

tarian, even when she was certain God had indicated such a diet as the “best” one, comforting. It helps me relate to my own struggles to follow truths that cut across human inclinations, just as I am comforted to know that the apostle Peter was not always consistent in following definite instruction from the Lord—yet was not abandoned because of his human weaknesses.

In uncovering the paucity of H. S. Lay’s medical preparation, Numbers throws new light (although he does not make a point of it) on why the Whites may have been unwilling to see a rapid development of the Western Health Reform Institute in 1867, when Lay was at its head. By showing Uriah Smith’s efforts to hurry Mrs. White into recommending the Institute’s early expansion, Numbers gives a graphic example of a rather common trait in Adventist circles—attempting to secure Ellen White’s support for a cherished viewpoint. By showing her yielding to pressure and later acknowledging this as an error, he even more humanizes God’s “Messenger.”

Some of the things I consider helpful contributions in *Prophetess of Health* will probably not appear in the same light to others. Here an appeal to charity is in order—and also an appeal to consider *carefully* what in Numbers’ account

may have disturbed the reader. A little hard thinking as to alternative explanations to those suggested or implied by Numbers may result in helpful new insights. Such has been my own experience.

One final word—What will be the impact of Dr. Numbers’ portrayal of Ellen White as a health reformer? It would be presumptuous to prognosticate. Some will undoubtedly conclude that she was a “pious fraud.” Others will conclude that Dr. Numbers is maliciously dishonest. I believe neither. My own hope, and prayer, is that the reader of Dr. Numbers’ elaborately researched and skillfully written study will be led to consider at least several things more carefully: 1) What was the *entire* impact of Ellen White’s work? 2) What are my reasoned views for accepting or rejecting her supernatural inspiration? 3) Just what is the role of prophets—are they somehow so controlled by God as to lose their human characteristics? 4) How does inspiration work? 5) Am I a victim of presuppositions that have not been carefully, thoughtfully and prayerfully arrived at? If the reader is led to the thoughtful consideration of such topics, Dr. Numbers will for that person have performed a service. I rather suspect that this was what he originally wanted to do.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Louis Gattschalk, *Understanding History* (1961), p. 241.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 241-42.

VI. What Should We Expect From a Prophet?

Review by Fritz Guy

It is true for a church as well as an individual that the real significance of an event is determined not by the event as such but by the response to it. And the character of that response is determined not only by the particular character of the event but also by the insight

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and creativity of the person(s) doing the responding. So, while it is evident that Ronald Numbers’ *Prophetess of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White* is an interesting and important book, the exact nature of its importance is yet to be determined—chiefly by the way in which the church responds to it.

The book’s first two chapters—“A Prophetess Is Born” and “In Sickness and in Health”—sketch Ellen White’s childhood in New England, her development into a prophetic figure among

sabbatarian Adventists of the midnineteenth century, and her early interest in health as a dimension of Adventist religion. To give a sense of the contemporary cultural context, Numbers then provides a survey of “The Health Reformers” with their interests in vegetarianism, hydropathy, homeopathy and phrenology.

The next pair of chapters—“Dansville Days” (referring to the western New York location of a “water cure” institution patronized by Mrs. White and other prominent Adventists) and “The Western Health Reform Institute”—constitute the focal point of the book. They are concerned with two events of the 1860s and their consequent developments: Mrs. White’s health-reform vision of June 1863 and her first extended writings on the subject; and the establishment of the first Adventist health institution and the rise of Adventism’s most famous physician, John Harvey Kellogg. Then the book turns to a somewhat more detailed consideration of three particular subjects related to health—female dress reform, abnormal and excessive sexual activity (especially masturbation) and diet—in chapters entitled “Short Skirts and Sex” and “Whatever Ye Eat or Drink.” The final chapter—“Fighting the Good Fight,” in which the major topic is Dr. Kellogg’s separation from the church—is a very brief overview of the four and a half decades from 1870 to Mrs. White’s death in 1915.

