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REPORT OF INTERVIEW OF ELDER E. E. ANDROSS WITH MRS. ELLEN G. WHITE

"Elmshaven," Sanitarium, California, Dec. 12, 1913, 2 P. M.

Elder Andross: I thought I would like to ask your counsel, Sister White, a little further about the matter we were considering the other day--the matter of wages of employees, especially physicians, in our institutions. If you have any further counsel for us with reference to the wages that our physicians should receive, we should be glad to hear it.

Mrs. Ellen G. White: If our physicians set themselves to demand higher and higher wages, the Lord will not prosper them. Over and over again this has been presented before me, during the night season. The Lord desires us to stand in a position where we can look to Him for guidance, and rely on Him for light, and follow on to know Him, whom to know aright is life eternal.

Elder Andross: The question confronting us now is, What wages should we pay our physicians? You know some of them feel that we are not dealing with them liberally; that they ought to receive a very much larger wage than they are now receiving--larger than the wage received by ministers and other workers in our cause. They urge that they can earn a large wage in worldly practice--a much larger wage than the minister could earn.

Sister White: Yes; and they will have the temptation continually before them. But in the matter of encouraging our physicians to set their own wages, we must be very guarded. I am sorry I am not able to present this matter fully as it has been opened up before me in the night season. I hope to be able to say more in the future regarding this question; but I can say now that I must continue to bear my testimony against the idea that men may be permitted to set their own wages. Let a man begin on this line, and Satan will help him wonderfully.

It is not God's plan that a man launch out on a plan of saying how much he shall receive. Let the Lord lead in these matters. When a man begins to value his

services at a certain price, he will later on increase this price; but the worst feature of such a course is the example it sets before others who are liable to yield to the same temptation. Until our brethren who are inclined to specify what they shall receive, can show that this is in accord with the example set by our Saviour, I am not ready to stand with them in any such policy. But Christ has never set us any such example. We must decide matters of this nature intelligently, in the light of the self-sacrificing life of the Lord and Master, whom we serve.

If we should adopt the policy of allowing workers to set their own wages, we would soon be in a strange condition. We can not consent to any such proposition, because it is not in harmony with God's plan for the conduct of His work. But we can help those who really need to be helped—not in response to their own testimony alone, because there is liable to creep into that a selfishness that must be guarded against; but we may render help to those who are worthy of assistance, in harmony with the united judgment of those in positions of responsibility.

God would be greatly displeased if we were to permit men to set their own wages. And if men threaten to go elsewhere to labor, unless we yield to their requests for special consideration and wages above others, let us allow them to go. Do not permit any one to drag you into a wrong policy. The Lord will not sustain any man in making demands of extraordinary wages of his brethren as a reward for continued service in the cause of God.

Our brethren in positions of responsibility must come into harmony on this matter, and not regard any man as so indispensable that he must be allowed whatever he thinks his services are worth. No one should cherish the idea that he is to be exalted above his brethren who are doing as faithful service as he is. We must have correct views on the wage question, if we expect the Lord to continue to prosper us in our work. Those who persist in following their own way, contrary to the counsels of their brethren, will find that they are on losing ground, and they will finally fail.

From the beginning, our work has been carried forward on self-sacrificing principles. Over and over again we have proved the value of these principles. And when men have attempted to turn from the way of self-denial, they have not prospered. The Lord has not blessed them in any such course.

Let us be true to God in this matter, Elder Andross. I have an intense desire that you and your wife and children shall stand in a position where you will all know that the Lord is working with you and for you.

We have known what hard times are. And we know, also, what it is to be blessed of the Lord with means. We have not hoarded this for ourselves, but have tried to help others, and we mean to continue trying to help many with the means entrusted us of God.

In planning for the advancement of the cause of God, we must have a living interest in all branches of the work. For years my husband and I labored to help our brethren to unite in self-denying service; and it is now too late in the day to adopt new standards and policies.

Elder Andross: Some of the brethren feel that a wage considerable in advance of that which the ministers receive, is for them a very small wage; it is not anything in comparison with what they could get out in the world; and so they do not count it a large wage at all. They say, for instance, that forty or fifty dollars a week is a very small wage for a competent physician and surgeon to receive; that this may be a large wage for the ministry, but not for them, because of their superior earning power. This is the way they reason.

Sister White: Yes; but I wish to say decidedly that we can not maintain any class of workers in the policy of setting their own wages; and if they are led by God, they will not continue to do it. These matters have come up often in the past, and if I had the time and the strength, I could find in my writings many things that have a direct bearing on this very question; and the outcome of following such a policy has always been against our cause, and not in favor of its progress.

