery's estimation, Bell was the "most conspicuous" of his teachers "for mental, moral, and physical strength, the outgrowth of experimental Christian living." Surely, this must be one of the most significant and enduring marks of the Christian educator.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed Bell's retirement years, and, especially, two of his most lasting contributions as a Christian educator: the publication of a monthly journal for the home, The Fireside Teacher, and his private tutoring and correspondence teaching program. Bell had worked extensively for the church and for the school prior to his retirement. It was fitting that now he should direct his attention to the home which is the other great agency in the Christian education of the youth of the church.

For three years he sent his journal to hundreds of homes with its articles designed to cultivate in his readers "ease,  

1 Bell entitled his first textbook, Natural Method in English For his description of the "seven peculiarities of the method," see his Natural Method in English, 2nd ed. (Battle Creek, Mich.: Student's Publishing Company, 1881), pp. v, vi.


3 Ibid., p. 1.
simplicity and naturalness of expression," and at the same time
to "turn the mind toward the good and the beautiful." It was
a noble aim and so characteristic of the man who worked throughout
his life to bring to others a practical education and a higher
culture which would make them more efficient servants of Christ
in this life and would prepare them for the companionship of God
and the angels in the life to come.

Though there are few remaining sources that record the
influence of his private teaching the testimony of M. E. Olsen
and A. W. Spalding, examined in this chapter, also reveal Bell's
gifts as an educator and his influence as a Christian. No man
can measure the positive results for good of another man's life.
But if one believes the testimony of those whose lives were
blessed and enriched by Bell's life and work, he was instrumental
in inspiring many to be faithful, thorough, and committed servants
of Christ. Twenty years after Bell's death, Drury Reavis wrote
of him, "Perhaps the least appreciated man in his day, he is today
fondly cherished in the hearts of hundreds of his pupils." In
the estimation of another former student, W. H. McKee, Bell did

... a very unassuming work, yet one which, when judged
by its fruits, is seen to be worldwide in its results.
In every land and clime where the English tongue is spoken,
and in many where it is rarely heard, there are living
monuments to his memory which stand as religious and intel-
lectual beacon lights in the communities in which they
labor.
CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS

It has been the purpose of this dissertation to describe and document the contribution of Goodloe Harper Bell as the pioneer Seventh-day Adventist educator. Any evaluation of his work must take into consideration that he was not merely a pioneer educator, but was, in fact, the pioneer educator in many areas of the educational program of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

It has been established that Bell did indeed blaze a trail for others to follow. In practically every aspect of his work he was the pioneer. Or to change the figure, he laid the foundation for what has since become one of the most extensive Protestant church-school systems in the world. Furthermore, if the work of education is understood to include the church, the school, and the home, then Bell helped to lay the foundations in all three, but especially in the church and the school. He reached out beyond the day-school movement to the education of the church through the Sabbath school, and in his retirement years worked for the improvement of the Christian home. In concluding this examination of the life and work of Goodloe Harper Bell, three areas are examined: his accomplishments, his character, and his methods.
His Accomplishments

Bell's life spanned an era of great change and development both in education generally and in the Seventh-day Adventist church more particularly. His initial teaching experience in Michigan public schools occurred at a time when the state was laying its own educational foundations. When he joined the Seventh-day Adventist church in 1867, there was no organized work in education among them. His commitment to Christian education, his teaching skills, and the thoroughness with which he conducted his work enabled him to make a most significant contribution to Seventh-day Adventist education during the last thirty years of the nineteenth century.

Bell's accomplishments may be reviewed in six areas: founder of day schools, school teacher, organizer and instructor in the Sabbath school, founder of a private correspondence school, author of English textbooks, and editor of denominational journals related to Christian education.

First, Bell was the founder of the day school program operated by the Seventh-day Adventist church. Soon after Bell became a Seventh-day Adventist some of the young people of the church invited him to teach them. This led to the establishment of a small school in Battle Creek in 1868. Here he quickly gained the reputation of being a Christian teacher who enabled his students to clearly grasp the concepts he taught them. His first private efforts to conduct a school in Battle Creek eventually led to his employment by the church as its first church school teacher in 1872. Considerable success rewarded his efforts. Later, when that school developed into Battle Creek College, Bell headed the
preparatory department under Sidney Brownsberger who was in charge of the school.

In 1882 Bell founded another school in South Lancaster, Massachusetts. As principal of that school, his careful organization, Christian philosophy of education, and strong biblical emphasis molded the institution in its first two impressionable years. Bell, along with Sidney Brownsberger in California, was the first to implement the combination of study and physical labor into the program of any Adventist school. He also made the study of the Bible a strong feature of the daily program. A primary object of South Lancaster Academy was the training of Christian workers for the church. During Bell's period of service at South Lancaster, he was successful in making a worthwhile contribution toward the achievement of this goal.

As founding teacher of both Battle Creek College and South Lancaster Academy, Bell had a formative influence upon their early development. His strong support of the philosophy of Christian education promoted by Ellen White laid a firm foundation for the development of these schools in the years that followed.

Second, Bell made a significant contribution as the pioneering teacher of the denomination. He had been a teacher for some fifteen years prior to his joining the Seventh-day Adventist church. He had taught in the public schools of Michigan and had been a school inspector for at least three years. Bell's love of learning, his wide reading, and his natural teaching ability enabled him to teach a wide variety of subjects at Battle Creek College. He
was the first teacher of botany, history, arithmetic, vocal music, and English in any Adventist college or secondary school, and was among those teachers who organized and taught in the first teacher-training course operated by Seventh-day Adventists. His teaching also included instruction in Bible subjects, particularly at South Lancaster.

Bell's students often thought his discipline severe and his instruction too demanding. Then, too, some of his personality traits militated against the positive methods of his teaching. These led to difficulties in his relationships with the administration, staff, parents, and students of Battle Creek College in 1882 and to a lesser extent with the operation of the smaller South Lancaster school in 1884.

Nevertheless, those who persevered profited by his thorough and enthusiastic teaching, and were later most appreciative of the clarity of his instruction, his Christian principles, and continued interest in his former pupils. His contribution as the pioneering teacher in the Adventist church is further discussed below in the section "His Methods." Many of the students who were in his classes during the first seven years of the operation of Battle Creek College later became leading ministers, teachers, and administrators in the Seventh-day Adventist church. They testified of the great impact of Bell's teaching upon their lives.

Third, Bell had a most significant and enduring influence upon the organization and instructional program of the Sabbath school. In 1869, Bell was appointed the superintendent of the
Battle Creek Sabbath School and continued in that office for most of the period until early 1882. During this time he introduced many changes in its organization and operation. He appointed various officers to care for different aspects of the conduct of the school and carefully outlined the responsibilities of each office. The marking of rolls for punctuality, attendance, scholarship, and deportment that Bell brought with him from his public school experience became features of the Sabbath school. As superintendent of the largest and most influential Sabbath school in the denomination, he shared his pioneering organizational changes with other schools through the pages of The Youth's Instructor during the period he was editor from 1869 through 1871. The gradual introduction of these ideas brought uniformity of action to Sabbath schools throughout the Adventist church and greatly strengthened the educational impact of the Sabbath school on the lives of its members.

Bell also pioneered in the preparation of graded Bible lessons for the students of the Sabbath school. In 1869 he published two series of lessons: one for the youth and one for younger children. These were supplemented by further lessons during the following years until finally Bell had published a series of eight small books of lessons. These were graded in difficulty and led the student through a carefully prepared eight-year program of Bible study from Genesis to the book of Acts. Bell's eight books were used in the Sabbath schools and day schools of the denomination for a quarter of a century and introduced thousands of children
to the teachings of the scriptures.

Bell pioneered in other areas of the work in the Sabbath school as well. He was the first Sabbath school superintendent to organize a division for the very young children--this was later named the Kindergarten division. His interest in the Sabbath school led him to be among those who first organized the General and Michigan Sabbath-School Associations. The church appointed him as the first recording secretary of the former organization and the first president of the latter. While he was editor of the Youth's Instructor from 1869 to 1871, he also pioneered in the introduction of a department in that journal for the special promotion of Sabbath school interests. In addition, he was the first to give instruction in any Adventist journal on how to teach in the Sabbath school and how to study the weekly lesson.