The primary thesis of the book seems to be (although it is not stated as such) that the life and work of Ellen White can be best understood in terms of sociocultural and psychosomatic factors, and that these factors provide an entirely adequate explanation of her role in the development of Adventist health ideas and activities. Thus, Numbers devotes much attention both to the endeavors and influence on Mrs. White of antecedent and contemporary American health reformers (especially Larkin B. Coles, Russell T. Trall and Jacob C. Jackson) and also to Mrs. White’s physical, interpersonal and spiritual traumas. Specifically, he insists that by the time of the 1863 vision, “Seventh-day Adventists were already in possession of the main outlines of the health reform message” (p. 81), and that “the content of this vision was hardly new,” inasmuch as “since the 1830s Sylvester Graham and his fellow health reformers had been preaching virtually the same thing” (p. x).

A secondary thesis (also implicit rather than explicit) is that Mrs. White exhibited many of the personal foibles characteristic of humanity generally—namely, certain ideological and practical inconsistencies, ambition for status and power, and (perhaps most disconcerting of all) a reluctance to admit either her changes of judgment or her intellectual indebtedness to other authors.

These major contentions will seem hardly exciting to the general public, but they will be disturbing to many Adventist readers who will regard them as incompatible with their view of Ellen White as a divinely appointed and authorized spokesman. The messages delivered by such a person must originate with God, and cannot come from purely human factors. Yet, the fact remains that, as a foundation for his very readable narrative, Numbers has done an impressive amount of homework, resulting in 46 pages of references and supplementary notes, plus a four-page bibliographical essay. The result is a book that no future study of either the ministry of Ellen White or the development of Adventist efforts in the field of health will be able to ignore.

Yet, the real importance of *Prophetess of Health* may finally depend not so much on the final appraisal of its accuracy and adequacy, but more on its function as a stimulus to further historical study and theological discussion.

Human nature being what it is, it is possible to predict some of the principal Adventist reactions that the book will surely evoke (partly by its substance and partly by its style) with varying degrees of justification.

Some of the initial response will be highly emotional—and not very constructive. Many readers (and especially nonreaders) will fear the book as a threat to the church’s confidence in the prophetic mission of Mrs. White, on the incorrect (although understandable) supposition that she is somehow “on trial.” This feeling may indeed be encouraged (unintentionally) by Numbers’ declaration that his is “the first book about her that seeks neither to defend nor to damn but simply to understand” (p. xi), a claim that seems to imply a careful and perhaps even sympathetic objectivity.

These readers will be all the more upset,

therefore, by the rhetorical tone of the book, which conveys a kind of breezy secularity and amiable skepticism as it refers to Mrs. White's "most satisfying miracle" (p. 34) and her "greatest triumph as a temperance lecturer" (p. 168), her "anxiety to appear uninfluenced by any earthly agency" (p. 84) and her "flirtation with phrenology" (p. 149), the "high point of Ellen White's short skirt crusade" (p. 143) and the "spate of sex-oriented testimonies" (p. 158). They will be upset also—and perhaps even more—by the explicit attribution to Mrs. White of unworthy motives and interests, including "personal ambition" (p. 21) and "efforts to maintain control of an expanding church organization" (p. 124).

At the same time, other Adventists—those who have for one reason or another been uncomfortable with the role of Ellen White in the life of the church—will welcome the book as a symbol of liberation from a disagreeable religious domination. They will be pleased to note a reference to "her occasional inconsistency and insensitivity" (p. 30); and they will probably sympathize with James White, who "had his own cross to bear—living with a woman whose criticisms and reproofs came backed with divine authority" (p. 181). And they may appreciate the picture of "an aging and sometimes bewildered prophetess" involved in the sensational excommunication of Dr. Kellogg, who along with others was "raising embarrassing questions about the validity of her testimonies" (pp. 190-91).

