

CORNFLAKES, GOD, AND CIRCUMCISION:
JOHN HARVEY KELLOGG AND
TRANSATLANTIC HEALTH REFORM

by

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ABSTRACT

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The health reform movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth century impacted American and European societies in profound ways. These reforms, while usually represented in a national context, existed within a transatlantic framework that facilitated a multitude of exchanges and transfers. John Harvey Kellogg—surgeon, health reformer, and inventor of cornflakes—developed a transatlantic network of health reformers, medical practitioners, and scientists to improve his own reforms and establish new ones. Through intercultural transfer Kellogg borrowed, modified, and implemented European health reform practices at his Battle Creek Sanitarium in the United States. These transfers facilitated developments in reform movements such as vegetarianism, light therapy, sex, and eugenics. While health reform movements were a product of the modern world in which science and rationality were given preference, Kellogg infused his religious, Seventh-day Adventist beliefs into the reforms he practiced. In some cases health reform movements were previously semi-religious in nature and Kellogg merely accentuated an already present narrative of religious obligation for reform. These beliefs in salvific health reform centered around Kellogg's desire to perfect the human body physically and spiritually in an attempt to make it fit for translation into heaven.

To my wife and family for their long-suffering support and patience in having to hear about Kellogg on a constant basis, and to Thomas Adam...professor, mentor, friend

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Introduction

I.1 From Cornflakes to Obscurity

Most Americans, at one point or another in their lives, have poured out a bowl of Kellogg's Cornflakes for their breakfast. The flaked cereal fostered generations of breakfast cereals and became a household name in the United States. Indeed, when American singer Bing Crosby recorded "What's More American" in 1968 the first line was: "What's more American than cornflakes?"¹ But cornflakes spread far beyond the borders of the United States, and breakfasts from Europe to Japan were inundated with the phenomenon of cold cereal. Yet, for all the popularity of cornflakes little is known of their inventor, John Harvey Kellogg (1852-1943).

Born in Tyrone, Michigan in 1852, Kellogg was perhaps the most influential health reformer of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. In 1876 he became the director of the then Western Health Reform Institute in Battle Creek, Michigan, which he soon renamed the Battle Creek Sanitarium. From this seat of power, Kellogg reigned supreme over an empire of health, with branch sanitariums dotted throughout the United States, Mexico, and Europe. These branch sanitariums followed the models of health reform he established at his Battle Creek Sanitarium, such as a vegetarian diet, exposure to fresh air and sunlight, exercise, dress reform, avoidance of coffee, tea, alcohol, tobacco, and other stimulants, as well as treatments such as hydrotherapy, light therapy, and massage therapy. Kellogg was also an avid inventor, utilizing the newest technologies to aid in his quest for good health practices. His inventions ranged from mechanical exercise devices and light baths (the precursor of the modern infrared sauna) to

¹ Bing Crosby, "What's More American?," by Kadish Millet, in *Thoroughly Modern Bing*, Stateside SL 10257, 12"LP, 1968.

various health food products such as peanut butter, protose (a protein, meat substitute), and, of course, cornflakes.

Kellogg's career in health reform stemmed from his religious roots, and, for most of his life, the Seventh-day Adventist Church shared in his cause. The Seventh-day Adventist Church was a Christian denomination that came out of the Second Great Awakening (1790-1850) in the United States. Originally part of the Millerite Movement of the 1830s and 1840s (itself made up of converts from Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian backgrounds), the Seventh-day Adventists reinterpreted the prophetic understandings of the Millerite leader William Miller. Miller had predicted that Christ would return on October 22, 1844. When the Advent failed to happen as he predicted (an event known as the Great Disappointment) many left his movement to go back to their original denominations. But some kept the faith of Christ's soon coming and moved on from Millerism to become Adventists. Out of these believers, some began to recognize the seventh day of the week (Saturday) as the true day of worship as opposed to Sunday. This group eventually organized as the Seventh-day Adventist Church during the Civil War in 1863.²

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, as their name implied, was characterized by two major beliefs—the soon Advent of Christ, and Saturday (seventh-day) worship. But they also possessed a fervent desire for scriptural study of the Bible, an immanent need to spread the gospel, and a passion for health reform. The denomination's foray into health reform was, predominantly, a result of the work of one of its cofounders, Ellen G. White. Many in the denomination considered White to be a prophetess as she claimed to receive visions and dreams from God, and it was her 1863 health vision that orientated the denomination towards health reform as a major tenet of Seventh-day Adventist mission. Health care is still a major part of the

² For a more detailed account and full explanation of Seventh-day Adventist theological development, see George R. Knight, *A Search for Identity: The Development of Seventh-day Adventist Beliefs* (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2000).

Seventh-day Adventist Church, with denominational hospitals and medical schools throughout the United States and the world.

Yet, for all the success of Kellogg and his denomination's health reform, his life and work are largely unknown. Only three major works on Kellogg have been published in the last fifty years.³ In 1970, Richard W. Schwarz wrote, *John Harvey Kellogg, M.D.*, the first full biography of Kellogg. As his work was the first full account of Kellogg's life, Schwarz's narrative tended to be used as the foundational text for Kellogg's history—both of the following major studies relied heavily on him for their narratives on Kellogg's personal life. Thus, for the last five decades, Schwarz possessed the monopoly on Kellogg's life with few deviations from his original text. But this is problematic. While Schwarz's work incorporated a vast amount of Kellogg's personal correspondence and interviews with those who had worked with Kellogg, he was nonetheless limited in his study. Kellogg's personal papers were donated in two parts to the University of Michigan in 1962 and 1972, meaning not everything was available to Schwarz before he finished his work as a dissertation in 1964. Added to this, the analogue nature of historical research at the time limited him to a confined number of viewpoints. None of this is to say that Schwarz's work is not useful, and the limitations of his research do not negate the excellence of the central narrative, but it is, for the most part, dated.

After over four decades of academic silence on Kellogg, Brian C. Wilson published *Dr. John Harvey Kellogg and the Religion of Biologic Living*. Wilson's work was not meant to be an exhaustive biography of Kellogg, nor was it so much concerned with all aspects of his health reform. As an historian of religion, Wilson saw Kellogg "as an important example of an

³ There was an earlier work entitled *Cornflake Crusade* published in 1957. Though this was more an overall narrative of health reform (predominantly of health foods), the author, Gerald Carson, centered it around Kellogg. The text is meant to be less a historical work and more a popular narrative. As Carson noted, his work was intended for pleasurable reading and not an academic audience. See, Gerald Carson, *Cornflake Crusade* (New York: Rinehart & Company, Inc., 1957).

overlooked category of theological discourse: the doctor as theologian.”⁴ Wilson’s work sought to emphasize the religious context of Kellogg’s health reform and exemplified the underlying spiritual foundations of his work. He correctly surmised that when Kellogg was removed from Seventh-day Adventist Church membership in 1907 he did not abandon his religious sentiments (a belief many held), but rather transitioned and shaped his Adventist beliefs into a new religion—biologic living.