Before the establishment of denominational elementary schools in the late 1890s, the Sabbath school was the largest and most significant educational facility within the Seventh-day Adventist church in the 1870s and 1880s. Bell's influence, therefore, as a Christian educator through the Sabbath school was most profound. His work greatly reinforced the spiritual impact upon the life of the church.

Fourth, Bell was the first Seventh-day Adventist to found a private correspondence school. After his retirement in 1884, he was concerned with raising the educational standards of those within the church who, for one reason or another, had not been able to further their education. Universities and other groups
were beginning to promote correspondence school programs during the 1880s, and Bell took the initiative by offering instruction through the mail for members of his church. He prepared a textbook for this purpose and many students gained great benefit from his careful instruction in English by correspondence. The organization in 1909 of what was later named "The Fireside Correspondence School" paid a silent tribute to Bell's pioneering work on behalf of the home through education by mail.

Fifth, Bell's most substantial contribution during his fifteen years of retirement was the preparation of a series of five textbooks on English language and literature. Previously, while still teaching, he had written three other texts on grammar and punctuation in the 1880s. The five books in the second series, which was completed in 1898, were well received by English teachers both within and without the church. They demonstrated his extensive learning in the fields of literature and grammar, his concise and thorough teaching skills, his commitment to the principle of teaching students to think and reason rather than depend on rote memory, and his convictions about the place good literature has in the development of Christian character. The lives of many students were blessed by the high ideals he upheld in his English textbooks.

Finally, Bell became the early leader in educational journalism among Seventh-day Adventists. He was a profuse writer and his writing style was simple and unadorned, yet vivid and precise. He was closely connected with three denominational journals during his life—all of them were related to Christian education.
Reference has already been made to Bell's appointment as editor of the Youth's Instructor, a position he held from 1869 through 1871. He not only strongly promoted his new Sabbath school organization through its pages but he also published in it his first two series of Bible lessons adapted for the youth and younger children. The editorial articles which came from his pen upheld Christian principles and virtues before the youth of the church through the only journal the church published to meet the needs of its younger members.

When the General Sabbath-School Association decided to commence the publication of The Sabbath-School Worker--its first journal to promote the Sabbath school--it invited Bell, W. C. White, and J. E. White to be the first editorial committee. For three years Bell served as a co-editor and wrote many articles on Christian teaching.

In 1887 Bell also pioneered in his publication of the first journal within the Adventist church dedicated to the improvement of home culture. His monthly journal, The Fireside Teacher, which continued for three years, was not a religious magazine. Nevertheless it promoted wholesome Christian virtues and ideals. Though it never gained a wide circulation, it was an influence for good in the homes into which it came, and foreshadowed the interest Seventh-day Adventists would later take in the area of home education.

It is possible, of course, to lay a foundation and yet not lay it firmly enough for others to build upon. But this was
not in harmony with Bell's character. Many of his innovations continued for decades to be a blessing to the church, the school, and the home. Some of his innovations in the Sabbath school, for example, are still seen in its operation today. Bell's accomplishments, therefore, were most significant for the development of the program of Christian education in the Seventh-day Adventist church. His contemporaries recognized that he had performed the labor of three men in the dedication of his life and the best of his strength to the task of teaching.

Yet Bell was often unpopular, and the ideals which he strove so hard to attain at times failed in practice because of his character weaknesses. It is important, therefore, to examine his strengths and weaknesses in an attempt to understand the enigma that Bell's life often presented.

His Character

In any evaluation of Bell's character it must be kept in mind that there are gaps in our knowledge and understanding of him and of the significant events in which he played a part. This study has attempted to examine those documents still extant that are related to his life work. Nevertheless, Bell himself did not leave an extensive correspondence and many of the church records of the period prior to the 1880s have been lost or destroyed. It has therefore been necessary at times to depend upon only a few contemporary witnesses, and this may affect the veracity of the conclusions drawn from them. Much of the source material,
for example, that might throw light upon the circumstances and conflicts that led to the 1882 crisis and Bell's subsequent departure from Battle Creek College no longer exist. Similarly, the documents that might add to the understanding of Bell's resignation from the South Lancaster school and from the work of the church have also been destroyed. This has necessitated some tentative treatment in the body of the dissertation. The study, however, has highlighted some significant aspects of his character and personality.

One of the most outstanding qualities Bell possessed was the thoroughness which characterized his work. Whether he was preparing a lesson, writing a text, teaching in the classroom, organizing a Sabbath school, or editing a magazine, it was done with precision and to the best of his ability. Bell believed that teaching students to be thorough in their lessons would help them to be thorough Christians. He encouraged them to act according to the maxim that a thing worth doing is worth doing well. Certainly this relationship between thoroughness in personal habits and a commitment to the Christian life appeared to exist in his own experience. His devotion to God and to the Bible teachings he had espoused when he first came to Battle Creek continued throughout his life. Though he was spurned and despised by those who should have demonstrated more Christian charity, he did not relinquish his faith or withdraw from fellowship with the church. In 1884 he chose to return to live in the city where only two years before his name had been reviled, and he remained a loyal
member of the church until the day he died. Perseverance and a readiness to uphold what he believed to be right in the face of opposition and censure were two of his commendable qualities.

This inner drive for perfection, however, led him at times to be intolerant of those who demonstrated little inclination to work. It is here that one sees the contradiction that Bell's life sometimes presents. As a teacher he was concerned about the development of his pupils. His goal as a Christian educator was to accomplish positive Christian growth in the character of his students. He tried to inspire in them the spirit of cheerful, voluntary, industry, but when they did not respond, he often reacted severely and spoke with sarcasm or ridicule which only exacerbated the problem. As a result, the very nobility of character he upheld before his students was denied by his own life. The mystery that this presents lies, of course, at the heart of the Christian life. So often the teacher is not what he wants his pupils to become. Bell may have been striving to be a Christian in his own strength, for he was urged on more than one occasion to depend more on God for his strength, wisdom and righteousness. He himself admitted during one crisis that had he lived nearer God, he would not have been in the position he was at that time.

As a teacher Bell loved children and youth. Some of them responded to him and more immediately appreciated all he did on their behalf. But many were repulsed by his sterner virtues and did not understand how much he had done for them, how carefully he had trained them, until after they had passed from his classes.
Bell was also a sensitive man. Though inclined to wound the feelings of others, he was easily wounded himself. And though he was noted for his perseverance, he was also often cautioned not to resist the appeals of his fellow workers. Perseverance may easily turn to stubbornness and an unwillingness to listen to the counsels of those of long experience. Both at Battle Creek and at South Lancaster there were those who made such charges against him.

Bell also trusted too much in his own ability. This created difficulties for Bell in the misunderstandings that arose in the early 1870s and again in 1882 at Battle Creek. The church may have been partly to blame for this, particularly in 1870 when it thrust too much responsibility upon him. Praised for the quality of his teaching by some in the church, he became overconfident and intolerant of those who disagreed with him. Yet at the same time, Bell may well have labored with a feeling of inferiority because of his lack of formal education. Brownsberger had been selected to head the Battle Creek College because of his college degrees. Bell, on the other hand, had no educational qualifications from any university or college. It is feasible to believe that he may have overcompensated for this lack by becoming both overconfident of his own ability and oversensitive to what he interpreted to be a lack of respect for his dignity.

Unfortunately, these weaknesses were exacerbated by his poor health which was undoubtedly brought on by his excessive and intemperate work habits. It would appear that his home
circumstances also were not conducive to happiness and peace of mind, and these probably contributed to his illness. Bell's health was never robust. It was sickness and grief that first brought him to the Western Health Reform Institute. He withdrew from Battle Creek in 1871-72 because of poor health. His teaching and other responsibilities left him weak and in need of rest in the early 1880s and hastened the onset of the crisis of 1882. During his stay at South Lancaster, it seems that he rarely enjoyed good health and finally he withdrew from contact with others and appeared to abdicate many of his responsibilities. Adding to his concerns was the pain associated with his failing eyesight. This must have added to his discouragement since Bell loved to read.

