



Second meeting house at Battle Creek where the 1863 General Conference session was held.

Photo courtesy of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Archives.

Denominational Organization, 1860–1863

BARRY OLIVER

Barry Oliver, Ph.D., retired in 2015 as president of the South Pacific Division of Seventh-day Adventists, Sydney, Australia. An Australian by birth Oliver has served the Church as a pastor, evangelist, college teacher, and administrator. In retirement, he is a conjoint associate professor at Avondale College of Higher Education. He has authored over 106 significant publications and 192 magazine articles. He is married to Julie with three adult sons and three grandchildren.

Soon after the great disappointment of 1844, it became evident to some of the Sabbatarian Adventists that there was a need for order and organization if the movement was to have a future. At the same time, there were those who argued that by being organized the Church would become Babylon. However, those who saw the necessity for an efficient system of organization prevailed. It was James White who, throughout the controversies surrounding the proposed organization in the late 1850s and early 1860s, was the most vocal proponent of the need for organization. As early as 1849, he proposed some form of formal support for those in ministry of the word.¹ Another more specific statement followed a few months later: "I hope the church will soon get it right when they can move in gospel order."²

The Need for Organization: The Context of the 1850s and 1860s³

Early comments by both James and Ellen White, two of the three cofounders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, on the subject of order came in response to the need to meet fanaticism and unauthorized persons disseminating dissident ideas within the scattered group.⁴ Towards the end of 1853, James White wrote the first well-developed argument for the need for gospel order and organization among Sabbatarian Adventists.⁵ He wrote that the extremes of confusion on the one hand, and inflexibility on the other hand, were to be avoided. Firmly convinced of the need for organization by the middle of 1854, during the ensuing six years his articles on church order in the *Review and Herald* were developed on the basis of the need to avoid the extremes of "anarchy" and "popery," and the need for a system which was "not opposed by the Bible, and is approved by sound sense."⁶ By the time he wrote these words in 1859, White had adopted a view that any method of organization can be effective, provided it is not specifically opposed in Scripture and provided it is based on common sense. Indeed, after the organization of the General Conference in 1863 he wrote, "Now we are happy to see so many rally around the standard of order and common sense."⁷

Thus, the arguments being used by 1860 to persuade the believers to organize themselves into a denomination, while they were somewhat loosely based on Biblical themes, tended to the more pragmatic.⁸ James White stated in 1860 that "if God in his everlasting word calls on us to act the part of *faithful stewards* of his goods, we had better attend to those matters in a legal manner—the only way we can handle real estate in this world" (emphasis supplied).⁹ For James White, organization was needed. But, the form it would take was not explicitly based on a particular ecclesiological dimension or by the burgeoning missionary enterprise of the church. Apparently, organization was called for by the constraints of Christian stewardship.¹⁰ Stewardship, rather than ecclesiological, eschatological, or missiological concerns seems to have been the theological/pragmatic basis for the initial organizational attempts by the church.

In 1907, A. G. Daniells, the longest-serving General Conference president in the history of the Church, reflecting on the events of the 1860s listed some of the problems of disorganization, implying that organization solved these and other issues facing the Church. His list included: failure to keep proper church membership records;

paucity of church officers; inability to determine the accredited representatives of the people; no regular support for the ministry; and no legal provision for holding property.¹¹

The Role of Ellen White in Organization

Ellen G. White first wrote on the subject of church order towards the end of 1850. She wrote: "I saw that everything in heaven was in perfect order...Said the angel, 'Behold ye and know how perfect, how beautiful, the order in heaven; follow it.'¹² Despite considerable opposition to any notion of organization, which emerged from both ministers and laypersons during the latter 1850s and early 1860s, Ellen White had stood consistently with those who advocated church order.¹³ However, she did not at any time describe just what form that organization should take. As expressed in 1854, she insisted that order in the church should be a reflection of the order of heaven and of the New Testament church. She warned against sending inexperienced men into the field, but she did not say just how that would be accomplished.¹⁴

Among the reasons why Ellen White stood for the establishment of church organization were the conviction that there was a divine mandate for strict order, discipline, and organization in the church, and the desire to share responsibility for the burgeoning endeavors of the fledgling denomination for which she and her husband, James, had consistently carried the largest share. She was concerned for the failing health of her husband who would later suffer a severe stroke in 1865.

