

ELLEN G. WHITE ESTATE

W. W. PRESCOTT  
AND THE 1911  
EDITION OF  
THE GREAT  
CONTROVERSY

ARTHUR L. WHITE



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**W. W. Prescott and the  
1911 Edition of The  
Great Controversy**

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**Arthur L. White**

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Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely translated American author, her works having been published in more than 160 languages. She wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of spiritual and practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to the Scriptures as the basis of one's faith.

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## Introduction

At a meeting of the Bible and history teachers held in Washington, D. C., on August 1, 1919, (following the Bible Conference), Elder W. W. Prescott declared:

I contributed something toward the revision of *Great Controversy*. I furnished considerable material bearing upon that question.—“Minutes of the 1919 Meeting of Bible and History Teachers,” p. 121. (Published in *Spectrum*, volume 10, No. 1, page 54, column 2.)

Dr. Desmond Ford in his 991-page document states that many of *The Great Controversy* pages were changed because of the Prescott criticisms and suggestions, implying a strong Prescott influence in what is said to be a revision of the book. One gains the impression from these two witnesses that there were very significant and rather sweeping revisions of the book in response to the Prescott input.

The facts are that the Prescott suggestions which would have resulted in sweeping changes in the book were, after careful consideration, rejected outright. Only a little more than half of the 105 suggestions were accepted and a large part of these related to precision of expression or called for supporting references or Appendix Note explanations.

The facts fail to sustain the assertions of either Prescott or Ford, but very few, if any, researchers of this day have gone to the trouble to ascertain just what the facts are. Only in so doing can the truth be known.

[2] This paper is dedicated to such an investigation. To assure the reader of a fair and correct evaluation, the Prescott suggestions, as conveyed in his letter to W. C. White on April 26, 1910, are presented in toto. In reporting on the response to these suggestions, the contemporary records have been summoned and where changes were made in the text of the book, the 1888 reading is presented,



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followed by the wording in the 1911 edition. Only in this way is it possible to convey just what was done and why. The reader may thus judge the number and weight of the changes made in response to the Prescott input.

## Chapter 1—The Documented Facts in the Case

In July, 1911, a new edition of *Great Controversy* came from the presses of the Pacific Press and the Review and Herald. It is often spoken of as the 1911 “revision” of *The Great Controversy*. The term revision is much too broad for what was actually done. The word “refinement” would be more in keeping with both what was intended by the author and her staff at Elmshaven and what actually took place. While the work was in progress, workers involved made it clear that the book was not being revised. The word “revision,” in the interest of accuracy, was studiously avoided, and rightly so. C. C. Crisler, writing to H. C. Lacey, September 20, 1910, said: “No revision of the text has been attempted.”

Not only have the terms used in reference to the 1911 edition of *The Great Controversy* been used loosely—and the White Estate is not guiltless in this respect—but at times very inaccurate statements have been made as to the book and the work done on it. This is clearly evidenced in the minutes of the 1919 Conference of Bible and History Teachers.

## Chapter 2—History of the 1911 Edition

On January 5, 1910, C. H. Jones, manager of the Pacific Press wrote to W. C. White concerning *The Great Controversy* as follows:

It will be necessary to print another edition of this book on or before July, 1910. You are aware that the plates are worn out. New plates ought to be made before printing another edition.

This set in motion plans for resetting the type and the making of new printing plates. The work was entered upon with no expectation of any alteration of the text. It was merely a routine undertaking, but embodying plans to improve the illustrations, et cetera. Type-setting and plate making commenced immediately. Ellen White informs us, however, of her attitude toward the project: [3]

When I learned that *The Great Controversy* must be reset, I determined that we would have everything closely examined, to see if the truths it contained were stated in the very best manner, to convince those not of our faith that the Lord had guided and sustained me in the writing of its pages.—EGW to FMW, July 25, 1911.

This, together with a long-standing request that the historical quotations in the book be properly credited, prompted W. C. White to call a halt in the operation. The considerations led him to take up correspondence with the book committees of both the Pacific Press and the Review and Herald and to confer with several individuals opening the way for suggestions relating to the new reset book.

One of the individuals W. C. White conferred with was Professor W. W. Prescott. He did so in connection with a trip to Washington in early April, 1910. Prescott was then editor of *The Protestant Magazine* and as *The Great Controversy* had considerable to say about the Roman Catholic Church, it was logical that he should be asked to look the book through, especially in the light of Ellen White's desire to "have everything closely examined, to see if the

truths it contained were stated in the very best manner.” Prescott, with the views that he held in regard to inspiration,<sup>1</sup> was reluctant to do as he was requested, but he accepted the assignment and in the matter of two or three weeks submitted his report to W. C. White. This was in the form of a 39-page, double-spaced letter, dated April 26, 1910.

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<sup>1</sup>While president of Battle Creek College in the 1890s, Prescott had espoused the views in regard to inspiration of Professor Francois Gaussen, a Swiss theologian. Of this, W. C. White commented: “The acceptance of that view by the students in the Battle Creek College and many others, including Elder Haskell, has resulted in bringing into our work questions and perplexities without end, and always increasing. Sister White never accepted the Gaussen theory regarding verbal inspiration, either as applied to her own work or as applied to the Bible. W. C. White to L. E. Froom, January 8, 1928, published in the Appendix of [Selected Messages 3:454, 455](#). While Prescott at the 1919 conference denied holding verbal inspiration views, we do not know precisely what his views were at that time.

## Chapter 3—The Prescott Report and How Employed

We shall quote all of the 39-page Prescott letter to W. C. White in which he renders his report. In doing so, we shall intersperse his suggestions with the response of Ellen White and the Elmshaven staff.

Prescott refers to W. C. White's request given orally by W. C. White while he was in Washington in early April. The White Estate files fail to disclose a W. C. White letter to Prescott. For the sake of convenience, the points made by Prescott are numbered. He writes:

My Dear Brother:

In harmony with your urgent request, I have taken a little time to go through *The Great Controversy*, and to note some of the things which seemed to me to indicate the need of a revision. Inasmuch as the book covers the period beginning with the destruction of Jerusalem, and ending with the coming of the Lord and the new earth, it could hardly be expected that I should be able to deal in any way exhaustively with the facts of history which are treated upon in this book. I can only notice such matters, and make such suggestions, as are within the range of my reading.

### 1. Page 22

There is one general feature of the book to which I will call attention without attempting to refer definitely to each case, as this would require much space, and involve much repetition. Throughout the book there are very many quotations, both from other writers and from verbal conversations which ought to be accurate, and which I think ought to have in nearly all cases suitable references. It is very difficult now, however, to locate these quotations, as oftentimes there is no hint which would enable one to look them up. I shall call attention to some which I have been able to locate, and suggest the need of much work in this direction. The inaccuracies which I

[5]

have found in the few which I have looked up, suggest this. [Variant translations contributed to the appearance of inaccuracies.]

I will now deal with different places throughout the book which seem to need attention. The edition which I have used in making this criticism is the Eleventh edition, revised and enlarged, published by the Pacific Press in 1889.

## 2. Page 24

It is stated that the temple “was rebuilt about five hundred years before the birth of Christ.” On the insert page following, the date of rebuilding is given as B. C. 516. *Smith’s Bible Dictionary* gives it “Cir 520 B. C.”

**Response:** Negative. Text left unchanged. The word “about” allows some leeway.

## 3. Page 26

The setting up of the “idolatrous standards of the Romans” just outside the city walls is stated to be the signal referred to by Christ for the flight of the disciples; but on page 31, the flight of the disciples is made to be after “the retreat of Cestius.”

**Response:** Negative. No change in text.

## 4. Page 28

The period between the doom of Jerusalem as pronounced by Christ and the overthrow of the city is said to be “forty years.” As the city was overthrown A. D. 70, if this period is exact, it would make the time for his pronouncing the doom A. D. 30, and consequently, His crucifixion in the same year; but in other places in the book, the crucifixion is placed in A. D. 31.

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Text changed in the interest of precision.

1888 book reads: “For forty years after the doom of Jerusalem had been pronounced by Christ Himself, the Lord delayed His judgments upon the city and the nation.”

1911 book reads: “For nearly forty years after the doom of Jerusalem had been pronounced by Christ,” et cetera. (Page 27).

## 5. Page 31

After speaking of the retreat of Cestius, it says: “Terrible were the calamities that fell upon Jerusalem when the siege was resumed by Titus.”

The reader who is not informed concerning the history of this period would probably conclude that Titus immediately succeeded

Cestius in the command of the Roman forces, as no hint is given [6] of the campaign under Vespasian, the father of Titus.

**Response:** Negative. No change made.

## 6. Page 33

The efforts of Titus to save the temple are said to have been futile, because “One greater than he had declared that not one stone was to be left upon another.” Does an event happen because it has been foretold by prophecy, or does the prophecy foretell events which happen for other reasons?

**Response:** Negative. Criticism ignored. No change made.

## 7. Page 43

Of the idolaters who united with the church it is said that “they still clung to their idolatry, only changing the objects of their worship to images of Jesus, and even of Mary and the saints.” My understanding is that these idolaters were induced to unite with the church by an accommodation of the Christian doctrine to their beliefs and modes of worship, and that therefore they were brought into the church on the basis of the worship of images.