Bell's teaching career in the formal classroom was affected on three occasions by deteriorating relationships with others. After teaching in a more private capacity at Battle Creek, he was criticized in 1872 by parents, students, and church members because of the weaknesses described above. This occurred again in 1882, but to a much greater extent. Then two years later, when he terminated his position as head of the South Lancaster school, he evidently found it difficult to relate to his peers or take counsel from his superiors.

In each of the crises in which Bell was involved, there were clearly faults on both sides. The evidence points to a spirit of intolerance and harsh criticism in the Battle Creek church for some time prior to both the 1872 and 1882 conflicts. Tolerance, Christian charity, and an appreciation of Bell's extended labors...
on behalf of the church should have been demonstrated by its members. On the other hand, Bell was harsh, critical, and often can­
tankerous. Furthermore, he lessened the impact of his teaching to the extent that he himself fell short of what he desired his students to become. His lack of consistency complicated his personal relationships. For example, when he had stood so strongly for upholding the proper relationships between the sexes at the college, it must have been an embarrassment for the board to have to pass censure on him for indiscreet behavior.

Like every other Christian educator, Bell possessed weaknesses in his character that limited his effectiveness. In fact, he seems to have had more obvious faults than many of his peers. He was publicly rebuked by Ellen White and others, and almost hounded out of Battle Creek in 1882. Yet it must be noted that when faced by his mistakes, Bell was always ready to acknowledge them and start over again. The spirit of humility and sorrow he displayed for his actions was much to Bell's credit.

From the perspective of time, one may only admire his tenacity of purpose, his commitment to the cause he loved, and his dedication to Christ and to the work of training the character of those who came in contact with his teaching and other labors. No other Christian educator in the Seventh-day Adventist church during the last thirty years of the nineteenth century pioneered in so many areas and, through his life and writings, exerted a more positive influence upon the youth of the church than did Goodloe Bell. One can only contemplate what he might have
accomplished had he been more considerate of the feelings of others, less sensitive to his own feelings, and more inclined to take counsel from his friends.

**His Methods**

Bell's methods arose out of his philosophy of Christian education to which he was deeply committed. As a Christian, he believed in the plan of salvation from sin that Jesus Christ's death on the cross had accomplished for man. He accepted the Bible as the inspired Word of God and promoted its principles actively throughout his life. Eternal life was a reality to him, and thus this earthly life was but a preparation for the one to come. Education must be focused, therefore, on man's total possible existence and must prepare him for a life with God as well as for life with other men. Since the development of a Christian character through faith in Christ was an integral part of that preparation, character training lay at the heart of Bell's philosophy of teaching. His distinctive methods emanated from his acceptance of this tenet of Christian education.

Bell was devoted to teaching and was thorough both in his lesson preparation and in its presentation. He possessed the ability to explain clearly and to illustrate effectively from his extensive reading. In his grammar instruction he placed great priority on the thought of the sentence and avoided the extreme dependence on rules and rote memory so prevalent in his day. The development of the student's mind was basic to the work of education, but its
growth did not come by adding fact to fact without giving time for assimilation. As a student of nature, Bell had noted that natural growth could not be forced without harm to the organism. The dependency upon rules, formulas, and memorization to the neglect of developing the student's reasoning powers only dwarfed the final product. He encouraged his students that it was preferable to learn a little amount thoroughly and with understanding, than a large amount superficially.

Bell loved nature and beauty in all its forms and was a careful student of the natural world. His study of nature possibly contributed also to his promotion of the "natural method" of teaching. Learning must proceed, he believed, from the known to the unknown. Each thought was to be the parent of the next. He taught inductively, therefore, and rarely introduced rules or definitions until the child understood the concept being taught.

A practical education, he believed, was to be prized above all else. His emphasis upon the thorough study of the common subjects and his commitment to the principle of combining useful labor with study led to this end. These contributed to the mental, physical, and spiritual development of his students and, therefore, to the balanced development of a character after the divine model.

Bell believed that education must be Christian to be true education. This necessitated directing the student to place his faith in Christ for his salvation and to look to Him as the pattern for his character development. Bell understood all too well that the Christian teacher possessed not only strengths in his character
but also weaknesses. Thus, in concluding this analysis of his methods and philosophy, his counsel to teachers is worthy of consideration:

Christ alone is the only model worthy of imitation,—the only one on which it is safe to mold the character. It is to the pure life and character of Jesus that both parents and teachers should direct the minds of the children. . . .

The developing of this ideal is the essential feature of Christian education. There can scarcely be a more important question than, "What think ye of Christ?" The entire Bible has a bearing upon this subject. . . . From the Old Testament history we learn, as by a series of object lessons, what God approves and what He condemns. . . . In tracing God's dealings with mankind we best learn the character of the Creator himself. Now when we come to the New Testament we are told that Christ is the express image of His Father. The character of the Father and the Son is one. But besides this we have an extended account of the Saviour's life here upon earth, his humility, his love, his patient forbearance, his boldness in reproving error, his willingness to sacrifice himself for the good of others,—all these are exemplified over and over again. . . . Let these narratives and precepts constantly flow through the mind, and they will not only impart useful knowledge, but they will be constantly solidifying a character upon the model furnished by the Son of God, the Saviour of mankind.

In conclusion, Goodloe Harper Bell remains as a preeminent Christian educator in the Seventh-day Adventist church. Through his accomplishments he pioneered in many areas of Christian education that have subsequently developed into major educational projects within the denomination. The strengths and weaknesses of his character provide an object lesson for all who are engaged in teaching. Christian educators may also profit from a study of the principles underlying his instructional methods to the extent

1G. I. Bell, "Results of Influence," YM 35 (July 6, 1887): 130.
they still contribute to the ultimate goal of Christian education—the balanced physical, mental, spiritual, and social development of students that will enable them to live a life of greatest service in this world and in the world to come.
THE ANCESTRY OF GOODLOE HARPER BELL

According to the earliest published life sketch of Goodloe Bell, his paternal ancestors "were prominent in the early colonial history of New England and earlier in the annals of old England as well."¹ It is not known when the Bell family migrated from England to the New World. Many pioneers carrying the name of Bell were in the provinces of New England as early as 1643. Most of these were from Scotland, but some came from northern England and Ireland.²

Goodloe Bell's grandfather, David Bell, was born and reared in Vermont. He married Chloe Carpenter,³ daughter of Asa Carpenter and niece of Benjamin Carpenter, who was a member of the first constitutional convention of Vermont and in 1788 was elected lieutenant-governor of that state.⁴ In 1807, David and Chloe Bell migrated from Vermont to the state of New York. Like the majority of Americans in his day⁵ David Bell was a farmer, but unlike the

⁵In 1820 72 percent of the American workers, both slave and free, were on farms. See 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, p. 22.
The Blodgett family in the United States may be traced back to Thomas Blodgett, who was born in England in 1605. He came to America thirty years later, settling in Cambridge, Massachusetts Bay Colony, with his wife Susannah and two children, Daniel and Samuel. Samuel married in 1655 and on February 26, 1661, became the father of Thomas Blodgett who, in 1684, married Rebecca Tidd. Some years later, he was to bestow upon many of his children, including his son Goodloe, the same enthusiasm for agricultural pursuits.


2The biographical details in this paragraph are taken from an undated published genealogical record Ten Generations of Blodgetts in America by Edwin A. Blodgett of Springfield, Massachusetts, pp. 5, 7, 10, 23, 56, 130. It was revised for publication by his daughters Edith A. and Evelyn M. Blodgett and is located in the Historical Genealogy Department, Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana.
after his marriage Thomas moved to Lexington, Massachusetts, where he became one of the town's most active and prominent citizens. One of his sons, named Samuel after his grandfather, became the father of Timothy Blodgett, who was born on August 10, 1740, and who later served in the Revolutionary War. Timothy married Millicent Perry and thirteen children were born to them including a set of twins, Lucy and Samuel.

