

Reflections on The Year 1876  
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Several inter-related events occurred in the year 1876 illustrating the critical issue whether mankind would exalt nature above its Creator—in various ways to attempt to removed Him from His position. This document highlights these events by listing them with reflections that probe beneath the surface and outward to connect occasions and trends. Ponder these, and note the reflection paragraphs in particular.

### Summary

*July:*

James & Ellen White met J. H. Kellogg in Philadelphia, and attended the Centennial of the United States of America; SDA books exhibited.

*August:*

J. H. Waggoner wrote Preface to the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition of his book *The Nature and Tendency of Modern Spiritualism*.

*September:*

Johns Hopkins University launched with Thomas Huxley as the keynote speaker.

*October:*

J. H. Kellogg became physician in chief in Battle Creek at the Health Institute.

*During the year:*

Ellen White addressed the “nature above God” issue for first time.

### References and Reflections (all emphases in bolding are supplied)

*July:*

James & Ellen White:

Friday morning, July 28, they arrived at **Philadelphia** where they were met by **John Kellogg**, who was **just completing his medical training**. A horse car took them to a depot where they caught a train for the twenty-six-mile trip to Wilmington, Delaware. Here at a boarding house, John had rented a large, pleasant, well-furnished room for them. Mary Clough had a “cozy little room” just above. They felt fortunate to find such a pleasant place to stay. 3BIO 42.5

On Sabbath they found a beautiful grove on a hill overlooking Wilmington. There with Dr. Kellogg and Will Fairfield, they rested and conversed on religious subjects including the life of Christ and health reform. Ellen White wrote to Edson and Emma: 3BIO 43.1

John takes a very sensible view of health reform. I find him in a very good, healthful state of mind on these subjects upon which we have conversed. We see the need of more earnest, active effort in reference to the great subjects of health reform. Our **Health Institute is sinking** for the want of proper physicians and proper workers, interested workers. 3BIO 43.2

We have sought to make Dr. Kellogg feel it is his **duty to go into the institute**, and take hold with Willie Fairfield and Brother Sprague and with zeal and interest **bring up the institute**. We have taken our luncheon on the green grass, and now conversation

again. **Important matters** are to be considered and decisions made.—Letter 35, 1876. 3BIO 43.3

Now our business is to visit **Centennial** grounds every day, see what we can, and [let] Mary make reports. We shall take our dinner with us from our landlady.—Ibid. 3BIO 43.4

The *Review and Herald* reported on August 10 that “Elder White is spending a couple of weeks in Philadelphia, and is improving the present opportunity to publish **second editions of the engraving, entitled ‘Way of Life,’** and of the Lecturer's Charts [both prophetic and Ten Commandments]. With efficient helpers he has greatly improved them, and will have them ready for the Michigan camp meeting and General Conference in September.” 3BIO 43.5

The **Centennial Exhibition**, James White felt, was magnificent in its greatness, gorgeousness, and perfection, such as the newspapers could not tell it ([Ibid.](#)). By courtesy of the publishing association, Seventh-day Adventists had an **exhibit** there showing denominational **books and health works**. This was located in the main building in the American Book Trade Department (The Review and Herald, August 17, 1876). 3BIO 43.6 [3BIO = *Ellen White, Volume 3: The Lonely Years*, Arthur White, 1984]

Reflections: This meeting with Kellogg juxtaposed with the national celebration was significant. God was setting up a **system of health**, with a **dynamic interface between religion and science** (the life sciences in particular) that should guide His people into the future, in fact, through the **end-time events**. And the presence of SDA publications showed their high calling at this time, which God had directed since James White began them 27 years earlier in 1849. One of those books published was—

*August:*

Joseph H. Waggoner: Preface to the Fifth Edition of *The Nature and Tendency of Modern Spiritualism*:

The object of this work being to show the Nature and Tendency of Spiritualism, rather than its progress, we have not found it necessary to make very material changes for this edition. Some evidence is added to that given in previous editions, especially on the subject of “**Free-Lovism**,” or their opposition to marriage. Our recent observations and inquiries have convinced us that this **monstrous delusion** is rapidly spreading with nearly all classes, especially with professors of religion, many of whom turn to it for evidence of **immortality**. We pray that they may be warned, and **flee from the snare**, and find immortality in Christ, our Lifegiver. [NTMS 5.1]

J. H. W.

Salem, Oregon, August, 1876.