**Response:** Negative. No change made.

## 8. Page 50

It is declared that “the pope has arrogated the very titles of Deity. He styles himself ‘Lord God the Pope.’” The definite reference for this ought surely to be given, if such instance can be found: if no such instance can be found, it does not seem proper to make this assertion. In all my reading I have not found one such instance,

although I have found instances where others have applied this term to the pope.

**Response:** Criticism accepted. The suggestion led to a careful investigation by the staff at Elmshaven and an extended outreach. While there were published works making this assertion, no statement was found in authoritative Catholic sources. Wording changed for accuracy of expression:

1888 book read: “It is one of the leading doctrines of Romanism that the pope is the visible head of the universal church of Christ, invested with supreme authority over bishops and pastors in all parts of the world. More than this, the pope has arrogated the very titles of Deity. He styles himself ‘Lord God the Pope,’ assumes infallibility, and demands that all men pay him homage.”

1911 book reads: “More than this, the pope has been given the very titles of Deity. He has been styled ‘Lord God the Pope,’ and has been declared infallible. He demands the homage of all men.”

An Appendix note was added giving Roman Catholic sources on the title of the pope.

[7]

## 9. Page 52

At least the vital portion of the decree of the council which “finally established this system of idolatry” ought to be cited, either here or in the Appendix. This is a serious charge, and ought to be substantiated.

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Documentary support given.

1888 book read: “To afford converts from heathenism a substitute for the worship of idols, and thus to promote their nominal acceptance of Christianity, the adoration of images and relics was gradually introduced into the Christian worship. The decree of a general council finally established this system of idolatry.”

A footnote reads: “Second Council of Nice, A. D. 787.”

The 1911 edition uses the statement unchanged. Supporting documentation is provided in an extensive Appendix note on pages 679 to 680, thus carrying out more fully than did the 1888 book the call for documentation.



## 10. Page 52

It is said: “Satan tampered with the fourth commandment also.” In other places the change of this commandment is referred directly to the pope or the papacy.

**Response:** Negative. This rather quibbling criticism was ignored, for none could misunderstand the intent of the author, who elsewhere in the book attributed the change to the papacy under the influence of Satan.

## 11. Page 52

Beginning at the bottom of the page this statement is found: “While Christians continued to observe the Sunday as a joyous festival, he led them ... to make the Sabbath a fast.”

On page 53, it says: “But while Christians were gradually led to regard Sunday as possessing a degree of sacredness, they still held the true Sabbath as the holy of the Lord.”

It seems to me that in both cases the word “Christians” should be qualified by some word limiting its application. As they now stand, these expressions seem too broad.

The same suggestion applies to the use of the word “Christians”: on page 54, eighth line from the bottom.

**Response:** Page 52: Criticism accepted. Text changed in the interests of precision.

1888 book read: “While Christians continued to observe Sunday as a joyous festival,” et cetera.

1911 edition wording reads: “While Christians generally continued to observe Sunday as a joyous festival,” et cetera. [8]

**Response:** Page 53: Affirmative. Text changed.

1888 book read: “But while Christians were gradually led to regard Sunday as possessing a degree of sacredness,” et cetera.

1911 edition wording reads: “But while many God-fearing Christians were gradually led to regard Sunday,” et cetera.

**Response:** Page 54: Negative.

1888 book read: “Christians were forced to choose, either to yield their integrity and accept the papal ceremonies,” et cetera.

Wording left unchanged.

## 12. Page 54

The argument in the last paragraph of this page would seem to favor commencing the 1260 years with the decree of Justinian in 533, as it says: "The bishop of Rome was declared to be the head over the entire church." And immediately following it says: "And now began the 1260 years." In various other places in the book, which will be noted later the 1260-year period is definitely stated to begin in 538.

**Response:** Negative. Implication calling for a change was rejected. No change was made.

## 13. Page 56

In the second paragraph I find this statement:

"About the close of the eighth century, papists put forth the claim that in the first ages of the church the bishops of Rome possessed the same spiritual power which they now assumed. To establish this claim, some means must be employed to give it a show of authority; and this was readily suggested by the father of lies. Ancient writings were forged by monks. Decrees of councils before unheard of were discovered," et cetera.

The only thing in the history of the papacy to which this can possibly refer would be the forging of the pseudo-Isidorian decretals; but these were not brought forward until the middle of the ninth century; and Pope Nicholas I who filled the pontifical chair from 858 to 867, was the first pope to make use of these forged writings in order to establish the authority of the papacy. Of course it does not say in this paragraph that these writings were forged in the eighth century, but to one acquainted with the facts the matter does not seem to be clearly handled.

**Response:** Criticism rejected. No change made.

[9]

## 14. Page 57

These two statements are found: "Another step in the papal assumption was taken, when in the eleventh century, Pope Gregory VII proclaimed the perfection of the Romish church."

“The proud pontiff next claimed the power to depose emperors,” et cetera.

The natural inference from these statements would be that these two claims were put forth at different times; but both of them are found in one document, namely, “The Dictates of Hildebrand,” a document, which presents in a summarized form the leading claims and teachings of Gregory VII. It is of course, barely possible that these claims were originally made at different times; but, as they now appear in ecclesiastical history, they are found in the same document. This document will be found in Mosheim’s *Ecclesiastical History*, book 3, cent. 11, part 2, chapter 2, paragraph 9, Note 1.

**Response:** Criticism accepted. A change was made in the text.

The word “also” was substituted for the word “next” to more precisely indicate the time relationships. An Appendix note was added on the “dictates of Hildebrand.”

### 15. Page 59

Purgatory is defined as “A place of torment, in which the souls of such as have not merited eternal damnation are to suffer punishment for their sins.” Purgatory is thus defined in *Catholic Belief*, page 196:

“Purgatory is a state of suffering after this life, in which those souls are for a time detained, who depart this life after their deadly sins have been remitted as to the stain and guilt, and as to the everlasting pain that was due them, but who have on account of those sins still some debt of temporal punishment to pay; as also those souls which leave this world guilty only of venial sins.”

**Response:** Negative as to a change. An Appendix note was added quoting Catholic sources and giving many reference to sources.

### 16. Page 59

The doctrine of indulgences is made to mean “full remission of sins, past, present, and future.” But in *Catholic Belief*, page 194, we find this:

“It is a pity that many Protestants should be so ill-informed about the doctrine of Indulgences as to suppose that it means forgiveness of a sin, or a permission to commit a sin.

“By an indulgence is meant not the forgiveness of a sin, or a permission to commit a sin, but the remission, through the merits of the whole or part of the debt of temporal punishment due to a sin, the guilt and everlasting punishment of which have, through the merits of Jesus Christ, been already forgiven in the sacrament of Penance.”

[10] There is no doubt that this teaching of the church has been perverted, and practically made to mean in many instances the forgiveness of sin, or possibly the permission to commit sin; but this is not the official teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. Would it not be proper to make this distinction?

**Response:** Negative. No change was made. An Appendix note was added, citing Catholic sources.

### 17. Page 59

It is said that “all Christians” were compelled to believe in the “idolatrous sacrifice of the mass.” The expression “all Christians” seems rather a broad one here.

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Wording changed by deletion of the word “all” making the sentence read “Christians were required, on pain of death, to avow their faith in this horrible, Heaven-insulting heresy.”

### 18. Page 60

The expression “Babylon the Great” is plainly applied here to the Roman church; but on page 383, it is declared that Babylon of Revelation “cannot refer to the Romish church.” Are there two interpretations of Babylon, one for [Revelation 14](#), and one for [Revelation 17](#)?

**Response:** Criticism considered. No change here. See page 383 for addition of the word “alone.”

### 19. Page 60

The expression “The noontide of the papacy was the world’s moral midnight” ought to be changed back into Wiley’s original form of expression quoted.

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Wording changed to harmonize with Wiley.

1888 book read: “The noontide of the papacy was the world’s moral midnight.”

1911 edition wording reads: “The noon of the papacy was the midnight of the world,” and the reference given.

### 20. Page 61

In the expression “Everything heretical, whether persons or writings, was destroyed.” The statement seems overdrawn. Both heretics and heretical writings survived that period.

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Wording changed.

1888 book read: “Everything heretical, whether persons or writings, was destroyed.”

1911 edition reads: “Everything heretical, whether persons or writings, she sought to destroy.”

### 21. Page 61

[11]

“Papal councils decreed that books and writings containing such records (of Rome’s cruelty) should be committed to the flames.” Reference ought to be made to one or more councils, and a brief quotation from the decrees given.

**Response:** Negative. No change made.

### 22. Page 62

At the bottom of the page it reads: “But Rome had fixed her eyes on Britain, and resolved to bring it under her supremacy.” The facts as given in history are these: While walking through the slave market in Rome one day, Gregory the Great saw some youths who attracted his attention. On inquiry he learned that they came from Britain. He was impressed with the beauty of their form and appearance,

and thought that such a people ought to receive Christianity; and therefore sent Augustine, with about forty monks, to preach the gospel to them. I do not find anything in the history which indicates that Gregory knew of this country and determined to bring them under his pontifical power before he saw those young men in the slave market.