Medical historian Howard Markel published the most recent work on Kellogg, *The Kelloggs: The Battling Brothers of Battle Creek*, in 2017. Originally meant as an exposé of the relationship between the Kellogg brothers (John Harvey and Will Keith) and their feud over their cornflake invention, Markel deviated somewhat to cover more aspects of John Harvey’s health reform principles. While the study was fair in revealing the work-abuse Will Keith suffered at the hands of his brother, their feuding and separation over cornflakes, and Will Keith’s well-founded success as a cereal magnate, Markel inevitably spent more time discussing John Harvey. But this was perhaps predictable—John’s work, much like his presence, dominated his younger brother through much of their lives. Therefore, any study of Will Keith (or in this case both brothers) is inexorably built upon the context of John’s life and work.

Both Wilson and Markel’s studies are inherently biographic in their approaches, perhaps Wilson’s least of all, yet this is not surprising given both authors focus on Kellogg’s life and work as a whole. Indeed, Kellogg’s life, his conflicts, his personality, and his inventions (especially his cornflakes) make for an excellent story. But this is a problem when considering the history of Kellogg within the larger theme of health reform. Wilson and Markel, starting with

⁴ Brian C. Wilson, *Dr. John Harvey Kellogg and the Religion of Biologic Living* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2014), xiii.

Schwarz, portray Kellogg in the same context—as an American character in an American story of American ideas.

I.2 Kellogg as a Transatlantic Figure

In many of the numerous conversations I have had with individuals curious about my work on Kellogg, most are surprised—even bothered—when I explain his European connections in his health reform practices. Many have exclaimed or objected with lines such as: “I have never heard that,” or “I have never read that.” The latter is harder to comprehend. All three major works on Kellogg mention his European excursions. Schwarz noted that Kellogg visited Europe “to improve his abilities as a physician and surgeon” and that Vienna, where Kellogg studied in 1883, “was probably the world’s chief center of medical knowledge.”⁵ But Schwarz only dedicates about two pages to Kellogg’s work in Europe, and provides scant detail as to his studies there. Wilson spent only a few lines discussing Kellogg’s European travels and studies, but did note his training under the eminent Theodor Billroth of Vienna. Markel did more justice to Kellogg’s European ventures and observed that when Kellogg came back from his trips, he was “loaded with techniques he wanted to replicate” at the Sanitarium in Battle Creek.⁶ Markel was correct in Kellogg’s transference of ideas but only extended these transfers to Kellogg’s surgical techniques.

Unlike these previous works, this study seeks to remove Kellogg from the restriction of the American context. In order to improve his abilities as a physician, Kellogg removed himself from his own cultural context and mined European health principles to bring back to North

⁵ Richard W. Schwarz, *John Harvey Kellogg, M.D.* (Nashville, Tennessee: Southern Publishing Association, 1970), 34.

⁶ Howard Markel, *The Kelloggs: The Battling Brothers of Battle Creek* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2017), 196.

America with him. These transfers went far beyond surgical techniques and extended to the very health reforms and techniques Kellogg practiced. In some instances, such as in vegetarianism and sex, European influence was less directly apparent, but the concepts and practices of European progenitors passed on through European migration to the Western Hemisphere. Perceptions and practices regarding vegetarianism and sex were established in the United States before Kellogg's career, but were inherently products of European thought and traditions. In other cases, such as in light therapy, the transfer of European ideas is obvious. Kellogg's work was therefore not entirely a story of American ingenuity and invention, but rather a product of the transatlantic world of the nineteenth and twentieth century. This does not mean Kellogg was wholly a European figure, but he was not completely American either. A more correct view of Kellogg is as a nexus in a transatlantic network of health reform.

In placing Kellogg within the context of transatlantic history, we may more accurately understand the scope and function of his health reform principles.⁷ More importantly, Kellogg's life and work are presented in a more suitable format. Portraying Kellogg as an American character in an American story, perpetuating American ideas, simply ignores the blatant connections and influences of Europe upon him and the wider topic of health reform. With his network of health reform spanning the transatlantic world—and with intentions to move to a global health movement—Kellogg cannot be solely located within an American milieu.

⁷ For examples of transatlantic contexts see Thomas Bender, *A Nation Among Nations: America's Place in World History* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006); Ian Tyrrell, *Transnational Nation: United States History in Global Perspective Since 1789* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); and Colin G. Calloway, Gerd Gemünden, and Susanne Zantop, eds., *Germans and Indians: Fantasies, Encounters, Projections* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2002).

I.3 Kellogg as an Agent of Intercultural Transfer

The methodology of intercultural transfer is the foundation of this study. Intercultural transfer is an excellent tool for writing in the transatlantic context, as it provides a method for documenting the connections between different cultures and rejects the national paradigm so often found in historical narratives. Intercultural transfer is predicated on the recognition that cultural ideas and phenomena are the result of constant cultural contact and borrowing in the form of transfer. These transfers do not occur at the level of the state or nation, and instead depend on individual actors. These actors are termed *agents of transfer*, and take the form of professionals and the leisure traveling class.

The process of transfer via these agents followed a specific format, and can be summed up in the following steps: 1. The agents of transfer visits a foreign culture (culture of origin) and witnesses an idea or phenomenon that they admire and decide to attempt to transfer and implement said phenomenon in their own culture (receiving culture); 2. In the process of transfer, the agent of transfer modifies the idea to fit into the context of the receiving culture, thereby helping to facilitate its acceptance; 3. The receiving culture either accepts or rejects the idea; 4. The idea is retransferred to the originating culture.

Intercultural transfer historian Thomas Adam states that intercultural transfer is predicated “on the belief that societies are far more open to exchanges beyond and below the nation state than is commonly accepted among historians.”⁸ However, this did not mean that agents of transfer always announced the origin of the ideas they were transferring. Existing prejudices against an originating culture could keep agents of transfer from being fully truthful about who developed the ideas they utilized, and in many cases they did not record their

⁸ Thomas Adam, *Intercultural Transfers and the Making of the Modern World: Sources and Contexts* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 5.

transfers. This provides some issues for an historian utilizing intercultural transfer as a methodology. The sources for recreating a transfer are sometimes nonexistent. This is also a fundamental problem within the wider context of transatlantic history. Through centuries of migrations, exchanges, and transfers, sources were often lost, destroyed, or never created in the first place. In some other cases, as Adam notes, “ideas travel back and forth between one or more societies and sometimes undergo so many changes that an idea might no longer be recognized as originating in a specific society by the members of that society.”⁹ These constant transfers and changes can make it very difficult to determine the origin of ideas and practices in the transatlantic context. Though not always necessary, historians of transatlantic history and intercultural transfer must often use a method of comparison between cultures and logically infer a connection or transfer.

