

Copy 27A 344
43-C-4

December 13, 1934.

Elder L.E. Froom
Takoma Park, D.C.

Dear Brother Froom:

I hold in my hand your letter of December 3. The questions you ask are very comprehensive and rather difficult to answer.

It is a fact that during my thirty or more years of association with Ellen White I had the utmost confidence in her ministry. I know that she received revelations from God which were of untold value to the church and to the world. I did not enter as fully as some of our brethren wish to do in an analysis of the sources of information which enabled her to write her books.

Ellen White's Her Reading

> The framework of the great temple of truth sustained by her writings was presented to her clearly in vision. In some features of this work, information was given in detail. Regarding some features of the revelation, such as the features of prophetic chronology, as regards the ministration in the sanctuary and the changes that took place in 1844, the matter was presented to her many times and in detail many times, and this enabled her to speak very clearly and very positively regarding the foundation pillars of our faith.

> In some of the historical matters such as are brought out in "Patriarchs and Prophets" and in "Acts of the Apostles," and in "Great Controversy", the main outlines were made very clear and plain to her, and when she came to write up these topics, she was left to study the Bible and history to get dates and geographical relations and to perfect her description of details.

Ellen White was a rapid reader and had a very retentive memory. The revelations which she had received enabled her to grip subjects regarding which she read in a vigorous way. This enabled her to select and appropriate that which was true and to discard that which was erroneous or doubtful.

She read diligently the History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century. Much of D' Aubigne's History she read aloud to my father. < She was an interested reader of religious journals, and during the many years that Uriah Smith was Editor of the Review, it was her custom to request him after having made use

of the religious exchanges, to pass them over to her and she would spend a portion of her time in scanning them in selecting precious things which sometimes appeared in the Review. In these she also gathered information regarding what was going on in the religious world.

> Regarding the study of books, there came a time shortly after the erection of the brick edifice which housed the Review and Herald plant, that the large room facing the north end on the second floor was assigned to Elder and Mrs. White as their editorial and writing room. In this was located the Review and Herald library. To this Elder White made reference in his writings and from the library, Ellen White made selection of books which she considered profitable to read.

It was remarkable that in her reading and scanning of books that her mind was directed to the most helpful books and ^{the} most helpful passages contained in those books. Occasionally, she would mention to father and in my presence, her experience in being led to examine a book which she had never looked into before, and her experience in opening it to certain passages that helped her in describing that which she had seen and wished to present. <

I am supposing that Bliss's Memoirs was in this Library, but I have no knowledge as to whether she read it or not. I never heard her mention that book in connection with her work.

The explanatory notes found in her large subscription books were, some of them, written by herself, but most of them were written by J.H. Waggoner, Uriah Smith and M.C. Wilcox in conjunction with Marian Davis.

You ask if James White brought to Ellen White books, the reading of which would help her in her writing. I do not remember of any such occurrence. I do remember that she occasionally brought interesting passages which she had been reading to the attention of her husband.

You ask if her helpers brought statements to her attention which they thought would help her in her writings. Nothing of this kind occurred previous to the writing of "Great Controversy," Volume IV, at Healdsburg, in 1883 or 1884, and then it was seldom and related to minor details.

When we were in Basel, in 1886, we had a very interesting experience with a group of translators. We found that our brethren in Europe were very desirous of having "Great Controversy," Volume IV, translated in the French and German languages.

To provide this book for the French people, Elder Au Franc had been employed as translator and had put twenty or more chapters into what he considered his first class French. Not every one was satisfied with his translation and Elder John Vuilleumier had been employed to make a translation and had gotten through with a half dozen more chapters.

Regarding the German, there were three attempts at translation. Professor Kuhns, Madam Bach and Henry Fry, were the translators.

What should we do? Several persons were united in condemning each of these translations and it was difficult to find more than two persons who would speak a good word for either one.

Elder Whitney, manager of the Basel Office, recognized the fact that Sister White's writing was difficult. The figures of speech were in some cases imperfectly understood by the translators, and in some cases where they were understood the translators did not know the religious phraseology of their own language well enough to give a correct translation.

Finally a way was arranged. Each morning at 9 o'clock, two of the German translators, two of the French translators, Elder Whitney, Sister Davis and myself met in the editorial room and chapter by chapter of the English book was read and commented upon. The translators recognizing a difficult passage, would stop the reading and discuss between themselves what the wording should be in French and in German. Frequently Elder Whitney would stop the reading and say, "John, how would you translate that?" Then he would appeal to Elder Au Franc saying, "Do you agree with that?" Discerning that they did not understand in completeness the English text, Sister Davis and Brother Whitney would discuss its meaning and then the translators would again propose translation.

When we reached those chapters relating to the Reformation in Germany and France, the translators would comment on the appropriateness of the selection of historical events which Sister White had chosen, and in two instances which I remember, they suggested that there were other events of corresponding importance which she had not mentioned. When this was brought to her attention, she requested that the histories be brought to her that she might consider the importance of the events which had been mentioned. The reading of the history refreshed to her mind that which she had seen, after which she wrote a description of the event.

I was with mother when we visited Zurich and I well remember how thoroughly her mind was aroused by seeing the old cathedral and the market place and she spoke of them as they were in the days of Zwingle.

During her two years residence in Basel, she visited many places where events of special importance occurred in the Reformation days. This refreshed her memory as to what she had been shown and this led to important enlargement in those portions of the book dealing with the Reformation days.

This statement is made for your own benefit and is not for publication.

With very kind regards, I remain,

Sincerely your brother,

WCW:lfw.

W. C. White