An account of Millicent Blodgett's experiences at the Battle of Lexington, April 19, 1775, has been preserved. She describes the panic experienced by those living in Lexington at hearing the news on the morning of April 19 that Lord Percy was approaching with fifteen thousand men to burn all the villages between Boston and Concord. With most of the husbands and fathers in pursuit of the enemy, the women fled with their children to the woods near the village. Millicent Blodgett and her twins, Lucy and Samuel, who were then only six and one half months old, were among them.¹

Twenty years later in 1795, Samuel Blodgett married Susanna Whipple.² To them were born twelve children, one of whom was Lucy Ann Blodgett. Lucy was born in the village of Heath in Franklin

¹Ibid., p. 57. See also Bartholf, "Goodloe Harper Bell," p. 102.

²There is some evidence that Susanna Whipple's original name was Susanna Harper and that she was later adopted by Whipple. See Bradley Deforest Thompson and Franklin Condit Thompson, "Blodgett-Blodgett Descendants of Thomas of Cambridge," vol. 1, generations 1 to 6 (Concord, New Hampshire: n.p., 1955), p. 153, Historical Genealogy Department, Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana. It is significant that one of Susanna's daughters was Lucy, the mother of Goodloe Harper Bell. One of Susanna's sons was given the name of Robert Goodlow Harper Blodgett. Blodgett, Ten Generations of Blodgetts, p. 130.
County, Massachusetts, on April 17, 1812. In 1828, when Lucy was about sixteen years of age, her parents moved their large family to Antwerp, a small village on the Indian River about twenty miles northeast of Watertown in Jefferson County, New York.

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1Biographical Record of Muskegon and Ottawa Counties, p. 226. The two other Blodgett genealogical records previously quoted give the year of Lucy Blodgett's birth as 1804 and 1802, respectively. See Blodgett, Ten Generations of Blodgetts, p. 130, and Thompson and Thompson, "Blodget-Blodgett Descendants," p. 154. The records of the 1860 Census state that Lucy's age in that year was 48 which points to 1812 as the year of her birth. 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.

2Biographical Record of Muskegon and Ottawa Counties, p. 226.
APPENDIX B

FOUR ORIGINAL ESSAYS

BY G. H. BELL
My forest friends are many and dear. The great oaks and maples that sheltered me in childhood, and against whose massive trunks I leaned while listening to the squirrels overhead, and to the dropping of nuts and acorns on the dry leaves at my feet; the brooks and torrents that went dashing over rocks, and winding through glens; the modest flowers and happy birds; the huge rocks, with their broad shoulders and cool shadows,—all these seem like old acquaintances, endeared by a thousand pleasant recollections.

Poets represent inanimate objects as speaking, and these things do certainly speak to me, in tones that cannot be mistaken. The rock speaks of the strength and immutability of the great Jehovah; the brooklet sings a song of purity and cheerfulness; the birds praise God, as all allow, and they also talk of love, of connubial joys, and domestic peace; the trees, with their protecting arms, speak of the providential care of the Creator, and through their leaves run mysterious whispers of things unseen. The flowers, crowning the tree-tops, springing from the cold sod, or enlivening the dusty wayside, tell us that beauty, sweetness, and delicacy, may be developed under all circumstances.

Among these objects of nature I find real companionship. With them there is an eternal and unchanging constancy. Never yet have they given me a frown. Their serenity sinks into my soul, and the cares of life are forgotten. They seem to appreciate my admiration; for I am told that not to many do they speak in such tender tones as they do to me. The birds show their preference in a decided manner. When I am alone, they come almost within reach of my hand, caroling their richest roundelays, and looking into my face with as plain a welcome as any one could give. On the contrary, whenever a stranger is with me, no matter how still we may be, the birds keep their distance, perching upon the highest boughs, and giving only a few faint, distrustful notes.

Every spring-time I watch for my floral favorites, as we watch for loved ones o'er the sea. When they first open their delicate petals to the morning sun, they often find me present to welcome them; for I know the homes of them all, "Yea, one and all," and the exact places where the earliest of them will appear. The bright, innocent, happy smiles they give me could scarcely be sweeter upon human lips; and if they do not actually speak in audible tones, I know that our common Creator speaks through them to my heart.

At the foot of that great oak, I have often poured out to my
Heavenly Father the secret woes of my life, yet the straggling winds that pass through its branches, have never, in all their wanderings, lisped a word of what I said. The tender plants that listen to my moans, and witness my tears, turn their bright faces to the sky, saying, "Look up! the light of God’s love can dispel the damps and dews of the dreariest night that sorrow ever brought upon the human heart."

Surely,--

"There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is society where none intrudes;"
and
"I love not man the less, but nature more,
From these our interviews."

SOURCE: G. H. Bell, "Compositions," an original manuscript of essays written at South Lancaster, Massachusetts, about 1884, pp. 32-35, AUHR.
MY BOOKS

From childhood up, my books have been a delight to me. Pleasant memories cluster around them all; even Webster's Spelling Book, which for a time was so distasteful, is now remembered with mingled feelings of fondness and reverence. Was it not my first book? Did I not there learn, "b-a-g, bag; h-a-g, hag; l-a-g, lag; m-a-g, mag; n-a-g, nag; r-a-g, rag; s-a-g, sag; w-a-g, wag; b-i-g, big; d-i-g, dig; f-i-g, fig; g-i-g, gig; j-i-g, jig; p-i-g, pig; r-i-g, rig; w-i-g, wig? and begin to experience that consequential, self-satisfied feeling which learning gives? Who can tell how insignificant all common attainments appeared when I could actually read, with very little telling:

"She fed the old hen."
"The old hen was fed by her."

How I commiserated the unlearned! With what pride and satisfaction I looked down from the heights I had reached; and with what bold ambition did I turn my aspiring eyes to still loftier eminences. I even dared to hope that one day I might be numbered with the immortal few who could cipher, and recite in geography! And sometimes, with fluttering heart, when hope soared highest (pardon my want of modesty), I dreamed of a far away glory too bright to be thought of but with blushing cheek and downcast eye. Could it be that I should some day read in the English Reader? Would I live to read such pieces as the Vision of Mirza, or the Grotto of Antiparos? It seemed that such men as Joseph Addison and Oliver Goldsmith must belong to a superior order of beings. I viewed them in something the same light as the Greeks did their Gods. And there was Peter Parley, the author of that little quarto geography! Was he not the idol of every schoolboy? Could it be that he, with all his learning, was made like other men? And yet, there was his picture on the fly leaf of the book, with bandaged foot in chair, and cane in hand, poking back the boys, and threatening them that if they did not keep off his sore toe, he would tell them no more stories.

I write about these authors, not because I had the faintest glimmer of a hope that I should ever write anything that could be printed; but to show how I looked upon the books they had written, and how I longed to be able to read them, and find out for myself some of the wonderful things they had revealed.

Thus the years rolled on, until I had become so profound in wisdom that it was thought I might learn to cipher. Indeed, it seemed quite necessary, too, that I should know something of the laws of computation, since I was now nine years of age, so nearly to the
estate of manhood as to render it highly probable that I would soon have use for such knowledge.

Accordingly, an old slate was fitted up with a new frame, and the arithmetic my father had used in boyhood were given me. No titled son ever felt prouder at coming into possession of baronial estate than did I in coming into possession of that book. The days of childhood were forever past! How I applied myself to that first page of questions till I could answer every one. Of course I did not know what the answers meant, but what had that to do with it? Could I not recite the lesson? and who ever thought of anything farther?

But O, the vanity of human greatness! That very night an accident laid me upon a bed of pain, where entirely helpless, I suffered for many weeks.