Reflections: This addition to Waggoner's book highlighted the source of **free-love**, illustrated by the story of **Victoria Woodhull** (apparently supplementing Chapter 9 that since the Third Edition had dealt with the issue of marriage), in this vitally important area of deception by **supernatural, negatively mystical forces**. This principle of those mystical powers would make **inroads into Kellogg's thinking** over the next 30 years, making him and many others vulnerable to those forces. (See Ellen White's five documents addressing the counterfeit love, all in 1903 and 1904, at this web address:

<http://www.fredbischhoff.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Free-Lovism.pdf>.) The counterfeit message from these forces (dealing with cosmology and the future of the universe) would be carried into the world at large in a significant way by a former Seventh-day Adventist minister-turned-physician who was born June of the previous year (1875), **William Sadler**, with his work spanning over 40 years on *The Urantia Book*, received as messages from unseen beings. His case shows the truthfulness of Ellen White's warning 26 years later about the "mysticism" in Kellogg's book, *The Living Temple*, whose "sophistries" place those entertaining them "in a position where the enemy can talk with them, and lead them away from God." (*Review and Herald*, October 22, 1903, article "Teach the Word," par. 2)

### *September:*

Johns Hopkins University's Launching:

On September 12, 1876 ... auditorium of Baltimore's Academy of Music ... launching of the Johns Hopkins University, an institution whose leaders intended not simply to found a new university but to **change all of American education**; indeed, they sought considerably more than that. They plan to **change the way in which Americans tried to understand and grapple with nature**. The keynote speaker, the English scientist **Thomas H Huxley**, personified their goals. [page 11]

The war involving the Hopkins was more muted [than the Civil War] but no less profound. The outcome would help define one element of the character of the nation: the **extent to which the nation what except or reject modern science and, to a lesser degree, how secular it would become, how godly it would remain**. [page 12]

... Huxley did not look the warrior. But he had a warrior's ruthlessness. His dicta included the pronouncement: "The foundation of morality is to have done, once and for all, with lying." A brilliant scientist, later president of the Royal Society, he advised investigators, "Sit down before a fact as a little child, be prepared to **give up every preconceived notion. Follow humbly wherever and to whatever abyss nature leads**, or you shall learn nothing." He also believed that learning had purpose, stating, "The great end of life is not knowledge but action."

To act upon the world himself, he had become a proselytizer for faith in human reason. By 1876 he had become the **world's foremost advocate of the theory of evolution and of science itself**. Indeed, H. L. Mencken said that "it was he, more than any other man, who worked that great change in human thought which marked the Nineteenth Century." [page 13]

... The ceremonies most significant word was one **not spoken**: not a single participant uttered **the word "God" or made any reference to the Almighty**. This **spectacular omission** scandalized those who worried about or rejected a mechanistic and necessarily godless view of the universe. It came in an era in which American universities had nearly 200 endowed chairs of theology and fewer than five in medicine, an era in which the president of Drew University had said that, after much study and experience, he had concluded that only ministers of the Gospel should be college professors.

The omission also served as a declaration: the Hopkins would pursue the truth, no matter to what abyss lead.

In no area did the United States lag behind the rest of the world so much as in its **study of the life sciences and medicine**. And in that area in particular the influence of the Hopkins would be immense.

By 1918, as America marched into war, the nation had come not only to rely upon the changes wrought largely, though certainly not entirely, by men associated with the Hopkins; the United States Army had mobilized these men into a special force, focused and disciplined, ready to hurl themselves at an enemy.

(*The Great Influenza*, John M. Barry, 2005)

Reflections: This pendulum swing of **science against religion** (an overreaction of science to a religion that stifled thought) would move the trajectory of the country and world into **secularism**, under the new world order that was developing, directed by **naturalism**, and ultimately orchestrated, ironically, by **negatively mystical forces**, to which naturalism makes one vulnerable.

*October:*

John Harvey Kellogg:

*Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* 1876/10/19, page 124, James White announces Kellogg's appointment as physician in chief:

Our Health Institute

We have never seen as bright a prospect for success before our Health Institute as at the present time. **J. H. Kellogg, M.D.**, graduate from Bellvue Medical College of New York City, and editor of the *Health Reformer* for several years, now **takes his place as physician in chief**.

