

**ADVENTISTICA · STUDIES IN ADVENTIST
HISTORY AND THEOLOGY – NEW SERIES**



**THEOLOGISCHE
HOCHSCHULE
FRIEDENSAU**

Contours of European Adventism

**Issues in the History of the
Denomination on the Old Continent**

**STEFAN HÖSCHELE & CHIGEMEZI N. WOGU
EDITORS**

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and Theology – New Series**

Series Editors:

Johannes Hartlapp, Daniel Heinz,
Stefan Höschele, Rolf J. Pöhler

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Volume 2

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J. N. Andrews and the “Success” of the European Mission

Abstract

Vigorous public criticism was voiced by General Conference leaders in the late 1870s about the wisdom and the effectiveness of the particular mission strategies adopted by John Andrews in undertaking his mission to Europe. He was challenged over why he had not followed the tried and tested “American Model” for his mission. Leadership was troubled that results were coming too slowly, that the operation was too expensive and that the mission had not become self-sustaining quickly enough. Andrews vigorously defended the approach he had adopted given the particular socio-cultural and financial situation he faced. Circumstances on the ground and experience led him to conclude that the “American Model” was not an appropriate fit for the situation he confronted. Thus he had not followed it. Ironically, recent interpreters have faulted Andrews on the assumption that he had followed it. This paper will explore the background of the General Conference criticism of Andrews’ mission to Europe, Andrews’ defense, the subsequent “audit” conducted by the General Conference and the results of the audit. It will also explore how the publication of the audit’s positive assessment stands in tension with Ellen White’s last letter to Andrews and how this has resulted in contrasting assessments of John Andrews’ legacy to Adventist mission.

The three-man General Conference Committee which convened in Battle Creek for ten days in mid-1877 was deeply worried about the financial and missionary challenges of the church. Although calls were opening up everywhere across the United States for evangelistic laborers (forty evangelistic tents were to be in operation across seventeen states during the forthcoming summer) the General Conference (GC) was heavily in debt and the nation-wide financial depression was steadily worsening. Church income was seriously shrinking. Every church entity was plunging deeper into debt including the young European Mission begun just two-and-a-half years earlier in late-1874. Europe, in fact, had become an unexpected heavy drain on church resources. The committee had thus taken “an anxious interest” in the Swiss-based Mission. It was not going in the direction they had anticipated nor was it producing the results they expected. Why was it not meeting with success? And why was John Andrews not doing what the GC leaders expected of him? “More than ever” the GC Committee asserted, “*their* influence should be felt in directing the important work there [emphasis mine].” More control was needed from Battle Creek.

The Committee wrote up its assessment and published it on the main editorial page of the *Review* of June 7, 1877. Primarily the work of James White, it was a

highly critical public report on the European mission and on John Andrews' leadership of it.¹ It was not the first time John Andrews had been publicly criticized in the *Review* by his sharp-tongued, acerbic, and authoritarian president, James White.²

This paper will explore the background and impact of James White's criticism of Andrews' mission to Europe and Andrews' energetic defense. It will also consider the subsequent "audit" conducted by the General Conference after James White's death, an audit which exonerated and lauded Andrews and his mission. It will also explore the publication of the conclusions of the audit, the subsequent fallout and its implications for assessing John Andrews' legacy to Adventist mission.

A Highly Critical Report

"We are becoming terribly anxious about the mission in Europe," read the General Conference Committee report.³ It was not a ringing vote of confidence in John Andrews. The Committee appeared to have become worried primarily about the slow progress being made in the Francophone arena and by the fact that Andrews appeared to be too tightly tied to editorial work and routine magazine production processes. Why was he doing this rather than going out running evangelistic tent campaigns? They knew he was very skilled in both. The committee was also disturbed by the high level of investment that the European mission was requiring. Andrews had frequently requested further funding – sometimes desperately because the system of spend first and be reimbursed later frequently broke down. The mission was simply not becoming self-sustaining quickly enough. They had been pained to learn, for example, that Charles and Mary, Andrews' children, had been kept from their school studies in order to help their father. They had heard that the children were doing

- 1 "Our European Missions," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (June 7, 1877): 180.
- 2 John Andrews had frequently been the subject of James White's public and sometimes quite caustic criticism in the *Review*. See for example, "Publications in Other Languages," *The Advent Review and Herald* (November 12, 1872): 173. "Adelia P Van Horn," *The Advent Review and Herald* (November 12, 1872): 173. 176. Also *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (December 27, 1871). This criticism eventually ate away at his self-confidence and proved counter-productive to the cause because it dissuaded Andrews and his senior colleagues from being willing to help reduce White's work overload. Ellen White rebuked James White for these public attacks even as she also sought to encourage Andrews, George Butler and others to take more responsibility. The dysfunctional dynamics that disrupted senior denominational leadership in 1873 and in the years immediately following provide part of the background to the criticism of Andrews. These issues and much of the discussion in this paper draws on the author's forthcoming biography of John Nevins Andrews to be published by Pacific Press.
- 3 Although the report was signed by the committee comprising S. N Haskell, D. M. Canright and James White, the authorial style is clearly that of James White. "Our European Missions," *The Advent Review and Herald* (June 7, 1877): 180.

such work as folding papers. From afar this looked terrible; much worse than it actually was.⁴

According to his Battle Creek critics Andrews should have started his work in a village somewhere, not in a city like Basel. The church in America had begun in villages, "humbly," and at much less cost, they reasoned. Furthermore, Andrews should not have started with a monthly paper. A paper published occasionally, three or four times a year (like James White's early *Present Truth*) would have been better than shutting himself up wholly to printing. He should have been content to leave the translation and printing "imperfectly done," and not worry about grammar, spelling or other literary mistakes, they argued.

Moreover, the French-speaking Canadian Daniel Bourdeau, who had been sent across eighteen months earlier to help him, should not have gone into France to do his evangelistic work. (He had taken himself there against Andrews' advice.) He should have stayed in Switzerland to help Andrews get that work on to a self-sustaining basis more quickly. Bourdeau should now be brought back. The workers in Europe had "a model" to follow, claimed the committee: they should copy the way the church had developed successfully in America. That model had "secured growing strength and numbers and means to the cause at every step." Why did the missionaries to Basel not follow it? "The work in Europe, in order to prosper, must copy after the American model."⁵ Does not the General Conference Committee have a responsibility to prescribe the form the work should take that would "best advance and build up the cause"? The implication was that Andrews should obey! The Committee had seen this responsibility as justification for the sharp public criticisms the report proceeded to offer. The criticisms were the kind of second guessing – the public airing of his "mistakes" in the *Review* – that John Andrews had experienced numerous times before and feared so much, even as he took on the project of the mission to Europe.⁶

4 The folding took only one day a month and was a family enterprise. The lack of schooling was a result of a lack of money rather than the press of work. Andrews received no regular salary from the GC and all travel, educational, health and living expenses of his children he had to meet from his own pocket.

5 Ibid. The tone of the report was biting, reflecting some frustration on the part of the GC President. While speaking of Andrews as "our beloved brother," the report used exaggerated expressions and patronizing comparisons which clearly indicate frustration and a lack of confidence in Andrews' decision making. For example, the report made such arguments as: James White could have started the *Review* in Boston or New York, if he had wanted the magazine to have prestige, but he did not – he went to a small village to start. The report feared that Andrews would too easily place means in the hand of "utter strangers" on the basis of "mere correspondence." The target of this expression was Dr Ribton of Naples, Italy, whom the Battle Creek brethren had not been able to meet in person. The committee apparently overlooked that Andrews had spent a month in Ribton's home and had baptized him in the Naples bay.

6 Andrews received a circular letter form of the report after it had been published in the *Review*.

The “American model” that James White wanted implemented was one that was primarily rural based, focused on small villages and avoiding large urban centers. It involved numerous preachers engaged in local tent evangelism with revival-style, doctrinal decision-making meetings and house-to-house circulation of tracts and magazines by local volunteer workers. These would develop into full-time or part-time colporteurs nurtured by a tract and missionary society. White was thinking of his preaching around the small villages of rural New England and New York and his deliberate avoidance of cities like Boston and New York City.

Andrews’ Reply

Andrews must have winced when he read the GC committee’s report in the *Review* and absorbed its tone, knowing also that the whole church was reading it at the same time. The report carried exaggerated expressions and conveyed a patronizing attitude. He could have been excused perhaps for feeling somewhat abused. He replied promptly to James White, the primary author, with vigor. He acknowledged that the committee’s ideals were valid, such as “the necessity of preaching as well as printing.” That was “true and right,” and Andrews’ strategy included this. In fact he had been doing just that for some time already.⁷ The missionary editor pushed back hard against the criticisms. “There are difficulties in my way of which you can have little idea till you visit Europe,” he replied to his armchair critics who claimed to know better about things from the other side of an ocean. While respectful and careful to convey a submissive tone, he asserted “our situation in Switzerland has been very different from what you suppose. It has been almost wholly different from what I expected to find.” He recounted the rationale for the monthly editions of the magazine and gave the reasons for special concern when it came to insisting on linguistic precision in publication. He needed to guard against “ridiculousness” in print. Did they really want him to “ruin” the paper and their own reputation?⁸ The paper was being read by “well-educated people.” He could move back out to a village if they insisted but if left to his local judgment of the situation, he would need to get as “clear a light as I thought I had with respect to moving to Basel” in the first place, he asserted. He had seen the clear leading and providence of God in this but maybe he had erred on the matter if they said so.

Two months later Andrews was even more assertive in his pushback. In order to be able to publish a paper in Europe using commercial presses, the missionaries were

7 J. N. Andrews to James White, June 19, 1877, Ellen G. White Estate – General Conference (EGWE-GC). He had appointments for preaching up in Tramelan and Le Locle that very weekend. J. N. Andrews to James White, June 22, 1877, EGWE-GC.