While the nineteenth century saw an enormous leap in media production, such as newspapers, books, magazines and journals, and radio and film, such networks were not the same as modern global communications today. Just because a book was published in Britain did not mean it was sold in North America. Often, in the nineteenth century, an agent of transfer was still needed to facilitate the book’s physical movement from one culture to another. This is not to say that there was a lack of exchange of intellectual products, in some cases individuals purchased and transferred whole libraries. In many cases, an agent of transfer did not have to travel to a culture of origin to transfer an idea. Perceiving the idea in a foreign book, journal, or magazine, agents of transfer could just as easily utilize it without ever coming into contact with the originator of the idea. This is not unlike Bruno Latour’s Actor-Network-Theory, in which he describes his term “intermediary” as something that “transports meaning or force without

⁹ Ibid.

transformation.”¹⁰ In this case the intermediary can be a book from a foreign author that an agent of transfer wishes to take an idea from and implement in their receiving culture. Latour’s term “mediators” is similar to agents of transfer in that mediators “transform, translate, distort, and modify the meaning or the elements they are suppose to carry.”¹¹

With his travels and studies in various countries, as well as his proclivity for transferring health reform ideas and practices, Kellogg is an ideal agent of transfer. His books, journal articles, and lectures are filled with a plethora of ideas from various cultures and sources, and in many cases (such as light therapy) he named whom he worked with and how they impacted his health reform practices. In other cases (such as vegetarianism and sex) Kellogg’s relationship to other cultures is more difficult to flesh out. But his established transatlantic networks of health reformers, medical professionals, and professors constantly impacted his work.

The source material for Kellogg’s health reform movements is vast. In order to facilitate a work of history more than a biography I have stayed predominantly away from using Kellogg’s correspondence (excepting the first chapter). Kellogg’s correspondence is immense, yet it is mostly comprised of his exchanges with other Americans, as well as his numerous (and tedious) letters to officials and members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Thus, examples of intercultural transfer, my main focus, are not readily available from such sources. Choosing instead to utilize Kellogg’s source material outside of his correspondence—in this case his medical and reform books, as well as his lectures and articles—I modeled my work around Jonathan Spiro’s work on eugenics and Madison Grant. In *Defending the Master Race*, Spiro faced the issues of a “historiographical desert,” in that Grant’s family burned his personal papers,

¹⁰ Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 39.

¹¹ Ibid.

as did many of Grant's associates.¹² Yet, Spiro was able to produce a 400-page text utilizing a biographical sketch of Grant to connect various topics within the eugenic movement. This study has much the same goal in mind. My intention is not to write a comprehensive biography, but rather to employ a biographical framework of Kellogg's life on which to examine the intercultural transfers present in health reform movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

While my study predominantly covers both the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, Kellogg's "golden age" of reform was in the late nineteenth century. In some chapters, in order to provide a better context to the topic overall, I have reached back into antiquity (vegetarianism) and medieval Europe (sex). But most instances of intercultural transfer within Kellogg's work occurred in the nineteenth century or before. This study focuses on the transatlantic context of health reform; specifically Western Europe, as this is where Kellogg spent much of his time learning, though he did travel extensively throughout Eastern Europe as well. Europe was the predominant source of Kellogg's ideas on health reform and medicine, but influences from India are also considered, as is Kellogg's desire for a global health reform movement.

I.4 Organization

This study focuses on Kellogg's work through topical chapters. Choosing which topics of health reform to write on was a difficult process. The sheer number of health reform topics he was involved in throughout his life is daunting to say the least. I chose my topics based on the availability of sources, as well as the impact they had on society. I at first intended to write my

¹² Jonathan Peter Spiro, *Defending the Master Race: Conservation, Eugenics, and the Legacy of Madison Grant* (Burlington, Vermont: University of Vermont Press, 2009), xiv.

chapters based on a singular formula, but as I started writing I felt it more natural to let the varying contexts and sources dictate chapter formations. For instance, the chapters on vegetarianism and sex both cover topics that are extremely old historically speaking, necessitating a large overview of the historical contexts involved in their development and eventual transfers through culture. In both of these I have attempted to place Kellogg in the wider context of the topic itself. In contrast, the chapters on light therapy and eugenics required different approaches based on the nature of the sources, and the need for a smoother narrative. These topics required a more narrow approach rather than broad scopes to help the reader better realize the process of Kellogg's intercultural transfers.

The first chapter is meant to be foundational, in that I wish the reader to realize how Kellogg's religious beliefs defined him and directly influenced his work. This chapter is the longest of the five because the attempt to pinpoint an individual's religious beliefs is not an easy task. In the context of Kellogg, the narrative of his religious beliefs is extremely convoluted not only by his own writings and language, but also due to no shortage of Seventh-day Adventist literature that sought to define a particular narrative of his faith (in this case his alleged doctrine of pantheism). In order to document my interpretations of Kellogg's faith, I determined it was necessary to include as many primary sources as feasible—predominantly through an analysis of the letters between Kellogg and Ellen White. My intention is that this chapter will set an overarching context for the others.

As vegetarianism was such a huge, dominating factor in Kellogg's work, as well as the basis for the invention of cornflakes for which he is so well known, it seemed almost obligatory to include it in my study. This second chapter is purposefully broad in scope to accommodate the

enormous amount of time and space it covers. Yet, through an examination of his particular take on the subject, I attempt to secure Kellogg's place in the wider history of vegetarianism.

The third chapter focuses on sex, or rather, how Kellogg approached sex in terms of salvation. While sex was part of health reform, full knowledge of sexual diseases was still lacking in the nineteenth century. Kellogg's attempts to control both marital and illicit sex required an examination of what those two terms meant throughout history. In order to accomplish this I followed the interpretations of illicit and permissible sex throughout European and American history.

When I originally outlined my study, chapter four was intended to be on hydrotherapy. There was an abundance of sources and clear lines of intercultural transfer, yet light therapy had the appeal of elusiveness. Light therapy is perhaps one of the least known of Kellogg's reforms in terms of historical literature. It at best receives a few paragraphs of attention and at worst a passing mention in a sentence. But light therapy is not only as transatlantic as my other chapters, it is truly a remarkable narrative of how something most take for granted today saved countless lives in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, especially those of children. I also look at the cultural impact of light therapy, which few realize plays a huge role in many modern concepts and designs.

The last chapter is on a topic that, unfortunately, is once again becoming relevant in modern society. The eugenic movement is a stain on the history of health reforms and progressivism, and few are aware of Kellogg's involvement in its development. My intension is not only to demonstrate Kellogg's interactions with this transatlantic movement, but also to show how his interpretation of it was the culmination of everything he worked for in his reforms. Of

all the chapters this is perhaps the most relevant at the moment, but Kellogg's position on eugenics is far from what one might suspect.

The nature of Kellogg's health reform movements was a mixture of medical science with religion, and the chapters reflect the constant intermingling of these two elements. In some ways, this work is as much about religion as it is about health reform, for in Kellogg's mind, they were very much the same. This religious undertone is visible throughout my study and comes to a single point at the end. I should note that when I began my research it was not my intention to include religion, but even a short amount of time spent with Kellogg's sources is enough to convince one that any serious study of him cannot be attempted without a consideration of his faith.