Ellen White continued her support of the need for organization into the early 1860s. In August 1861, she wrote reproving those who did not have the courage of their convictions with respect to organization:

The agitation on the subject of organization has revealed a great lack of moral courage on the part of ministers proclaiming present truth. Some who were convinced that organization was right failed to stand up boldly and advocate it...They feared blame and opposition. They watched the brethren generally to see how their pulse beat before standing manfully for what they believed to be right...They were afraid of losing their influence...Those who shun responsibility will meet with loss in the end. The time for ministers to stand together is when the battle goes hard.¹⁵

While Ellen White strongly supported the move toward organization, it was James White who, throughout the controversies surrounding the proposed organization in the 1850s and early 1860s, appeared as the more vocal proponent of the need for organization. It appears that at that early date the church understood his wife's role to be more advisory than definitive.

Organization (1860-1863)

In February 1860, James White in the *Review* wrote of two pressing issues that were looming on the horizon: the question of legal ownership of property, and the question of choosing a name for the scattered company of

believers.¹⁶ One followed from the other as it was not possible to legally incorporate without a name. The strongest opposition to this at that time came from R. F. Cottrell (1814-1892), who was convinced that legal incorporation would lead the church into an unbiblical alliance with the state. In his view, this was akin to becoming Babylon.¹⁷ His solution was for individuals to continue holding property in their own names.¹⁸

James White did not concur with Cottrell. He replied in the pages of the *Review*, describing instances in the Millerite movement in which people had apostatized and taken Millerite property, which was held in their name, with them.¹⁹ A few weeks later, White wrote a more extended reply to Cottrell's views.²⁰ He cited a situation in Cincinnati where the believers had constructed a meeting house and placed the ownership in the name of one of their number. All was well until the brother went astray and "locked out the congregation, and the place built and consecrated for the worship of God was turned into a vinegar" factory.²¹ Apparently, the congregation built another house of worship, placed it in the legal ownership of another brother whom they thought they could trust, but "he played a similar trick."²²

Not surprisingly, White reiterated his conviction that there was no biblical objection to holding property legally, or indeed, of insuring it. He declared, "All means which, according to sound judgement, will advance the cause of truth, and are not forbidden by plain scripture declarations, should be employed."²³ Cottrell shortly thereafter replied, indicating that he was willing to follow the Lord's leading in the matter.²⁴ However, he clearly was not done. Cottrell was not in agreement with the idea of a distinctive name for the church, not willing to acknowledge any unscriptural title. He also implicitly opposed the idea of a general organization, promoting the concept of the legal holding of property by individual local churches.²⁵

Choosing a Name (1860)

At a special conference called at Battle Creek between September 28 and October 1, 1860, the matter of a formal name was on the agenda. James White had previously stated his preference for the name "Church of God" for the fledgling believers.²⁶ Other names had been suggested including "Seventh-day Adventist" previous to the conference.²⁷ On October 1, after lengthy debate, the delegates adopted the name "Seventh-day Adventists," opening the way for the formal acceptance of church organization.²⁸ The action was recorded as follows:

Bro. White remarked that the name taken should be one which would be the least objectionable to the world at large. The name Seventh-day Adventists was proposed as a simple name and one expressive of our faith and position. After some further remarks, Bro. Hewitt offered the following resolution:

Resolved, 'That we take the name of Seventh day 'Adventists.

This resolution was freely discussed, but was finally withdrawn to make room for the following from Bro. Poole:

Resolved, That we call ourselves Seventh-day Adventists.