SOURCE: G. H. Bell, "Compositions," pp. 50-53, AUHR.
MY BOOKS AGAIN

The doctor, pleased with the fortitude shown during a severe and long-protracted surgical operation, began after a few days, to ask me questions, and soon discovered the view of my ambition. Being a scholar, his sympathies were quickly awakened, and he promised that as soon as I had sufficiently recovered to make it safe for me to read I should have a book. How I longed for that time to come! How carefully I observed all the doctor's directions!

At last the book came. Can I ever forget how that kind physician sat down by my bedside, and read me the story of "The Little Man in Black"? How I wondered that he could take time to do me such a favor. At his next visit he read me the story of "The Boy and the Frogs."

Through the intercession of the doctor I prevailed on father to buy me a geography. But my ambition was now raised to such a pitch, and my ideas had been so expanded by frequent interviews with the doctor, that I soared above the childish stories of Peter Parley. Mr. Olney had just completed his most excellent work. It consisted of a duodecimo volume of some four hundred pages accompanied by a large and beautifully drawn atlas, the best I have ever seen. The first sight of these precious books made an impression that will never fade. Although my father had somewhat grudged the large expense, his feelings seemed to change when he saw the joy his presents gave me. The marvelous progress I made in this study I fear to tell lest you should think me guilty of exaggeration. The teacher could not find time in school or out of school to hear the lessons I learned. In less than a year I had made the book my own. Scarcely a question could be asked me that I could not answer. Your overtasked patience would fail if I should tell of my first testament, of the school reader that was sent me by a dear maiden aunt, or of the first really good school I attended; yet the memories connected with them, I should be sad to lose.

Years have rolled round, the cares of life have multiplied, joys and sorrows have come and gone; yet my books have always been a comfort and delight to me. Although few, they have been like old friends, ever constant, ever the same. Nothing ever ruffles them, or disturbs their quiet mood. How often have they calmed my perturbed spirit, and caused me to take broader, and more generous views of life.

Of late, however, I have been almost shut out from their society. They seldom speak to me except through an interpreter. How sad it seems! In spite of the love I bear them, they are slowly
fading from my mind. Even the great book of nature grows dim. Yet I thank God for some appreciation of what I can read. I praise him, not only for the benefit, but for the enjoyments I have had in books. I still retain many of the beautiful pictures they have made for me, and bless the kind interpreters who still help me to keep up some acquaintance with the pages I love.

SOURCE: G. H. Bell, "Compositions," pp. 54-56, AUHR.
THE IMAGINATION

The Bible speaks of vain imaginings; and there can be no doubt but the dreamy-senseless reveries in which some indulge are carried much too far, if they are not wholly unprofitable. Yet we must not condemn the exercise of the imagination; for upon it depends some of the loftiest enjoyments of life. The writers of the Bible indulge in it freely; and without it we should be powerless to conceive of the glories of heaven, or the beauties of the new earth.

From the very spelling of the word we may see that it means to image,—to picture mentally what cannot be literally seen, and to picture it so clearly that it will appear as real as if seen in vision. The power to do this is very valuable. It enables us to live over all the scenes of past history, as well as those that are predicted for the future. One thus gifted can at pleasure call up any scene of which he has read, and can cause the heroes of the past to come upon the stage, and act for him the deeds that made them famous. The most distant lands are brought near. He traverses them at will. He sees their mountains, valleys, and plains; their streams gurgle and sparkle at his feet; he enjoys the refreshing shade of their groves; birds of the most gorgeous plumage flit before him, their songs regale his ear, the branches quiver to their tread, the insects hum in the still air. Glassy lakes reflect the earth and sky, or ripple to the boatman's oar. He sees the busy people at their toil, at their pastimes, at their devotions. Thus lands never seen by the natural eye become almost as familiar as the land of our birth.

So, too, we may climb to heaven itself, and stand before the great white throne. The face too bright to be seen by mortal man may yet receive the unwearied gaze of imagination. Eden, with all its glories, stands forth at the beck of the magic wand. As innocent as the first pair, we may wander at will through all its enchanting shades. Its beautiful bowers are free. We breathe the air of love, and like Rabbi Ben Levi, whom the angel of death took to the heavenly city, we almost refuse to turn to earth.

In childhood, the imagination is especially active. The little boy becomes at once a man in the pride and pomp of life. His cub-house is an elegant mansion; a mark in the sand is a dashing, surging river; and his grandfather's cane is transformed into as proud a steed as the Bucephalus tamed by young Alexander the Great. How dreary indeed would be the heart of childhood without the gift of imagination! What a pity that the chilling associations of the world should check the growth of this heaven-born gift.

It is imagination that suggests to the poet the ten thousand
beautiful figures by which he illustrates his lessons of truth, explains the mysterious movings of the heart, and paints the beauties of heaven.

Without the aid of imaginations, we could enjoy nothing but what is within the immediate range of our own senses at the moment. Memory would only tell us that we had seen something before, but would not give us a picture of it. The lovely scenes of the past, the beautiful associations of childhood, the faces of loved ones, absent or departed, -- all these would be blotted out forever. We could form no pictures of the future, it would be shut in by bare facts and scenes of the present moment. Alas, for such a state! And yet there are many who seem to regard it a virtue to crush out, so far as it is possible, all the loftier flights of imagination. And have they not succeeded far too well?

SOURCE:  G. H. Bell, "Compositions," pp. 66-69, AUHR.
APPENDIX C

SAMPLE LESSON FROM NATURAL METHOD IN ENGLISH

BY G. H. BELL
Lesson 183.

Substantive Clause as Object.

1. Instruction.

I hear that you are going to Europe.

In this sentence, that you are going to Europe tells what I hear. It is a clause, for it has a subject and predicate, and since it is the object of the transitive verb hear, it does the work of a noun; for nouns and pronouns are the words commonly used in that office. Nouns and pronouns are called substantives, and since this clause does the work of a noun or pronoun, it is called a substantive clause.

2. Examples.

1. I know that my Redeemer liveth.
2. I believe that the Bible is a sacred book.
3. We found that he was prepared.
4. I deny that I deceived you.
5. What wicked man murdered all his brothers.
6. We admit that we were wrong.
7. They acknowledged that they were defeated.
8. Our happiness depends on what we desire.
9. I fear that I weary you.
10. Some deny that Bonaparte was a great man.

Model for Analysis.

Subject 1.
1. I is the subject.
2. Know is the predicate.
3. That my Redeemer liveth tells what I know.
4. That shows the clause to be subordinate in rank.
5. Redeemer is the subject; liveth is the predicate; and my, by alluding to the person speaking, tells whose Redeemer is meant.

Substantive Clauses Introduced by Interrogative Pronouns.

1. Instruction.

I know who took the melons.

In this sentence, who took the melons is a substantive clause, object of the verb know. If this clause stood alone, it would be interrogative; so the pronoun who, which introduces it, is called an interrogative pronoun. It seems best to call these pronouns interrogative from the following considerations:

1. Such a pronoun cannot be personal, for its person cannot be determined from its form.
2. It cannot be a relative pronoun, for it does not show its clause to be in a subordinate relation to any word.
3. It agrees with the interrogative pronoun in the following particulars:
   (a.) Its number and gender are often indefinite.
   (b.) It has no antecedent expressed.
   (c.) It introduces a clause which would, in most cases, ask a question if it stood alone.

2. Examples.

1. We heard who was elected.
2. He knows who burned the building.
3. He said, "Lord, who is it?"
APPENDIX D

"USEFUL READING"

BY G. H. BELL
USEFUL READING

What reading is most useful is the important question to be considered in the study of literature. As already shown, useful writings are not confined to a mere compilation of facts. One of the best tests of any piece of writing is the state it leaves us in when we have finished reading it. If it leaves us with a deeper reverence for the Creator; a tenderer feeling toward mankind as a whole; with a warmer admiration for the works of God in nature, both animate and inanimate;--if it leaves us with a keener sense of our obligations to God and to our fellow men; with a more profound feeling of gratitude for the benefits we enjoy; with a stronger desire for some part in the work which the Savior of the world has undertaken for man; with a more gentle, tolerant, and generous spirit,—it has been a good thing for us to read.