Chapter 1

The Gospel of Health

1.1 Conflicting Giants

In the popular 2009 movie *Angels & Demons*, taken from a Dan Brown novel of the same name, Camerlengo Patrick McKenna revived an old controversy when his character gave a speech on science and religion: “We are at war...If science is allowed to claim the power of creation what is left for God?”¹ Brown’s novel, and subsequent movie, centered on the debated “conflict thesis” first supposed by John Draper and Andrew Dickson White, who, in the late nineteenth century, proffered that science was and would always be at war with religion (specifically Christianity).² This debate is as old as the scientific method, with those agreeing that science conflicts with religion and those who believe that God gave man science. Both sides have dug further into their respective trenches in this attritional war of ideas, with little compromise but plenty of vitriolic dialogue. Noted historian of science, Ronald Numbers, stated that: “Despite the efforts of less bellicose historians during the past quarter century or so to craft a more accurate and less prejudicial narrative, the notion of warfare between science and religion continues to thrive, particularly at both ends of the politicotheological spectrum.”³

Nowhere does faith and science cross paths more than perhaps in the practice of medicine. Religion has long claimed access to supernatural power to heal and assist doctors in treatments, and modern medicine has pushed for the recognition of human-led scientific triumph

¹ Tom Hanks, Ewan McGregor, and Stellan Skarsgård, *Angels & Demons*, BD, directed by Ron Howard (Culver

² See John William Draper, *History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science* (London: Henry S. King & Co., 1875) and Andrew Dickson White, *A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1896).

³ Ronald L. Numbers, *Science and Christianity in Pulpit and Pew* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 3.

over disease. Hospitals that push for greater medical research achievement frequently struggle to contextualize their often sectarian foundations, either downplaying the role of religion in their corporate history or marginalizing it in a fervor of medical professionalism. This crisis of identity stems from an inner battle over health care origins, and a pathological denial of religious affiliation in medicine. Western hospitals were originally founded as charitable enterprises to further the Christian principle of healing the sick and taking care of the poor who were disproportionately sick. As the modern and postmodern world developed, hospitals and their functions were continually placed in a position of combatant ideas—religious sentiment was forsaken in favor of the certainty of medical science and, correspondingly, the Christian sentiment of charity was marginalized to make way for the enormous profits selling and insuring health could produce. Histories of hospitals document the transition from religious formations to modernity, and, for the most part, seek to contextualize these movements as organic and inevitable.⁴ Victoria Sweet, herself a medical doctor, opposed the idea of an inescapable secularization of medicine when she noted that something seemed to be missing from the terminology that defined modern medicine. She concluded that the central function of medicine was love—which is, not coincidentally, the core tenet of Christianity—and that “the doctor-patient relationship was, above all, a relationship.”⁵

Thus, the historic role of religion in medical foundations cannot be easily ignored. Nor can we simply remove religious sentiment from situations where healing and a medical “miracle” are desired. There is a reason why many hospitals—both private and state funded—

⁴ See David Rosner, *A Once Charitable Enterprise: Hospitals and Health Care in Brooklyn and New York, 1885-1915* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Morris J. Vogel, *The Invention of the Modern Hospital: Boston 1870-1930* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980); and Lindsay Granshaw and Roy Porter, eds., *The Hospital in History* (London: Routledge, 1989).

⁵ Victoria Sweet, *God's Hotel: A Doctor, a Hospital, and a Pilgrimage to the Heart of Medicine* (New York: Riverhead Books, 2012), 388. See also Mary Risley, *House of Healing: The Story of the Hospital* (New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1961), 273-275.

have spiritual services such as chaplains, and built-in physical chapels. The very hospital I was born in has several paintings in its main lobby depicting Jesus Christ assisting surgeons and doctors in patient care. As I grew older I many times questioned the purpose of these illustrations: Were they simply a reflection of the hospital's sectarian roots or did the doctors of that institution really believe Christ was standing over their shoulders and guiding their hands? The simple fact is, as much as many would like to see religion removed from science, within medicine the belief that God or some other higher power can assist in healing or use doctors as instruments of healing prevails as a dominant characteristic of American healthcare.

This phenomenon is not coincidental and finds its roots in the health reform movements of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Early reformers such as Sylvester Graham (1794-1851) were in fact denominational ministers—in Graham's case he was a Presbyterian minister. The health reform movement in America reached a pinnacle towards the end of the nineteenth century, and it found no greater ally than in the Christian denomination of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Spearheading this denominational-led reform movement was Dr. John Harvey Kellogg, who was the center of Adventist health reform for 31 years from his takeover of the Western Health Reform Institute (soon to be renamed the Battle Creek Sanitarium) in 1876 till his removal from the denomination in 1907. There is much debate surrounding the impact of Kellogg's faith on his work, especially post 1907 where many see his break with the church as a sudden turning point away from sectarianism. Historian Howard Markel opined that Kellogg's "forced expulsion from the Adventist Church may have been the best thing that happened to his medical career," since it emancipated him from "a minority Christian denomination in a world where science was increasingly trumping faith."⁶ While it is easy to see Kellogg as a radical and prodigal son of the Seventh-day Adventist Church who rejected his faith in the pursuit of

⁶ Markel, *The Kelloggs*, 170.

medical science, it would be reckless to adopt such an assertion without examining his religious background.

Kellogg's religious faith was the focal point of his life and formed the foundation of his understanding of his own medical work and reform movements. As late as 1901 Kellogg professed to Ellen White (the prophetess of the Seventh-day Adventist Church) his belief that his work was the work of God, writing: "This is God's work. It is everlasting truth. It is in my very bones. I am nothing without it, or apart from it, I cannot separate from it, it will not let me go, and I am not the least bit inclined to want to let it go."⁷ To imply that Kellogg in 1907 easily and/or readily abandoned the religious understandings that had guided his entire life is absurd. Kellogg not only contextualized his life's work with its religious foundations, but found in his faith a calling to serve God that was as strong as that of any minister.

While Kellogg was reared in the Adventist community, it is clear from his writings that their theology was not the only influence upon his personal faith. Frequent trips to Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East deeply impacted him, and he was always academically inclined, open-minded, and desired to absorb as much from other cultures and their practices as possible. Given these traits, it is worth exploring the possible effects these various cultural exposures had on Kellogg's personal faith and his practices in health reform, especially his European contacts as he was mostly exposed to Roman Catholicism. While he may not have credited these experiences directly, they may account for some of the various "heretical" beliefs that surfaced in his later life.

Understanding the role of religion in Kellogg's life and his struggle with the only church he ever belonged to requires an examination of a central relationship. The formative years of his

⁷ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, March 9, 1901, 15421-o, Incoming Correspondence, Ellen G. White Estate, Silver Spring, Maryland (hereafter cited as EGW Estate).

life, from about age twelve to his early twenties, were predominantly spent not with his own mother but with Ellen White. We know very little about Kellogg's early life at his parent's home, but it is apparent that he suffered from emotional abuse perpetrated by his father, who himself may have suffered from depression.⁸ This might account for Kellogg's eagerness to move into a new home with the Whites, when, in 1864, Ellen's husband, James White, invited young John to apprentice as a typesetter and learn the trade of printing. For almost the next ten years the Whites would serve as Kellogg's surrogate family as he lived with them in their home in Battle Creek. The culmination of this familial relationship came when the Whites offered to personally pay for Kellogg to go to medical school. The doctor thus found himself in a unique mother-son relationship with the prophetess of the Seventh-day Adventist Church—a bond that would dictate his actions for over half his life.

While it is necessary to examine Kellogg's religious foundations in order to contextualize his health reform work, I by no means intend for this to be a sweeping analysis of his religious disagreements with his denomination. Such a subject could easily fill several volumes with complex issues and the actions of petty men. The fact that this topic is still contested and Kellogg's memory attacked through Seventh-day Adventist propaganda only compounds the issue.⁹ My intent is not to write an exposé on Kellogg's controversy with the church. Rather, my goal is to give the reader an understanding of the power Kellogg's faith had on his health reform principles and programs, and to show that Kellogg positioned himself as a nexus between science and religion to show they need not be separate.