8 James White was listed on the masthead as lead editor. Publishing in French with its range of diacritical markings was not so simple as publishing in English – a dimension that James White did not seem to appreciate.

"absolutely obliged to live in a city."⁹ And on the matter of his associate, he was not sure it was such a good idea to bring back Bourdeau from France to Switzerland given that the French-speaking preacher had now made a breakthrough and had won some educated and highly skilled converts. Andrews would recall him if they said so but he begged for "a little time for reflection." He also confessed that he was sorry now that he had related some of the humorous cultural particulars about daily life around him and in his house such as the Swiss custom of infrequent clothes-washing and their family activity of folding papers. Such anecdotes apparently were "not understood." It seems that they only "made me appear in an unfavorable light," and he thus resolved to desist of speaking of such things.¹⁰ The overall thrust of Andrews' reply to his critics was that he was doing absolutely the very best he could, given the less-than-ideal financial circumstances, the unexpected non-availability of national personnel and a very different socio-cultural setting. He was stretching himself thin (literally!) to meet the expectations of his brethren and his expectations of himself.

On the same day that he replied personally to James White, Andrews also wrote a public defense of his work for the *Review*. He did not take issue with the specific criticisms on mission strategy to avoid appearing as if he was taking a polemical or adversarial stance. But he did explain what he was doing and why. He spoke of the situation where if a foreigner tries to speak conversationally in French they are readily pardoned for mistakes but they are "*not pardoned if they write for the public.*"¹¹ He stated that since the paper had been able to establish its pattern and had survived for twelve months he would, with careful planning, be able to spend more time, (several days each week) in preaching. But the reality was that producing *Les Signes des Temps* was not quite the same as producing the Californian *Signs* or the *Review* in Michigan, which could be managed somewhat remotely and allow for field preaching at the same time.¹² "I must beg the friends in America to have all patience possible," he wrote. "You justly look for progress in the work in Europe. Your anxiety that we who are here should accomplish something for the cause of God is great, I know; but if you knew our anxiety, you would be satisfied that we are not in ease in Zion."¹³

Erich Baumgartner in a 2010 study has critiqued Andrews' leadership and his approach to the European mission rather harshly. He sees the example of sacrifice as the only really lasting value in Andrews' mission. I believe Baumgartner has erred in two important ways in making his assessment. First, he seems to have misread the sources which led him to think that Andrews believed "the only way to establish the work in Europe was to copy the model of the church in America." In fact it was quite the opposite. Andrews was criticized by the General Conference because he did *not*

9 "Our Situation and Prospects," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (November 22, 1877): 64.

10 Ibid.

11 "Our Work in Europe," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (July 12, 1877): 20.

12 Andrews knew how that worked since he had managed his short time as editor of the *Review* that way.

13 Ibid.

follow the “American Model.”¹⁴ Second, Baumgartner’s negative assessment of Andrews seems to be based largely on his adoption of Ellen White’s critical letters of Andrews as the primary interpretive lens through which to view Andrews as a person and as a leader. This body of letters has been read by many. Andrews’ responses to the letters also need to be considered as well as other relevant contextual documents. The body of letters from Ellen White arises out of a very complex context of time and place and cannot be read uncritically. A more extensive discussion of these issues can be found in Appendix I.

It is true, as Baumgartner notes, that initially Andrews struggled with culture shock after his arrival in Switzerland and communicated to his new parishioners the idea that he thought American values, customs and culture were superior. This created serious barriers between him and his parishioners in the first eighteen months.¹⁵ The problem was exacerbated by his New England “plain speaking” pastoral style that utilized blunt, judgmental language in addressing pastoral problems. This was

- 14 Erich Baumgartner, “Charisma and Contextualization: Leadership Lessons from the Emerging Adventist Church in Central Europe, 1864–1914,” in *Parochialism, Pluralism, and Contextualization: Challenges to Adventist Mission in Europe (19th–21st Centuries)*, eds. David J. B. Trim and Daniel Heinz (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2010), 67. Daniel Heinz also critiques Andrews for “overemphasizing the publishing work” and prematurely adopting “the American model of literature evangelism.” This critique could be more nuanced in light of a more careful study of the economic circumstances facing Andrews on his arrival in Switzerland and given Andrews’ limitations as an expatriate. Both Matteson and Conradi were returning nationals for whom culture and language were not the same barriers as they were to Andrews. Conradi found much of his success in working with German immigrant communities in different countries which again minimized the cultural barriers to an American religion. This strategy was not available to Andrews. See Daniel Heinz, “The Development of Seventh-day Adventist Missionary Dynamic in Europe: Assessing the Contributions of Michael B. Czechowski, John N. Andrews, and Ludwig R. Conradi,” *ibid*, 55.
- 15 Andrews acknowledged that he wanted to change things and to do so quickly. “I tried prudently, but faithfully to change or correct various things,” he reported, “but found it was like ploughing upon a rock. I grieved those that I tried to correct, but produced no change.” Faced with this resistance Andrews unwittingly stepped even deeper into the quagmire of cross-cultural misunderstanding. He construed the resistance as evidence of “backsliding” and spiritual declension. He thought he understood their situation and that to a large extent it was “the natural result of the unfortunate things they have had to encounter” as the fallout from Czechowski’s misdeeds among them. He saw them as being in “a very low state as to the spirit of the work,” with “no burden upon their souls.” But it was still what in America was called “backsliding,” and this condition he knew called for a particular kind of medicine. Andrews thus drew upon the tried and true resources of his New England heritage of “plain speaking.” He found to his loss, however, that in this place “the work of reproof was quite unknown, and wholly misunderstood.” In fact it gave offense. Writing to James and Ellen White sometime later and looking back on his experience he observed, Europeans were “little acquainted with reproofs or anything of the kind.” Rather, “what I said by way of reproving faults was taken as though prompted by ill will and fault finding on my part.” J. N. Andrews to James White and Ellen G. White June 8, 187[5], EGWE-GC. This letter has been filed as June 8, 1878 but several lines of internal evidence suggest that it should be dated 1875.

not Andrews' natural pastoral style but one that he had felt obliged to adopt under the tutelage of James and Ellen White. He had often been critiqued by both for not taking a more confrontational "plain speech" approach to parishioners and fellow workers. Andrews quickly found that this approach did not work in Europe. It was not culturally appropriate. But he had largely worked through that problem and by mid-1877 (the time of James White's critical report) he was becoming much more culturally adapted to Europe.¹⁶ The focus Andrews gave to the work of the magazine as the keystone of his evangelistic strategy was not because he thought it was the only way or that he must do it because that was how it was done in America. The decision to focus on publishing was taken because of the strong cultural barriers to public tent or hall evangelism, the non-availability of national helpers and an awareness of his own limitations with the spoken language. He was an expatriate with limited language skill, not a fluent returning national like John Matteson or Ludwig Conradi. After close consultation with his Swiss parishioners and with their strong advice, an evangelistic magazine seemed the best way forward given the specific circumstances he found himself in.

Changed Circumstances Force Adjustments to Andrews' Mission Strategy

Andrews' initial strategic approach to his mission in Europe had called for reliance on national helpers who would give their full time to working with him, serving as evangelistic associates and as translators. Andrews was apparently counting on the availability of the senior elder of the group of Swiss churches, Albert Vuilleumier, and his younger relative Adémar Vuilleumier, together with the Swiss-German, Jakob Erzberger, to engage with him in local evangelistic preaching. (Erzberger had returned to Switzerland from Battle Creek twelve months previously. Adémar returned with Andrews in October 1874 after two years of ministerial and language training at Battle Creek.) To Andrew's great dismay, for several reasons this plan quickly fell apart. As he explained confidentially to members of the General Conference Committee eight or nine months after his arrival in Neuchatel, he had arrived in Switzerland too late to prevent the leading Swiss Vuilleumier family from entering with other church members into a major industrial initiative to re-establish and/or expand their watchmaking business. They had invested more than 50,000 Francs in

16 If Andrews had been able to benefit from attending a mission institute prior to his departure from America, he perhaps would have avoided some of the hazards of cross-cultural communication and culture shock that confront new missionaries. Such sensitizing and training considered essential for missionaries today, however, were still 100 years in the future. The university in Berrien Springs, Michigan, that now honors Andrews' memory specializes in such training. But for Andrews in 1874 it was inevitable that this transplanted New Englander would be ensnared by at least some of the pitfalls new missionaries encounter when they leave their own culture to share the gospel in a new one. Andrews would have to learn the hard way – and he did.

a large three-story, stand-alone, stone house and stable with an attached vineyard of two acres. With an additional borrowed 10,000 Francs they planned to turn the cluster of buildings into a Watchmaking factory and winery. They had no more than 30% of the needed capital from their own funds which they used for the deposit. They had then borrowed funds from other church members to make up the difference for the purchase. This project completely tied up church members' assets – “nearly all the money in the hands of our brethren,” – funds that Andrews had hoped to leverage for local mission programs, salaries, publishing and other evangelistic enterprises. The large industrial investment totally absorbed the energy and the time of Albert Vuilleumier and members of his extended family and created acute financial stress for everyone around the Sabbath-keeping community as the families struggled to make the new business venture a success. Commitment to church growth and outreach though aspirational was simply not forthcoming.