But perhaps a still better test is the permanent impression it makes on us. Sometimes one feels that he needs time before deciding upon the merits of a book. It may have been so exciting that he must wait for his feelings to subside into a normal state, before he can decide with respect to the permanence of the impressions which he has received.

But there is an all-important test which may be applied to literature, as well as to everything else in life,—the test of permanent value. The questions to be asked in regard to any production is this,—Will it be useful hereafter?—not simply in this life, but in the life to come.

It is generally believed by good men that we may secure attainments here that will enhance our happiness in the future life. The better we learn to love God now, the greater power we shall have for loving him then, and the more perfect will be our happiness; for unselfish love is the spring from which the highest happiness flows. The more fervently we enter into the work of doing good, the more fully will we be able to enter into the joy of our Lord, when he shall welcome home those who have been saved through him. The more we delight ourselves in admiring the works of God in nature, the more we shall, to all eternity, enjoy the wonderful creations which he has yet to make known to us. It is in this way that we may all be laying up treasures in heaven, and the kind of reading that aids most in this work is the most profitable.

The knowledge, the literature, the training, which teaches us how to gain a competency here, how to succeed in business, how to gain a title to respectability, is useful in its way, and should not be neglected; but that which fits us to take a loving part in our
Master's work, is better. It is part of that higher culture which prepares us to stand in the presence of God and the angels, and to share in the exalted joys prepared for us by the Author of our being. This is a practical education in the truest sense, and the literature which tends to promote it is as much higher in usefulness than that with a lower aim as heaven is higher than the earth.

APPENDIX E

PUBLISHED SABBATH SCHOOL LESSONS, 1852-1869
PUBLISHED SABBATH SCHOOL LESSONS, 1852-1869

The topic, author, number of lessons and the dates for the commencement of the series of Sabbath school lessons that appeared in the Youth's Instructor or the Review and Herald from 1852 through to the series by Joseph Clarke in 1868/9 are given below.

<table>
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<th>Theme</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>No. of Lessons</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Daniel</td>
<td>Berean's Assistant</td>
<td>17 YI 1</td>
<td>(February 1853):39.</td>
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<td>Creation &amp; Birth of Jesus</td>
<td>The Children's</td>
<td>9 YI 1</td>
<td>(April 1853):54.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inheritance</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>3 YI 1</td>
<td>(May 1853):61.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth of Christ</td>
<td>James White</td>
<td>4 YI 1</td>
<td>(July 1853):80.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sanctuary</td>
<td>Uriah Smith</td>
<td>9 YI 1</td>
<td>(August 1853):87.</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Doctrines</td>
<td>R. F. Cottrell</td>
<td>52 YI 2</td>
<td>(August 1854):60.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 John</td>
<td>G. W. Amadon (?)</td>
<td>20 YI 7</td>
<td>(February 1859):16.</td>
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<td>History of the Sabbath and Daniel</td>
<td>Uriah Smith</td>
<td>32 RH 21</td>
<td>(February 17, 1863):93.</td>
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<td>Bible History</td>
<td>Adelia Patten</td>
<td>104 YI 11</td>
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<td>General Bible Topics</td>
<td>The Christian</td>
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<td>Joseph Clarke</td>
<td>75 YI 16</td>
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APPENDIX F

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF ARTICLES IN THE YOUTH'S INSTRUCTOR
ON SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHING AND ORGANIZATION
BY G. H. BELL, 1879-1883
CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF ARTICLES IN THE YOUTH'S INSTRUCTOR
ON SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHING AND ORGANIZATION
BY G. H. BELL, 1879-1883

Title of Article | Youth's Instructor
--- | ---
"Hints on Teaching the Lesson" | January 8, 1879, p. 7, and January 15, 1879, p. 11.
"Family Sabbath-Schools" | February 12, 1879, p. 27.
"Duties of the Superintendent" | March 26, 1879, p. 51.
"General Duties of Superintendent" | April 9, 1879, p. 59.
"How to Teach the Little Ones" | May 21, 1879, p. 79.
"How to Have Good Lessons" | June 4, 1879, p. 87.
"General Exercises" | July 9, 1879, p. 115.
"Sabbath-School Meeting at Bushnell" | July 23, 1879, p. 123.
"Our Reports" | August 27, 1879, p. 144.
"The Land of Moab" | February 18, 1880, p. 32.
"Babylon" | September 15, 1880, p. 163.
"Notes on Bible Lands" | October 13, 1880, pp. 179-80.
"Flippancy in Recitation" | October 5, 1881, p. 163.
"Glimpse at the Life of Jesus" | October 26, 1881, p. 175.
"Blackboard Illustrations Their Uses and Abuses" | December 28, 1881, pp. 212-13.
"Object of the Sabbath-School" | March 28, 1883, p. 52.

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APPENDIX G

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF ARTICLES IN THE SABBATH-SCHOOL WORKER AND YOUTH'S INSTRUCTOR SUPPLEMENT
BY G. H. BELL, 1885-1887
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<tr>
<th>Title of Article</th>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;Object of the Sabbath-School&quot;</td>
<td>January 1885, pp. 4-5.</td>
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<td>&quot;Hints on Studying&quot;</td>
<td>January 1885, pp. 5-6.</td>
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<td>&quot;Blackboard Illustrations Their Uses and Abuses&quot;</td>
<td>April 1885, pp. 19-21.</td>
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<td>&quot;Three Ways of Doing&quot;</td>
<td>April 1885, p. 23.</td>
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<td>&quot;Make It a Business&quot;</td>
<td>July 1885, p. 40.</td>
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<td>&quot;The Spirit Giveth Life&quot;</td>
<td>October 1885, pp. 55-56.</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;General Questions&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;A Secret Worth Knowing&quot;</td>
<td>April 1886, pp. 19-20.</td>
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<td>&quot;Did You Ever Try It?&quot;</td>
<td>July 1886, pp. 35-36.</td>
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<td>&quot;Promptness&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Don't Be Afraid of Reviewing&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Teaching for the Love of It&quot;</td>
<td>October 1886, p. 52.</td>
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<td>&quot;Duties of Officers&quot;</td>
<td>February 2, 1887, p. 19.</td>
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<td>&quot;A Happy Hour&quot;</td>
<td>March 9, 1887, p. 45.</td>
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<td>&quot;A Good Recitation&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Count the Cost&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Be Companionable&quot;</td>
<td>August 3, 1887, p. 147.</td>
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<td>&quot;Don't Be Afraid of Hard Work&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Facts or Speculation Which?&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;Helps in Bible Study&quot;</td>
<td>November 9, 1887, p. 217.</td>
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<tr>
<td>&quot;How Many in a Class&quot;</td>
<td>December 7, 1887, p. 236.</td>
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A Complex Sentence contains one or more subordinate clauses. A Subordinate Clause is one that lim-its a word in some other clause.

2. We left the body where we found it.

ADJECTIVE CLAUSES.

RULES.

103 When the Adjective Clause is restrictive, it is not usually set off

104 The Restrictive Adjective Clause is set off by the comma.

105 When the relative word has a compound antecedent consisting of

106 When the relative is immediately followed by an exclamatory expression,

107 Whenever the meaning would be made uncertain by the omission of

108 Adjective Clauses, when not restrictive, should be set off by the

109 The Descriptive Adjective Clause, when it constitutes one of the

110 Adjective Clauses are combined coordinately, they are sep-

Examples illustrating this rule will be found under "Compound Sen-

PUNCTUATION.

EXAMPLES.