**Response:** Negative. No change made.

### 23. Page 63

The quotation put in the mouth of “the Romish leader,” is not the same as that found in the *Historian’s History of the World*, volume 18, pages 44, 45.

**Response:** Negative. No change made.

### 24. Page 64

The expression “Those humble peasants ... had not by themselves arrived at the truth in opposition to the dogmas and heresies of the apostate church,” does not clearly express the writer’s idea. It should read:

“Had not, without the assistance of others,” or “Had not themselves first arrived at the truth.” What follows shows that they were simply defending the faith of their fathers.

**Response:** Negative. No change made.

### 25. Page 65

This statement is found: “Amid the prevailing error and superstition, many, even of the true people of God, became so bewildered that while they observed the Sabbath, they refrained from labor also on the Sunday.”

With this compare the statement in *Testimony*, volume 9, page 232:

“The light given me by the Lord at the time when we were expecting just such a crisis as you seem to be approaching was, that when the people were moved by a power from beneath to enforce Sunday observance, Seventh-day Adventists were to show their

wisdom by refraining from their ordinary work on that day, devoting it to missionary effort.”

**Response:** Negative. No change made.

[12]

## 26. Page 65

The statement reads: “The Waldenses were the first of all the people of Europe to obtain a translation of the Holy Scriptures.”

Ridpath, *History of the World*, Volume 2, page 42, says:

“For seven years Ulfilas labored assiduously at the great task (translating the Bible) which he had undertaken. At the end of that time the whole Bible, with the exception perhaps of the Book of Kings had been translated into the vernacular ... The achievement of Ulfilas requires a more especial attention for the reason that the Gothic Bible thus produced was the first Bible ever written in a Teutonic language.”

It would seem to me that this translation made by Ulfilas gave to the Goths the first translation of the Holy Scriptures.

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Wording changed.

1888 book read: “The Waldenses were the first of all the peoples of Europe to obtain a translation of the Holy Scriptures.”

1911 edition reads: “The Waldenses were among the first of the peoples of Europe to obtain a translation of the Holy Scriptures.” See Appendix. An Appendix note was added giving details and references to historical sources.

## 27. Page 76

Some portion of the bull from Innocent VIII, to which reference is made, ought to be quoted, with proper reference.

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Appendix note added giving references.

## 28. Page 77

Some of the provisions of this bull are given, however, the language of another, but without any reference as authority for the translation.

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Appendix note with references added.

### 29. Page 79

In view of what has been stated concerning the translation of the Bible by Bishop Ulfilas, is it proper to say that “except among the Waldenses the Word of God had for ages been locked up in languages known only to the learned”?

**Response:** Negative. No change in text made.

### 30. Page 82

[13] A quotation of very severe import is credited to “one of the early fathers of the Romish Church.” This reference does not seem definite enough to warrant the use of the quotation. The same seems true of the quotation from Luther, found on the same page.

**Response:** Negative on the first suggestion. Source probably unknown.

In the second instance, affirmative, with footnote credit given to the reference for Luther’s statement.

### 31. Page 84

At the top of the page the question of “purchasing forgiveness with money” is suggested, and in the same paragraph there is a quotation for which no reference is given.

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Appendix note added.

### 32. Page 85

A quotation is given from one of the tracts of Wycliffe, for which no reference is given. This matter, found in Neander, volume 5, of the five-volume edition, page 137, runs thus: (Paragraph quoted.)

In Neander this quotation is credited to Lewis’s *History of the Life and Sufferings of J. Wiclif*, page 32 (n. ed. 37).

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Original wording retained, footnote reference added.



### 33. Page 85

Three bulls are mentioned, “all commanding immediate and decisive measures to silence the teacher of heresy.” Would it be possible to mention these bulls, or give some reference to where they may be found?

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Appendix note giving reference added.

### 34. Page 86

The expression, “Two conflicting powers, each professedly infallible, now claimed obedience,” raises the question of the proper use of the word “infallible.” According to Roman Catholic doctrine, infallibility does not apply to the pope as a temporal king, as a private person, as a writer on general themes, or as a speaker; but merely refers to his utterances when made ex-cathedra in defining the belief of the church. See *Faith of Our Fathers* by Cardinal Gibbons, page 145, and following. From the Catholic standpoint the doctrine of infallibility is not impaired by the fact of there being two rival popes at the same time.

**Response:** Negative. No change made.

### 35. Page 88

[14]

The quotation from Wycliffe in the first line, “But live and declare the evil deeds of the friars,” reads in Green’s *History of England*, “but live and again declare the works of the friars.”

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Sentence corrected to read: “I shall not die, but live, and again declare the evil deeds of the friars.” Footnote reference given to D’Aubigne.

### 36. Page 97

Two statements are put into the mouth of Gregory VII, for which no reference is given. As these are very important pronouncements, they ought to have proper authority back of them. The same is true of the decree mentioned in the last line of the same page.

**Response:** Affirmative on the first suggestion:

1888 book read: “The pope declared that ‘God was pleased that His worship should be celebrated in an unknown tongue, and that a neglect of this rule had given rise to many evils and heresies.’”

1911 Edition corrected according to Wylie, to read: “The pope declared that ‘it was pleasing to the Omnipotent that His worship should be celebrated in an unknown language, and that many evils and heresies had arisen from not observing this rule.’” (Footnote reference to Wylie given.)

On the second suggestion regarding the wording which reads: “After a time it was decreed that all who departed from the Romish worship should be burned.” The 1888 book carries no reference nor is reference given in the 1911 edition.

### 37. Page 103

It is declared that “all the gifts, offices, and blessings of the church were offered for sale.” The word “all” makes this a very broad statement.

**Response:** Criticism accepted. The word “all” was deleted making the 1911 edition read: “Of course money must be had; and to procure this, the gifts, offices, and blessings of the church were offered for sale.” An Appendix note was added referring to “Indulgences.”

### 38. Page 104

It is said that the Council of Constance “was called, at the desire of Emperor Sigismund, by one of the three rival popes, John XXIII,” This matter seems to be presented in a somewhat different light by Bower in his *History of the Popes*, under “John XXIII, the two hundred and fourth bishop of Rome.” In the three-volume edition of Bower, this matter is found in volume 3, pages 175, 176.

**Response:** Negative. No change made in the text.

### 39. Page 106

In speaking of the treatment of Huss and his imprisonment, it says: “The pope, however, profiting little by his perfidy, was soon after committed to the same prison.”

From this statement, in connection with the preceding paragraph, it would appear that the pope was cast into the same prison in which Huss was first incarcerated. Bower, however, presents the matter in a different way, as will be seen by reading his account of the imprisonment of John XXIII in the same edition, on page 188.

**Response:** Criticism accepted, but changing the text to agree with Bonnechose. [15]

1888 book read: “The reformer was in a short time arrested, by order of the pope and cardinals, and thrust into a loathsome dungeon. The pope, however, profiting little by his perfidy, was soon after committed to the same prison.”

1911 Edition was changed to read, and in so doing following Bonnechose, volume 1, page 247: “The Reformer was in a short time arrested, by order of the pope and cardinals, and thrust into a loathsome dungeon. Later he was transferred to a strong castle across the Rhine, and there kept a prisoner. The pope, profiting little by his perfidy, was soon after committed to the same prison.”

#### 40. Page 107

The words in italics [in the 1888 book], and quoted, being of so much importance and involving so serious a charge against the papacy, ought to have a proper reference for them.

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Wording corrected to that of L’Enfant in *History of the Council of Constance*, volume 1, page 516.

1888 book read: “They brought forward arguments of great length to prove that he was ‘perfectly at liberty not to keep faith with a heretic,’ and that the council, being above the emperor, ‘could free him from his word.’ Thus they prevailed.”

1911 edition wording reads: “They brought forward arguments of great length to prove that ‘faith ought not to be kept with heretics, nor persons suspected of heresy, though they are furnished with safe-conducts from the emperor and kings.’” Footnote reference given Lenfant, *History of the Council of Constance*, volume 1, page 516.

#### 41. Page 116

To supply what was needed for a crusade, it is stated that “In all the papal countries of Europe, men, money, and munitions of war were raised.” The word “all” makes this statement a very broad one.

**Response:** Negative. No change in text made.

#### 42. Page 122

The statement concerning Luther’s discovery of the Bible would be more definite if it should read: “While one day examining the books of the library of the University of Erfurth.”

**Response:** Negative. No change made in the text.

#### 43. Page 128

The expression “A salvation that could be bought with money,” raises the same question as to the meaning of indulgences. There is little if any doubt, that Tetzel represented his indulgences as being the same as forgiveness of sin; but would it not be fair to the Roman Catholic Church to say that this was not their official teaching?

[16]

**Response:** Negative. No change made in the text.

#### 44. Page 129

The quotation from Tetzel at the top of the page, if authoritative, ought to have suitable reference.

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Footnote reference to D’Aubigne given.

#### 45. Page 160

The answer of Luther as here quoted varies somewhat from the language given by D’Aubigne, book 7, chapter 8, which runs thus: (Paragraph quoted).