⁸ See Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, December 3, 1902, 17188, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate; and Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, December 7, 1904, 19650, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

⁹ Kellogg's controversy with the church was recently listed as #5 out of 7 major crises that almost destroyed the Seventh-day Adventist Church at the 2017 Annual Council of the General Conference Executive Committee of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. See the report of Executive Secretary G. T. Ng. <https://executivecommittee.adventist.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/17AC-Secretarys-Report.pdf> (September 19, 2018).

1.2 Son of a Prophet: Kellogg, Ellen G. White, and Their Church

Out of the few examinations of Kellogg's life and the plethora of books concerning Ellen White, no one has ever fully examined the extent of their relationship. In the first biography of Kellogg (c.1970) historian Richard Schwarz mentions their relationship in passing, stating that to "the Whites, John became almost another son. In later years Ellen White wrote that her husband had acted more the father to John Kellogg than to his own sons."¹⁰ However, Schwarz does not elaborate further, nor does he offer any evidence other than the conclusion that a young and impressionable Kellogg might naturally find a ready mother and father figure in the Whites. The same can be said of Jonathan Butler, who, in a chapter on Ellen White's life, noted "the good Dr. John Kellogg had once been as close as a son to her."¹¹ Butler stops his analysis of Kellogg and White there, and further examination reveals that he based his opinion on that of Schwarz. This is understandable in light of the fact that Butler's goal was to give a short biographic sketch of White. But it does demonstrate the hold Schwarz possesses over current scholarship regarding Kellogg's personal life.

It was not until 1999, in an issue of *Adventist Review* (one of the SDA church's most prominent periodicals) that the relationship between Kellogg and White would be given another serious consideration. Then associate editor, Bill Knott, wrote a cover story on the recent opening of the Dr. J. H. Kellogg Discovery Center in Battle Creek. Knott commented on the irony of the center and noted that "no one would be more surprised" than Kellogg "to discover that there is a Seventh-day Adventist building...celebrating the life and work of John Harvey

¹⁰ Schwarz, *John Harvey Kellogg, M.D.*, 25.

¹¹ Jonathan M. Butler, "A Portrait" in *Ellen Harmon White: American Prophet*, ed. Terrie Dopp Aamodt, Gary Land, and Ronald L. Numbers (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 22.

Kellogg.”¹² Suggesting that since it might seem Adventists were “rehabilitating” their relationship with Kellogg, Knott thought it was perhaps appropriate to give readers a refresher course on Kellogg’s history with the church. His re-evaluation of the conflicts between Kellogg and the church took on an apologetic tone, with the admission that “for more than 90 years Kellogg’s reputation among Seventh-day Adventists has been anything but healthy.”¹³ But apologetics soon gave way to a familiar story of a wayward son of the church who let pride, avarice, and disbelief separate him from his religion and Ellen White. Yet again, the narrative held fast to Schwarz’s testament on Kellogg, and it was obvious that his conclusions influenced Knott’s reading of texts and events.¹⁴

As orthodox as Knott’s take on the Kellogg-Adventist controversy was, he paid attention to Kellogg and White’s relationship more than any author before him. Recognizing that “relatively few Adventists in the late twentieth century appreciate how completely the stories of John Harvey Kellogg and Ellen White are interconnected,” Knott notes that “there was no other person who had so great an influence on his [Kellogg’s] life during the next 60 years as the woman who modestly referred to herself as ‘a messenger of the Lord.’”¹⁵ Unlike most authors before him, Knott offered a very brief case study of White’s letters to Kellogg in a following article—its title, “A Motherly Concern,” divulged his intimation at the close relationship John

¹² Bill Knott, “Another Visit to the Doctor: A New Adventist Museum Honors a Prodigal Who Never Came Home,” *Adventist Review* (May 27, 1999): 8.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Although this is not surprising as Knott was a member and employee of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and was writing in a denominational magazine for a denominational audience. To deviate from the accepted Adventist definition of Kellogg’s positions against the church (Schwarz’s interpretation) could have been somewhat perilous for a person in his position.

¹⁵ Knott, “Another Visit to the Doctor,” 9. I would note here that there is still debate among present-day Adventists as to the role Ellen White both had and still has in the church. While she rejected the mantle of a prophet, and would correct those who used that term (preferring “messenger” instead), this did not stop Adventists of her time from assuming that every word she spoke came from God. This confusing mix of beliefs would later complicate her relationship to Kellogg, and it continues to complicate doctrine in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. For better context of this debate, see George Knight, *A Search for Identity: The development of Seventh-day Adventist Beliefs* (Maryland: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2000).

had with Ellen.¹⁶ However, he stopped short of identifying it as a true mother-son relationship, dismissing such intimate language as a practiced “motherly tone” White commonly used “with literally hundreds of persons to whom she wrote.”¹⁷ But this fails to take into full account Kellogg’s residency with the White’s and their financial support of his medical education (both of which Knott mentions), along with how Kellogg understood such language from his adoptive mother. Knott admirably brings Kellogg and White closer together, but is hesitant to admit that their relationship was anything more than close friends.

Even if White’s tone was common for her letters to several individuals, this does not discount the unique relationship she had with Kellogg during his upbringing and it certainly does not negate his familial loyalty to her. To fully understand this mother-son bond I endeavored to read every letter between White and Kellogg. Of the some 220 letters between them—ranging from 1877 to 1906—he refers to her as his mother approximately 18 times.¹⁸ Beyond this, the nature of their letters, especially from him, were far more intimate than from a parishioner to his spiritual leader. Kellogg revealed as much when he wrote “I have always spoken to you of my heart thoughts more freely than to my own mother or to any one, in fact, and your motherly counsel and advice and kindly interest in me since early boyhood, I think I feel some appreciation for.”¹⁹

Over the course of his professional career Kellogg maintained an enormous amount of correspondence. His letters to most individuals, while courteous and well intentioned, were short and to the point. In reality, he was not only a doctor—with all the duties inherent—but also the superintendent of the Battle Creek Sanitarium, as well as one of their few surgeons. As such, he

¹⁶ See Bill Knott, “A Motherly Concern: Ellen White’s Personal Letters to John Harvey Kellogg,” *Adventist Review* (May 27, 1999), 14-15.

¹⁷ Knott, “Another Visit to the Doctor,” 10; Knott, “A Motherly Concern,” 14.