Andrews was sure that Albert Vuilleumier should have been devoting himself to ministry, not running a watch factory and overseeing a small winery. Furthermore, Andrews felt familiar enough with the implications of the extended severe economic depression that had begun in 1873 (what became known as the long depression) and the changing technology in watchmaking taking place in America, to know that the new enterprise could not be made to work successfully. He told them that in his opinion their business decision was not a good one. He foresaw bankruptcy at the end of the road.¹⁷ Because agreements had been entered into but final papers had not been signed, Andrews tried to intervene. “I tried to get them out of it on the ground that they could not raise the money. But I could not move them,” he later recounted.¹⁸ He had arrived in Switzerland a few months too late. And the cost was great.¹⁹ Five years later, as predicted by Andrews, the watchmaking enterprise ended in bankruptcy. The result, reported Andrews, was that “the brother whose [ministerial] gift would have been so valuable to me as a helper in the cause of God has lost five years' time and a large sum of money.”²⁰

Andrews' attempt to intervene in the Vuilleumier family's business plans so soon after his arrival in their midst and his efforts to persuade the Swiss Sabbath-keepers to abandon their watchmaking business decision, created huge tensions and misunderstandings. These actions seriously crippled his influence with them for a

17 J. N. Andrews to the General “Conference Committee, [June] 1875, EGWE-GC. He had become familiar with the industry in America through selling substantial quantities of watches on behalf of the Swiss believers. See *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (January 3, 1871): 24; “The Swiss Watches,” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (Jan 14, 1873): 40.

18 J. N. Andrews in an incomplete letter written to an anticipated Committee of the *Review*, December 29, 1879, EGWE-GC. This letter relates essentially the same story Andrews tells in his 1875 report but in an abbreviated form.

19 An argument can be made that if Andrews had arrived earlier in Switzerland the business venture could have been averted. Andrews' delay in leaving for Switzerland was occasioned by procrastination on the part of James and Ellen White and fall-out over the conflict that the unwell James perceived between himself and Andrews.

20 Ibid.

long period afterwards.²¹ Whether a different outcome would have been achieved if Andrews had taken time to establish a trusting and respected pastoral relationship with them before intervening is impossible to know. But it seems reasonable to assume that there may have been a greater chance that the fateful decision could have been successfully averted if he had arrived on the scene in Switzerland earlier.²²

Another delicate personnel crisis confronted the newly arrived missionary in the person of Jakob Erzberger. The Swiss-German Erzberger, who had for a time been mentored by Andrews at his home in Rochester, N. Y. in 1873 and who had then been ordained at a camp meeting in Massachusetts, had undertaken his visit to America sponsored by the Swiss Sabbath-keepers. According to Andrews they "had expended considerable money" on his education. After his study he had come back to labor among them and engage in evangelism. Andrews discovered, much to his chagrin, that the young preacher had fallen out with the Swiss Sabbath-keepers, had become discouraged, left ministry and had moved 126 kilometers east to Basel on the German border. Andrews is discreet about the problem Erzberger had fallen into but his case was "very unfortunate and very difficult to help." As Andrews saw it, not only was the confidence of the brethren in him destroyed, but he had their ill will, and they felt very decided to let him entirely alone." Erzberger was as unyielding as the watchmakers, leading Andrews to observe that "the firmness of Europeans is not controlled by reason as often as I wish it was; so it is in many cases of nothing but obstinacy."²³ The new missionary reeled from his culture shock.

For the next "many weeks" Andrews worked intensively with Erzberger, visiting Basel repeatedly in an effort to reclaim him for ministry. He had "wholly despaired

21 It is possible that the offense Andrews gave by his unsuccessful intervention was still a matter of spiritual concern that was resolved only in the last months of Andrews' life. "There is reason to hope," he wrote just a few months before his premature death in 1883, that his old Swiss friends would "fully put away the old difficulties. This takes an immense load off from my heart." "Omens for Good," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (January 2, 1878): 9. The matter also concerned financial difficulties related to the bankruptcy of the Vuilleumier watchmaking business. Andrews had lent the family money and when the business collapsed it proved awkward for Andrews. The collapse of the business also involved lawsuits among the church members and between family members causing a great deal of stress and ill-feeling. See Jean Vuilleumier *Diary* (JVD), January 4, 6, February 22, 29, March 11, 24, June 17, 18, 1880 and April 28, 1883, Archives Historiques de l'Adventisme Francophone, Campus Adventiste du Salève, Collonges-sous-Salève, France (AHLF). The problem of the offense given also related to the free use of table wine among the Swiss families which Andrews had initially tried to address in a heavy-handed way and which custom continued to prevail among them. See JVD, October, 23, 1883, AHLF.

22 It is a serious question as to whether the delay in sending Andrews to Europe helped create the problem he faced when he arrived there. The procrastination in sending him was occasioned by reticence on the part of the seriously ill James White who saw Andrews as a threat to his leadership. The "leadership" crisis of 1873 generated out of the difficulties of White's autocratic, dogmatic, and easily offended temperament caused great tension among his colleagues in the leadership team and damaged the reputation of Andrews.

23 Ibid.

of success” but then eventually at the turn of 1875 “there came a great break.” Erzberger “took such action as the Spirit of God signally witnessed to and such as gave him the confidence and the affections of every one,” back in the hills above Lake Neuchatel. Andrews, who had been greatly discouraged, felt that this was “a first special token” of God’s mercy, and a very great mercy it was.”²⁴ The turnaround came just in time, for developments in Germany were demanding attention and Andrews would very soon need a good German-speaking pastor-evangelist. Furthermore, Andrews desperately needed some indication of God’s blessing and signs of success to counter the frustration and deep discouragements he was experiencing in Neuchatel.

Problematic Financial Policies for Mission

The watchmaking enterprise severely limited the ability of other Swiss church members to support the general mission work thus obliging Andrews repeatedly to go cap-in-hand to the General Conference for funding, a “situation” that “has been in the highest degree painful to me,” he noted. Andrews’ lack of ability to develop an adequately self-supported mission seriously dented his credibility with Battle Creek leaders, ready as ever to second-guess his decision making. And there was a very high personal cost to Andrews for, rightly or wrongly, it led him to skimp on his own expenses in food and lodging in order to make ends meet, with dire consequences to his health. With his immunity compromised, a severe bout of pneumonia set upon Andrews on Sabbath morning, January 13, 1877, that almost took his life. Though his health reform principles inclined him to refuse to take any medicine, he consented to call “one of the best physicians in the city.” The doctor attended him seven times during the crisis. At his lowest point during an extended spasm of coughing that he could not control, he feared that he would choke to death. During several days of delirium, days that were “blank in my memory,” he reported, he was not at all aware that Albert Vuilleumier had come from Neuchatel to pray for him.

After two weeks Andrews began to recover but he was not back into full harness for another six weeks with magazine copy way behind schedule. It took many weeks after that to get the magazine fully back on track.²⁵ The episode frightened his colleagues in Battle Creek and it had frightened Andrews.

Looking around for something to blame for in the episode, other than the fact that contagion permeated the community, Andrews identified what he supposed might be the cause. He was receiving no regular salary from the General Conference and given the financial crisis, the Swiss churches were not able to sustain him. He was obliged to sustain himself as well as the Bourdeau family. He acknowledged that he had been cutting corners on food intake for himself and his family although it was

24 J. N. Andrews to the General Conference Committee, [June] 1875, EGWE-GC.

25 J. N. Andrews to James White, June 22, 1877, EGWE-GC. When the business went bankrupt, apparently the law-suits between church members and family members generated much suspicion, divided families and considerable ill-feeling. See JVD, April 28, 1883, AHLF.

out of necessity, he noted. He could see no other way to make ends meet. "I have felt constrained to use great economy in the matter of our food," he explained to James White later in what he hoped would be a strictly confidential letter. The family had been trying to live on a two-meal a day, vegetarian, "health reform plan" and that was difficult in Europe even when money was available. When money dried up it was still more difficult.

We have lived upon baker's [white] bread, graham pudding, potatoes and occasionally a cabbage. We have bought milk and butter sufficient for the cooking. We have used almost no fruit at all. We bought a few cherries and a very few grapes; and perhaps have laid out one dollar and a half in apples.²⁶

The apples were tasteless and purchasing more fruit was simply beyond their means. Andrews pled with White not to censure him "sharply" for he had "confessed" to God and family and now to White, recognizing he had not acted wisely. But when faced with the difficult choice of paying for house rent, paper for the magazine, tracts, fuel, essential help for the Bourdeau family and food for himself when the money did not go far enough and when he could not borrow from anyone, the budget for the food was the easiest to trim back on – only temporarily of course. More revealingly, Andrews confessed that he himself was frightened. "I have feared that the brethren in America would think that our mission would cost more than it came to." He was in a no-win situation.

In the future, he confessed to White, he would not trim the food budget. He would try and employ Louis Aufranc, a recent Swiss convert, for a greater share of his time to reduce the pressure on himself. But there was one solution that he thought only James White could solve for him. Would the General Conference grant him a set salary! As things were in Switzerland, he had "no way of earning money," by which he meant the extra moonlighting income by which James White was able to double or triple his own ministerial salary. When money was sent from America for "the publication of the paper," he explained, he regarded it as "very sacred money." Taking it to use for his personal expenses made him feel "as David did in eating the shewbread" – allowed only in extreme necessity. He thus felt guilty when from time to time he had had been forced to use money intended for publishing work on his own expenses. He argued that this policy placed him "in a false position and one that is very painful." He did not want to have to decide himself what proportion of the

26 Some details of his account of their circumstances come from a follow-up letter he dictated two days later. Andrews acknowledged that their cook was "about the poorest cook that I ever had knowledge of." She was apparently an eighteen-year old orphan girl who had lost her job when she became a Sabbath-keeper and Andrews had offered to provide accommodation for her if she would do the housekeeping and cooking. That had not worked out successfully. Ironically, at this same time Andrews had been asked to write out a testimonial piece on Health Reform for the *Health Reformer* journal that White was trying to rejuvenate. J. N. Andrews to James White, February 8, 1876, EGWE-GC.

funds was personal for food, fuel and clothes etc., and what proportion was for publishing. Would it not be much better for the General Conference to designate what was his “pay” – he did not want a large sum. Just give him whatever was thought proper and then allow him “to have one quarter of a year’s pay in advance.” Remittances and the mail system thus far had been too unreliable for the system of “spend and claim” to work properly. If this could be done it would “place him on his feet,” meaning it would enable him to plan, and he would be free from “embarrassment.” He did not want to suggest that he was blaming anyone else for his predicament and accepted that the “fault” was perhaps his own sensitivity about these things, but it was an awareness of the super-high expectations placed upon him by the whole church that further heightened his anxiety. Once he had commenced the paper, he explained, “my anxiety to make it worthy of so sacred a cause, has been inexpressible.”²⁷ He pled that “prompt action” be taken on his request.