Neither the fearful nor the delighted Adventists, however, will profit much from the book, because their reactions to it will be determined largely by the extent to which it challenges or confirms their own opinions of feelings regarding Ellen White. And—ironically—both groups will be the victims of the same theological misunderstandings: confusions about the nature of a prophetic ministry and the grounds of confidence in such a ministry.

Some more sophisticated Adventist readers, however, will instinctively "play it cool." On the one hand, noting that there is no such thing as truly "objective" history of a religious move-

ment (or of anything else, for that matter), they will regard the book and its central theses as simply the result of the author's naturalistic presupposition, which he states forthrightly in the preface: "I have refrained from using divine inspiration as an historical explanation." This, he continues, means that he does not begin with the assumption that Adventism is a divinely guided movement, or that Ellen White was a divinely chosen messenger who was impeccably honest and whose followers were reliable witnesses to her character and work (pp. xi-xii). Since this stance is so different from that of traditional Adventism, it will be supposed by many that the resulting research is largely irrelevant to committed "believers," and therefore need not be taken seriously.

But this reaction is still too superficial. For it ignores the possibility that a book with presuppositions radically different from the reader's may nevertheless contain information, ideas, or insights that deserve consideration. Even in the comparatively "subjective" discipline of religious history, where the "objective truth" and "actual facts" seem especially elusive, evidence is still evidence.

On the other hand, some readers will probably be tempted by the theory (which by its very nature is not easily refutable, any more than it can be conclusively established) that this sort of book is a verbalization of the author's own religiopsychological problems: unresolved hostilities toward the church, perhaps, or toward his parents. This is another easy response that seems to render the book quite harmless, so that it can be readily ignored. But it is a kind of poppsych, *ad hominem* speculation that is not really very useful—not only because it is intrinsically dubious, but also because it diverts attention toward the author's inner motivations (which are none of the reader's business) and thus away from the actual presentation and its implications (which are the proper object of critical reflection).

Then again, although there are few places where Numbers has the facts simply wrong or the chronology seriously muddled, Adventist critics will charge that often his interpretations are biased and his generalizations overstated, sometimes to the point of caricature. And there is, unfortunately, some basis for this complaint. For example, it is clever but hardly accurate to

say that “while politicians in Washington quarreled bitterly over the best method of healing a divided and scarred nation, the Adventists of Battle Creek dedicated themselves to curing mankind with water” (p. 104). Or that “Ellen White lived out her last years as a true health reformer, happily subsisting on a simple twice-a-day diet of vermicelli-tomato soup or thistle greens ‘seasoned with sterilized cream and lemon juice’” (p. 117).

Statements of this sort will strike some readers as a symptom of a fundamental imbalance in *Prophetess of Health*, an imbalance that seems evident in other, more crucial ways. For one thing, the narrative concentrates on the problematic rather than the positive, the frustrating rather than the successful episodes in Mrs. White’s career as a health reformer. While this emphasis may result in part from the fact that the book focuses on the difficult decades of the 1860s and 1870s, the total picture even at that time was somewhat brighter than Numbers paints it. For another thing, the story is frequently oversimplified and one sided. It includes evidence that supports the author’s own interpretation of a situation, but it fails to acknowledge—much less take adequate account of—evidence that would support an alternative interpretation. This is the case in regard to the “shut door” theology of the 1840s, Mrs. White’s relation to other health reformers and the significance of the health reform vision of 1863, the plan to enlarge the Western Health Reform Institute, the final dispute with J. H. Kellogg, et cetera. Moreover, when it comes to secondary sources, Mrs. White’s foes seem regularly to get more space and credence than do her friends—even when the friends seem to have something important to say.¹

Thus, yet other readers will probably miss the book’s potential importance, and that is regrettable.

For there are—in spite of its apparent imbalance, its naturalistic presupposition and its frequent skepticism regarding Ellen White’s integrity—some good reasons for taking *Prophetess of Health* seriously and reading it constructively.