¹⁸ See Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

¹⁹ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, Dec. 19, 1885, 01856, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

had a very limited amount of time to answer the massive amounts of letters he received. But if frankness in his writing was the rule, then his letters to Ellen White were the exception. He took out large swaths of his precious time to pay special attention to his adopted mother, with some letters reaching as much as forty-two pages of handwritten text.²⁰ These letters moved beyond the business of the church and its health message with Kellogg often taking time to reminisce about his time growing up in the White household: “I look back with pleasure to the old days when I used to run to you and Bro. White with my troubles and felt such comfort and safety in your counsel. Those old days are often in my dreams, and I often wake and for a few moments imagine that they are really returned again, and the joy and relief are simply unspeakable.”²¹

If there was ever any doubt as to Kellogg’s true feelings about White—as was stated in a letter in 1882—he made very sure to reaffirm his position in writing: “I am indeed sorry that you have been so long in doubt as to my feelings; if I had had any idea that this was the case, I should have been most anxious to have written you sooner...I have always felt that you treated me as a son, and I have felt that you had an interest for me more than I could ask and more than I deserved.”²² White echoed his sentiments, and, seeming to know the attitudes of her adoptive son as well as any of her own, often wrote to him to guard against pride and to remind him of his sacred mission:

I write to you as one of my own sons...Whatever you have done that is good has been because the Lord has blessed your efforts. Whatever you may do will be because the Lord will still bless your efforts. You are His instrument to be handled by His divine power. Of yourself you can do nothing.²³

²⁰ See, Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, Feb. 7, 1887, 02201-o, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

²¹ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, Feb. 6, 1886, 02200, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

²² Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, Sept. 2, 1882, 01397, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

²³ Ellen White to Kellogg, J. H., 1886, K-064-1886, Ellen G. White Letters, 1845-1914, EGW Estate.

Such a divine ordination of position did not come from her without its expectations. Kellogg was expected to heed the word, yet White reveals in her proclamation that there was indeed two sides to her—the prophet and the mother—a distinction that, given Kellogg’s intimate relationship with her, was almost predestined to become convoluted. When was the prophet speaking and when the mother? Did the adoptive son, so sure of his mother’s true intent, ever say to himself: “This is what she really meant?” Seventh-day Adventist Church historians are often reluctant to ask such questions as it complicates White’s theological position within the church. But given the nature of Kellogg’s intimacy with her, it is perfectly reasonable to suggest that at some point he thought he knew better—and on points relating to medicine he probably did.

Whatever the implications of their correspondence, White clearly served not just as Kellogg’s confidant, but also as his spiritual advisor, church-political advisor, and many times as his confessor. But this was not an unusual role for her, as she served as a spiritual guide for most if not all Adventist believers. What differentiates these letters from others in the archive is their unbelievable personal content. Kellogg writes to White of his fears, doubts, and spiritual struggles, a side of him that was kept well hidden behind his mask of gravitas and charismatic personality. Most in Kellogg’s day saw what he wanted them to see—the immutable doctor whom, as historian Brian Wilson noted: “Despite his small physical size and high, squeaky voice...nevertheless exuded a charisma that drew people to him.”²⁴ But Kellogg’s spiritual battles—his demons if I may—were of a completely different nature, and it is unclear if White truly understood the condition in which he often found himself.

Kellogg’s letters to White display an array of emotions; passion, religious fervor, and frustration are abundant in his many epistles. But upon close inspection a unique and unsettling

²⁴ Wilson, *Dr. John Harvey Kellogg and the Religion of Biologic Living*, 37.

trend seems to emerge from between the lines of communication. One of the first instances in which Kellogg displays this is in a letter to White in 1886:

Often for days and weeks I do not have the time to eat or to sleep a sufficient amount, and not a moment for relaxation and recreation, and I am willing to deny myself of every pleasure for the sake of the work...I often get where everything seems whirling about me. It seems to me as I think it must seem to a man in a cyclone. At these times I find my own strength utterly insufficient. I am compelled to go down upon my knees to beseech the Lord to help me.²⁵

Kellogg, along with most Adventists, tended to practice certain forms of asceticism, but his denial of sustenance to the point of mental exhaustion is out of the ordinary. While it may be tempting to see his invocation of God as an example of expected religious rhetoric when conversing with the church's prophet, it is more than likely that Kellogg experienced this episode. Much might not be made of this singular incident, but it is only one of many that display a troubling trend not only in Kellogg's mood and attitude but his mental health as well. Four years earlier Kellogg informed White that he pushed himself to the breaking point, writing: "For ten days, during the last two weeks, I was unable to take off my clothes except to take baths. Did not go to bed at all during the time."²⁶

The constant habit of perpetual work, which, in turn, led to a continued practice of sleep deprivation and denial of food, led Kellogg down a path of apparent mental disturbance. His ceaseless infighting with religious church leaders only added to his volatile state. He voiced as much to White in a revealing letter in 1886:

²⁵ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, Oct. 15, 1886, 02199, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

²⁶ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, Sept. 2, 1882, 01397, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

The mental ordeal through which I have tried to struggle for the last five years no one but God knows anything about. Sometimes I have feared that I should lose my mind, and I do not know but that I have been off my mental balance a little sometimes. There have been times when the strain was terrific, when one thing after another crowded upon me until it seemed as though I was being whirled around in a tornado, and that I should certainly be dashed to pieces a mental wreck. I may safely say that for half the time at least, for the last six years I have not valued my life as worth the living, and if I could have died with the satisfaction that my work was well done, it would have been a happy release. I have sacrificed every thing for the success of my work. I have not spared myself.²⁷

Kellogg's confession to the possibility of losing his mind is both astonishing and terrifying, especially at a time when no one fully understood what "losing" one's mind meant; after all Freudian techniques along with professional psychology and psychiatry were just beginning to take shape, and Adventists looked upon such developments with suspicion. This left Kellogg in a vacuum of mental darkness. Had his contemporaries in the church discovered Kellogg's struggles, it would have signaled his lack of faith in God.

While it is impossible for a mental health professional to definitively diagnose a deceased person, it is not arbitrary to psychoanalyze a historical individual through their own words and the description of others. Lyndal Roper argued as much in her psychoanalytical biography of Martin Luther, in which she pointed out that the wealth of documentation from and about Luther superseded any reservations about such an endeavor.²⁸ Since much of psychoanalysis is based on reported observation of a subject or a subject's self-reporting, it is not out of the realm of possibility to make suggestions about a historical person's mental state.

²⁷ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, Dec. 6, 1886, 02200, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

²⁸ See Lyndal Roper, *Martin Luther: Renegade and Prophet* (New York: Random House, 2016). In particular her defense of a psychoanalytical approach in her introduction, especially pages xxvi-xxvii.

Through an analysis of Kellogg's letters to Ellen White and descriptions of his personality, social worker and counselor Dr. Gary Herr believes that Kellogg probably suffered not only from hypomanic and depressive episodes, but also from Cyclothymic Disorder (the rapid cycling through hypomanic and depressive episodes).²⁹ Herr, in consultation with the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-5), noted that Kellogg met most of the following criteria for a Hypomanic Episode:

1. Inflated self-esteem or grandiosity.
2. Decreased need for sleep (e.g., feels rested after only 3 hours of sleep).
3. More talkative than usual or pressure to keep talking.
4. Flight of ideas or subjective experience that thoughts are racing.
5. Distractibility (i.e., attention too easily drawn to unimportant or irrelevant external stimuli), as reported or observed.
6. Increased in goal-directed activity (either socially, at work or school, or sexually) or psychomotor agitation.
7. Excessive involvement in activities that have a high potential for painful consequences (e.g., engaging in unrestrained buying sprees, sexual indiscretions, or foolish business investments).³⁰

Of these criteria perhaps the most striking is the third—Kellogg loved to talk.