After a somewhat lengthy discussion, the question was called for, and the resolution adopted,

Bro. Butler dissenting, and Brn. Lawrence, Sperry, Andrews and Ingraham not voting. On explanation that this resolution had reference only to those present, Bro. Sperry gave his vote in favor of the resolution, and Bro. Andrews 'signified his assent, to the same.

Moved by Bro. Hull that we recommend the name we have chosen to the churches generally.—

Carried, Bro. Butler dissenting.

Moved, That the proceedings of this meeting be published in the *Advent Review*.—

Carried.²⁹

The choice of a name was not the only matter adopted at the 1860 conference. It was voted in principle to incorporate the Advent Review Publishing Association located in Battle Creek, Michigan.³⁰ Seven men were chosen to organize the association and apply to the state legislature for incorporation: James White, J. H. Waggoner, J. N. Loughborough, G. W. Amadon, Uriah Smith, George T. Lay, and D. R. Palmer.³¹ However, it was not until the next spring that the legal incorporation of the publishing association was accomplished. At that time the name was changed to Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association.³²

Progress was also made at the 1860 conference on the matter of the holding of church properties. The action that was taken was, "Resolved that this conference recommend to our individual churches so to organize as to hold their church property or church buildings legally."³³ James White was well satisfied with the decision. He wrote, "the action upon securing church property legally is all that we have ever suggested, and more than we ever expected would be so unanimously adopted."³⁴

Developments and Organization of the First Conference, Michigan (1861)

The next conference at Battle Creek was held between April 26 and 29, 1861. Not only were further actions taken with respect to the publishing association, but a committee of nine was appointed to thoroughly study the matter of organization and make a presentation in the *Review*.³⁵ The report advocated both state conferences and a general conference. It contained the first reference to the selection of delegates on a proportional basis. For the first time, letters of transfer were suggested. The purpose of organization was to promote the evangelistic outreach of the church, to provide for rapid increases in membership, to conduct the business matters of the church, to own property, and to facilitate administration of church order and discipline.³⁶

While some vestiges of opposition to the idea of organization remained, especially in the East, by October 1861, most of the influential leaders in the church were openly advocating their support.³⁷ Thus, it was at the conference held at Battle Creek, October 4 to 6, 1861, that the churches of Michigan banded together to form the first state conference. Joseph Bates was appointed chairman, Uriah Smith, clerk; and John Loughborough, Moses Hull, and M. E. Cornell, members of the conference committee.³⁸ A procedure was adopted for providing conference ministers with credentials and a committee created to study the issue of organizing local churches. A

simple covenant was adopted which stated, "We, the undersigned, hereby associate ourselves together as a church, taking the name Seventh-day Adventists, covenanting to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ."³⁹

Ten days later, the committee appointed to study guidelines for organizing local churches had its report ready.⁴⁰ The report outlined procedures for the election and ordination of church officers, reception of new members into fellowship, and letters of commendation for transferring members to another church. Reception into membership required a unanimous vote of the local church. The report also provided a job description for deacons.⁴¹

By January 1862, James White could reflect optimistically on the process toward organization and on what had been accomplished:

We stood nearly alone. The battle went hard, and we needed help; but many of our very prudent men saved their ammunition to fire away upon the subject of organization now when the battle is fought and the victory won. Almost every day we receive a communication from some good brother upon the subject of organization. A few only of these have found place in the *Review*.⁴²

The first session of the Michigan Conference was held in Monterey, Michigan, on October 4, 1862. Seventeen churches were admitted to membership; ministers were assigned areas of responsibility; and significantly, other states were invited to send delegates to the first General Conference the next year.⁴³

Reflecting many years later, then General Conference president, A.G. Daniells said of the early organization and the formation of the Michigan Conference in 1861: "This was the first conference ever organized by Seventh-day Adventists...The resolution which locates the source of the responsibility, authority, and power of the conference places it in the church, or, more properly, the people. This is directly the opposite of the organization of the papacy, which places these prerogatives in the officials."⁴⁴

Organization of the General Conference (1863)

The first meeting of the General Conference was originally scheduled for October 1863. However, at the suggestion of James White, it was rescheduled for May 1863. Leaders from the various conferences wrote expressing their approval of the change.⁴⁵