The financial policy of spend first and be reimbursed later by James White necessitated reliance on his personal assets. But the initial operating fund drawn from his personal capital shrank and sometimes there were long delays in being reimbursed. It was a perilous situation. Furthermore, James White held tight control in the area of finance and tended to meticulously monitor all expenses and Church monies. This was both a function of his own business temperament and also because the flow of church funding was still so heavily dependent on his own personal fundraising ability and his entrepreneurial spirit. The lack of a formal policy framework for delegating the processing of expense claims at the General Conference to some other treasury official points to the micro-management style of White’s leadership at work and the demeaning of those who had to report to him. The church was still a long way from working with annual budgets (such were not adopted until 1895).

For whatever reason, the brethren in Battle Creek decided that they could not comply with Andrews’ suggested revised compensation arrangements. White’s letter of reply on the matter is not extant. Perhaps the leaders feared losing control of expenses or perhaps they saw a danger in creating a sense of dependency of the Swiss brethren on the General Conference. At any rate, instead of granting Andrews’ request for a more regular salary plan, they forwarded a money order to cover the expenses Andrews had already incurred. With it they sent additional privately donated monies for Andrews’ personal expenses – somewhat to his embarrassment perhaps because he now felt ashamed of needing such help. Three months later, Andrews found himself backing up and explaining that he had “no disposition to find fault with the existing arrangement.” He would therefore live with “the matter as it is,” without a regular salary and he would continue to give a good account of the means used.²⁸

27 Ibid.

28 J. N. Andrews to James White, May 26, 1877, EGWE-GC.

Socio-cultural and Language Barriers

As Pietro Copiz has pointed out, in the denomination over time, John Andrews' vaunted linguistic ability developed legendary and mythic qualities.²⁹ The reality was very much less. Andrews' unexpected difficulty in mastering spoken French actually proved to be an major barrier to implementing his plan for evangelism given the non-availability of local workers. He found the task of learning a foreign language as an adult much more challenging than he had imagined. He did not become fluent enough to preach in French for two or three years after arrival and then was able to do so only with an understanding congregation. He did not feel really comfortable speaking to a sophisticated public audience of native speakers even after that. His expatriate status as an American using broken and heavily accented French set him at a distinct disadvantage. He was, however, able to develop a reasonably high level of skill in written French, and his translation and copy-editing prowess became an important strength. In proof-reading skill he exceeded even local language specialists like Louis Aufranc.

The cultural barriers to public evangelism and the intense local hostilities to such meetings, generated by the unique church-state relationships in Europe that Andrews had not encountered before in America eventually persuaded him of the limited value of such a confrontational approach to evangelism in Europe. In discussion with his Swiss advisors he became persuaded that given their over-committed circumstances, his limited skills and his abilities, a regular monthly magazine would be the best way of reaching across the barriers if it could be supplemented by personal contact through visitation and follow-up meetings. It would enable him to reach across local town cultural barriers and across national barriers to reach French speaking people groups elsewhere.

Hedging the Criticism

James White learned from the pushback that his harsh public criticism had not only injured the feelings of his missionary colleagues but had also damaged the confidence of church members in their work. It seems that word had gotten around that the General Conference was to send an auditor to Europe to check on the wayward missionaries. In an editorial White tried to undo some of the damage and to assure Andrews, and his fellows, of the church's support. "It is right, that they should feel that they have the moral support of their American brethren," he editorialized. "Full and frank expression of our confidence and love has been made and still should be. We know these men." He added, "Our assurances of the confidence of the whole American army of brethren can hardly be stronger than they have been." On the other hand he noted, "these dear brethren should rest in Christ, and in the confidence of

29 Pietro Copiz, "The Linguist," in *J. N. Andrews: The Man and the Mission*, ed. Harry Leonard (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1984), 165.

their brethren. They feel deeply and must guard against over-sensitiveness. And in order to succeed the missionaries must have confidence in their brethren.” In reality, the question really was whether the brethren would have confidence in Andrews. White seems to have read correctly the sense of annoyance, resistance and even righteous indignation in Andrews’ vigorous response to the General Conference Committee’s doubts and “great concern.”

Did White also sense a glimmer of disdain expressed for the armchair critics? Coping with such open criticism as had been offered in the *Review* was difficult. Accepting benignly, the second-guessing of decisions from the other side of the ocean and a completely different world, was easier said than done.³⁰ Andrews had found Europe to be very different. Could there not be a different way for the GC President to offer advice? Andrews was sure that White would think differently if only he could experience the culture and the frustration for himself. This broadening out into world-wide mission clearly presented a steep learning curve for the church and for its leaders. But how to be able to see for themselves was a problem. What was needed was an audit.

Auditing Mission: William Ings (1878) and Stephen Haskell (1882)

The first attempt at an audit of the European Mission was made by sending out more helpers. John Andrews had found it necessary to adjust to the fact that James White and his committee at the General Conference did not trust his judgement in mission affairs or his strategy for mission when William Ings and his wife arrived in Basel from Battle Creek in early 1878. Ings was an accounting clerk from the Battle Creek publishing house. Andrews told twenty-three year old Willie White who at the time was deputizing for his ill and dysfunctional father, that though the Ings’ visit had not been officially designated as an audit, nevertheless, Andrews clearly understood that an audit was a hidden agenda of the new arrivals. Ings’ “confidential” correspondence with W. C. White during his stay in Basel plainly confirms Andrews’ suspicion. But to Andrews’ pleasant surprise, while Ings made some observations about efficiency to W. C. White, he affirmed, in essence, that he probably would not have done anything differently to what Andrews had done. His report was largely favorable. As a monolingual expat, he could not himself add anything to Andrews’ mission team beyond what the missionary was already doing or trying to do although Ings did benefit from a wife who could speak German. Thus Ings went on to England, his homeland, to try his literature evangelism approach there. He found the same cultural barriers there and the same lack of easy numerous baptisms that Andrews had encountered. In fact he found it worse. This first unofficial audit seemed to allay some fears.

Eighteen months later during the darkest days of the “financial hard times” in December, 1879, church leadership in Battle Creek again looked for ways to cut costs

30 “Our European Missionaries,” 68.

and find ways of achieving more rapid growth rates for its investment in mission and they considered sending out another audit team.³¹ Both James and Ellen at this time, almost in a state of panic over the escalating debt, called for contraction in mission. They proposed shuttering the work in Europe and removing the headquarters to England. Ellen White believed that the message would find a more ready response there given the English language medium and the more intellectual tradition. How could the inherent intellectual power of the Adventist message be resisted, was the idea.³² Her expectation proved to be mistaken. In the meantime the proposed closure hurt Andrews badly. He prepared extensive documentation defending the location, the francophone work and his magazine and provided an in-depth justification of all of his expenses and his decision-making.³³

As it turned out, the financial stresses, institutional mismanagement in California in the publishing work on the part of Edson White, and the ill-health of James White resulted in the postponement of the proposed audit. Andrews would later recall the devastating emotional impact this proposal to close down his work had on him in lengthy discussions that Jean Vuilleumier recorded in his diary in 1883. The twenty-year old Jean could not record the incident Andrews related without shedding tears of his own.³⁴

The death of James White in July 1881 introduced a time of major adjustment and transition in the church. At the General Conference session in October that year action was again taken to undertake an audit of the European mission. George Butler, now the new GC President, explained the decision in the *Review*, putting a glossy spin on the announcement. The need had been contemplated for several years, he said, for "leading brethren" at the General Conference to "become acquainted with the state of things in Europe in order to cooperate to the best advantage" with the missionaries there.³⁵ By mid-1882 such a visit could be postponed no longer. Haskell would be the auditor and would travel in company with a Brother J. W. Gardner and his wife from California. Gardner had previously travelled extensively on the

31 The "financial hard times" occurred during the long and deep economic recession from 1873 to 1881.

32 Ellen G. White to W. C. White and Mary White, February 11, 1879, EGWE-GC.

33 "Financial Report of the European Mission," October 20, 1879. General Conference Archives, Silver Spring MD (GCAr). J. N. Andrews to S. N. Haskell, December 23, 1879; J. N. Andrews to W. C. White, December 27, 1879, EGWE-GC. J. N. Andrews, Untitled Manuscript, December 29, 1879. Andrews University Center for Adventist Research, Berrien Springs, MI (AUCAR).

34 Vuilleumier spoke of the prospect as giving Andrews "a painful blow, a deadly blow. He looked back, replayed all the sacrifices he had made, thought of the death of his girl, about his work, his sleepless times, about his worries to get the work done deciphering the European terrain; ... the unspeakable anxieties, the agonizing prayers ... When I listened to him telling me this my heart was painfully torn and more than once tears shot from my eyes." JVD, May 6, 1883, AHLF.

35 "Eld. Haskell's Trip to Europe," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (May 16, 1882): 313.

