

TESTIMONY
FOR
THE CHURCH.

No. 21.

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STEAM PRESS
OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION.
BATTLE CREEK, MICH.
1872.

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DEAR BRETHREN AND SISTERS: I feel compelled at this time to fulfill a long-neglected duty.

Previous to my husband's dangerous and protracted illness, he performed, for years, more labor than two men should have done in the same time. He could not see any period where he could be relieved from the pressure of care, and obtain mental and physical rest. My husband was warned by testimony of his danger. I was shown that he was doing too much brain labor. I will here copy a written testimony, given as far back as Aug. 26, 1855:

"I was shown while at Paris, Maine, that my husband's health was in a critical condition, and that his anxiety of mind had been too much for his strength. When the present truth was first published, he put forth great exertion, and labored with but little encouragement and help from his brethren. From the first, he has taken burdens upon him which were too taxing for his physical strength.

“These burdens, if equally shared, need not have been so wearing. While my husband took much responsibility, some of his brethren in the ministry were not willing to take any. And those who shunned responsibilities and burdens did not realize his burdens, and were not as interested in the advancement of the work and cause of God as they should have been. My husband felt this lack, and laid his shoulder under burdens that were too heavy, and they nearly crushed him. As the result of these extra efforts, more souls will be saved. But it is these efforts that have told upon his constitution and deprived him of strength. I have been shown that my husband should lay aside his anxiety in a great measure; for God is willing he should be released from such wearing labor, and that he should devote more time to the study of the Scriptures, and in the society of his children, seeking to cultivate their minds.

“I saw that it was not our duty to perplex ourselves with individual trials. Such mental labor endured for others' wrongs should be avoided. My husband can now labor with all his energies, as he has done, and as the result go down to the grave, and his labors be lost to the cause of God; or he can now be released while he has some strength left, and last longer, and his labors be more efficient.”

I will copy from a testimony given in 1859: "In my last vision, I was shown that the Lord would have my husband give himself more to the study of the Scriptures that he might be better qualified to labor effectually in word and doctrine, both by speaking and writing.

"I was shown that we had, in the past, exhausted our energies through much anxiety and care to bring the church up in a right position. Such wearing labor in various places, bearing the burdens of the church, is not required; for the church should bear their own burdens. Our work was to instruct them in God's word, pressing upon them the necessity of experimental religion, defining as clearly as possible the correct position in regard to the truth. God would have us raise our voices in the great congregation upon points of present truth, which are of vital importance. These should be presented with clearness, and with decision, and should also be written out, that the silent messengers may bring it before people everywhere.

"I have been shown that there is required of us a more thorough consecration on our part to the essential work, and we must be earnest to live in the light of God's countenance. If our minds were less exercised with the trials of the church, they would

be more free to be exercised upon Bible subjects; and a closer application to Bible truth will accustom the mind to run in that channel, and we shall be better qualified for the important work devolving upon us.

“I was shown that God did not lay upon us such heavy burdens as we have borne in the past. We have a duty to talk to the church, and show them the necessity of their working for themselves. The church have been carried too much.

“I was shown the reason why we should not be required to take upon ourselves heavy burdens, and engage in perplexing labor. The Lord has work of another character for us to perform. He would not have us exhaust our physical and mental energies, but they should be held in reserve, that upon special occasions, whenever help was actually needed, our voices could be heard.

“I saw that important moves would be made that would demand our influence to lead out. Influences would arise, errors would occasionally be brought into the church, and then our influence would be required. But if exhausted by previous labors, we would not possess that calm judgment, discretion, and self-control, for the important occasion in which God would have us act a prominent part.

“Our efforts have been crippled by Sa-

tan's affecting the church to call forth from us almost double labor to cut our way through the darkness and unbelief. These efforts to set things in order in the churches have exhausted our strength. Lassitude and debility have followed.

"I saw that we had a work to do, and the adversary of souls would resist every effort that we might attempt to make. The people may be in a state of backsliding, so that God cannot bless them, and this will be disheartening; but we should not be discouraged. We should do our duty in presenting the light, and leave the responsibility with the people."

I will here copy from another testimony, written June 6, 1863: "I was shown that our testimony was still needed in the church, and that we should labor to save ourselves trials and cares, and that we should preserve a devotional frame of mind. It is duty for those in the Office to ~~tax~~ their brains more, and my husband to tax his less. Much time is spent by him upon various matters which confuse and weary his mind, and unfit him for study, or for writing, and hinder his light from shining in the *Review* as it should.