**Response:** Criticism accepted.

1888 book read: “The reformer answered: ‘Since your most serene majesty and the princes require a simple, clear, and direct answer, I will give one, and it is this:’” et cetera. The quotation

closes with the words, “Here I take my stand; I cannot do otherwise. God be my help! Amen.”

1911 edition changed to present the quotation from D’Aubigne. It was a matter of quoting from one translation or another, and the one used closes with the familiar words, “Here I stand, I can do no other; may God help me. Amen.”

The one used, was not the one suggested by Prescott, but the one approved by D’Aubigne and followed consistently in the 1911 edition. It closes with the familiar words, “Here I stand, I can do no other; may God help me. Amen.”

#### 46. Pages 202 and 203

The Protest at the Diet of Spires, as here quoted, does not agree with the same Protest as found in D’Aubigne, book 13, chapter 6.

**Response:** Criticism accepted. The translation approved by D’Aubigne, was employed which called for some change in wording. The reference was given.

#### 47. Page 209

[17]

At the top of the page is this statement: “One of the principles most firmly maintained by Luther was that there should be no resort to secular power in support of the Reformation, and no appeal to arms for its defense.”

This is true, but it is also true that, as the Reformation progressed in later years, Luther argued in favor of the use of the secular power to suppress heretical and fanatical teaching.

**Response:** Negative. No change made.

#### 48. Page 234

The statement at the bottom of the page concerning the nature of Jesuitism is very broad and very strong. According to this statement, Satan himself could not possibly be any worse. The same is true of the further description on page 235.

**Response:** Criticism accepted as to precision of statement, but argument well supported by an extended Appendix note, quoting and giving references.

1888 book read: “Cut off from every earthly tie and human interest, dead to the claims of natural affection, reason and conscience wholly silenced, they knew no rule, no tie, but that of their order, and no duty but to extend its power.”

1911 edition wording reads: “Cut off from earthly ties and human interests, dead to the claims of natural affection, reason and conscience wholly silenced, they knew no rule, no tie, but that of their order, and no duty but to extend its power.” See Appendix.

#### 49. Page 235

The bull mentioned which reestablished the Inquisition ought to be definitely located.

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Appendix note with references added.

#### 50. Page 261

The quotation concerning the assumptions of the pope are evidently taken from *Facts for the Times*. (An S. D. A. publication). After a long search, I have found the quotation to the effect that the pope “can dispense above the law,” et cetera; but it is what is called an authoritative gloss upon the canon law, and not a direct utterance of the pope. The second quotation, “He can pronounce sentences and judgments,” et cetera, I have been unable to locate. I do not think it wise to use these quotations, unless we can give very definite reference for them, as I fully expect that we shall be called to strict account for all these statements at some time in the future.

**Response:** Affirmative. The discussion is not of the papacy, but the quotation was used as illustrating a point that God’s law was not binding. See paragraph which precedes the paragraph in question, for proper setting. The quotation questioned was not used, but the principles involved were stated without supporting quotation involving the papacy was used.

1888 book read: “This monstrous doctrine is essentially the same as the Romish claim that ‘the pope can dispense above the law, and of wrong make right, by correcting and changing laws;’ that ‘he can pronounce sentences and judgments in contradiction... to

the law of God and man.’ Both reveal the inspiration of the same master-spirit,—of him who, even among the sinless inhabitants of Heaven, began his work of seeking to break down the righteous restraints of the law of God.”

1911 edition wording reads: “These monstrous doctrines are essentially the same as the later teaching of popular educators and theologians, —that there is no unchangeable divine law as the standard of right, but that the standard of morality is indicated by society itself, and has constantly been subject to change. All these ideas are inspired by the same master-spirit,—by him who, even among the sinless inhabitants of heaven, began his work of seeking to break down the righteous restraints of the law of God.”

[18]

### 51. Page 266

In the first paragraph, “the holy city,” mentioned in [Revelation 11:2](#), is interpreted to mean [the true church,] but on page 427, the holy city is made to be the bride, and the virgins to represent the church. Note the full argument on page 427.

**Response:** Criticism considered. Issue at this point eliminated by the deletion of bracketed phrase, “the true church.”

1888 book read: “Said the angel of the Lord: “The holy city [the true church] shall they tread under foot forty and two months.””

1911 edition wording reads: “Said the angel of the Lord: “The holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.””

### 52. Page 266

The 1260 years of papal supremacy are made to commence “with the establishment of the papacy in A. D. 538,” and to terminate in 1798. It does not seem to be in harmony with history to say that the papacy was established at this time, and the whole question of the proper application of 1260 years needs reconsideration and a new interpretation made.

**Response:** Criticism considered and with no departure from the beginning and ending dates of the 1260 years, the phrase, “with the establishment of the papacy,” was deleted.

1888 book read: “The 1260 years of papal supremacy began with the establishment of the papacy in A. D. 538, and would therefore terminate in 1798.”

1911 edition wording reads: “The 1260 years of papal supremacy began in A. D. 538, and would therefore terminate in 1798.” See Appendix note.

### 53. Page 267

The statement that “through the influence of the Reformation, the persecution was brought to an end prior to 1798,” seems a very loose one, in view of the fact that the Reformation occurred nearly four centuries before the date mentioned here.

**Response**: Negative, no change made.

[19]

### 54. Page 268

In the last paragraph, it is assumed that the 1260 years ended in 1798.

**Response**: Negative. No change in text.

### 55. Page 269

Reference is again made to the year 1798, on the basis of its being the date for the end of the 1260 years. On the same page the French Revolution is called “the Revolution of 1793;” but at the top of page 282, it is said:

“At the opening of the Revolution, by a concession of the kind, the people were granted a representation exceeding that of the nobles and the clergy combined.”

This concession was made at the convocation of the States-General in 1789, which would, according to this statement, then be the opening of the Revolution. This is historically correct. But the Revolution could then not properly be spoken of as “the Revolution of 1793.”

**Response**: Negative. No change.



**56. Page 271**

When we think of the persecutions carried on by the papacy under the inquisition in Spain and in other countries, it seems a little strong to say that: “In no land (other than France) had the spirit of enmity against Christ been more strikingly displayed.”

**Response:** Negative. No change made in the text.

**57. Page 272**

[20]

In the middle of the page, the statement is made that: “The great bell of the palace, tolling at the dead of night, was a signal for the slaughter.”

All the histories dealing with the French Revolution which I have been able to consult, state that it was the original plan to toll the bell of the palace as the signal, but owing to special circumstances, the signal was given by ringing the bell of the church of St. Germain l’Auxerrois.

**Response:** Negative. It was found that historians differed on this point. See A. L. White in *The Ellen G. White Writings*, p. 32, for documentation. It was not Ellen White’s mission to correct historians. A bell rang signaling the massacre. The wording was adjusted to avoid the point of which one.

1888 book read: “The great bell of the palace, tolling at dead of night, was a signal for the slaughter.”

1911 edition was changed to read: “A bell, tolling at dead of night, was a signal for the slaughter.”

**57a. Page 272**

On the same page the number that perished throughout France is stated to be “seventy thousand.” The estimates vary from fifty to one hundred thousand. Would it not be better to say “about seventy thousand?”

**Response:** Negative. No change made.

### 57b. Page 272

On the same page, a quotation is given concerning Pope Gregory's reception of the news of the massacre. In view of the fact that Roman Catholics dispute this whole ground, ought there not to be some authoritative reference for this paragraph concerning the reception of the news in Rome?

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Footnote reference supplied.

### 58: Page 273

It is stated that "Bibles were collected and publicly burned with every possible manifestation of scorn;" and on pages 286 and 287, reference is made to a decree passed in 1793, prohibiting the Bible, and the rescinding of the same decree three years and a half later. Both of these statements appear to have been taken directly from *Thoughts on Revelation*; and the statement concerning the decree suppressing the Bible, as found in *Thoughts on Revelation*, is taken verbatim, but without credit, from an article by George Storrs, one of the early Adventist writers.

Two or three of us have made a very careful search of all the histories of the French Revolution to be found in the Congressional Library, in an effort to find some authority for this statement concerning this decree suppressing the Bible; but thus far we have been utterly unable to find any reference to any such action. Of course, if this cannot be established, it will affect quite a number of paragraphs based upon this statement.

**Response:** The challenge of the criticism was accepted. Considerable careful research in the libraries in both Europe and America did yield supporting evidence for the *The Great Controversy* statement in its broader terms, but did not yield a specific action of the French Assembly in 1793, edicts abolishing the Bible, and then three and a half years later restoring it to favor. Painstaking research failed to disclose such specific legislation, but edicts were found that did so in effect. C. C. Crisler, Ellen White's leading secretary working on the 1911 edition of *The Great Controversy*, found that one of the

British lords, in a debate in Parliament, as it opened in January, 1794, declared after reading at length from French documents, that “the Old and New Testament were publicly burnt, as prohibited books.”

1888 book read: “The atheistical power that ruled in France during the Revolution and the reign of terror, did wage such a war upon the Bible as the world had never witnessed. The Word of God was prohibited by the national assembly. Bibles were collected and publicly burned with every possible manifestation of scorn. The law of God was trampled under foot. The institutions of the Bible were abolished.”