In the first place, it can actually be beneficial to see what a familiar subject looks like when it is viewed from a very different (and even somewhat uncomfortable) angle. Many Americans,

for example, might gain increased understanding of what happened in the colonies in the 1770s by reading an account of those events written by someone (such as a British historian, or a colonial Loyalist) who did not simply assume the political and moral rightness of the American Revolution. This is not to say, of course, that the absence of such a presupposition is a necessary (much less a sufficient) prerequisite for writing accurate history. Indeed, just such a presupposition may well open up insights into the subject that are not accessible from a deliberately “neutral” viewpoint. Yet, it is surely legitimate and honorable for a historian not to presuppose the absolute righteousness and infallible virtue of his subject—whether he is writing about the American Revolution or about Ellen White.

In the second place, the unbalanced presentation that frequently characterizes *Prophetess of Health* may even be regarded as a kind of negative virtue, insofar as it calls attention to aspects of the subject that might otherwise be overlooked. It can thus increase our knowledge of the total factuality of Adventist history and of the ministry of Ellen White. In this respect, the references to and citations from her critics may be of some value, for most of them have not been given a very extensive Adventist hearing in the past. Indeed, if he chose to do so, Numbers could defend the one-sidedness of his account by appropriating an argument and illustration offered by Francis D. Nichol in a different (but somewhat parallel) context:

When a teeterboard has seated on it a child at each end, then someone may be needed to stand in the middle, to throw his weight, first on one side and then on the other. But if one child after another sits down at the same end, the only hope of bringing the board into line is for someone to throw all his weight on the other end. Now during a hundred years a host of writers—one after another—have added their weight to one end of the board that constitutes the record of Millerism. . . . Under some circumstances we believe that a heroic move must be made by someone in order to bring things into balance. It would never have occurred to us to stress certain of the facts in the record as we vigorously do, were it not

that these facts deal with matters long emphasized in an opposite way. If the reader thinks we have walked far out to one end in our emphasis of the evidence for the Millerites, we invite him to remember the teeterboard.²

And in the third place, even if the particular presuppositions of *Prophetess of Health* do limit the adequacy of its interpretations of persons and events, the facts which it presents are still facts that should not be excluded from the church's understanding of Ellen White's prophetic ministry. It is clear, for instance, that she originally advised her fellow Adventists not to "dishonor God by applying to earthly physicians" (p. 31), and that she initially condoned the eating of swine's flesh (p. 43). In declaring her independence from contemporary health reformers, she gave an incorrect date as the time when her husband ordered some health books from Dansville, and she did not mention her reading of materials that had appeared in the *Review and Herald* (p. 84). The "reform dress" was indeed a disappointment and an acknowledged failure (pp. 145-56). On the basis of the 1863 health reform vision, she warned of not only functional but also organic diseases that would result from masturbation (p. 152). She used the vocabulary and logic of both phrenology (p. 148) and vitalism (pp. 154-55). She incorporated into her writing some materials taken without acknowledgment from Horace Mann and L. B. Coles (pp. 155-56, 162-63). And for 20 or more years she was not consistently vegetarian in her diet (pp. 170-72).

Although some of these facts have long been available from other sources, they have not been a part of the general Adventist consciousness. It is now likely that they will be.

It is unlikely, however, that Numbers' picture of Ellen White will constitute any threat to her continually influential role in the life and thought of Adventism—provided there is adequate understanding both of the nature of a prophetic ministry and of the appropriate grounds for confidence in it. Regrettably, however, there seems to be fairly widespread confusion on both points—a confusion not only afflicting many potential readers of *Prophetess*

of *Health* but also reflected to some extent in the book itself.