"I saw that my husband's mind should not be crowded and overtaxed. His mind must have rest, and he be left free to write and attend to matters which others cannot

do. Those engaged in the Office can lift from him a great weight of care if they would dedicate themselves to God, and feel a deep interest in the work. No selfish feelings should exist among those who labor in the Office. It is the work of God in which they are engaged, and they are accountable to God for the motives and manner in which this branch of his work is performed. They are required to discipline their minds, and to bring their minds to task. Forgetfulness is sin. Many feel that no blame should be attached to forgetfulness. There is a great mistake here; and this leads to many blunders, and much disorder, and many wrongs. The mind must be tasked. Things that should be done should not be forgotten. The mind must be disciplined until it will remember.

“My husband has had much care, and he has done many things which others ought to have done, fearing they would, in their heedlessness, make mistakes which would involve losses not easily remedied. This has been a great perplexity to his mind. Those who labor in the Office should learn. They should study, and practice, and exercise their own brains; for they have this branch of business alone, while my husband has the responsibility of many departments of the work. If the workmen make a failure, they should feel that it

rests upon them to repair damages from their own purses, and not allow the Office to suffer loss through their carelessness. They should not cease to bear responsibilities, but should try again, avoiding their former mistakes. In this way they would learn to take that care which the word of God ever requires, and then they will do no more than their duty.

“I was shown that my husband should take time to do those things which his judgment tells him would preserve his health. He has thought that he must throw off the burdens and responsibilities which were upon him, and leave the Office, or his mind would become a wreck. I was shown that when the Lord released him from his position, he would give him just as clear evidence of his release as he gave him when he laid the burden of the work upon him. But he has borne too many burdens, and those laboring with him at the Office, and his ministering brethren also, have been too willing that he should bear them. They have, as a general thing, stood back from bearing burdens, and have sympathized with those that were murmuring against him, and left my husband to stand alone while he was bowed down beneath censure, until God has vindicated his own cause. If they had taken their share of the burdens, he would have been relieved.

“I saw that now God required us to take special care of the health he has given us; for our work was not yet done. Our testimony must still be borne, and would have influence. I saw we should both preserve our strength to labor in the cause of God when it is needed. We should be careful of our strength, and not take upon ourselves burdens that others can, and should, bear. We should encourage a cheerful, hopeful, peaceful frame of mind; for our health depends upon our doing this. The work God requires of us will not prevent our caring for our health, that we may recover the effect of overtaxing labor. The more perfect our health, the more perfect will be our labor. When we overtax our strength, and overlabor, and become exhausted, then we are liable to take colds, and are at such times in danger of disease assuming a dangerous form. We must not leave the care of ourselves with God, when he has left the responsibility upon us.”

Oct. 25, 1869, while at Adams Center, I was shown that some ministers among us fail to bear all the responsibility God would have them. Their lack throws extra labor upon those who are burden-bearers, especially upon my husband. There is a failure in ministers moving out and venturing something in the cause and work of God. Important decisions are to be made, and,

as the end cannot, by mortal man, be seen from the beginning, there is a shrinking from venturing and advancing as the providence of God leads. Some one must advance. Some one must venture in the fear of God, trusting the result with him. Those ministers who shun this part of the labor are losing much. They are failing to obtain the experience God designed they should have, to make them efficient, strong men that can be relied upon in any emergency.

Bro. ———, you shrink from running risks. You are not willing to venture when you cannot see the way all clear. Yet some one must do this very work, and move by faith, or no advance moves would be made, and nothing would be accomplished. Your fear lest you shall make mistakes, and mismoves, and then be blamed, binds you. You should move according to your best judgment, trusting the result with God. Some one must do this, and it is a trying position for any one. One should not bear all this responsibility alone. This burden, with much reflection, and earnest prayer, should be equally shared. You excuse yourself from taking responsibility because you have made some mistakes in the past.

During my husband's affliction, the Lord proved, tested, and tried, his people, to re-

veal what was in their hearts; and, in thus doing, showed to them what was undiscovered in them that was not according to the Spirit of God. The trying circumstances under which we were placed called out that from our brethren which otherwise would never have been revealed. The Lord proved to his people that the wisdom of man is foolishness, and that their plans and calculations, without thorough trust and reliance upon God, would prove a failure. We are to learn from all these things. If errors are committed, they should teach and instruct, but not lead to the shunning of burdens and responsibilities. Where much is at stake, and where matters of vital consequence are to be entered into, and important questions settled, God's servants should take individual responsibilities. They cannot lay off the burden, and yet do the will of God. Some ministers are deficient in the qualifications necessary to build up the churches, and they are not willing to wear in the cause of God. They have not a disposition to give themselves wholly to the work, with their interest undivided, their zeal unabated, their patience and perseverance untiring. With these qualifications in lively exercise, the churches will be kept in order, and my husband's labors will not be so heavy. It is not constantly borne in mind by all ministers that

the labor of all must bear the inspection of the Judgment, and every man be rewarded as his works have been.