1911 edition reads: “The atheistical power that ruled in France during the Revolution and the Reign of Terror, did wage such a war against God and His holy word as the world had never witnessed. The worship of the Deity was abolished by the National Assembly. Bibles were collected and publicly burned with every possible manifestation of scorn. The law of God was trampled under foot.” [21]

Pages 286, 287:

1888 book read: “It was in 1793 that the decree which prohibited the Bible passed the French Assembly. Three years and a half later a resolution rescinding the decree, and granting toleration to the Scriptures, was adopted by the same body.”

1911 edition reads: “It was in 1793 that the decrees which abolished the Christian religion and set aside the Bible, passed the French Assembly. Three years and a half later a resolution rescinding these decrees, thus granting toleration to the Scriptures, was adopted by the same body.”

### 59. Page 276

A quotation is made, beginning, “the popular society of the museum entered the hall,” et cetera, which is also found in *Thoughts on Daniel* (Notes on [Daniel 11:38](#)), where it is credited to Scott’s *Life of Napoleon*, without any page being given. It seems to me that the expression, “the popular society of the museum” must be a mistranslation of the French name of some society of that period.

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Some change made in writing:

1888 book read: “This was followed, not long afterward, by the public burning of the Bible. And ‘the popular society of the museum

entered the hall of the municipality, exclaiming, Vive la Raison! and carrying on the top of a pole the half-burned remains of several books.’”

1911 edition reads: “This was followed, not long afterward, by the public burning of the Bible. On one occasion ‘the Popular Society of the Museum’ entered the hall of the municipality, exclaiming ‘Vive la Raison!’ and carrying on the top of a pole the half-burned remains of several books.”

### 59a. Page 276

And the expression “the breviaries of the Old and New Testaments,” should read, “the breviaries and the Old and New Testaments.”

**Response:** Affirmative. The text in the 1911 edition reads: “among others breviaries, missals, and the Old and New Testaments, which ‘expiated in a great fire.’”

[22]

### 60. Page 277

The words put into the mouth of the pope as spoken to the regent of France ought surely to be authoritatively located. And the same is true as to the words of “a papist dignitary.”

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Footnote references given and wording of quotation changed to harmonize with accepted D’Aubigne wording.

1888 book read: “Rome was not slow to inflame their jealous fears. Said the pope to the regent of France in 1523: ‘This mania [Protestantism] will not only destroy religion, but all principalities, nobilities, laws, orders, and ranks besides.’ A few years later a papist dignitary warned the king, ‘If you wish to preserve your sovereign rights intact; if you wish to keep the nations submitted to you in tranquility, manfully defend the Catholic faith, and subdue all its enemies by your arms.’”

1911 edition reads: “Rome was not slow to inflame their jealous fears. Said the pope to the regent of France in 1525: ‘This mania [Protestantism] will not only confound and destroy religion, but all principalities, nobility, laws, orders, and ranks besides.’ A few

years later a papal nuncio warned the king: ‘Sire, be not deceived. The Protestants will upset all civil as well as religious order.... The throne is in as much danger as the altar.... The introduction of a new religion must necessarily introduce a new government.’”

### 61. Page 282

There appears on this page this statement: “The war against the Bible inaugurated an era which stands in the world’s history as ‘The Reign of Terror.’”

The whole outbreak of the French Revolution is interpreted in this chapter as being a war against the Bible; but the histories of that period represent this outbreak as being a protest against the arbitrary authority of both state and church. In harmony with this idea is the fact that the king was beheaded previous to the inauguration of the Reign of Terror, and before the worship of the Goddess of Reason was established.

**Response:** Negative. No change made.

### 62. Page 284

It is stated that “in the short space of ten years, millions of human beings perished.” When used in this way, “millions” would be taken to mean several millions, and it is a question whether so broad an expression is warranted.

**Response:** Criticism accepted, and the word “multitudes” was substituted for “millions.”

### 63. Page 285

At the bottom of the page reference is made to the decree prohibiting the Bible, to which attention has already been called.

**Response:** Criticism accepted, and wording changed to harmonize with the precision of demonstrable facts and authentic records. [23]

1888 book read: “When France publicly prohibited the Bible, wicked men and spirits of darkness exulted in their attainment of the object so long desired,” et cetera.

1911 edition reads: On page 286: “When France publicly rejected God and set aside the Bible, wicked men and spirits of dark-

ness exulted in their attainment of the object so long desired,—” et cetera.

C. C. Crisler’s General Observation on the Chapter, “The Bible and the French Revolution:”<sup>2</sup> (Discussed in points 56 to 63.)

In all this historical work, we are eager to have the MSS that may be submitted, given the most searching tests. We need never be afraid of historical truth. However, we would do well to avoid accepting the conclusions of some of the more modern historians who are attempting to rewrite history so as to shape it up in harmony with their philosophical viewpoint. We find it necessary to exercise constant vigilance in this respect; and this leads us to set considerable store by the original sources, or fountain heads of history....

The more closely we examine the use of historical extracts in *Controversy*, and the historical extracts themselves, the more profoundly are we impressed with the fact that Sister White had special guidance in tracing the story from the time of the Destruction of Jerusalem, down through the centuries until the End. No mortal man could have done the work that she has done in shaping up some of these chapters, including, we believe, the chapter on the French Revolution, which is a very remarkable chapter, in more ways than one.

And the more we go into these matters, the more profound is our conviction that the Lord has helped not only Sister White in the presentation of truth, but that He has overruled in the work of other writers, to the praise of His name and the advancement of present truth. Our brethren in years past have used many quotations, and as a general rule, the Lord surely must have helped them to avoid making use of many extracts that would have led them astray.

[24] Of course there is still a great deal of room for improvement, even in a book like Elder U. Smith’s *Daniel and Revelation*. But not so much needs to be done, as might have had to be done if the Lord had not given special help to these various writers.—C. C. Crisler to Guy Dail, January 3, 1911.

<sup>2</sup>Note: Written after a very thorough investigation of sources relating to the subject in several libraries and soliciting the assistance of scholars in Europe and America, and having personally dug into literally mountains of historical records. This task extended over a period of five months, but of course not with his full time given to it during that period.—Arthur L. White.

**64. Page 288**

The statement that Adoniram Judson was sent as a missionary to Burma under the auspices of the American Board of Foreign Missions, does not seem warranted, as I understand the facts. Judson sailed under the auspices of the American Board, but on the voyage changed his views on baptism, and became a representative of the Baptists. His going to Burma was not a direct design on the part of anyone. On account of trouble which he got into in India, he was obliged to leave the country suddenly, and, going to the harbor, sought to find some ship sailing to any other country. Finding one going to Burma, he took passage. It would not seem that he was sent to Burma by anyone, but that he merely went there to get away from India.

**Response:** Criticism accepted, and the two sentences dealing with Carey and Judson were deleted to avoid what seemed to be a technical error and then a one-page Appendix note was prepared reviewing the point of a surge in mission advance. Ellen White had introduced in her 1888 book only a quick survey naming two men illustrating the point made. The Appendix note gave opportunity to elaborate.

1888 book, on pages 287 and 288, read: “The devoted Carey, who in 1793 became the first English missionary to India, kindled anew the flame of missionary effort in England. In America, twenty years later, the zeal of a society of students, among whom was Adoniram Judson, resulted in the formation of the American Board of Foreign Missions, under whose auspices Judson went as a missionary from the United States to Burmah. From this time the work of foreign missions attained an unprecedented growth.”

The 1911 edition reads: “From this time the work of foreign missions attained an unprecedented growth.” (See **Appendix.**)

**65. Page 292**

Of the Pilgrim fathers it is stated: “The freedom which they sacrificed so much to secure for themselves, they were not equally ready to grant to others.”

But on page 441, it says: “The Christian exiles who first fled to America, sought an asylum from royal oppression and priestly intolerance, and they determined to establish a government upon the broad foundation of civil and religious liberty.”

**Response:** Criticism considered, and no change was made on page 292. A word was added on page 441, modifying the statement.

[25] 1888 book, (page 441) read: “The Christian exiles who first fled to America, sought an asylum from royal oppression and priestly intolerance, and they determined to establish a government upon the broad foundation of civil and religious liberty.”

1911 edition reads, with the addition of the word “Among:” “Among the Christian exiles who first fled to America, and sought an asylum from royal oppression and priestly intolerance, were many who determined to establish a government upon the broad foundation of civil and religious liberty.”

## 66. Page 306

It is here again stated that the 1260 years terminated in 1798. And the express “In those days,” found in the text, “In those days, after the tribulation,” is made to refer to the 1260 days. On this basis the statement is made: “Between these two dates [1773-1798] according to the words of Christ, the sun was to be darkened.”

This interpretation involves the necessity of explaining why all the other signs mentioned in [Matthew 24](#) come outside this period, and this is a difficult matter to establish satisfactorily. It seems to me a much more consistent interpretation of this passage to regard the expression “In those days, after that tribulation,” to refer to the indefinite period beginning with the close of the period of tribulation and extending to the time of the second advent, thus taking in all those events mentioned in [Matthew 24:29, 30](#).

**Response:** Criticism considered and the phrase: “following this persecution” was substituted for “Between these two dates.”