A prophet as a human being is not, and should not be regarded as, infallible—informationally, logically, behaviorally, or linguistically. There are limits in regard to the nature and amount of information available to him through both ordinary (or "natural") and extraordinary ("supernatural") means. To be called to a prophetic ministry is not to become omniscient, any more than it is to be removed from the influence (positive and negative) of one's interpersonal and cultural environment, or to be relieved of human emotional needs, feelings, temptations and tendencies to sin. As Kenneth Wood puts it,

In many ways prophets are just like other people. They eat, they sleep, they hear, they read, they learn, they speak, they travel. Prophets may be well informed in some areas of knowledge and poorly informed in others. They may have a large vocabulary or a small one. They may be well educated or poorly educated. . . . They obtain some kinds of information as do others. As time goes along, they may improve their skills, such as reading, speaking, or writing.³

As a person, therefore, a prophet can—and sometimes does—make mistakes. At some point or other, he is likely to receive and follow poor advice, or misjudge the factors involved in a particular situation. He may on occasion be discouraged, overoptimistic, shortsighted, or irritable. There is ample evidence of the human fallibility of the authors of the biblical documents (including Moses, David, Peter and John as some of the more obvious examples); and we would be naive to suppose that there would not be any similar evidence in the life of Ellen White. To demand or expect personal perfection would be unreasonable and unfair. Besides, it would divert to her personal life some of the attention that should be given to understanding the implications of her ministry for our own individual and collective experience as Adventists.

Nor is the prophet infallible in the formal communication of his message. To write "under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit" does *not* mean that one's pen is "literally guided by God," as Numbers suggests (p. 201). A prophet may suffer a lapse of memory, indulge in overgeneralization, or express his thoughts with

something less than ideal clarity. When Mrs. White says, “I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them” (quoted on p. 163), she is not claiming divine authority or absolute precision for her verbal formulations. And, when she goes on in the same sentence to say, “The words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own” (quoted on p. 197), she is not claiming unique originality for her language. On the contrary, in this twofold statement she is acknowledging her own human limitations and at the same time accepting the responsibility of her choice of words. Elsewhere she wrote, “In regard to infallibility, I never claimed it; God alone is infallible.”⁴

This is not to say, of course, that the quality of a prophet’s life is irrelevant to his mission and ministry, or that his messages may be garbled and unintelligible. Nor does it suggest that the life and work of Ellen White were characterized by hypocrisy, dishonesty, arrogance, or greed, or that her writings are inconsistent and confused.

“There is ample evidence of the human fallibility of Bible authors, and we would be naive to suppose that there would not be any similar evidence in the life of Ellen White.”

On the contrary, the incredibly detailed documentation we have of her daily activities supports belief in the genuineness and integrity of her religious dedication and gives impressive confirmation of her prophetic vocation. And, given the extent of her written work for nearly 70 years—an estimated 45,000 or more pages of manuscript materials, 4,500 published articles, and more than 50 books now in print—the degree of systematic coherence and conceptual consistency is remarkable.

To the extent, therefore, that Numbers has called attention to Mrs. White’s human fallibility, the church ought not to regard this reality as an embarrassment. For it is a reality which, even if often ignored, has never been denied by the church. Nor is the recognition of

this fallibility a threat to the continuing effectiveness of her prophetic ministry in Adventism.

At the same time, the church has a scholarly responsibility to identify those points at which Numbers has misread the evidence or exaggerated its implications, and to carefully correct or clarify the picture he gives of Ellen White’s life and work. Knowing that it is not necessary for the final picture to disclose absolute personal perfection, the church can go about this task without anxiety or defensiveness.

There is, furthermore, a fundamental and crucial difference between determining the presence of a genuine prophetic ministry in the church and discovering the precise nature and shape of that ministry.⁵

The former task may be accomplished in the light of four general criteria: 1) fundamental compatibility with the biblical revelation, which remains the ultimate standard of religious truth, the final rule of faith and practice; 2) internal coherence and integrity, which enables it to “make sense” to the church; 3) overall contribution to the spiritual growth and practical life of the church; and 4) validation in the personal religious life of individual members, who continue to hear in it the voice of the Eternal with its gift of forgiveness, its challenge to service and its claim for ultimate allegiance.