Bro. ———, you have a responsibility to bear in regard to the Health Institute. You should ponder, you should reflect. Frequently the time you occupy in reading is the very best time for you to reflect, and study what must be done to set things in order at the Health Institute and at the Office. My husband takes on these burdens because he sees that the work for these institutions must be done by some one. As others would not lead out, he stepped into the gap and supplied the deficiency.

God has cautioned and warned my husband in regard to the preservation of his strength. I was shown that he was raised up by the Lord, and that he lives as a miracle of mercy—not for the purpose of gathering the burdens upon him again under which he has once fallen, but that the people of God might be benefited with his experience in advancing the general interests of the cause and in connection with the work he has given me, and the burden he has laid upon me to bear.

Bro. ———, great care should be exercised by you, especially at Battle Creek. In visiting, your conversation should be upon the most important matters. Great care should be exercised to back up pre-

cept by example. This is an important post, which will require labor, and while you are here, you should take time to ponder the many things which need to be done, which require solemn reflection, careful attention, and most earnest, faithful prayer. You should feel as strong an interest in the things relating to the cause and burden of the work at the Health Institute, and the Office of publication, as my husband, and feel that the work is yours. You cannot do the work God has especially qualified my husband to do, neither can he do the work God has especially qualified you to do. Yet both of you together, united in harmonious labor, can accomplish much, you, in your office, and my husband, in his.

The work in which we have a mutual interest is great, and efficient, willing, burden-bearing laborers are very few indeed. God will give you strength, my brother, if you will move forward and wait upon him. He will give my husband and myself strength in our united labor, if we do all to his glory, according to our ability and strength to labor. You should be located where you would have a more favorable opportunity to exercise your gift according to the ability God has given you. You should lean your whole weight upon God, and give him an opportunity to teach, lead,

and impress you. You feel a deep interest in the work and cause of God, and you should look to God for guidance and light. He will give it you. But, as an ambassador of Christ, you are required to be faithful, to correct wrong in love, and meekness, and your efforts will not prove unavailing.

Since my husband has recovered from his feebleness, we have labored earnestly. We have not consulted our ease or our pleasure. We have traveled, and labored in camp-meetings, and overtaxed our strength, so that it has brought upon us debility, without the advantages of rest. During the year 1870, we attended twelve camp-meetings. In a number of these meetings, the burden of labor rested almost wholly upon my husband and myself. We traveled from Minnesota to Maine, and to Missouri and Kansas.

My husband and myself united our efforts to improve the *Reformer*, and make it interesting and profitable, that it should be desired, not only by our people, but by all classes. This was a severe tax upon my husband. He also made very important improvements in the *Review* and *Instructor*. He accomplished the work which should have been shared by three men. And while all this labor fell upon him, in the publishing department, the business department at the Health Institute and at the

Publishing Association required the labor of two men to relieve them of financial embarrassments.

Unfaithful men who had been entrusted with the work at the Office and the Institute, had, through selfishness and lack of consecration, placed matters in the worst condition possible. There was unsettled business that had to be settled. My husband stepped into the gap, and worked with all his energies. He was wearing. We could see that he was in danger; but how he could stop, we could not tell, unless the work in the Office should cease. Almost every day some new perplexity would arise, some new matter of difficulty, caused by the unfaithfulness of the men who had taken charge of the work. His brain was taxed to the utmost, until the worst perplexities are now overcome, and the work is moving on prosperously.

At the General Conference, my husband plead to be released from the burdens upon him; but notwithstanding his pleading, the burden of editing of *Review* and *Reformer* was placed upon him, with encouragement that men, who would take responsibilities and burdens, would be encouraged to settle at Battle Creek. But as yet no help has come to my husband to lift from him the burdens of the financial work at the Office of publication.