1888 book read: “Between these two dates, according to the words of Christ, the sun was to be darkened. On the 19th of May, 1780, this prophecy was fulfilled.”



1911 edition wording reads: “Following this persecution, according to the words of Christ, the sun was to be darkened. On the 19th of May, 1780, this prophecy was fulfilled.”

### 67. Page 304

A quotation is here credited to “Herschel the astronomer.” I have spent some time in running down this quotation, and find no basis upon which it can be stated that these words were uttered by Herschel, the astronomer. On the contrary, there is good ground for inferring that he never did make such an expression. This statement is here quoted as found in a book entitled *Our First Century*, by R. M. Devens, being used as a sort of “text” at the beginning of his article on the “Dark Day,” where it is attributed simply to “Herschel.” No one seems to know who this “Herschel” is, although it has been suggested that it was Dr. Herschel, a converted Jew, who believed in the near coming of Christ, and preached on this subject in this country in 1845.

**Response:** Criticism accepted, and the point of issue was cared for by the deletion of reference to Herschel the astronomer, and the substitution of another quotation describing the dark day. [26]

### 68. Page 325

In connecting the prophecy of [Daniel 9](#) with that of [Daniel 8](#), it is said: “There was only one point in the vision of chapter eight which had been left unexplained, namely, that relating to time.”

It seems to me, however, that there are several points in the vision of [Daniel 8](#) which were not explained by the angel, as recorded in that chapter; namely the daily, the transgression of the desolation, the sanctuary and the time period.

**Response:** Criticism accepted, and wording changed to read, “one important point.”

1888 book read: “There was only one point in the vision of chapter eight which had been left unexplained, namely, that relating to time,—the period of the 2300 days.”

1911 edition: “There was one important point in the vision of chapter eight which had been left unexplained, namely, that relating to time,—the period of the 2300 days.”

### 69. Page 326

Of the decree releasing the Jews from Babylon, it is said: “In its completest form it was issued by Artaxerxes,” et cetera. Does not [Ezra 6:14](#) regard the decrees of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes as really one decree, all of which went to make up the full decree?

**Response** : Negative, no change made.

### 70. Page 327

In dealing with the decree of Artaxerxes, it is stated that it “went into effect in the autumn of B.C. 457.”

On the basis of this interpretation the 483 years are made to extend to the autumn of A.D. 27, when, it is stated on the same page, that: “Christ was baptized by John.”

Further interpreting “the midst of the week” to mean the middle of the week, it is stated, on the same page, that: “In A. D. 31, three and a half years after His baptism, our Lord was crucified.”

The same method of beginning the 2300 days in the autumn of B. C. 457 is used in the argument on pages 398, 400, and 410; and the time of the baptism is definitely fixed as the autumn of A. D. 27, and the crucifixion as the spring of A.D. 31. No proof is given, except the claim that the 2300 years commenced in the autumn of B.C. 457. But the Scripture statement is very plain; it says: “Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks,” et cetera.

It is very difficult for me to see how the expression “From the going forth of the commandment,” can be made to mean from the time that Ezra commenced to build the city, at least six months after

[27] the commandment went forth.

Furthermore, in my investigation of this subject, I find much good argument for placing the baptism in 27, either the spring or the summer of 27; and for placing the crucifixion either in A.D. 29

or 30; but I find no authority for making it as late as 31, except the marginal chronology of the Authorized Version of the Bible, which is Usher's chronology. This chronology has been accepted by our writers to establish the baptism in A.D. 27, but has been rejected so far as it relates to the crucifixion, which is placed by it in A.D. 33.

It seems to me abundantly evident from the Scripture and history that the 2300 days commenced in the spring of B.C. 457; that the baptism was not later than the early part of A.D. 27; that the crucifixion was not later than the early part of A.D. 30; and that the 2300 days must end in the spring of 1844. This interpretation appears to me to be in harmony both with Scripture and history.

And this was the original interpretation of William Miller, as stated on page 328: "Miller and his associates at first believed that the 2300 days would terminate in the spring of 1844 whereas the prophecy points to the autumn of that year."

I am unable to see that the prophecy does point to the autumn of that year. The diagram inserted between pages 328 and 329 places the crucifixion in A.D. 31, the setting up of the papacy in 538, the ending of the 1260 years in 1798, and the ending of the 2300 years in the autumn of 1844.

**Response:** Negative. No change made in the text.

**Observation:** W. C. White in describing Ellen White's work and its relation to the visions declared: "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 clearly and very positively regarding the foundation pillars of our faith."—W. C. White to L. E. Froom, January 8, 1928 (Published in [Selected Messages 3:462](#)).

## 71. Page 334

A quotation given in the first paragraph is credited to Henry Dana Ward. I have looked up the original article from which this quotation is taken, as found in the New York Journal of Commerce,

of November 14, 1833, and find a long article to which no name is appended, and it appears that Henry Dana Ward was not one of the editors of the paper. If he wrote this article, there is no proof of it in the paper itself.

**Response:** Criticism accepted, and text changed to delete the name. The quotation retained.

[28] 1888 book read: “On the day following its appearance, [the falling of the stars] Henry Dana Ward wrote thus of the wonderful phenomenon: ‘No philosopher or scholar has told or recorded an event, I suppose, like that of yesterday morning.’” Et cetera.

1911 edition reads: “In the *New York Journal of Commerce* of November 14, 1833, appeared a long article regarding this wonderful phenomenon, containing this statement: ‘No philosopher or scholar,’” et cetera.

## 72. Page 334

The statement is made that Josiah Litch, in interpreting the prophecy of [Revelation 9](#), specified “not only the year but the very day on which” the Ottoman empire would fall. It appears from one of Litch’s pamphlets which is preserved in the General Conference Library that he did not name the definite day until after the event, but simply claimed that the prophecy would be fulfilled “in August, 1840.”

**Response:** Criticism considered, and a review of sources led to a change in the text.

1888 book read: “In the year 1840, another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy excited widespread interest. Two years before, Josiah Litch, one of the leading ministers preaching the second advent, published an exposition of [Revelation 9](#), predicting the fall of the Ottoman empire, and specifying not only the year but the very day on which this would take place. According to the exposition, which was purely a matter of calculation on the prophetic periods of Scripture, the Turkish government would surrender its independence on the eleventh day of August, 1840. The prediction was widely published, and thousands watched the course of events with eager interest.”

1911 edition changed to read: “In the year 1840, another remarkable fulfillment of prophecy excited wide-spread interest. Two years before, Josiah Litch, one of the leading ministers preaching the second advent, published an exposition of [Revelation 9](#), predicting the fall of the Ottoman empire. According to his calculations, this power was to be overthrown ‘in A. D. 1840, sometime in the month of August;’ and only a few days previous to its accomplishment he wrote: ‘Allowing the first period, 150 years, to have been exactly fulfilled before Deacozes ascended the throne by permission of the Turks, and that the 391 years, fifteen days, commenced at the close of the first period, it will end on the 11th of August, 1840, when the Ottoman power in Constantinople may be expected to be broken. And this, I believe, will be found to be the case.’”

### 73. Page 334

At the bottom of the page, referring to the 11th day of August, 1840, it states: “At the very time specified, Turkey, through her ambassadors, accepted the protection of the allied powers of Europe, and thus placed herself under the control of Christian nations. The event exactly fulfilled the prediction.” [29]

The history of this period shows that on that date the demand of the allied powers was placed in the hands of the Pasha of Egypt, this being some time after these powers had assumed the control of Turkey. The explanation as here given does not harmonize with that which is found in other books which we have published.

**Response:** Negative. No change made in the text.

### 74. Page 340

The general statement that “the papal church withholds the Bible from the people,” seems to need modifying, in view of the fact that the Roman Catholic Church now prints its own translation of the Bible, and a recent pope has recommended the reading of it to the people.

**Response:** Criticism considered an Appendix note giving references to attitudes in different countries was added.

**75. Page 356**

The 1260 years are made to end in 1798.

**Response:** Negative. No change made.

**76. Page 368**

The statement: “The testimony of the prophecies which seemed to point to the coming of Christ in the spring of 1844 took deep hold of the minds of the people,” seems strictly in harmony with the Scripture statement, rather than the claim that the 2300 days extended to the fall of 1844.

**Response:** Negative. No change made.

**77. Page 376**

Barnes’ commentary is spoken of as one “so widely used.” But at the present time all these old commentaries have been discredited and thrown aside by the more liberal theologians.

**Response:** Criticism accepted and text changed by deletion of the word “so.”

1888 book read: “At a meeting of the presbytery of Philadelphia, Mr. Barnes, author of the commentary so widely used,” et cetera.

1911 edition reads: “At a meeting of the presbytery of Philadelphia, Mr. Barnes, author of a commentary widely used.”

**78. Page 380**

The “worldliness, backsliding, and spiritual death which existed in the churches in 1844” is made very prominent; but the condition of the churches at the present time seems much worse than then. In view of these more recent developments, should the matter not be

[30] handled a little differently?

**Response:** Negative. No change in text.

**79. Page 381**

It is stated that the term Babylon “is employed in Scripture to designate the various forms of false or apostate religion.”