Elder Andross: I am sure that you will be pleased to learn, Sister White, that we had a Board meeting last night at the Sanitarium, during which the question of the Doctor's remuneration was to be settled. Some time ago, our physician-in-chief had placed before the Board his resignation which was to take effect Jan. 1, 1914, unless the Board saw fit to increase his wage, or give him a percentage on his surgical fees. He urged that he must have the command of a larger part of his earnings than in the past. And so we met together last night, to consider the question again. Finally, after talking the matter over for a time in the Board, the Doctor arose, and said he would withdraw his resignation, and would leave the matter of his wages in the hands of the Board, and he would remain with the institution.

Sister White: On what conditions will he remain?

Elder Andross: He would withdraw his resignation, and would let the Board set his wage, and would let the matter of his wage rest there.

Sister White: Truly, then, I am relieved of a burden. I have gone through experience after experience that has taught me that the enemy of our work would be pleased to see introduced a policy regarding wages that would bring us into trial. God is not in any arrangement that permits a man to specify how much he should receive. When one says that he can not labor in one of our institutions unless he is treated just so and so, why others will feel at liberty to make similar demands. It will not do for us to adopt any policy that will open the way for such results. When this question has been up for consideration in times past, the Lord has given clear light over and over again, that no man be permitted to mark out the exact course he is to pursue; for to allow this would bring the cause very soon into a state of confusion. God will help us, if we walk in the light of His counsel.

We are coming into a place where the enemy will use against our work every advantage that it is in his power to use. We must all depend wholly upon our God, and be in a position where we can follow on to know the Lord, that we may

know His going forth is prepared as the morning. In the past, when this matter of large wages has come up for consideration, the Lord has overruled many times, and men have been saved from falling into a snare of the enemy. When men have urged their seeming necessities, we have dealt faithfully with the principles underlying rewards in God's service, and a blessing has attended our efforts. Our brethren have been led to see what the result to the cause would be in a little while, if we acceded to their requests, and they have wisely chosen a better way.

Elder Andross: It is evident that the report of the interview on that question that you had with the brethren the other day helped the Doctor to take his stand with us. After he read that, he said he would have to stay with us; he would continue his work here; he felt as if the Lord would be pleased to have it that way.

Sister White: We must do all in our power to encourage and help him, but I would never consent to any plan that permits a man to set his own wage. But if our brethren who find it difficult to live on the wages they receive, will come together in council, and study how they can help hold up and strengthen one another in the Lord, He will give them wisdom. He will not leave them to fall a prey to the devices of the enemy. I have been in this cause many years, and have given similar counsel and encouragement to many; and I do not know of a single case in which a brother has taken this counsel, and has decided to follow His Lord in the path of self-denial, but that he has said afterward, "I am glad that I have done this."

We are servants of the Most High. We desire to do His work intelligently. We must deal considerately with our faithful brethren who are bearing heavy burdens. We can not permit them to set their own wages; but in times of emergency, sickness, and distress, we can come right in and help them, just as if they were our own relatives. The Lord has privileged me to do this many times, and has blessed me in it. Our brethren who prove as true as steel to this cause,

should be helped in time of need. This is the position on which I stand, and I want you to stand here, also.

Elder Andross: Well, I have been trying to stand on the right side. And I feel that the Lord has helped me.

Sister White: Yes. I do want you to stand independent of all such ideas,-- that you can set your own wage. The time will come when we shall find the Lord can not prosper us in any such action; for if one is permitted to do it, others must be. I have been desirous of seeing you, so that I might tell you to be true to the Lord and to His cause, and to right principles, and to go along and do the best you can, and to put your trust in the Lord; and do not give your children one single chapter of experience of having their own way.

The Lord does not leave men to be the sport of the enemy, if they choose to walk in the path of self-sacrifice for the sake of the cause they love. I have proved the Lord; and I speak from experience. Again and again men have attempted to introduce a policy of paying high wages, and this has proved to be a failure, and they have had to acknowledge it. The Lord does not mean to leave us. He will be our frontguard and our rearward. The men who have chosen to follow their own selfish way, have been brought to naught. They have been brought into very hard places. Then some of them have come to us for help. Did we deny them?--No, indeed; no indeed! We gave them help. Those who are acquainted with us know how we have given assistance. I want you to stand just as straight, just as fully on the side of the Lord as it is possible for a man to stand; and you want to stand there.

Elder Andross: Yes, I do. Thank you, Sister White, for these words of counsel. Good-by for today. --E. G. White MS 14, 1913.