

some of my historical conclusions even further.”

This is a stimulating, well-written book, and well documented. If there should be a second edition, this reviewer would look forward to it with deep interest.

Adventist History

Review by Gary Land

Windows: Selected Readings in Seventh-day Adventist Church History, 1844-1922
Compiled by Emmett K. Vande Vere
Southern Publishing Association, 319 pp.,
\$10.00

As Ron Graybill wrote in a recent SPECTRUM issue, a new Adventist history is in the making. Whereas most previous histories have been either memoirs or apologetics, now the professional historians are getting into the act, casting a critical eye at the sources as they attempt to reconstruct the Adventist past. Such an evolution, it should be noted, is a common occurrence in the development of historical writing.

One of the historians who has played a role in creating this new Adventist history is Emmett K. Vande Vere, whose *Wisdom Seekers*, published in 1972, told the story of Andrews University. Having taught denominational history for many years, Dr. Vande Vere has become familiar with the primary sources. Out of these materials, he put together a collection of readings for use in his teaching. Although the manuscript was not originally intended for publication, when Southern Publishing Association learned of it they expressed an interest in putting it before the Adventist public. Titled *Windows*, a not very informative name apparently implying “windows on the past,” the resulting book should have wide use in denominational history classes; it should be of interest to the general reader.

Organized topically within a generally chronological framework, *Windows* addresses the prin-

cipal movers and developments that shaped Adventism. While many of the subjects—the Disappointment and doctrinal positions such as the Sabbath and Conditional Immortality—have traditionally appeared in Adventist histories, others—geographical expansion and organizational growth—reflect the broader interests of the professional historian. In other words, Adventist historical writing is moving toward a greater appreciation of Adventism’s development as a social institution, although much remains to be done. The readings have been drawn from a wide variety of sources, both published and unpublished. As one would expect, the majority are from the *Review and Herald* and Ellen White writings, but letters, diaries, and even the Pitcairn Logbooks make frequent appearance.

Although the author has not organized his work within a general interpretive framework, his selections indicate that he is primarily interested in Adventist history as it was acted out by and as it influenced individual people. Rather than only printing official statements on tithing, for instance, he focuses on Rufus A. Underwood, president of the Ohio Conference, giving several selections that reveal Underwood’s growing understanding and acceptance of the tithing principle which led to his active support. This approach has the advantage of attracting the reader’s interest and reflects history’s traditional humanistic orientation. But it has limitations as well; much could be told about tithing’s impact, in this case, by the inclusion of statistical tables. One of the challenges to future writers of Adventist history will be to take advantage of the social science techniques that will deepen our understanding of Adventist history while writing our history humanistically so that it will attract readers.

Windows illustrates one other challenge to Adventist historical writing: it ends in 1922. Although Dr. Vande Vere goes beyond the usual stopping point of the move to Washington, D.C., the twentieth century remains virtually untouched. Admittedly, the denomination becomes more complex in the present century but that very complexity necessitates our search for understanding. The largely completed first volume of *Studies in Adventist History* and Richard Schwarz’s forthcoming textbook will sketch the broad outlines of this century’s

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developments, but these will only establish a beginning.

Teachers of denominational history will be grateful that the publishers produced this book. Adventist historians will find in it useful material of which they may not be aware. The general reader will discover that *Windows* whets his interest for more Adventist history. But how much more will there be and to what extent will it contribute to a growing scholarship? Schwarz's *John Harvey Kellogg, M.D.* did not include footnotes and *Windows*, according to the author, has space limitations which kept editorial comment to a minimum. These restrictions are understandable, for denominational publishing houses do not exist for the academic community alone. But I wonder if it would be possible for one publishing house, or perhaps all three American houses acting together, to put aside a sum of money each year to support the publication of works in Adventist history with full scholarly apparatus. Perhaps one such work could appear every three or five years. Major publishing houses such as Knopf and Harper & Row do this all the time, taking some of the profits from ephemeral best sellers to publish prestigious scholarly works of little commercial value. Such a program would encourage Adventist scholars to fulfill the promise that Dr. Vande Vere, among others, has so nobly begun.

William Miller

Review by Brian E. Strayer

The Urgent Voice: The Story of William Miller.

by Robert Gale

Review and Herald, 158 pp., \$3.50.

William Miller was "God's man, with God's message, on God's schedule." This triple circumstance, states Gale, provides the foremost reason for his success as the main propo-

nent of premillennialism in the Burned-over District from 1831 to 1849.

Gale, a history and English teacher in southern California, employs the techniques of the amateur narrative historian to achieve a fascinating and superbly readable biography of one of Adventism's "founding fathers." Through character-revealing vignettes, spliced with cryptic analysis, he makes Miller come alive as a real, rustic farmer-preacher.

From his opening narrative hook of young William reading by the glow of a pine knot, to the pitiful spectacle of the "grand old man of the Second Advent movement" straining to read through a telescopic lens, Gale portrays Miller as a man with an insatiable desire to know truth in all its facets. Wherever this search led, Miller followed—from disillusioning deism to patriotic army service, Baptist Christianity and, finally, to Advent premillennialism. Although largely self-educated, Miller's scholarly diligence in searching out Bible prophecies from 1816 to 1831 forged a chain of such compelling logic that upwards of 200,000 "Millerites" saw its truth and "came out of Babylon." By 1833, one convert stated that Miller was "a household word throughout the world." Possibly one out of 85 Americans were Millerite sympathizers, Gale believes.

With the effective aid of Joshua V. Himes, his public relations agent after 1839, Miller's ministry multiplied magnificently. While he preached in the large cities, Himes projected his message through pamphlets and Advent newspapers such as the *Signs of the Times* and *Advent Herald*. Soon Miller's voice became so urgent that he was charged with being a monomaniac! The doctor who examined him, however, soon became as convicted with the "Millerite bug" as Miller himself.

The facts concerning the Millerite zenith in 1843, followed by the shattering nadir of October 22, 1844, are familiar to most students of Adventist history. Gale adds touches of local color and human interest details to make a smooth-flowing, often gripping, narrative. Certainly, his literary style is one of the book's best features.

The Adventist scholar seeking new Millerite disclosures, however, will be disappointed. Because Gale depends solely on secondary sources—standard works such as *A Brief History of William Miller* (1915), James White's

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