This raises the question of whether the Babylon of [Revelation 14](#) is different from the Babylon of [Revelation 17 and 18](#). In this connection read pages 382, 383.

**Response:** Criticism considered, and no change was made on page 381.

On page 383, the wording was changed to harmonize with the many statements in the book regarding Rome and the Catholic Church, and also to comport with the theme of the chapter as a whole. This was done by adding the word “alone.”

1888 book read: “The message of [Revelation 14](#) announcing the fall of Babylon, must apply to religious bodies that were once pure and have become corrupt. Since this message follows the warning of the Judgment, it must be given in the last days, therefore it cannot refer to the Romish Church, for that church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries.”

1911 edition wording reads: “The message of [Revelation 14](#), announcing the fall of Babylon, must apply to religious bodies that were once pure and have become corrupt. Since this message follows the warning of the judgment, it must be given in the last days; therefore it cannot refer to the Roman Church alone, for that church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries.”

### **80. Page 410**

In the edition which I use it states that “the command of Artaxerxes went into effect in the autumn of A.D. 457.” Of course this should be “B.C. 457.” (WWP had the first printing.)

**Response:** Neutral. Correction made in the second printing in the 1890s.

### **81. Pages 412, 413**

The argument on pages 412 and 413, concerning the covenants and the sanctuary seems to follow the lines laid down by Elder Smith in his argument, in which he makes the Old covenant to run from Sinai to Christ, and the worldly sanctuary to stand with it. He claims that the new covenant and the heavenly sanctuary superseded them.

**Response:** Negative. No change made in the text.

**82. Page 413**

[31] An argument is based upon the word “also” in [Hebrews 9:1](#). This is the argument made by Elder Smith in “[Looking unto Jesus](#),” pages 109, 110. But the [Revised Version](#) destroys the force of this argument by rendering the verse thus: “Now even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service,” et cetera.

**Response:** Negative. No change made in the text.

**83. Page 415**

I am unable to find any direct statement in the epistle to the Hebrews which would warrant the claim that: “Paul declares that that pattern was the true sanctuary which is in heaven.” This seems to me to be rather an inference than a direct statement.

**Response:** Affirmative, with a change of wording in the text,—substituting “teaches” for “declares.”

1888 book read: “Moses made the earthly sanctuary after a pattern which was shown him. Paul declares that that pattern was the true sanctuary which is in Heaven.”

1911 edition wording reads: “Paul teaches that that pattern was the true sanctuary which is in Heaven.”

**84. Page 438**

At the bottom of the page it is stated that “the dragon, primarily, represents Satan.” But at the top of page 439 it declares that the papacy “succeeded to the power and seat and authority once possessed by the ancient Roman Empire.” This would seem to suggest, at least, as Elder Smith directly states, that it was the Roman Empire, and not Satan, which gave to the beast “his power, and his seat, and great authority.” A little change in the wording here would make the interpretation more harmonious.

**Response:** Negative. No change made in the text.

**85. Page 439**

The 1260 days are again stated to begin with the establishment of the papacy in 538 and continue to 1798.



**Response:** Negative. No change made in the text.

### **86. Page 440**

Beginning with page 440 there are references at the bottom of some of the pages to various publications as to authority for the quotations. This would seem to indicate that there was no objection to introducing such references, and it would seem proper to do so in the other parts of the book as well.

**Response:** Prescott was only one of a number who called for references in connection with the materials quoted, and from the first in planning for the 1911 edition this became the policy to follow. Looking up these quotations, verifying them, and finding substitutions, with Mrs. White's approval, was the major part of the task in dealing with the text.

### **87. Page 447**

[32]

It states that the papacy's first resort to the power of the state "was to compel the observance of Sunday as 'the Lord's day.'" Very soon after A. D. 538 Pope Vilibius appealed to Narses, the representative of Justinian, to use force in putting down the heretics; but no reference is made in that connection to the observance of Sunday. In connection with the statement made on page 447, it seems that some reference should be made to the first instance of such use of the power of the state.

**Response:** Negative. No change in the text made.

### **88. Page 453**

Referring to the Sabbath and other special truths it says: "These truths, as presented in [Revelation 14](#), in connection with the 'everlasting gospel,' will distinguish the church of Christ at the time of His appearing."

This would suggest that these truths were something separate from the everlasting gospel; but it seems to me that they are the essential part of that gospel.

**Response:** Negative. No change made in the text.

**89. Page 457**

It is here declared that: “The computation of the prophetic periods on which that message was based, placing the close of the 2300 days in the autumn of 1844, stands without impeachment.”

If this should state “in the spring of 1844,” it would seem better to me.

**Response:** Negative. No change in text.

**90. Page 524**

The denial of the divinity of Christ is spoken of as a dangerous error, and it is apparently made synonymous with the denial of the pre-existence of Christ. In the present theological controversy it is the deity of Christ which is denied, while His divinity—using the term in a modern sense—is acknowledged. It would seem necessary to change this language on page 325, in order to make it in harmony with the present situation.

**Response:** Criticism accepted, and text changed by using the word “deity” in place of “divinity.”

1888 book read: “Another dangerous error, is the doctrine that denies the divinity of Christ, claiming that He had no existence before His advent to this world.”

1911 edition reads: “Another dangerous error is the doctrine that denies the deity of Christ, claiming that He had no existence before His advent to this world.”

[33]

**91. Page 549**

In the quotation from Martin Luther, to which no reference is appended, the word “prodigies” is used, where it seems to me the word “progeny” would be more appropriate. At all events it does not seem that the word “prodigies” is the right word.

**Response:** Criticism accepted and the text changed, quoting from an author which could be credited:

1888 book read: “Martin Luther classed it with ‘the numberless prodigies of the Romish dunghill of decretals.’”

1911 edition reads: “Martin Luther classed it with the ‘monstrous fables that form part of the Roman dunghill of decretals.’” Footnote reference given.

### 92. Page 557

At the bottom of the page it is stated that: “Believers in spiritual manifestations try to make it appear that there is nothing miraculous in the circumstances of our Saviour’s life.”

According to present-day teaching, the advanced theologians, who are not classed as Spiritualists, deny the miracles of Christ altogether.

**Response:** Negative. No change made in the text.

### 93. Page 563

At the bottom is the quotation, “Never erred, and never can err,” to which reference is made on page 57 as one of the propositions put forth by Gregory VII. The original proposition as put forth in Latin, when properly translated reads:

“The Roman Church never has erred, nor, according to the testimony of Scripture, will it ever err.”

This is somewhat different from the statement that it “never can err.”

**Response:** Criticism accepted, and text changed to agree with the wording in Mosheim.

1888 book read: “As Rome asserts that she ‘never erred, and never can err,’ how can she renounce the principles which governed her course in past ages?”

1911 edition changed to read: “As Rome asserts that the church ‘never erred; nor will it, according to the Scriptures, ever err,’ how can she renounce the principles which governed her course in past ages?” (Footnote reference given.)

### 94. Page 565

A quotation is made from the oath of allegiance to the pope, which does not agree with the words of this oath as found in the original Latin, and given in *Delineation of Roman Catholicism*, by

Reverend Charles Elliott, D. D., pages 3 and 4. His translation of this sentence runs thus: "Heretics, schismatics, and rebels, to our said Lord, or His foresaid successors, I will, to my power, persecute and oppose."

- [34] **Response:** Criticism considered and wording maintained except the phrase "the pope" is put in curves in the 1911 edition, and reference to source given.

### 95. Pages 567 and 569

Some of the statements on pages 567 (middle of the page) and 569 seem very severe, in view of the caution which has been given us to say nothing harsh about the papacy, as we shall later be called to meet these same statements.

**Response:** Negative. No change made in the text.

### 96. Page 575

The references to "an ecclesiastical council," and also to "a synod held in Rome," seem very indefinite. Should not the time when these meetings were held be stated definitely?

**Response:** Criticism accepted. Footnote reference given.

### 97. Page 57

Reference is made to "an edict from the king of Scotland." But neither the time when the edict was made nor the name of the king is given.

**Response:** Criticism accepted and footnote reference given.

### 97a. Page 577

On the same page reference is made to "a papal council held in the sixteenth century." But the definite date is not given, and there is no reference for the quotation.

**Response:** Criticism accepted, and footnote reference given.

**97b. Page 57**

On the same page reference is made to “an edict... forbidding the observance of the Sabbath.” But it is not stated what edict is referred to.

**Response:** Criticism accepted and footnote reference given.

**98. Page 579**

[35]

The expression “the abolition of the papacy in 1798,” seems likely to be misunderstood, in view of the fact that the papacy still exists.

**Response:** Criticism accepted, and in the interest of precision of wording, the word “downfall” was substituted for “abolition.”

1888 book read: “The infliction of the deadly wound points to the abolition of the papacy in 1798.”

1911 edition wording reads: “The infliction of the deadly wound points to the downfall of the papacy in 1798.”

**99. Page 580**

Reference is made to the claim that the pope: “Can pronounce sentences and judgments in contradiction to the right of nations, to the law of God and man.”