The first session commenced on May 20 at 6.00 p.m. Four delegates were present from the New York Conference, two delegates from Ohio, eleven delegates from Michigan, one from Wisconsin, two from Iowa, and one from Minnesota. It is of note that Ellen G. White was not a delegate to the session.⁴⁶

The action to form the General Conference read:

For the purpose of securing unity and efficiency in labor, and promoting the general interests of the cause of present truth, and of perfecting the organization of the Seventh-day Adventists, we, the delegates from the several State Conferences, hereby proceed to organize a General Conference, and adopt the following constitution.⁴⁷

The Form

The form of organization that was adopted in 1863 was based on a carefully prepared report that had been published in the *Review and Herald* on June 11, 1861.⁴⁸ The structure was simple with three levels: local churches, state conferences comprising the local churches in a designated area, and a General Conference comprising all state conferences. There was to be a General Conference president, secretary, and treasurer, and an executive committee of three. General Conference sessions were to be held annually.⁴⁹

The structure was also unique. It incorporated, but adapted, elements from Episcopal, Congregational, and Presbyterian forms of governance. For example, its president was given administrative powers akin to those of a bishop. Further, the president was elected by the constituency as were bishops in the Methodist episcopacy. The Methodist conference system was also adapted to the needs of the denomination. From Congregational governance it adapted the broad-based authority of the constituency. From Presbyterian governance it adapted the committee system and the concept of representation. There is little evidence that early Seventh-day Adventists intentionally set out to construct an organization which drew together such diverse elements—that such occurred was more by accident than by design. Even so, awareness of the denominational backgrounds of those involved in organization would indicate that such a product may have been somewhat inevitable.

Organizational Developments in Ensuing Years (1863-1888)

Despite the simplicity and uniqueness of the organizational form in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, its own growth soon forced the Church to realize that, in addition to its conference system, it had to accommodate other structures and institutions. Thus, by the beginning of 1888 the institutionalization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was well under way. There were already thirty organized conferences containing 889 organized churches.⁵⁰ There were 227 ordained and 182 licensed ministers.⁵¹ The constituency was supporting six publishing houses, three senior educational institutions, and two medical establishments.⁵²

In order to manage these institutions and provide for other functions, there were arising in the denomination a number of auxiliary organizations which functioned as promoting, coordinating and administrative bodies. These organizations were not integral to the conference administrative structure of the Church, but stood as independent entities apart from it. A number of them were associated directly with institutions established by the Church in specific locations. For instance, the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association was established

in 1861 as the incorporated body operating the Review and Herald Publishing plant in Battle Creek; the Health Reform Institute, established in 1866, was the forerunner of the Battle Creek Sanitarium, managed by John Harvey Kellogg; the Educational Society of 1874 concerned itself with the establishment and operation of Battle Creek College; and the Pacific Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, established in 1875, confined its activities to the institution that came to be known as the Pacific Press.⁵³ Other organizations were wider in scope. Although they had a separate infrastructure, most shared personnel with the administrative structure of the denomination. Most were located in Battle Creek.⁵⁴

The major auxiliary organizations not connected to a specific institution that were in existence at the beginning of 1888 were the General Tract and Missionary Society, established in 1874;⁵⁵ the General Sabbath School Association, established in 1878;⁵⁶ the Health and Temperance Association, established in 1879;⁵⁷ and the General Conference Association, established in 1887.⁵⁸ The National Religious Liberty Association was established in 1889,⁵⁹ an autonomous Foreign Mission Board in the same year,⁶⁰ and the Seventh-day Adventist Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association in 1893.⁶¹

These organizations were legally incorporated, independent bodies that had their own officers and executive boards or committees. Although they were all part of the Seventh-day Adventist Church—officers being appointed by and reporting to the General Conference session—they were not administered directly by the General Conference. Because of their independent status, co-ordination and integration were perennial problems during the 1890s. Not until the 1901 General Conference session and its reorganization of the administrative structures of the church were the auxiliary organizations incorporated into the conference structure as departments of the General Conference.