Once these criteria have been met, so that the validity of the prophetic ministry has been solidly established, it is appropriate for the church to examine it in detail, in order to understand it thoroughly and accurately, and thus to benefit from it as much as possible. In this setting, a detailed study of the life and work of a prophet is neither a mark of disrespect or skepticism, nor an occasion for worry that the conviction of validity will be undermined. Rather, just as it would be in the case of studying the work of a great musician or painter, it is a result of profound interest and seriousness, and an occasion for deepening appreciation.

Unfortunately, however, the procedure outlined here—first to determine the presence of a valid prophetic ministry and then to discover its precise characteristics—is not always followed. An alternative and all-too-common approach puts the cart before the horse. First, it attempts to establish *a priori* specifications for a divinely

inspired message (usually including the assumption that a perfect God would certainly provide a perfect revelation, without any sort of human deficiency); and the next step is to show how the materials under consideration meet these specifications. This approach, which can be seen typically in “evangelical” Protestantism in regard to the biblical revelation, is also taken by some Adventists in regard to the work of Ellen White.

But, however commonly it occurs, this procedure is a methodological mistake. For the specifications that are offered have no authoritative ground of their own; they are merely the characteristics that someone thinks a divinely initiated message *ought* to have. In contrast to this deductive approach, it is better to proceed inductively—that is, to examine a message that is recognized as divinely inspired and thus to discover what characteristics it *actually* has. In this way, the conclusions can be based on evidence rather than theological supposition.⁶

The problem here, furthermore, is not only methodological; for the procedure of establishing *a priori* specifications has some serious religious consequences. It requires ongoing (and often anxious) explanatory activity in the face of every newly discovered (or merely alleged) discrepancy between the actual characteristics of the revelatory materials and the predetermined specifications. And, if the explanation is not finally persuasive, the validity of the previously acknowledged revelation is thrown into question.

In the case of the “evangelicals” and the biblical documents, the discrepancies between the ideal and the actual have led to the invention of hypothetical “inerrant autographs,” which are supposed to have the required perfection that appears to be lacking in the extant biblical manuscripts. Adventists, however, need not resort to this kind of hypothesis. As Wood explains,

Seventh-day Adventists do not draw up and seek to defend artificial battle lines in the area of inspiration. They do not make exaggerated claims for inspiration. They do not declare that inspired writings are “inerrant in the original autographs.” They know better. They have “original autographs”! They have Mrs. White’s original manuscripts, and they know that those autographs, though bearing infallible truth regarding the way of salvation, give

evidence of having been produced by a fallible human being.⁷

Thus, although occasional imperfections may appear in the life and ministry of the prophet and even in the verbal formulation of the prophetic messages, confidence in the overall validity and reliability of those messages is not thereby disturbed.

An awareness of these last two major points—first, that a prophet is not, and must not be expected to be, personally infallible, and second, that there is a basic difference between recognizing a prophetic ministry and understanding it in detail—makes it possible for the church to engage in a careful, scholarly study of a prophetic ministry in which it has learned to have complete confidence. Therefore, although the limitations of Numbers’ *Prophets of Health* keep it from being the last word on the subject, it can well serve as an incentive for the church to continue the study.

And the study surely needs to continue—not only to clarify and correct the picture that Numbers has provided, but also to complete and supplement it. While Numbers has clearly documented Mrs. White’s use of some of the work of other American health reformers, yet to be studied are the extent and nature of her *differences* from them, which may turn out to be more interesting and significant than the similarities. In any event, this kind of study will illuminate the distinctiveness of her own constructive contribution.