Continent and “was familiar with the customs and languages of Central and Northern Europe.” Butler argued that Gardener’s assistance to Haskell would make the inspection tour much more profitable. At some point during the European tour an on-location European Council would gather all the overseas workers and local Swiss lay leaders to exchange experiences, share ideas and strategize together concerning the best means of outreach. The party left New York on May 13 bound for the UK.

Haskell and his travelling companions were away from the United States journeying through seven different countries of Europe for a total of five and a half months. Beginning in England, where they spent a week with John Loughborough and his small team, they journeyed to France, on to Switzerland, north to Norway and Sweden, back to Holland and Germany for the briefest of their numerous visits, down to Italy and then back again to Switzerland, across to England and then home by November 3. Haskell did not let the grass grow under his feet. He was a quick study and a person of action. After his first week he was informing *Review* readers that it had become quite apparent to him “that the publishing work is the right arm of our strength.” He had seen already that “more can be accomplished by scattering reading matter, and filling such openings as the providence of God may indicate from time to time than by making such efforts as are put forth in America.”³⁶ And this assessment was made before his visit to Basel and his meeting with Andrews and the Swiss brethren! Along the way he took time to study people, the way they lived, and their interests. He made an effort to absorb the local culture.

Haskell made Basel the hub of his European travels, returning three times to the city for varying lengths of time. On his first visit he found Andrews feeble but stable. Andrews was frustrated because he was not strong enough even to accompany Haskell on his local travels among the believers in Switzerland, but this was probably for the best anyway in that it enabled Haskell to gain a perspective of his own. He travelled in Switzerland in the company of James Erzberger, spent a weekend at Adémar Vuilleumier’s home in Chaux-de-Fonds and stayed with the believers in Tramelan after taking a meeting that went until almost midnight. Then he spent a month visiting Scandinavia, Germany and Italy checking out both Torre Pellice and the Naples church that Dr. Ribton had established after his baptism by Andrews three years previously. Haskell returned to Switzerland for the Swiss annual conference in early September at Tramelan. He convened the first European-wide Council in Basel shortly afterwards on the weekend of September 15–17, 1882.

Haskell’s report was very positive. One of the earliest recommendations that Haskell urged on his brethren back in Battle Creek was the need for a larger and more convenient home for the extended Andrews family. It was essential to have a place large enough to accommodate the people, the printing rooms and to have a hall for meetings, he argued. Securing a location away from the tramlines that created so much distracting noise and away from markets and stables to a place where the air was less fetid was also a necessity even though it might cost considerably more. Before

36 “The Work in England,” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (June 27, 1882): 409.

he left Switzerland he had negotiated just such a relocation, obtaining a property with echoes of Ravenswood in Southampton. Andrews was grateful.³⁷

As Haskell progressed through Europe and reported his findings to George Butler and to the *Review*, his observations tended to confirm the oft-repeated story Andrews had been telling his armchair critics for the previous six years. As Andrews read the reports he must have felt vindicated concerning most of the decisions he had felt obliged to make considering the circumstances he had found himself in. In an important sense, Haskell found himself defending Andrews and vindicating his course before his critics although only once did he do so in a direct and personal way. "The results already accomplished through the efforts of Eld. Andrews are in some respects truly marvelous," Haskell wrote in mid-July.³⁸ He affirmed the need for localization. Repeatedly he asserted that for Europe, publishing a regularly-issued periodical rather than tracts was a much more effective mission strategy. "It is evident that more can be accomplished in Europe by publications than by the living preacher," although, of course, they could not alone suffice, he asserted.³⁹ Furthermore, the papers needed to be published locally in order to reflect local issues and idioms. It was "impossible for a paper published in America to fully meet the wants of the European people," or even if it was published in England, he pointed out. Furthermore, Haskell acknowledged that he had "never realized the magnitude of the work, and how much can be accomplished with little expense."⁴⁰ The work in Europe should be enlarged, not retrenched. This was a direct riposte to the late James White.⁴¹

Haskell noted the problematic limitations that characterized the present mission outreach. In the past two years Andrews' health and his lack of editorial resources had prevented him both from visiting his local churches adequately and from following up interested readers with public and personal labor. Andrews knew this. Haskell noted that the preacher-editor had been "confined to his bed more than half of the time for a long period." *Les Signes* had done "a noble work," he reported. It had certainly gained in stature and in circulation. It was now being cited in numerous other religious journals and the Swiss Sabbath keepers had determined to increase its circulation by investing in paid advertisements for the journal in prominent daily newspapers.⁴² Erzberger had been successful in the field among German speakers but

37 "Bro. Haskell's Visit to Europe," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (November 14, 1882): 712, 713. The new house was a large rented property in a location that "gave an abundance of sunlight and good air," and faced "no apparent danger that these will ever be shut out by other buildings." It would also make a good purchase for the future.

38 "What is Wanted in Europe," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (July 18, 1882): 456.

39 Ibid. "First give the paper then tracts, pamphlets and books," he explained, had been the experience of "every live Tract Society." Haskell's investigation apparently looked beyond just the Adventist experience and embraced the study of other missionary organizations.

40 Ibid.

41 "From Europe," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (August 1, 1882): 488.

42 "The Conferences at Tramelan and Bale," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (October 10, 1882): 632.

there had been weakness in the francophone work.⁴³ Haskell had not been able to travel in France visiting churches or any of the many *Les Signes* readers scattered across 45 of the 86 departments into which France was divided administratively. But Haskell did read some of the large number of letters from the numerous scattered Sabbath keepers that Andrews kept on file. In Italy in August, Haskell and Gardner engaged in day-long Bible studies with villagers in Torre Pellice. This had necessitated double translation across three languages back and forth. "I never saw people try harder to understand," he told Butler as his own understanding of the difficulties of language barriers, national histories and cultural differences appreciably deepened.⁴⁴ In both Torre Pellice and in Naples Haskell and Gardner were surprised to find more Sabbath keepers and Sabbath keeping groups among readers of *Les Signes* than even Andrews had learned of.⁴⁵

What would have been of deep and genuine encouragement to Andrews was the message that Haskell took back to Battle Creek with him after the Swiss Conference and the European Council. Andrews had been well enough to attend both of these meetings although his speaking had needed to be restricted. Haskell had learned during his tour that things were indeed different in Europe and that the "American Model" would not work without major adaptation. Strategies for evangelism had to be adapted and localized to suit the European context. "It is very different here in the Old World from what it is in America."⁴⁶ A. A. Johns, an American pastor working in England and a participant at the Council expressed it clearly when he said that there were "peculiar circumstances by which our missionaries are surrounded," and "many difficulties that they have to surmount, which are known only to those who have labored in a foreign land."⁴⁷ In January, 1883 Haskell reiterated the theme again. "But few in America have been able to realize the difficulties under which those labor who go to Europe from this country," he noted for *Review* readers.⁴⁸ Andrews felt at last that they were being understood. Arguing as they had done that their situation could not be fully understood by those who sat in judgment in offices in Battle Creek was not simply a weak excuse. Circumstances on the ground were genuinely different. Andrews, Loughborough and Matteson were helping the Adventist church learn how to do mission and how to benefit from the trial and error process,

43 These details are based on Haskell's reports found in, "From Europe," 448 and "The European Mission," *The Advent Review and Herald* (August 29, 1882): 552.

44 S. N. Haskell to G. I. Butler, August 15, 1882 cited in "Notes from Italy," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (September 10, 1882): 601.

45 "Bro. Haskell's Visit to Europe," 713.

46 "The Work in England," 409.

47 "General Meeting at Bale, Switzerland," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (October 17, 1882): 648.

48 "Omens for Good," 9. In this report Haskell explained, tongue-in-cheek, that Andrews' former accommodation was "comparatively comfortable," if "many things were different." He then went on to list the deafening noise from the tram lines, the fertilizer smells from the neighbor's yard, the fact that the house was overcrowded and that it had no room for public meetings.

and church leaders were now, finally, also learning how to encourage them. The opportunities provided by the European Council provided a much needed larger perspective.

Vindication

Six months after Haskell's return to the US his favorable audit assessment of Andrews work was formalized into a major report in a special supplement to the *Review*. It is not unreasonable to imagine that Andrews would have been encouraged and humbled by what he read in the eight-page *Review Supplement* that arrived in May 1883.⁴⁹ Butler, Haskell and James Fargo, as the three members of the General Conference Executive Committee jointly authored long articles in this important publication focused on reviewing the status of the church and its deeply indebted institutions. The *Supplement* presented a kind of stock-taking or a state of the church report now that James White was gone. The Committee set out possible goals and strategies for resolving a number of pressing issues including the overwhelming financial threat. The supplement devoted a substantial section to an analysis and review of Adventism's short mission history and its prospects for the future. The authors had developed a well-reasoned rationale for both an expanded mission in Europe and in England and they had identified the acute need for additional funding. The section on Europe reflected thoughtfully on the unique difficulties Andrews and his fellow missionaries had faced and then expressed a deeply affirming tribute and warm commendation. Andrews had accomplished a "most noble work" in establishing the Central European mission in spite of his physical weakness. The Committee then expressed deep appreciation for his leadership. It was a striking vindication given the criticism and suspicion of an earlier period. "We regard this mission as already a great success," they wrote.⁵⁰ That did not mean that there was not much more to be accomplished. But Andrews had worked "under the greatest difficulties" and "to the utmost of his strength," and he had "accomplished a vast amount of good under such circumstances that most men would have felt they could do nothing." An "excellent impression" had been made by the French paper.⁵¹

The *Review Supplement* also cleared the air on the matter of the financial suspicions. "We consider the money used in this mission well spent, and firmly believe the advantages thus gained to the cause are worth far more than the cost." The Executive Committee reported that it had closely studied the Mission's financial reports in the light of the conditions in the Swiss mission and in the light of the expectations that had been held for Andrews. They wanted *Review* readers to clearly understand

49 There is no documentation that demonstrates he read the supplement but in view of the fact that he was still having his own articles published in the *Review* it is reasonable to assume that he saw it.