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NOTES

1. James White to Bro. and Sister Collins, September 8, 1849, Ellen G. White Estate Office.
2. James White to Leonard W. Hastings, March 18, 1850, Ellen G. White Estate Office.
3. Much has been written regarding the need for organization among the Sabbatarian Adventists of the 1850s and 1860s. See, for example, J. B. Frisbie, *Order in the Church of God* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1859); John N. Loughborough, *The Church: Its Organization, Order, and Discipline* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1907), 85-156; M. Ellsworth Olsen, *A History of the Origins and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1925), 245-54; C. C. Crisler, *Organization: Its Character, Purpose, Place and Development in the Seventh-day Adventist Church* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1938), 77-103; Arthur W. Spalding, *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists*, (Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1961) Volume 1, 291-311; Richard W. Schwarz, *Light Bearers to the Remnant*, Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1979), 86-103; Godfrey T. Anderson, "Sectarianism and Organization, 1846-1864," in *Adventism in America*, ed. Gary Land (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans,

1986), 36-65; Andrew G. Mustard, *James White and Organization: Historical Development 1844-1881*, (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1987), 116-92.

4. John Loughborough later reflected: It seemed to require some adverse experiences to arouse them [the early Adventists] fully to a sense of the necessity of the organization of conferences and churches and associations for the management of the temporalities of the cause." J. N. Loughborough, *The Great Second Advent Movement: Its Rise and Progress* (Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1905), 343.
5. James White, "Gospel Order," *ARH*, December 6, 1853, 173; December 13, 1853, 180; December 20, 1853, 188-190; December 27, 1853, 196-197.
6. James White, "A Complaint," *ARH*, June 16, 1859, 28.
7. James White, "Organization," *ARH*, April 19, 1864, 164.
8. Barry Oliver, *SDA Organizational Structure: Past, Present and Future* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1989), 46-48.
9. James White, "Making Us a Name," *ARH*, March 29, 1860, 152.
10. See Mustard, *James White and Organization*, 195-232.
11. A. G. Daniells, "Organization: A Brief Account of Its History in the Development of the Cause of the Third Angel's Message," *ARH*, February 14, 1907, 5.
12. Ellen G. White, "Vision at Paris, Maine," Manuscript 11, 1850, Ellen G. White Estate Office.
13. Ellen White's views on church order were published in *Supplement to the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White* (Rochester, New York: James White, 1854).
14. Ellen G White, *Early Writings* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1882), 98.
15. Ellen G. White, "Communication from Mrs. White," *ARH*, Aug. 27, 1861, 101-2.
16. James White, "Borrowed Money," *ARH*, February 23, 1860, 108.
17. R. F. Cottrell, "Making Us a Name," *ARH*, March 23, 1860, 140-141.
18. Ibid.
19. James White, "Making Us a Name," *ARH*, March 29, 1860, 152.

20. James White, "Making Us a Name," *ARH*, April 26, 1860, 180-182.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. R. F. Cottrell, "A Response," *ARH*, May 3, 1860, 188.
25. James White, "Organization," *ARH*, June 19, 1860, 36.
26. Ibid.
27. "The Advent Question," *Adventist Heritage*, November 27, 1847, 133; "Resolution of the Seventh-day Baptist Central Association," *ARH*, August 11, 1853, 52; John Loughborough referred to an advertisement for a meeting in Hillsdale, Michigan, in October 1856 which used the name "Seventh-day Advent people" on the handbills, (J. N. Loughborough, "Eastern Tour," *ARH*, November 13, 1860, 205); The first person to use the exact name "Seventh-day Adventist" in the *Review* was a Sister P. P. Lewis in August 1859 (P. P. Lewis to Uriah Smith, *ARH*, August 18, 1859, 103).
28. "Business Proceedings of the B. C. Conference—Concluded," *ARH*, October 23, 1860, 179.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid., 178.
31. Ibid.
32. "Business Proceedings of the B. C. Conference," *ARH*, April 30, 1861, 189.
33. "Business Proceedings of the B. C. Conference—Continued," *ARH*, October 16, 1860, 171.
34. James White, "Western Tour," *ARH*, October 30, 1860, 188.
35. J. H. Waggoner, Joseph Bates, James White, J. B. Frisbie, J. N. Loughborough, M. E. Cornell, E. W. Shortridge, Moses Hull, John Byington, "Conference Address: Organization," *ARH*, June 11, 1861, 21-22.
36. Ibid.