Reflections: Kellogg was to be an example of **medical science with the Creator at center**, developing and advancing the **blended ministry of Scripture and science**, blessed by the **increasing flood of light in both areas**. This would carry the third angel's message (which encompassed the first and second angels' messages) into a "loud cry" as it met the needs of rich and poor. However, James White would die within five years. Twelve years later a flood of light in Scripture would converge to convert Kellogg, causing a rapid development of benevolent work, but his health reform work would be attacked from within the church, especially by the ministers. Kellogg's negative reaction would derail his conversion and ministry, destroy his confidence in the gospel ministers, and deepen his confusion over the nature of God's relation to His creation. In the midst of this trend, Kellogg would begin training and graduating medical doctors, the first class 18 years from 1876.

*1876:*

Ellen White:

First use of "nature above God":

"The Days of Noah"

Men began to feel secure and to talk of the fixed laws of nature. **They reasoned then as men reason now, as though nature was above the God of nature**, that her ways were so fixed that God Himself would not or could not change them, thus making God's messages of warning of none effect because, should His word be fulfilled, the course of nature would be disturbed. The men before the Flood sought to quiet their consciences, which the Spirit of God had aroused, by arguing how impossible it was for the message of Noah to be true and a flood to deluge the world, which would turn nature out of her course. (Manuscript 5, 1876, pp. 1-4. "The Days of Noah," cir. 1876.) (*Manuscript Releases*, Volume 10, page 373.1)

Reflections: Ellen White's noted this philosophy of the antediluvians in statements that continued to 1905, showing it also in Baal worship, education, and the Advent movement. These statements are traced in "Nature Above God?" (see document at: <http://www.fredbischhoff.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Nature-Above-God.pdf>). Was God warning us of the trend of **naturalism** with it **Darwinism** and other philosophies masquerading as science, of where **secularism** would take education in the U.S.A. and world at large in the coming years, and of the danger of **Baal worship** even for the Seventh-day Adventist Church (see 1889 statement in *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, page 444.1)? Note these key observations on science published in 1904 in 8T 257 & 258 in the section "The Essential Knowledge":

God has permitted a flood of light to be poured upon the world in the discoveries of **science** and art; but when professedly **scientific** men reason upon these subjects from a **merely human point of view**, they are sure to err. The greatest minds, if not guided by the word of God, become bewildered in their attempts to investigate the **relations of science and revelation**. The **Creator and His works are beyond their comprehension**; and because these cannot be explained by natural laws, Bible history is pronounced unreliable. {8T 257.3}

Those who **question the reliability of the Scripture** records have **let go their anchor** and are left to beat about upon the rocks of infidelity. When they find themselves **incapable of measuring the Creator and His works** by their own **imperfect knowledge of science**, they question the existence of God and attribute infinite power to nature. {8T 258.1}

In **true science** there can be nothing contrary to the teaching of the word of God, for both have the same Author. A correct understanding of both will always prove them to be in harmony. Truth, whether in nature or in revelation, is harmonious with itself in all its manifestations. But the mind not enlightened by God's Spirit will ever be in darkness in regard to His power. This is why human ideas in regard to science so often contradict the teaching of God's word. {8T 258.2}

...

The mighty power that works through all nature and sustains all things is not, as some men of **science** represent, merely an all-pervading principle, an actuating energy. God is a spirit; yet He is a personal being, for man was made in His image. {8T 263.1}

...

False **science** is one of the agencies that Satan used in the heavenly courts, and it is used by him today. The false assertions that he made to the angels, his subtle **scientific** theories, seduced many of them from their loyalty. {8T 290.1}

...

He who has a knowledge of God and His word has a settled faith in the divinity of the Holy Scriptures. He does not test the Bible by man's ideas of **science**. He brings these ideas to the test of the unerring standard. He knows that God's word is truth, and truth can never contradict itself; whatever in the teaching of so-called **science** contradicts the truth of God's revelation is mere human guesswork. {8T 325.1} (*Testimonies for the Church*, Volume 8)

In this section Ellen White specifically addressed **Kellogg's aberrant ideas**, with specific warnings about **pantheism** (291.2) and **spiritualism** (291.1&3; 292.1&3&4; 293.1).