50 *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald Supplement* (May 1, 1883): 3–4. Baumgartner seems to be unaware of this publication.

51 Ibid.

that not all the church money had been paid to the missionaries as salary remuneration. Apparently some in the church had thought that that was happening. The report described Andrews' expenses and defended them as legitimate. Committee members went so far, in fact, as to suggest that there was "more danger that too great economy has been used, and that our missionaries have suffered, than that they have fared too well." "Our people will need no assurances from us," they continued, "that this beloved pioneer, who has labored so long and so faithfully in this cause, and who has almost given life itself for this mission, has not squandered the money raised for it. He has given for it more than any money can buy. It has cost him more than all the money given for the mission by our people could repay." There is no record of Andrews' reaction to the report but if he was still acting according to character, he would have offered a prayer of thanksgiving and if his advanced consumptive-impaired breathing had let him, he should have been able to sleep soundly.

The *Supplement* report also defended Loughborough's difficult English Mission, noting that while there had been some disappointment that "greater results" had not been attained, there was nothing that should discourage the church or cause it to lose hope. Again the writers of the report reflected a much more nuanced understanding of the unique challenges posed in introducing Adventism to "Old England" and expressed gratitude for the labors of Loughborough. The report would have been read by those in the know as a subtle push back against the criticisms of James White and his committee and perhaps also the veiled suspicions expressed by W. C. White to Ings in 1878. Those who were close to John Andrews would have understood it this way. Because of this subtle political edge, the *Supplement* report becomes a politically important document and it is important for the assessment of Andrews. It reflects something of the long conflict between James White and John Andrews and the perceived threat that Andrews was to James White. The document also seems to have constituted an important part of the context of a very critical letter Ellen White would finish writing to John Andrews a month later.

The Challenge of Assessment – Success or Not

Clearly, the Haskell Audit and the publishing of the *Review Supplement* in May 1883 sought to address the criticism that Andrews had not properly followed the "American Model" in his mission strategy for Europe and to put this criticism to rest. Whether from the perspective of 2018, Andrews' Mission to Europe should be considered a success or not, is not the question this paper addresses. The question is whether the church, at the end of Andrews' life, could affirm his mission as having been successful. The report of the GC Committee in the *Review Supplement* answered this question in the affirmative in glowing and highly appreciative terms. What has caused the question of the "success" of his mission to linger these many years, however, as if it is a question still unanswered is the highly critical letter Ellen White wrote to John Andrews as he was on his deathbed. He received it when he was already but a skeleton just three months before consumption finally took his life.

Grady Smoot reads Ellen White's last letter to Andrews as "the most severe rebuke," that Ellen White ever wrote to her colleague. Daniel Augsburger says that "she scolded Andrews severely." Pietro Copiz notes that for later readers, who know that Andrews was on his deathbed, the language may appear "unnecessarily harsh, almost pitiless."⁵² Ellen White appears not to have known how near death Andrews was. Andrews himself took the letter as a "severe rebuke." In truth these scholarly assessments seem diplomatically mild descriptions of the content of the letter. The letter could be seen as a devastating critique of Andrews as a person, his personality, scholarly temperament and of the way he had done his work in Europe.

The thirteen pages of the letter, which were written in a stream-of-consciousness and somewhat circular style, begin by reproving Andrews severely for not marrying again before he returned to Europe, a theme Ellen White came back to repeatedly in various ways. Angeline, his wife, who had died in 1872, had been the subject of disease and death and, according to White, he had been wrong to hug the grief for Angeline to his bosom. White asserted that he dwelt too much upon himself and his sufferings, many of which had been self-imposed, wrought by his over-conscientiousness. He was inclined to follow impressions and a conviction that these were the voice of God. He had magnified his afflictions and did this to draw sympathy to himself. This, she asserted, was unnecessary and unhelpful. It was a "birthright" problem that he had carried all through the years since his friendship with the Stevens family back in Paris, Maine, and it was a species of selfishness. Ellen White wrote that he had failed in the education of his son Charles. He had given him an education that had been too narrow and limiting. Andrews had sacrificed his own happiness because he considered that his brethren had not come up to his ideals of duty. He had given his own money to aid others when it had not been called for. He had been too parsimonious and deprived his family unnecessarily. She took the position that money from the General Conference had not been deliberately withheld.⁵³ Andrews worshiped intellect and gave preference to others whom he thought of as educated. He had exercised poor judgment, for example, in his relationship to Dr. Ribton of Naples.⁵⁴ Ellen White said, with a stretched hyperbole echoing that of the Biblical prophets, that

52 Grady Smoot, "Andrews' Role in Seventh-day Adventist History," in *John Nevins Andrews: The Man and the Mission*, 5; Daniel Augsburger, "The Adventist Colony at Basel during the Andrews Years," *ibid.*, 341; Copiz, "Some Financial Aspects of Andrews' Mission to Europe," *ibid.*, 326.

53 Comments about the lack of promptness in the sending of remittances appear to be a defense of James and W. C. White. W. C. White had explained to Matteson in 1879, for example, that at times there had been "delays and blunders" in settling accounts and that the failure to promptly send remittances was because the executive committee had been scattered and had "no head since father's sickness." During that time, the business had been "partly done by one member and partly by another." W. C. White to John G. Matteson, July 24, 1879, EGWE-GC. Whatever the reason, missionaries in the field were without funds.

54 Andrews felt he had been used by Ribton. He had apologized and absorbed the expense. The matter could not be undone.

nine-tenths of his problems had been born of his imagination which had been diseased.⁵⁵ God did not decree that he should die. The letter was a long and uncomfortable critique and must have been almost as difficult for the newly arrived president, Buel Whitney, to read to Andrews as it was for Andrews to hear.

It was also a letter that had been difficult for Ellen White to write and she had made several attempts to do so beginning in March.⁵⁶ The versions she had written earlier she did not feel she could send. She knew her colleague's "temperament" was "peculiar" and she did not know he would be able to receive what she said if it conflicted with his ideas. Clearly she felt uncomfortable with the way she was saying things and also probably with some of the content but she somehow felt burdened to write about certain things and knew she could "not feel free until I do write them."

Before settling on the letter she finally sent, Ellen White had talked of the material or read some of it to her son Willie. William and Jennie Ings also knew of what she was writing or had read some of her attempts.⁵⁷ But she was still not sure of herself and she told Willie that she wished she had found opportunity to talk further with both Stephen Haskell and with Bro. Gardner since they had returned from Europe. In this she had been unsuccessful.⁵⁸ Clearly she was still unsure of herself in some things and the letter was written with an awareness that further consultation and information would have been helpful.⁵⁹ There are clear points of tension between this letter and the published May report of the General Conference Committee.

55 As Abraham Heschel points out, Old Testament prophets would often deliver their powerful prophetic message with hyperbole or gross overstatement that should not be judged by statistical or mathematical exactitude. They were concerned with "the meaning of facts." Heschel, *The Prophets* (Peabody, MA: Prince Press, 1999), 14.

56 One short discarded version is dated March 17. Another is dated March 29. On June 11 Ellen White reported to her son that on Sabbath June 9, she had been strengthened to write thirteen pages to Elder J. N. Andrews – a third version. "Brother Whitney seems to be so long getting off. I feared that he might not get the light for him, therefore I wrote him again and this did not seem to injure me." Ellen G. White to W. C. White, June 11, 1883, EGWE-GC. This indicates that one purpose of the letter was to give guidance to Andrews' successor and time constraints imposed themselves on the situation making it less than an ideal communication. Which letter Whitney actually read to Andrews is not clear. Andrews speaks of it being in three parts and none of the extant versions have this format.

57 Ellen G. White to W. C. White, June 11, 1883, EGWE-GC.

58 Part of her letter apparently related to reports of an unwarranted strong influence of Anna Oyer over John Andrews that had been communicated to Ellen White through J. W. Gardner. The report it seems, had originated with Jean Vuilleumier in conversations he had had with Gardner in Le Locle during the time of the audit. His diary reveals that he regretted deeply making the comments to Gardner as soon as he had uttered them, felt they were wrong and misleading and that a "demon" had taken possession of him. His speaking badly of her had caused great distress. He later confessed his wrong understanding and his wrong doing to Anna Oyer herself. JVD, June 24, 1883, AHLF. The diary helps provide an important context for some of the content of Ellen White's letter.

59 Ellen G. White to Buel L. Whitney, March 30, 1883, EGWE-GC. To what extent did her own recent bereavement and the need to protect James' reputation as a leader also shape the

Andrews received the letter with his characteristic submissiveness. For him, letters from Ellen White such as this carried evidence of the prophetic charisma. If, as many biblical scholars have pointed out, the purpose of the prophetic voice in a community is to bring about change and give guidance for the life of the believer going forward, it might be asked what purpose did this letter serve other than inflicting pain? As a very ill man on his deathbed in late July 1883 without hope of recovery, what change was Andrews able to make in his marital status, in how he should educate his son or even at that stage in life how he might change his “peculiar” scholarly temperament? It has been seen as a very troubling letter. Can an understanding of the wider context help in our understanding of it?