My husband is fast wearing. We attended the four camp-meetings west. Our brethren are urging our attending the camp-meetings east. But we dare not take additional burdens upon us. We came from the labor of camp-meetings west, in July, 1871, to find a large amount of business that had been left to accumulate in my husband's absence. We have seen no opportunity for rest yet. My husband must be released from the burdens upon him. There are too many that use his brain in the place of using their own. In view of the light which God has been pleased to give us, we plead for you, my brethren, to release my husband. I am not willing to venture the consequences of his going forward and laboring as he has done. He served you faithfully and unselfishly for years, and finally fell under the pressure of the burdens placed upon him. Then his brethren, in whom he had confided, left him. They let him drop into my hands, and forsook him. I was his nurse, his attendant, and physician, for nearly two years. I do not wish to pass through the experience a second time. Brethren, will you lift the burdens from us, and allow us to preserve our strength as God would have us, that the cause at large may be benefited with the efforts we may make in his strength? Or will you leave

us to become debilitated so that we will become useless to the cause?

The foregoing portion of this appeal was read at the New Hampshire Camp-meeting, August, 1871.

When we returned from Kansas in the autumn of 1870, Bro. ——— was at home sick with fever. Sister Van Horn, at this very time, was absent from the Office in consequence of fever brought upon her by the sudden death of her mother. Bro. Smith was also from the Office in Rochester, N. Y., recovering from a fever. There was a great amount of unfinished work at the Office; yet Bro. ——— left his post of duty to gratify his own pleasure. This fact in Bro. ———'s experience is a sample of the man. Sacred duties rest lightly upon him.

It was a great breach of the trust reposed in him to pursue the course he did. In what marked contrast to this is the life of Christ our pattern. He was the Son of Jehovah, and the author of our salvation. He labored and suffered for us. He denied himself, and his whole life was one continued scene of toil and privation. He could, had he chosen so to do, passed his days in a world of his own creating, in ease and plenty, and claimed for himself all the pleasures and enjoyment the world could give him. But he did not consider his own convenience. He lived not to appro-

priate pleasure to himself, but to do good and lavish his blessings upon others.

Bro. ——— was sick with fever. His case was critical. In justice to the cause of God, I feel compelled to state that Bro. ——— sickness was not the result of unwearied devotion to the interests of the Office. Imprudent exposure on a trip to Chicago, for his own pleasure, was the cause of his long, tedious, suffering sickness. God did not sustain him in leaving the work, when so many were absent who had filled important positions in the Office. At the very time when he should not have excused himself for an hour, he left his post of duty. And God did not sustain him. There was no period of rest for us however much we might need it. *The Review*, the *Reformer*, and *Instructor*, must be edited. Very many letters had been laid aside until we should return to examine them. Things were in a sad state at the Office. Everything needed to be set in order.

My husband commenced his labor, and I helped him what I could; but that was but little. He labored unceasingly to straighten out perplexing business matters, and to improve the condition of our periodicals. He could not depend upon help from any of his ministering brethren. His head, heart, and hands, were full. He

was not encouraged by Brn. ——— and ——— when they knew he was standing under the burdens at Battle Creek alone. They did not stay up his hands. They wrote in a most discouraging manner of their poor health, and being in so exhausted a condition that they could not be depended on to accomplish any labor. My husband saw that nothing could be hoped for in that direction. And notwithstanding his double labor through the summer, he could not rest. He reined himself up to do the work others had neglected, irrespective of his weakness.

The *Reformer* was about dead. Bro. ——— had urged the extreme positions of Dr. Trall, which had influenced the doctor to come out in the *Reformer* stronger than he otherwise would have done, in discarding milk, sugar, and salt. The position to leave these things entirely may be right in their order. But the time had not come to make a general stand upon these points. And those who do take their position, and advocate the entire disuse of milk, butter, and sugar, should have their own tables free from these things. Bro. ———, even while taking his stand in the *Reformer* with Dr. Trall in regard to the injurious effects of salt, milk, and sugar, did not practice the things he taught. Upon his own table these things were daily used.

Many of our people had lost their interest in the *Reformer*, and letters were daily received with this discouraging request, "Please discontinue my *Reformer*." Letters were received from the West, where the country is new and fruit scarce, inquiring how the friends of health reform live at Battle Creek. Did they dispense with salt entirely? If so, we cannot at present adopt the health reform. We can get but little fruit, and we have left meat, tea, coffee, and tobacco; but we must have something to sustain life.

We had spent some time in the West, and we knew the scarcity of fruit, and we sympathized with our brethren who were conscientiously, in the fear of God, seeking to be in harmony with the body of Sabbath-keeping Adventists. They were becoming discouraged, and some were backsliding upon the health reform, fearing that at Battle Creek they were radical and fanatical. We could not raise an interest anywhere in the West to obtain subscribers for the *Health Reformer*. We saw that the writers in the *Reformer* were going away from the people, and leaving them behind. If we take positions that conscientious Christians, who are indeed reformers, cannot adopt, how can we expect to benefit that class whom we can reach only from a health standpoint?