37. J. N. Andrews, "Organization," *ARH*, September 17, 1861, 124; J. H. Waggoner, "To All the Brethren," *ARH*, September 24, 1861, 132; R. F. Cottrell, "Communication from Brother Cottrell," *ARH*, September 24, 1861, 132; B. F. Snook, "Organization," *ARH*, September 24, 1861, 132; William S. Ingraham, "Communication from Bro. Ingraham," *ARH*, September 24, 1861, 134; Rufus Baker, "Necessity of Church Order," *ARH*, October 1, 1861, 142; A. S. Hutchins, "Organization," *ARH*, October 8, 1860, 151.
38. Joseph Bates and Uriah Smith, "Doings of the Battle Creek Conference: October 5 and 6, 1861," *ARH*, October 8, 1861, 148-149.
39. Ibid.
40. J. N. Loughborough, Moses Hull, and M. E. Cornell, "Conference Address: Organization," *ARH*, October 15, 1861, 156-157.
41. Ibid.
42. "Organization," *ARH*, January 7, 1862, 44.
43. Joseph Bates and Uriah Smith, "Business Proceedings of the Michigan State Conference," *ARH*, October 14, 1862, 156-157.
44. Daniells, "Organization: A Brief Account," *ARH*, April 11, 1907, 6.
45. Letters to James White from B. F. Snook, A. S. Hutchins, I. Sanborn, J. N. Andrews, J. H. Waggoner, and Moses Hull appeared in the *ARH*, March 24, 1863, 132.
46. John Byington and Uriah Smith, "Report of General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists," *ARH*, May 26, 1863, 204.
47. Ibid, 204-205.
48. Joseph H. Waggoner, James S. White, John N. Loughborough, E. W. Shortridge, Joseph Bates, J. B. Frisbie, M. E. Cornell, Moses Hull, and John Byington, "Conference Address: Organization," *ARH*, June 11, 1861, 21-22.
49. John Byington and Uriah Smith, "Report of General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists," *ARH*, May 26, 1863, 204-206; For a detailed discussion of the factors which precipitated denominational organization in 1863, see Mustard, *James White and SDA Organization*.
50. *A Brief Sketch of the Origin, Progress and Principles of the Seventh-day Adventists* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1888), 9.
51. Ibid., 11-12. It was further emphasized: "None of the churches have pastors stationed with them. They maintain their worship without the aid of a preacher, only as one may occasionally visit them, leaving the ministers free to devote almost their whole time to carrying these views to those who have never heard upon them. During the summer months they carry forward their work by means of large tents. About a hundred of these were in use during the summer of 1887" (Ibid., 12).