Perhaps this last letter to Andrews should be read more as a cry of anguish in the pattern of an agonized scriptural lament over what might have been than as a prophetic call. At this stage in his life, Andrews was not in a position to change anything or do anything other than seek forgiveness and find refuge in the grace of God. A lament sees ideals not achieved. The prophetic perspective also points to ideals for the sake of others who follow, though they too would have to adapt ideals to uncomfortable messy realities in the pursuit of mission. Another perspective might suggest that the letter should be seen more as a prophetic voice speaking directly to the ideals that should generally guide mission. The realities on the ground had, in many cases, prompted Andrews to make less than ideal choices but the only place that missionaries live is in the real world and a number of the things that Ellen White describes as to what should have been done, people could not do because of circumstances. But the prophetic call to ideals is still important and this perhaps would have been helpful for the other reader in Andrews’ bedchamber at the time Andrews heard it read. The only other person to benefit from the reading of this letter was Whitney and perhaps the holding out of the spiritual ideals of mission was important for him as he too would have to grapple with the realities of time and place in the difficult world of the less than ideal. Clearly the latter part of the letter seems to be addressed as much to Whitney as he approached the task of leadership as it was to Andrews.⁶⁰

Andrews’ sense of inadequacy and his lack of confidence in his decision-making evidence a low sense of self-esteem that seemed to grow worse with time. This problem he seems not to have been able to overcome. His seeking of emotional support from others in what Ellen White saw as inappropriate ways she perceived as a danger to himself and the church. Yet, Ellen White’s own diaries and letters are similarly full

way she expressed her counsel to Andrews? In some subconscious way, did the letter reflect the underlying paradoxical cooperative-competitive tension that had always seemed to characterize the relationship between the two men?

60 Whitney led the work in Europe for only four years until he suffered intestinal ailments brought on by the complexities and stresses of work circumstances in Europe and he returned to America in the fall of 1887. He died of mesenteric consumption a few months later. “The Decease of Eld B. L. Whitney,” *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (April 17, 1888): 248. See also “Whitney,” *Lake Union Herald* (December 22, 1936): 10. *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* ed., Don F. Neufeld (Washington DC: Review and Herald, 1976), 1607.

of complaints about her health with long public accounts of how she and her husband had suffered and sacrificed. They also seemed to be designed to provoke sympathy and support for their lonely stands for what she saw as truth and right. Did she recognize these dimensions of temperament and their associated dangers in herself and was she therefore more keenly aware of them also in Andrews? Did the frequent public criticism from her husband actually help Andrews to overcome the weakness or tend to make the problem worse?

And finally, how much of the last letter Ellen White wrote to Andrews was a subtle, perhaps subconscious defense of her husband? The favorable reports of Andrews in Haskell's reports at the General Conference session and his public vindication in the *Review Supplement* clearly implied a correction of misunderstandings and a subtle if not intended criticism of her husband and his treatment of Andrews. To what extent did her sense of a need to push back against these implications form part of the heaviness and the weight Ellen White felt she could not be free from until she had written?

Conclusion: An Assessment

When Buel Whitney, Andrews' successor, sent to the *Review* editor brief details of Andrews' death and a report on the funeral, he did not intend his notice to be taken as a tribute to the fallen leader's life and work. He felt there were people better qualified for that writing task and he was sure that, by the time he sent in his funeral notice, "a fitting tribute" had probably already been offered.⁶¹ But the pen of the best tribute writer available, Uriah Smith, was not in fact able to provide "a fitting tribute." His pen was tightly constrained by a number of factors. What kind of tribute could one write in view of Ellen White's last letter to the pioneer? But more important Andrews had made a prior request to Smith laying him under obligation to not make a fuss? This circumstance seems to have prevented a fully adequate assessment of Andrews' life ever since. In particular, was the mission to Europe a success or not? Could it have been carried out differently, more effectively, given the circumstances encountered? Had Andrews been a helpful leader? If Daniel Bourdeau had learned of the "severe rebuke" testimony read to Andrews in his last illness, it seems that others would also know of the scolding the Elder had received on his deathbed?⁶² How many did is not clear. But how could one safely say much against such a backdrop?

61 "Death of Eld. J. N. Andrews," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (November 27, 1883): 730.

62 Andrews had briefly "mentioned his testimony which was read to him by Bro. Whitney, his writing to you and to Bro. Butler etc." D. T. Bourdeau to Ellen G. White, September 20, 1883, EGWE-GC. How much beyond this surface information was known by Bourdeau and others is uncertain.

Two years previously, in 1881, James White had been honored in the *Review* with numerous tributes from colleagues and deep expressions of gratitude. Appreciative observations on his major accomplishments and contributions to the church and discrete but respectful references to his distinctive, problematic authoritarian temperament and its weaknesses appeared for several weeks. For Andrews, by contrast, there was little more than a very subdued one-column statement giving some essential biographical details and facts about his family background and connections along with a brief reference to his major writings. It was an extended obituary, not a tribute.

Uriah Smith explained that some months previously Andrews had written to his brother-in-law, solemnly charging him that if and when their worst fears might be realized and he receive notice of his demise in foreign service, "no words of eulogy should appear in the paper." Andrews' reason was that he was fearful that Smith's "high regard" for him would "constrain you to say what I do not merit and what ought not to be said." In the tradition of William Carey of Serampore in India ("a wretched poor and helpless worm") Andrews was aware that even "his best acts" were tainted by "some trace of selfishness in them" and he had been "lacking in love toward God and man."⁶³ Smith felt that he had no choice, therefore, but to respect "the wishes of our dear brother" and restrain the comments that the esteem and love the church felt for the leader, "would naturally dictate."⁶⁴ And how much could he say without being perceived as undermining the authority of James White's widow? As he wrote out what he felt he could safely say, he felt that compliance with Andrews' request was "less difficult" because the works that the scholar-evangelist had left behind were "ample testimony" to "his efficiency and faithfulness" to the cause.

It has been difficult, ever since, for students of Adventist history to feel comfortable attempting an assessment of the contributions made to the church through the life and work of John Nevins Andrews. Letters of negative assessment – sent as private cautions and testimonies – are now public and have been widely read. Even in his own day they had been circulated around wide circles of leaders. Andrews' replies, his explanations, his correction of some things, his reports of changes made in response have not been generally available. Thus the negative communications have shaped perceptions and challenged assessments.⁶⁵ How are we to understand things in the larger perspective and in the light of history?

63 J. N. Andrews to US, Apr. 24, 1883, CAR. The Baptist founder of the modern missionary movement had insisted that the epitaph on his 1834 tombstone in the Serampore cemetery read, "A wretched, poor, and helpless worm on thy kind arms I fall." Andrews asked that his private, confidential note be also shared with J. H. Waggoner in California.

64 "The Death of Eld. Andrews," *The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* (October 30, 1883): 680.

65 Papers read at the J. N. Andrews sesquicentennial celebrations at Andrews University July 20–21, 1979 all illustrate sensitive attempts to find a positive but balanced assessment in the light of the negative testimonies. See Roy E. Graham, "J. N. Andrews and Dedication," Joseph G. Smoot, "J.N. Andrews and the Bible," and Gottfried Oosterwal, "The Legacy of J. N. Andrews," AU, CAR.

Clearly Andrews was a pioneer who helped shape the church profoundly in manifold ways. His ground-breaking service in mission in Europe helped shape and establish the future of Adventist work across national and cultural boundaries; and, as he himself learned with difficulty how to adapt to local circumstance in the cause of mission, so he helped the church to learn as well. With Butler and Haskell, we may agree that that accomplishment was a success.

Appendix: A Critique of Erich Baumgartner's Critique of J. N. Andrews and His Mission

In 1999 at a Conference at Newbold College in England, Erich Baumgartner offered an assessment of John Andrews' mission leadership in a comparative study of the leadership of Andrews, Michael Czechowski and Ludwig Conradi and their contribution to Adventist mission in Europe. The paper, later published as an article "Charisma and Contextualization: Leadership Lessons from the Emerging Adventist Church in Central Europe, 1864–1914," offers a very negative assessment.⁶⁶ The assessment betrays a serious misunderstanding of the role of John Andrews and his contribution to Adventist Mission in Europe. This misunderstanding undervalues his contribution, seeing it primarily only as an example. Andrews "became a legend of dedication and missionary sacrifice" that still inspires Adventists "who are willing to forgive his weaknesses." He never overcame the tremendous obstacles he faced, failed to win the trust of the people around him and failed to "energize them to pursue the vision of a missionary church."⁶⁷ This assessment misreads the sources, and seems manifestly unjust to the missionary's memory. Two major mistaken assumptions underlie this inadequate assessment of John Andrews' contribution to Adventist mission.

The first fundamental mistaken assumption is that Andrews sought to rigidly follow the "American model" of mission and that this was ill-advised, inappropriate and ultimately unsuccessful. Baumgartner writes, "In Andrews' mind, the only way to establish the work in Europe was to copy the model of the church in America. This proved to be a fatal problem for Andrews' leadership and resulted in a buildup of tension between him and the Swiss believers that he never could fully overcome."⁶⁸ "Loyal to what he understood to be the American model, he faithfully labored till his

66 *Parochialism, Pluralism, and Contextualization: Challenges to Adventist Mission in Europe (19th–21st Centuries)*, eds. David Trim and Daniel Heinz (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2010), 63–81.

67 *Ibid.*, 80.

68 *Ibid.*, 67.

strength finally gave out."⁶⁹ As noted in the text, quite the opposite occurred. Andrews did not follow the "American Model."

A closer study of the documents from the period reveal that the General Conference Committee criticized Andrews sharply because, in their opinion, he was *not* in fact implementing the "American model" and that the reason for his failure to quickly establish a self-sustaining status for his mission was because of this failure to follow the model. The term "American model" was James White's term and he used it to describe the way he had successfully established early Adventism.⁷⁰ Andrews' mistake, alleged White's Committee, was that he was not following this pattern. Andrews acknowledged that he was not and could not follow the model. He defended himself against the criticism because experience in Europe was teaching him that different circumstances and a different culture meant that a different approach was indeed called for. Andrews' strategy had been adopted in order to adjust to the unique local circumstances on the ground that he faced and in order to meet local needs, taking into account the extremely limited resources available to him in Switzerland, including his own skills and limitations.