1. The man who called on me yesterday has just returned from

2. He who shows himself friendly will have friends. (lo9)

3. Happy is the man that fears nothing. (lo9)

4. That vast obscurity, that black unexplored ocean, the unknown

5. It was only a few daring friends, in the nature of a fire- 

6. Failing to discern the true fountain of living water, she died and 

7. A need too often beset, in their mists, the seeds of that faith in 

8. God, who knows all our secret thoughts, will bring every secret

9. My father, who has always been very indulgent, was remark- 

10. And One is like the ocean, so deep and wide.

11. None knew the hardships that she bore. (103)

12. He speech before whom he has explained the mystery of another.

13. On the golden-rose table setting, the most gorgeous masses, 

14. How beautiful the long, wild twilight, which like a stormy 

15. This error, to which so-called educated men are addicted, 

16. There are many dreams, fancies, or theories, which men sub-

17. He that gathereth in summer is a wise son. (103)

18. Welcome to him, who, while he strove to break

At the same blow the fetters of the serv.
APPENDIX I

PROSPECTUS FOR THE FIRESIDE TEACHER
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**BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN**

**THE FIRESIDE TEACHER CO.**

71 College Avenue.

**SINGLE NUMBER. 10CTS. YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION. 75CTS.**
THE FIRESIDE TEACHER,
A MONTHLY MAGAZINE,
Literary and Educational in its Character,
and Especially Adapted to Home Culture.

Its Literary Aim is for something Pure and Wholesome, rather than for anything New or Startling, a literature that will cultivate care, simplicity, and naturalness of expression, while it will turn the mind toward the good and beautiful that still remain in nature and in humanity.

Its Educational Aim is to cultivate a taste for study, and for that kind of reading which will teach us to enjoy the sweet blessings of every-day life, instead of longing for the exciting pleasures of fashionable society, and public amusements. Its articles, without being heavy or tiresome, are Instructive and Elevating. They are written in Pure, Simple English, language that is correct and elegant, yet so plain that a child can understand it.

NOT INTENDED FOR CHILDREN.

This journal is adapted to the tastes and wants of youth and adults. It furnishes thoughts Worthy of Intelligent Minds, and treats of subjects in which all thinking people can take a lively interest. Yet it may be a great benefit to children, not by teaching them directly, but by showing how they may be taught at home. It cultivates A Spirit of Inquiry and Self-help in the entire family. It aims to foster noble aspirations for learning, to create A Relish for Healthful Reading, and especially to meet the wants of a great class of people whose literary advantages have been few, but who have a desire for higher culture, and are anxious to become well-informed.

Special Features.

Besides General Articles, including a wide and varied range of subjects, particular attention will be given to the following themes:—

Literature and Authors, Calculated to inspire a genuine love for pure literature,—a literature which, although it may be simple, will tend to bring the mind and heart into sympathy with all that is true, noble and lovely. Authors who have enriched the world by their writings will be noticed in a way to show what it is that made them great, and why it is that we should read their works.

Historical and Biographical Sketches, Whose object will be to hold up the deeds and character of some of the World's Great Men and Women, those who have been made great by their unselfish love, and their desire to do good to all mankind, characters that furnish noble incentives to the young.

Characters and Customs of Strange Peoples Will be discussed, from time to time, in a manner to show the common brotherhood of mankind, and lead us to look for the good that still finds some place among all nations. Notes on Central America will be continued, and we trust that our facilities will be such that the articles will possess a remarkable interest.
Lessons from Nature. Will be drawn from earth, air, and ocean, and especially from the living creatures that inhabit them. The object of these articles will be to lead to a closer acquaintance with all the wonderful and constructed beings, and thereby to a better sense of the Creator's love and care for all his creatures.

Bird Life. This subject is in the care of one who really loves it. A great lecturer once said, "All men are at times eloquent. When a man's whole soul is roused, he loses himself in his subject, and there is an earnestness and pathos in his language that touches the hearts of other men, and constitutes the real essence of true eloquence." No one can read these articles on birds, without realizing that the writer has something of this spirit.

The World of Plants. Plant life is so talked of as to remove from the subject all dryness, and render it interesting and profitable to all classes of people, whether old or young. The theme will for a time be that of the relation of the vegetable kingdom to the mineral, from which it springs, and to the animal kingdom, which it feeds. The author is no mere bookworm, but a real student and close observer of nature. Nothing hackneyed or commonplace is found in his articles, but everything is fresh, original, and mind-awakening.

Educational Articles. Treating on what a true education is, how children should be taught, and on themes that will kindle an interest in Healthful Study. The pursuit of knowledge for the real love of it, and for the real good it may enable us to do, is a thing almost unknown. What need, then, of something that shall possibly turn the more noble-minded away from the greed of mammon, and lead them to prize the good, the true, and the beautiful, more than they do the sordid gains that minister to false pride and hateful egotism.

A School Room Department. Containing instruction in various branches of study, including Familiar Talks about Arithmetic: Elements Grammar: Advanced Grammar: Punctuation and the Use of Capitals: Composition: Cleanness, Strength, Unity: Rhetorical Figures: Versification: etc. This Department is especially designed to meet the wants of a large class of people whose school advantages have been cut short by the necessity of earning a livelihood, or the cares of the household.

A Question Department. Under which questions will be answered, not only on the school studies, but also on other topics treated of in the journal. We do not promise to answer all questions, but will try to notice as many as we can of those which touch on points of general interest.

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Bound Volumes. The first volume May 1st to May 1887 will be ready in a short time. The covers will be substantial, and handsomely embossed.

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, $ .75. BOUND VOLUMES, $1.00.

THE FIRESIDE TEACHER CO., 71 College Ave., Battle Creek, Mich.
APPENDIX J

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF ARTICLES BY G. H. BELL

IN THE FIRESIDE TEACHER, 1886-1889
# Chronological List of Articles by G. H. Bell in *The Fireside Teacher*, 1886-1889

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<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Volume, Date and Page</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>My Forest Friends</td>
<td>1 (July 1886):34.</td>
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<td>A Few Words about Longfellow</td>
<td>1 (October 1886):89.</td>
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<td>Help Yourself</td>
<td>1 (November 1886):97.</td>
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<td>The Homes that Poets Choose</td>
<td>1 (December 1886):124.</td>
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<td>A Noble Manhood</td>
<td>1 (January 1887):151.</td>
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<td>School Recitations</td>
<td>1 (February 1887):161.</td>
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<td>The Center of the World</td>
<td>1 (February 1887):177.</td>
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<td>The American Wonder</td>
<td>1 (March 1887):198.</td>
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<td>A Great Rock in a Weary Land</td>
<td>2 (February 1888):239.</td>
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<td>Spanish Rule in Guatemala</td>
<td>3 (June 1888):42.</td>
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<td>Cities and Churches of Guatemala</td>
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<td>La Puebla de Los Angeles</td>
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<td>Charles XII of Sweden, and Peter the Great</td>
<td>3 (April 1889):355.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lady Brassey</td>
<td>4 (June 1889):39.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

This essay will describe the primary sources held in various archival and record collections. They are grouped together under headings that indicate the location of each collection.

Atlantic Union College, South Lancaster, Massachusetts

In the office of the president of Atlantic Union College, the "Record of Meetings of Stockholders of South Lancaster Academy" from 1883 to 1908 is preserved. The Four Record Books containing the minutes of the "school board" for the period from April 25, 1882, to March 25, 1883, are located in the Memorabilia Room in Founders Hall. Both the typescript of the chapel-talk given by Walter R. Andrews on Founders' Day 1948, and the Ella Graham diary for 1882, are in the G. Eric Jones Library.

Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Invaluable genealogical records are preserved in the Historical Genealogy Department of this library. The unpublished manuscript, "Blodget-Blodgett Descendants of Thomas of Cambridge," by Bradley and Franklin Thompson, and the published record, Ten Generations of Blodgetts in America by Edwin A. Blodgett are both found here.
Archives of the General Conference, Washington, D.C.

The M. E. Olsen private papers located in these archives contain Olsen's recollections of Bell as a teacher and correspondence with Bell. In the L. E. Froom Personal Collection 12, there is the valuable verbatim account of the remarks made by G. I. Butler on January 25, 1882, at the climax of the Battle Creek crisis. Record Group 47 contains the report of the educational conference that met August 1-9, 1900 at Mt. Vernon, Ohio. The papers connected with the claim made by A. R. Henry, the administrator of G. H. Bell's estate, against the General Conference are found in Record Group 3 of the General Conference Association Documents Series.