And as authority for this quotation, a reference is made to “The Decretalia.”! If a brief sentence should be quoted, and the authority should be stated to be “the Encyclopedia Britannica,” it would be just as valuable and just as definite a reference as this one, inasmuch as the “Decretalia” cover centuries of time and many volumes.

Furthermore, I have been utterly unable thus far to locate this quotation. It is evidently taken from *The Facts for the Times*, where it is also credited to the “Decretalia.”

**Response:** Criticism accepted; and a substitute paragraph, making the point, and one that could be supported with available references took its place.

1888 book read: “Protestants little know what they are doing when they propose to accept the aid of Rome in the work of Sunday exaltation. While they are bent upon the accomplishment of their

purpose, Rome is aiming to re-establish her power, to recover her lost supremacy. Let history testify of her artful and persistent efforts to insinuate herself into the affairs of nations; and having gained a foothold, to further her own aims, even at the ruin of princes and people. Romanism openly puts forth the claim that the pope ‘can pronounce sentences and judgments in contradiction to the right of nations, to the law of God and man.’”

1911 edition carries a substitute paragraph reading: “History testifies of her artful and persistent efforts to insinuate herself into the affairs of nations; and having gained a foothold, to further her own aims, even at the ruin of princes and people. In the year 1204, Pope Innocent III extracted from Peter II., king of Arragon, the following extraordinary oath: ‘I, Peter, king of Arragonians, profess and promise to be ever faithful and obedient to my lord, Pope Innocent, to his Catholic successors, and the Roman Church, and faithfully to preserve my kingdom in his obedience, defending the Catholic faith, and persecuting heretical pravity.’ This is in harmony with the claims regarding the power of the Roman pontiff, that ‘it is lawful for him to depose emperors,’ and that ‘he can absolve subjects from their allegiance to unrighteous rulers.’” (Footnote reference to quotations are given.) (Substitution of quotations was approved by Ellen G. White.)

### 100. Page 587

Not all the “popular teachers” who substitute Sunday for the Sabbath: “Declare that the law of God is no longer binding.” Some of them attempt to base Sunday-observance Sunday-observance upon the fourth commandment.

**Response:** Negative. No change made in the text.

### 101. Page 681

[36] (General Notes) In Note 3 the argument is made at length concerning the 2300 days, and the conclusion is drawn at the bottom of the page that these days—“must extend to the autumn of 1844 A. D.”

**Response:** None. The General Notes in the 1888 book were not written by Ellen G. White and in place of the note on prophetic dates, filling a little more than a page, a shorter Appendix note was used in the 1911 edition on page 687. It does not carry the chronological reckoning through to 1844, but does open with words affirming the 457 beginning of the 2300 day prophecy.

1888 edition Appendix note: “Page 329. Prophetic Dates.— The historical and chronological facts connected with the prophetic periods of [Daniel 8 and 9](#), including many references pointed unmistakably to the year 457 B. C. as the proper time from which to begin reckoning these periods, have been clearly outlined by many students of prophecy.” See and then follow ten lines of references.

### 102. Page 685

(General Notes) The statement is made in the first paragraph that: “One class who relinquished the view that ‘the door of mercy was shut,’ were led to do this because they discovered that other messages were to be proclaimed,” et cetera.

Is there not danger that this statement may be used to show that the early believers in this message did teach that there was no longer salvation for sinners after 1844?

**Response:** Criticism considered. The 1911 edition carries no note to the reference to the “shut door” explained in the text on pages 429 and 430.

### 103. Page 686

(General Notes) In Note 10, attention is called to the rapid growth of the influence of the papacy in Europe; but since this note was written, quite a change has taken place in this respect, and the papacy has lost much ground, notably in France.

In this same note, on page 687, statements are made on the authority of the *Converted Catholic* concerning former members of the President’s cabinet, which seem out of date at the present time. The same is true on statements on pages 688 and 689.

**Response:** Criticism observed, but as the decision was to eliminate most of the General Notes, none of the material referred to was included in the 1911 edition.

#### 104. Page 690

(General Notes) In Note 13, it is stated that the terms “mark” and “sign” “are used in the Scriptures as synonymous with seal, as in [Romans 4:11](#).”

[37] I am unable to see that “sign” and “seal” are used synonymously in [Romans 4:11](#). It is true that the sign of circumcision is called a seal of righteousness, but that does not make the two words synonymous.

**Response:** Criticism observed. The decision to eliminate the General Notes, removes these from consideration in the 1911 edition.

#### 105. General Observation

Throughout the book in dealing with Roman Catholics the word “Romish” is used very frequently. Roman Catholics regard this term as an insult. It is true that various Protestant writers of good standing use the word Romish; but it is a question whether we ought to follow their example.

**Response:** Criticism accepted and in the E. G. White text of the 1911 edition, other terms were used. No change made in the use of the word “Romish” in quoted materials.

#### 106. General Criticism

As an indication of the number of instances in which quotations are used in this book without any reference, I submit herewith, in a separate sheet, a long list of pages where such quotations are found.

**Response:** The decision reached early to include references to materials quoted, cared for this observation.

W. W. Prescott closing remarks

“Allow me to say in closing, that it has been quite a shock to me to find in this book so many loose and inaccurate statements; and what I have submitted for our consideration will indicate how much of an undertaking it will be to revise this book so that it will



be in harmony with historical facts, and with the interpretation of the prophecy concerning the 1260 days which we are now adopting.

“If I can be of any assistance in locating any of the quotations, I will be willing to do what I can in this matter.

“Yours faithfully,”

Compiler’s Remarks:

More, of course, was involved than dealing with the items suggested above. Work on the 1911 edition of *The Great Controversy* stretched from late January, 1910, to May, 1911. Time references were dealt with, checking the quotations was a large task. C. C. Crisler, at the Elmshaven office followed through on this with the help of D. E. Robinson in the office, and teachers, librarians, and ministers in the East, and in England, and the continent, with a great deal of work done in the excellent libraries in northern California. Most of the quotations used by Ellen White in the 1888 book were found, but some could not be traced, and with Ellen White’s approval, quotations making the same point were substituted. There were refinements beyond the suggestions made by W. W. Prescott which were made in the interests of precision of expression. Appendix notes, devoted mostly to giving references supporting various critical or sensitive areas of the book were developed and added. The Index was enlarged, and new illustrations were introduced. When the book came from the press, Ellen White was well pleased with it, and was often found readings its pages.

[38]

## Chapter 4—C. C. Crisler's Expressions Of Approval And Satisfaction With The 1888 Edition Of The Great Controversy

The historical work connected with the resetting of *The Great Controversy* is nearly finished. We are finding nearly all the quoted matter, and proper references are being given in the margins at the foot of the pages. The quotations are all being verified. When we learn from you what translation of D' Aubigne should be followed in the quotations taken from his *History of the Reformation*, we will act accordingly....

*The Great Controversy* will bear the severest tests. When it was prepared years ago, thorough work was done. This is more and more evident, the more the book is examined.

It would have been better, of course, if the historical references had been given in the first editions: but this is a minor matter that can easily be adjusted at the present time, when new plates are being made. We are copying our historical extracts to file away with our various publishing houses who are publishing *The Great Controversy*, so that if anyone should ever question statements that you have made in *The Great Controversy*, our brethren at these publishing houses will have matter to place before others, demonstrating that the positions you have taken in *The Great Controversy* and the historical statements you have made, are in harmony with the best historical records.

*The Great Controversy* has already had a great sale; and our bookmen who have much to do with pushing its sale into new fields, feel as if the new edition, giving proper credits to the historical extracts that are quoted in the book, will be all the better and stronger, and will meet with the full approval of all concerned. They rejoice to learn that the historical statements you have made in the book are in harmony with the best histories, and can be fully vindicated.—C. C. Crisler to E. G. White, August 1, 1910.

## Chapter 5—A Postscript—An Observation On W. W. Prescott’s Use Of The Writings Of Others

W. W. Prescott in his April 26, 1910, letter to W. C. White in which he offered suggestions regarding *The Great Controversy*, observed in both his first and last suggestions the absence of references, to materials quoted. He says:

There is one general feature of the book to which I will call attention without attempting to refer definitely to each case, as this would require much space, and involve much repetition. Throughout the book there are very many quotations, both from other writers and from verbal conversations which ought to be accurate, and which I think ought to have in nearly all cases suitable references. It is very difficult now, however, to locate these quotations, as oftentimes there is no hint which would enable one to look them up. I shall call attention to some which I have been able to locate, and suggest the need of much work in this direction.

Ten years later, in 1920, the Review and Herald published a 300-page college textbook prepared by W. W. Prescott, titled *The Doctrine of Christ*. Each lesson is supported by materials drawn in from other authors. Notes taken from the Spirit of Prophecy writings are fully credited. Notes from other authors are in quotation marks, but carry no source references. In his “Introductory Note” Prescott explains:

All quotations in the notes taken from the Spirit of Prophecy are duly credited to book and page. The other quotations have been selected from many sources, but as they are not cited as authority, but are used merely for the expression of the thought, no credit has been given.

There are over 500 notes without credit, but in quotation marks. There is no way of identifying the sources or the authors of the materials thus brought into the Prescott book.

*Arthur L. White*

*Ellen G. White Estate*

*Washington, D. C.*

*February 3, 1981*