52. The two publishing houses in the United States—The Review and Herald and the Pacific Press—were the objects of affectionate description in *Brief Sketch*. It appears that the denomination looked with a great deal of satisfaction on the institutions that had been recently established.
53. [Uriah Smith], "Origin and History of the Third Angel's Message, Number 8," *ARH*, January 27, 1891, 56-57.
54. For a summary overview of the Seventh-day Adventist Church at the beginning of 1888, see *Brief Sketch*, 9-40.
55. General Conference Session, August 15, 1874, 81, General Conference Archives, accessed April 1, 2018, <http://documents.adventistarchives.org/Minutes/GCSM/GCB1863-88.pdf>. The organization of the General Tract and Missionary Society was a result of the organization of state missionary societies, the first being in New England in 1870. Since the initiative for this organization did not come from the General Conference but from the state conferences, no consideration was given at the time of organization as to the possibility of integrating it into the framework of the denomination's administrative structure. A similar situation applied to the organization of the Sabbath School Association and its relationship to the denomination. In 1882, the name of the society was changed to the International Tract and Missionary Society. The concept of the Tract and Missionary Society was not original with Seventh-day Adventists. Other denominations, notably the Methodists, had been operating Tract and Missionary Societies for much of the nineteenth century. See Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform: American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 167.
56. A Sabbath School Association had been established first in California in 1877. Other associations followed in quick succession so that there were already twelve state Sabbath School Associations at the time of the incorporation of the general association in 1878. See Smith, "Origin of the Third Angel's Message," 57.
57. The Health and Temperance Association became the Seventh-day Adventist Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association in 1893. In 1896, its name was changed to the International Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association. The reason for the change was Kellogg's insistence that the medical work be non-denominational in character. He claimed that the way to attract patronage was to advertise a non-sectarian institution. In 1896, the objectives of the association were "to erect and manage homes for orphan children and for friendless aged persons, also hospitals and sanitariums for the treatment of the sick poor and others, the same to be either self-supporting or supported in whole or in part by funds secured for the purpose; to establish dispensaries in cities, medical missions at home and abroad, visiting nurses' work, Christian help work; to educate missionary physicians and nurses; to provide for the needy poor; to promulgate the principles of health and temperance and to do good in a variety of ways." *Yearbook of the Seventh-day Adventist Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association, 1896* [n.p., 1897], 58-59.
58. When established, the purpose of the General Conference Association was to be a legal body. It was incorporated to hold real estate and property and to enter into contractual arrangements with other parties. The proposal to have such a body was made and discussed in 1884. A motion to incorporate was accepted on November 18, 1885, and articles of association were drawn up and adopted on January 14, 1886. (See "General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Proceedings of Meetings of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference Association,

November 18, 1885," Record Group 3, General Conference Archives; and "General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Proceedings of Meetings of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference Association, January 14, 1886," Record Group 3, General Conference Archives). Perusal of the minutes of the meetings of the General Conference Association reveals that instead of remaining simply as a legal entity, the association became involved in administration of the church, and often found itself in conflict with the General Conference executive committee and the other auxiliary organizations.

59. The National Religious Liberty Association was established as a formal body to coordinate the denomination's approach to the problems with numerous Sunday laws that were being proposed, legislated, and enforced in many states, and contemplated by the United States Congress. In 1893, the name of the association was changed to the International Religious Liberty Association.
60. In 1898, L. A. Hoopes wrote a brief history of the Foreign Mission Board for the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*. He noted that "from the time that Elder M. B. Czechowski, a Polish Catholic, received the third angel's message in 1864 till 1887, the work of foreign missions was carried on through the General Conference officers" (L. A. Hoopes, "The Foreign Mission Board," *ARH*, November 1, 1898, 701). In 1887, an additional secretary was chosen by the General Conference to give his entire attention to the increasingly complex needs of the missionary work. The first person chosen for the position was W. C. White. In 1889, a distinct Foreign Mission Board was appointed (*General Conference Bulletin*, 1889, 43-46). Throughout its life the Foreign Mission Board stood alongside the other auxiliary organizations, each an appendage to the conference structure of the denomination. It appears that the effect of that structural arrangement was that mission was not understood as integral to the church and its nature, but as one task of many. The editor of the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* stated in 1896 that "there are four lines of effort pursued by Seventh-day Adventists in the proclamation of the gospel. These are the publishing work, educational work, health and temperance work, and missionary operations; all these, of course, being designed to be supplementary to the regular work of the ministry" (Uriah Smith, "A Bird's-eye View of the Progress of Our Work," *ARH*, 18 August 1896, 523).
61. The Seventh-day Adventist Medical Missionary and Benevolent Association was a legal corporation which was intended both to hold the properties of the denomination's medical and charitable enterprises and to promote the medical activities of the church.

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