

Ellen G. White Estate, Inc.

PROPRIETOR OF

# ELLEN G. WHITE Publications



Office Address:

GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS  
TAKOMA PARK, WASHINGTON 12, D.C.

March 24, 1960

*See Letter 32, 1912*

Oak Park Academy  
Nevada, Iowa

Dear Brother

Your letter written February 4 reached us on February 8 at a time when I was in Poland. This is my first opportunity to get to the pile of unanswered letters that I found awaiting me on my return. I am sorry for this. We are anxious to deal with our correspondence promptly, but sometimes the pressure of work, and absence from the office makes this impossible.

You asked if we had any information from the writings of Sister White on the question of students being permitted to blacken their faces to impersonate negroes. I cannot write to you concerning the denominational stand on this point. This I shall refer to another. I can give you some material which reflects somewhat Sister White's attitude.

First of all, let's go back to very early days, 1867. James White is writing for the issue of the Review and Herald of April 30. He gives what he calls a report, and deals with their travels in Michigan. Near the close of his article, he introduces this point in connection with some things which have taken place at the Monterey church.

"The youth of <sup>at</sup> the church, as is the case almost everywhere are crazed with the spirit of the world. We were pained to learn that under the name of a concert, which passed for innocent ~~pleasure~~ amusement, a sort of a young theater had been held, in which the world and Sabbath-keepers joined, some with blackened faces. If these things are right, then all our past teachings and experience are wrong. Mrs. W. appealed to the church old and young to stand aloof from such things, and we both entered our protest against them. Rather go to a full grown theater; for there you will see the evil undressed of a profession of innocent, religious sport. We do not argue for a grave, sad, cast-down monotony. This is good for neither

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~~neither~~ health nor growth of grace. It is even the individual's privilege to be cheerful in hope, making the best of this world, and all of the next." Review and Herald, April 30, 1867.

In this case, blackened faces are particularly mentioned.

Coming down to more modern times, we find that on July 5, 1912 a program was held at the St. Helena Sanitarium for the benefit of the patients and the sanitarium family. The program is described by one who was present, as follows:

"The Fourth of July program at the St. Helena Sanitarium included Band Music, and Flag Raising at 9:00 A.M.; Instrumental Music during dinner hour; Base Ball Game at 2:30 P.M. From 7:30 to 9:00 P.M. the program consisted of Band Music, Vocal and Instrumental Solos, interspersed with various sports, including some athletic feats, and also some clownish maneuvers by young men with blackened faces and grotesque attire.

"The purpose of those planning the entertainment was to interest patients and helpers so they would not desire to go to a neighboring town where there was a Barbeque and all sorts of sports and amusements."

On July 5, Sister White, who had not attended this program, nor had been advised as to what the program consisted of, wrote a letter addressed to the Sanitarium family at St. Helena.

(Copy from pamphlet "Recreation", p. 37 - 42)