In a letter to White's son, Willie White, then General Conference president Arthur Daniells remarked on the exhaustion he suffered after meetings with Kellogg:

I might have written a small volume regarding the long dissertations the Doctor gave concerning his work, his determinations, etc. ... He had not had an opportunity to tell us

²⁹ Gary Herr, Interview by Author, Keene, TX, February 12, 2018.

³⁰ Ibid.; American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, 5th ed. (Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Publishing, 2013), 124. Hereafter cited as (DSM-5).

what he thought of us for at least a year, and so he pulled out the stopper and let it run. In our first interview he talked the most of the time from 8:30 to 12:30 at night. In the next interview he must have talked three solid hours... When we would attempt to explain any point or protest against a false statement of facts, he would appear to get very angry, and claim to be very much injured by our statements. At last we became so weary and disgusted that we decided that it was useless for us to meet him any more.³¹

Clearly, Kellogg felt the need or “pressure” to talk, and his propensity to anger was not unusual as irritability is also a symptom of hypomania.³²

Herr also observed that Kellogg met most if not all of the criteria for a Depressive Episode as well:

1. Depressed mood most of the day, nearly every day, as indicated by either subjective report (e.g., feels sad, empty, or hopeless) or observation.
2. Markedly diminished interest or pleasure in all, or almost all, activities most of the day.
3. Significant weight loss when not dieting or weight gain, or decrease or increase in appetite.
4. Insomnia or hypersomnia.
5. Psychomotor agitation or retardation.
6. Fatigue or loss of energy.
7. Feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt (which may be delusional) nearly every day (not merely self-reproach or guilt about being sick).
8. Diminished ability to think or concentrate, or indecisiveness.
9. Recurrent thoughts of death (not just fear of dying).³³

³¹ Daniells A. G. to W. C. White, July 3, 1905, 18916, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

³² *DSM-5*, 124.

Kellogg had already expressed his inability to sleep or eat while he was close to “losing” his mind in his early letters to White, and he frequently wrote her of feelings of worthlessness and a willingness to die. It should be noted that, as evident and tragic as Kellogg’s depressive symptoms were, it was his hypomanic symptoms that enabled him to, as one historian put it, have “a seemingly inexhaustible energy that allowed him to work eighteen hours a day and to micromanage a dozen different projects at the same time.”³⁴ Indeed, Kellogg’s work ethic, his driven mindset, up-keep of enormous correspondence, continually inventive mind, and ability to lecture and talk whenever anyone was willing to listen can all be laid at the feet of his hypomania.

As time passed, Kellogg’s continued fighting with Adventist religious leadership and theological differences caused a strain in his relationship to White. His letters to her during the 1880s and 1890s demonstrate probably the worst symptoms of his mental state; in particular, the forty-two page hand-written letter from 1887. In this letter, Kellogg moved back and forth between praising God and depression. He wrote: “The thing that cut me all to pieces was to find that I had been dealt treacherously with by those I respected and loved. I passed through six or eight weeks of the most terrible mental torture I ever endured. I could not eat nor sleep. It seemed to me that my reason would leave me. I earnestly cried to God but the heavens seemed like bars.”³⁵ Immediately following this admission Kellogg stated that he had “lived through it,” and that he understood it as a lesson from God as he was “alive” and hoped “to be a better man for my sufferings.”³⁶ For the next 26 pages or so, he writes of mundane matters such as news from the sanitarium, the number of patients and their various ailments, and financial matters, and

³³ Herr, Interview; *DSM-5*, 125.

³⁴ Wilson, *Dr. John Harvey Kellogg*, 37.

³⁵ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, Feb. 7, 1887, 02201-o, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

praises God for assisting the medical missionary work. But in the last four pages of text he falls back into depressive diatribe, writing:

I am worn out by care and loss of sleep till I cannot walk straight for days and weeks together. I go hungry and faint for hours for want of time to eat. I am pestered and exasperated, and besieged, and disappointed until it seems as though the evil one was in my immediate vicinity, making things as lively as possible. I am always hurried, till it seems as though I was being dragged at the tail of a hurricane...I find my ability so short I must stretch it to the snapping point almost every day of my life. I am overwhelmed...I certainly shall fail in both this world and the next.³⁷

The content of these letters is not the only sign of Kellogg's struggles. The manner in which they were written provides evidence of his desire for absolute privacy. Most of the letters from the 1880s onward are typed, meaning a stenographer transcribed Kellogg's dictations. But Kellogg does not mention any symptoms of depression in this format; no doubt in an effort to keep his assistants from seeing his mental state. In order to assure privacy in these delicate matters, most, if not all of his depressive letters are written in his hand, and are only to Ellen White.

The mother-son relationship between White and Kellogg provided a safe haven for him to express his feelings of doubt and depression. Because he was speaking to his "mother" Kellogg felt he could truly bare his heart and soul. In the same letter he states, "You have done me the honor to address me as your son, and I come to you with all the candor and sincerity of a son to a parent, asking your advice and counsel."³⁸ This letter also reveals the Adventist perspective on depression. In the Adventist context depression was seen as the devil assaulting the mind, and was evidence of a lack of faith and a strained relationship with God—for if one

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Ibid.

was strong in faith, the devil could not enter the mind. In his essay on American Christianity's reaction to psychoanalysis, Jon Roberts argues that, to both the Protestant and Catholic communities, the mind was the focal point of spiritual matters. Christians "privileged the human mind because they regarded it as the primary site of humanity's interaction with the divine," and "insisted that in the divine-human encounter, minds were meeting Mind."³⁹ If the mind was the seat of interaction for the divine side of spirituality, then it also was a doorway for interaction with the devil. This concept was not lost on Kellogg, who often spoke of "the evil one" being in his "immediate vicinity," and later bemoaned, "I am most of all distressed about my own soul. I do not have the assurance of God's leading hand."⁴⁰

For Kellogg, who was possibly suffering from cyclothymic disorder (numerous periods of hypomanic and depressive episodes that could cycle rapidly or slowly), it must have seemed as if he was constantly being attacked by the devil.⁴¹ In numerous letters to Ellen White he continually questioned his faith writing, "I fear I have not this faith as a real living thing in my heart," and "I know I have never attained to my ideal of a Christian life... I feel that I must and say that I will, but it seems as though it is not in my nature."⁴² Later on he lamented, "How can I surround myself and my work with that atmosphere of deep spirituality?"⁴³ Kellogg continually asked White for her prayers and instruction, hoping that she could lead him out of his spiritual and mental darkness.

So where was Ellen White in all this? In the case of the above letters she received them while evangelizing in Switzerland, and her response to Kellogg's despair reinforced the belief of

³⁹ Jon H. Roberts, "Psychoanalysis and American Christianity, 1900-1945," in *When Science and Christianity Meet*, ed. David C. Lindberg and Ronald L. Numbers (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 232.

⁴⁰ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, Feb. 7, 1887, 02201-o, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

⁴¹ Herr, Interview. For a full description of cyclothymic disorder see *DSM-5*, 138-141.