The attention Numbers has given to the sociocultural context of Mrs. White’s work as a health reformer needs also to be supplemented with further study of the Adventist ecclesiastical context. There is a need for an examination of the interrelationships between the church’s interest in health and the concurrent (or immediately subsequent) interest of Adventists in education and in overseas mission work. The Western Health Reform Institute was only eight years old when Battle Creek College was founded in 1874, and when J. N. Andrews left for Switzerland as an official missionary.

And there is a need for an examination of the theological context and implications of the Adventist interest in health. What, for example, are the reciprocal relationships between this

interest and the Adventist understanding of the nature of man (theological anthropology)? . . . the process of salvation by grace through faith (soteriology)? . . . the end of present history with the second coming of God in the person of Christ (eschatology)? . . . the meaning and experience of the Sabbath as a day of rest and worship? What part does the subject of health play in the total concept of "the great controversy," which is the central systematic theme of Adventist theology?

Finally, there is a need for a comprehensive theological synthesis of Ellen White's views of health as a dimension of religious life and as a concern of the church. Besides the first slender books that get most of Numbers' attention—*An Appeal to Mothers* (1864) and the collection of pamphlets entitled *How to Live* (1865)—she published numerous articles on health in various journals. Toward the end of her career came the systematic elaboration of her thought published as *The Ministry of Healing* (1903), and there

have been several posthumous compilations of both previously published and unpublished materials—*Counsels on Health* (1932), *Medical Ministry* (1930), *Counsels on Diet and Foods* (1938) and *Temperance* (1949). By way of secondary sources, first Dores E. Robinson's *The Story of Our Health Message* (1943) and now Numbers' *Prophetess of Health* (1976) have provided historical narratives. But *The Ministry of Healing* is not sufficiently comprehensive, the compilations are not sufficiently coherent, and the narratives are not sufficiently theological to give the church a clear, complete and integrated understanding of the whole of Ellen White's writings on health.

To the extent that *Prophetess of Health* functions as an encouragement to these kinds of further historical study and theological interpretation, its publication can be a significant and constructive event as the church grows into a more complete understanding of the prophetic mission and ministry of Ellen G. White.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. An example here is Francis D. Nichol's extensive consideration and documentation of Ellen White's relation to the "shut door" theology, in *Ellen G. White and Her Critics* (Washington: Review and Herald, 1951), pp. 161-252, 586-615, and 619-43. There is also a less elaborate discussion by Arthur L. White, *Ellen G. White and the Shut Door Question* (Washington: Ellen G. White Estate, 1971).

Numbers is aware of these materials (see p. 218, n. 50, and p. xii), but he does not comment on them.

2. Francis D. Nichol, *The Midnight Cry: A Defense of the Character and Conduct of William Miller and the Millerites* (Washington: Review and Herald, 1944), pp. 12-13.

3. Kenneth H. Wood, "Hear the Word of the Lord," a

Bible study presented at the 1975 General Conference session in Vienna and published in the *Review and Herald*, July 16, 1975, p. 11.

4. Ellen G. White, *Selected Messages*, Book 1 (Washington: Review and Herald, 1958), p. 37.

5. This approach to the issue at hand derives from a conversation with Warren C. Trenchard of Canadian Union College at College Heights, Alberta.

6. See Everett F. Harrison, "The Phenomena of Scripture," in *Revelation and the Bible*, edited by Carl F. H. Henry (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1958), pp. 238-50.

7. Wood, "Hear the Word of the Lord," p. 11. See also his editorial, "The Divine-Human Word," *Review and Herald*, June 24, 1976, pp. 2, 14-15.

VII. An Author Replies To His Critics

by Ronald L. Numbers

First, I want to thank the editors of SPECTRUM for giving me this opportunity to respond to my reviewers. Although I am partic-

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ularly appreciative of the comments of Norwood, Brodie and Sandeen, most of what I say will be directed toward the criticisms of the White Estate, Schwarz and Guy, which raise serious questions about the quality and reliability of my work.

The Estate's allegations are not new. In February 1975, it provided me with an extensive