The second major mistaken assumption that Baumgartner makes in interpreting Andrews and his mission is that Ellen White's May 1883 critique of Andrews' temperament, and his ministry and numerous other critical letters can be uncritically relied on as an adequate interpretive screen for understanding Andrews.⁷¹ These important and critical documents need to be considered in the wider context of the long complex relationship of John Andrews to both James and Ellen White and in the setting of James and Ellen White's inadequate understanding of the situation on the ground in Europe. A closer reading of these documents in the context of a broader range of sources, including John Andrews' own correspondence with the Whites, the correspondence of colleagues and diary sources suggests that the situation was much more complex. Such a reading requires a much more nuanced and sympathetic understanding than Baumgartner provides. Baumgartner seems not to be aware, for example, of the *Review Supplement* of May 1883 authored largely by Haskell and Butler which provides a very different assessment of Andrews' situation and of the "success" of his work.⁷²

These two major weaknesses in the approach to the assessment of Andrews' leadership and mission tend to create a less than comprehensive perspective on John Andrews' experience in Europe. A wider context taking into account Andrews' own records and substantial newly available documentary sources suggest the need for a reappraisal in some key areas.

69 Ibid., 80.

70 "Our European Missions," 180.

71 See Baumgartner, 70–71.

72 G. I. Butler to B. L. Whitney, April 18, 1883, AHLF; *Review Supplement* (May 1, 1883): 3, 4.

Unexpected Limited Resources Necessitate a Changed Strategy

John Andrews arrived in Neuchatel in late October 1874 just after the influential Vuilleumier families headed up by Albert had invested heavily in a new development of their watchmaking industry. This involved heavy financial commitments which tied up financial resources of their relatives and other church members. Andrews arrived too late to prevent this. The decision had large ramifications. Albert, the senior elder of the cluster of churches around Neuchatel, had been expected to lead out in evangelistic ministry. The industrial investment deprived Andrews of the personnel resources he was counting on for local evangelism (neither Albert nor his nephew Ademar, who had been trained in ministry for two years in America were able to commit to ministry). The decision also prevented access to critical financial resources from the Sabbatarians. In the important early stages of mission, funding available to Andrews was thus severely restricted, forcing him to rely on his own personal resources. The industrial investment eventually went bankrupt and involved unpleasant legal proceedings and a rupture in relationships apparently between church members.⁷³

The restricted funding also meant that Andrews was obliged to rely much more heavily on General Conference funding than originally anticipated – a situation that aggravated relationships with the General Conference which had very high expectations of an early achievement of self-sustaining status for the mission. Andrews did not receive any salary from the General Conference. Nor did his helper, Daniel Bordeaux. Local Systematic Benevolence funding was used primarily for the support of the Swiss-German pastor, James Erzberger and his mission activities.

Baumgartner suggests that the journal, *Les Signes des Temps*, was “a mixed blessing at best” and that “Andrews’ perfectionism led him to exclude most of his coworkers from contributing to the success of the journal.”⁷⁴ This assessment overlooks the much more positive 1883 assessment by Haskell and the General Conference itself. Andrews’ choices were limited. Neither Bordeaux nor Aufranc were blessed with a concern for carefulness or accuracy in writing or copy editing.⁷⁵ Publishing in French with its range of diacritical markings was not so simple as publishing in English – a dimension that James White never appreciated. Andrews judged his readership to be educated in such matters and that to ignore the issue posed the risk of the publishers being exposed to printing “ridiculousness.” The choice to launch a magazine and to go monthly was a decision influenced heavily by the Swiss brethren who were sensitive to the cultural location and by the dictates of the local postal system. Such matters had to do with reputation and economic logistics. The choice to go with an

73 The financial troubles also apparently involved the loss of personal funds Andrews had extended to the family during the difficulties. See JVD, January 6, March 24, 1880, April 28, 1883, AHLF.

74 Baumgartner, 69.

75 Andrews’ assessment of this is confirmed by Jean Vuilleumier, JVD, July 25, 1883, AHLF.

obviously American format for the magazine (large paper matching the *Review*) rather than the more economic and culturally sensitive European format was a decision made by James White not Andrews. A recognition of the complexities of the situation that Andrews found himself in and his limited range of options led Haskell's audit team in 1883 to judge that the magazine in fact had a powerful ministry and had made a major contribution to the success of the mission. They heartily endorsed the approach, and wanted it extended to include a German magazine. "Thousands of copies of our paper are going forth every month to enlighten minds dwelling [in?] darkness ... An excellent impression has already been made by the French paper ... We must have a German paper there in the near future."⁷⁶

As Pietro Copiz has pointed out, there has developed a substantial mythology about Andrews' linguistic skills. The impact of Andrews' inability to quickly master conversational French has been underappreciated. It took him almost three years to acquire a level of fluency sufficient for him to preach in a public evangelistic setting in French. This limited his options during the early stages of mission. But the evidence is clear that as he developed fluency he did engage in substantial preaching both publicly and in local churches, joining in outreach and church planting with both Bourdeau and Erzberger. As an expatriate, however, he was never fully comfortable in the medium. In his later years the tuberculosis that he contracted prevented him from extensive engagement.

The argument that more preaching would have made for quicker results can be made, as it was by the advisors from Battle Creek, but this needs to be qualified by other evidence. Daniel Bourdeau's preaching in French and in France produced results very slowly against much hostility and opposition. John Loughborough and William Ings in England with their heavy emphasis on preaching, lengthy evangelistic series and intensive literature distribution produced far fewer results and more slowly than Andrews. Anti-Americanism and the culture of Europe was much more resistant to an American religion than many understood.⁷⁷ The situation was simply much more complex than either Ellen White or James White realized.

Any comparison that is made between the leadership of Andrews and Conradi based on perceived results of the work of the two men needs to be qualified by numerous dissimilarities between the two. Andrews, for example, was an expatriate, and already aging when he began his work. Furthermore he had had no previous cross-cultural experience. He struggled with culture shock, (without the benefit of prior sensitization as is now provided missionaries), but did adjust to his new culture. At

76 "Bro. Andrews has done most noble work there in his weakness, and those seeds of truth which have been so thoroughly watered with tears, will spring up in many hearts." *Review Supplement*, 3.

77 "It is no small matter to introduce a new doctrine so unpopular as ours . . . into old established communities, where the customs of society are fixed, where there is a prejudice against American ideas, and where the mass of the people are so poor as in Europe. It is especially difficult where the missionaries are natives of other lands, speak another language, and everything has to be learned." *Review Supplement*, 2.

the first he was “extremely critical” of Europeans, as Baumgartner observes.⁷⁸ This, however, did not last as Andrews adapted to the situation and realized that the New England tradition of “plain speaking” and of “rebuke and reproof” and the language of revivalism with its judgmental concepts of “backsliding” and the need for “reconversion” did not work in Europe. This cultural disparity long nurtured in him by James and Ellen White was a disadvantage. Apart from significant differences in temperament, Conradi had been born in Germany, was seventeen years younger than Andrews and had spent the first seventeen years of his life in Germany and had benefited from a long formal Catholic education before emigrating to the United States. He was naturally fluent in several languages and had significant cross-cultural experience. Converted to Adventism in Iowa in 1878 and educated at Battle Creek College, he had not been long influenced by interactions with James White or irreparably shaped by the American revivalist and confrontational tradition, and he was thus able to more readily adapt to a more culturally sensitive evangelistic methodology. Furthermore, when Conradi returned to Europe in 1886, it was as a national returning, not as an expatriate and he had the support of an established local organization with salary and budget resources able to support him from the outset.

The numerous personal letters from Ellen White addressed to John Andrews that Baumgartner uses as a primary filter for understanding John Andrews do provide helpful insights into his life and philosophy. Baumgartner notes that Ellen White was “very unhappy about his philosophy of work and life.”⁷⁹ To accept this perspective as a kind of final verdict or even as the dominant interpretive lens without a careful understanding of “time and place” and without a careful study of John Andrews’ response to the criticism is to misunderstand the correspondence and the person they are addressed to. This correspondence needs to be sensitively interpreted in the context of the distinctive temperament of her mildly bi-polar husband, his autocratic leadership style and the conflicted attitudes that James White developed towards Andrews, his closest working loyal associate. Ellen White feared that her husband’s unreasonable, harsh criticism of Andrews (and two or three other colleagues) had irreparably intimidated them, destroying their self-confidence and their ability to think and act for themselves. On many occasions, for the survivability of the Advent cause Ellen White felt called to defend her husband in spite of his dominant, highly effective and yet at the same time damaging leadership style. Submission was the only alternative for associates like Andrews. It is also necessary to consider the role of a defense of her husband’s posthumous reputation, as a possible factor in Ellen White’s last negative interaction with Andrews in the letter sent to him on his deathbed.

The complicated nature of the long complex relationship between the Andrews, Stevens and White families also needs to be factored into the interpretive schema when seeking to understand the correspondence between Ellen White and John Andrews. The relationship was characterized by misunderstandings, offenses given, long

78 Baumgartner, 70.

79 Ibid.

memories and carried grudges. A careful consideration of such context would result in a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of Andrews and a more balanced assessment of the “success” of Andrews’ mission to Europe.

Andrews was a pathfinder, learning as he went how to succeed in cross-cultural mission. In the process one of his significant contributions was that he helped his church to learn how to be successful in mission – even in a difficult field like Europe.