Ellen G. White Estate, Washington, D.C.

All the letters and manuscripts to and from Ellen G. White are located here. Copies of most of these documents may also be found at the Ellen G. White Research Center, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan. The files examined at these centers included the letter and manuscript files, the document file, and the Ellen G. White biographical file. The office at Washington, D.C. also contains the extensive correspondence received or written by W. C. White, J. E. White, S. N. Haskell, J. H. Kellogg, U. Smith, and G. I. Butler. Letters by G. H. Bell and Eva Bell to these individuals are also located in the Washington office. There are duplicates of some of the Bell letters in Berrien Springs. Copies of the early journals of the church are available at both the Washington and Berrien Springs Centers.
Hackley Public Library, Muskegon, Michigan

The early newspapers of the county of Muskegon are on file at this library. Several volumes of the "Ideal Scrapbook", containing newspaper clippings of the early history of the district are preserved in the local history room.

Heritage Room, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan

Very valuable and extensive primary source materials have been collected at this location. Of particular importance is the George Royal Avery Collection, which includes letters, manuscripts, diaries and other documentary material, written, received, or preserved by G. R. Avery. It therefore contains letters from G. H. Bell, Winnie Loughborough, and Lilla Hough.

A portion of the G. R. Avery collection has been duplicated by E. K. Vande Vere in his manuscript collection for his book The Wisdom Seekers. The typescript for this book with footnote references is also in the Heritage Room. (The diary of Henry P. Holser for 1879 is in Dr. Vande Vere's private collection at Collegedale, Tennessee).

Other relevant sources located in the Heritage Room include: the Brownsberger Collection; the Battle Creek and Emmanuel Missionary College Board and Faculty Minutes, September 4, 1877 - January 8, 1890; Autobiographical Sketch of Mrs. Alma Lucille (Wolcott) Caviness; and unpublished collection of original essays by G. H. Bell entitled "Compositions," courtesy of Mrs. J. J. McLoone of Phoenix, Arizona; the diaries of both Elder and Mrs. O. A. Johnson; the General Conference Education Department Staff Minutes for 1912; the minutes for the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, July 1, 1891 -
February 7, 1897, and January 2 - December 12, 1913; the Sabbath school records books prepared by Bell for the Battle Creek church and for the General Sabbath-School Association; typescript for the "Keynote" address by J. O. Waller on August 21, 1968 at Andrews University; the Founders' Golden Anniversary Bulletin 1874-1924 published for the fiftieth anniversary of Emmanuel Missionary College; and the Articles and By-laws of the Health Reform Institute published in 1867.

The Heritage Room also contains copies of the major early journals of the church such as the Review and Herald, Youth's Instructor, Sabbath-School Worker, that were used in this dissertation.

**Michigan County Records**

Single legal and semi-legal documents such as the death certificates for Eva Bell Giles, Goodloe and Harriet Bell, land sale indentures, and probate court files are located in the offices of the Michigan counties of Calhoun, Hillsdale, Muskegon, and Ottawa. They are fully documented as they occur throughout the dissertation and are not repeated in the bibliography.

**Michigan State Library, Lansing, Michigan**

The Muriel Link Collection provided the gravestone inscriptions for Kent County, Michigan.

**Military Service Records, Washington, D.C.**

This office supplied a copy of Harriet (Bryant) Bell's application for a widow's pension, together with the affidavits and other papers accompanying it. These provided some helpful information about
Harriet's first and second marriages.

**Oak Hill Cemetery, Battle Creek, Michigan**

Details of the death and burial of those interred in the Bell family plot 117A at Oak Hill cemetery are located in the cemetery records office.

**Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio**

The Oberlin College archives are located in the Mudd Learning Center. The director of the archives, W. E. Bigglestone, was interviewed on September 9, 1981, and provided access to the Alumni Register of the students and staff at Oberlin College between 1833 and 1960.

**State Archives, Lansing, Michigan**

Nineteenth century school reports are located in the State Archives. The annual reports rendered by the school inspectors of Chester Township for the years 1859-1863 are located in Record Group 55-11. A copy of the land patent issued to G. H. Bell on May 24, 1854, is contained in the Tract Books, vol. 70, Record Group 80-116.

**Western Michigan University Archives, Kalamazoo, Michigan**

These archives contain many valuable nineteenth century records and books pertaining to Michigan's early educational history. The tax rolls for Chester Township, County of Ottawa, from 1855 through 1867 are located in Record Groups 71-8 and 71-40. The documents related to the court action, Louisa F. Bell v. D. Omar Bell, from the Calhoun County Circuit Court are also filed in these archives.
Willard Library, Battle Creek, Michigan

This library contains a comprehensive local history collection of source material on the early history of Battle Creek. Among the resources examined here were the following: the Charles H. Giles manuscript, "Stories of Old Advent Town" recording his impressions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Battle Creek in the last quarter of the nineteenth century; four volumes of early newspaper clippings entitled the "Battle Creek Scrapbook" collected by Henry Wiegmink; the Ross Coller Collection of clippings from early publications, especially the files on Charles H. Giles, and Battle Creek College; an incomplete set of nineteenth century Battle Creek newspapers; the Battle Creek city directories, and early maps of the city.

Books


Hall, Samuel Read. *Lectures on School Keeping*. Boston: Richardson, Lord and Holbrook, 1829.


History of Jefferson County, New York, with Illustrations and


Masson, David. The Collected Writings of Thomas De Quincey. 14 Vols.


Murray, L. English Grammar Adapted to the Different Classes of Learners. York: Wilson, Spence and Mawman, 1795.


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.


S. v. "Bell, Goodloe Harper."
S. v. "Brownsberger, Sidney."
S. v. "Butler, George Ide."
S. v. "Dime Tabernacle."
S. v. "Holser, Henry P."
S. v. "Home Study Institute."
S. v. "Jones, Dan T."
S. v. "Kellogg, John Harvey."
S. v. "Morton, Eliza H."
S. v. "Olsen, Mahlon Ellsworth."
S. v. "Reavis, Drury W."
S. v. "Sabbath School."
S. v. "White, James Springer."


--- Special Testimony to the Battle Creek Church. August 3, 1882, n.p.


Periodicals and Newspapers


Battle Creek College, 1877.

Battle Creek College Record, 1882.


Battle Creek Moon-Journal, 1923, 1931.


The Christian Educator, 1897-1899.

Church and Sabbath-School Bulletin (Battle Creek), 1899.

The Citizen (Battle Creek), 1882.

The College Record, 1878-1879.


The Daily Moon (Battle Creek), 1899-1900.
The General Conference Bulletin, 1895.
The Fireside Teacher, 1886-1889.
The Health Reformer, 1866.
The Medical Missionary, 1894.
Michigan History Magazine, 1921.
Michigan Tribune (Battle Creek), 1877-1882.
The Missionary Magazine, 1901.
Muskegon Chronicle, 1899, 1912, 1937.
The News and Reporter (Muskegon), 1875.
The Nightly Moon (Battle Creek), 1879-1882.
The Sabbath-School Worker, 1885-1886.
Signs of the Times, 1877.
The Sunday Record (Battle Creek), 1899.
Youth's Instructor, 1852-1871, 1879-1887, 1899, 1920.

Unpublished Theses


VITA

NAME: Allan G. Lindsay

DATE OF BIRTH: March 21, 1935

PLACE OF BIRTH: Sydney, Australia

EDUCATION:

1956 Bachelor of Arts (Theology)
Avondale College

1967 Diploma of Teaching
Armidale Teachers' College

1979 Master of Education (History of Education)
University of Newcastle

1982 Doctor of Education (Religious Education)
Andrews University

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

1957-65 Evangelistic Work,
New Zealand

1968-69 Elementary School Teacher
Ourimbah, Australia

1970-71 Secondary School Teacher
Cooranbong, Australia

1972-80 Lecturer in Education, Avondale College,
Cooranbong, Australia