⁴² Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, April 3, 1887, 02203-o, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

a satanic attack and divine remedy. White recognized Kellogg's depression as a spiritual condition and wrote, "Satan and all his emissaries delight to see that you can be plagued and irritated and unbalanced and overborne by the deep-laid plots of Satan."⁴⁴ Her remedy for his condition was the "essence of simplicity;" Kellogg was to "just look away from the disagreeable things to heaven above," and walk "in the light, press to the light, refuse to look at darkness or talk darkness; talk of things that are calculated to uplift the soul, come close to Jesus, commune with Him...By beholding you become changed. Talk of pleasant things, talk of hope and courage, and you will have hope and courage."⁴⁵ It seemed obvious to White that Kellogg dwelt too much on negative things, and that his melancholy could be lifted through positive thinking. White missed the mark—although perhaps through no fault of her own—and basically gave Kellogg a prescription of "think happy thoughts and pray harder." But surely this was to be expected in a time when mental illness was equated to spiritual darkness, and not even a prophet could be expected to know the full implications of Kellogg's condition.

The 1890s was a tremendously difficult decade for Kellogg. The Seventh-day Adventist Church was still reeling from the theological conflicts of the 1888 General Conference session and there were continued movements to reorganize the church and the medical work—all of which greatly vexed Kellogg. To compound all of these issues, Ellen White—having made herself a nuisance to church leadership after the 1888 conference—was ignobly sent to the mission field of Australia in 1891, where she would remain until 1900.⁴⁶ Without the close proximity of his refuge and counselor Kellogg's state of mind seemed more unstable than at any

⁴⁴ Ellen White to Kellogg, J. H., April 22, 1887, K-046-1887, EGW Letters, EGW Estate.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ White sided against the Seventh-day Adventist leadership on the theological issue of righteousness by faith at the 1888 conference, and shortly thereafter began a campaign to sway denominational members away from the views held by church leadership. For more in-depth information on the issues regarding the 1888 controversy (as Adventists refer to it) see, "What is Christian in Adventism? (1886-1919)" in George R. Knight, *A Search for Identity: The Developments of Seventh-day Adventist Beliefs* (Maryland: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2000).

other time in his correspondence with her. The evidence of this instability was predominantly contained in a letter from December 1892, which Kellogg would two years later inform White was “some sort of an index to my state of mind,” and that she must have thought him insane.⁴⁷ But he assured her that it accurately “reflected exactly the situation I was in.”⁴⁸ Indeed, the letter is filled with descriptions of hypomanic and depressive symptoms, which Kellogg seemed to cycle through with startling frequency.⁴⁹ This is also the first letter in which Kellogg appeared to be self-aware of his condition and tried to work out on paper the triggers of his ailment.

The 1892 letter begins innocuously enough, with Kellogg informing White that he had visited Mexico City to present a paper at a conference of the American Public Health Association, as well as to make inquiries of the possible mission work that could be done there, and, most importantly, to rest.⁵⁰ In fact, Kellogg wrote her: “The rest has done me good, I feel like a new man.”⁵¹ But this sentiment was short lived, as he began to describe physical manifestations of his condition that frequently plagued him. Kellogg recounted that he would often “reel and stagger,” suffer from vision impairment, stammering of the tongue, and that his brain refused “to work properly.”⁵² He remarked that “my eyes seem like burning coals in my head, and the noises which in health I do not mind, hurt my ears,” and that he longed “for a chance to hide away in some dark spot where even the light cannot find me.”⁵³ He continued to describe how small things distracted him, which led him to become irritable (both symptoms of hypomania), and related concerning physical episodes: “My head feels too big, enormously large sometimes. The top seems to be separated from the rest...One side of my face gets numb. My

⁴⁷ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, May 30, 1895, 03542, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Herr, Interview. This letter in particular led Herr to the conclusion of a possible diagnosis of Cyclothymic Disorder.

⁵⁰ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, Dec. 17, 1892, 02555-o, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Ibid.

muscles twitch and jerk involuntarily. I jump at little noises. A terrible sense of apprehension and oppression comes upon me.”⁵⁴ Highly aware that something was wrong, Kellogg tried to work out the causes of his malady and noted that he worked “like a machine” through sheer “force of will,” but as soon as there was no more pressure from work to be done, he collapsed with “not a spark of spontaneous energy left.”⁵⁵

In page after page, Kellogg details his state of mind, lamenting that he became a completely different person during these episodes and said vicious things to people, which he would not normally do otherwise. Kellogg’s self-reporting divulges hypomanic symptoms, including his decreased need for sleep as he noted that he would often “work 20 hours out of 24,” meaning he would only sleep for four hours or less.⁵⁶ The letter reveals a toxic cycle; as Kellogg reflected upon his actions and behavior during a hypomanic state, this seemed to initiate a depressive episode. But there is one other thing that Kellogg cites as a trigger for his depression—Ellen White’s letters.

Part of White’s function as the “spirit of prophecy” in the Adventist church was to often give reproof, warnings, and council—whether solicited or not.⁵⁷ In her letter preceding Kellogg’s of December 17, 1892, White counseled:

Now, my brother, you will meet with trials in little things, but hold fast your integrity. I know whereof I speak...Never show anything but a noble spirit, for all the universe of heaven is watching the result of the battle. Satan is watching to see you off guard, to see you stirred up to act impetuously, ...I know that severe trials have come upon you. I know, for I have been shown occasions where you acted in words and spirit to please the

⁵⁴ Ibid.; Gary Herr, Interview.

⁵⁵ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, Dec. 17, 1892, 02555-o, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ “Spirit of Prophecy” is an Adventist term often used to refer to White and her writings.

enemy and to grieve heavenly angels. Provocation was given you, but I have been shown that you are to fight the battles of the Lord manfully, which means to do just as Christ would do were He in your place. There must be no inconsistency in your faith and practice.⁵⁸

As if this was not pressure enough, White drove the point home, albeit with an invocation of motherly concern:

You who stand as it were between the living and the dead... must not in any way, at any time, lose your Christlike dignity and self-control... I almost see you a boy again, and want to say, John, my son, for Christ's sake put on the whole armor of righteousness; open the windows of the mind, the door of the heart and let heaven's blessed sunshine flood both mind and soul temple; then joy in Christ will be a permanent state of the heart... I have seen you, in reviewing the past, full of keen remorse and inexpressible sorrow... I know just what I am writing about.⁵⁹

While this may have been intended as encouragement to Kellogg, the knowledge that the whole universe—and the devil for that matter—was watching him and that he had to maintain dignity and self-control no doubt terrified him beyond words. Especially given the fact—as he relates in his letter of reply—that he had already violated this command with his irritability and state of mind. Kellogg points to White's words as a catalyst for his despair and wrote: "It is also that (*sic*) the fact that I realize the full truth of what you write me. I have felt impressed with these very same thoughts many times. It is this that has made it impossible for me to entertain a sound hope for the future."⁶⁰ Clearly, White's words had the opposite of their intended effect, and Kellogg felt himself guilty of violating her words and disgracing God as he failed to live up to a

⁵⁸ Ellen White to Kellogg, J. H., October 17, 1892, K-020-1892, EGW Letters, EGW Estate.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, Dec. 17, 1892, 02555-o, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

“Christlike dignity.” While White did not and could not have known the severity of Kellogg’s condition, it did not stop her words from tormenting him with mental anguish. These emotions culminated toward the end of Kellogg’s letter, where he cries out: “I seem to be in a great maelstrom which carries me around irresistibly, and is certain by and by to draw me down into the depths. My life has not been worth much to me the last 20 years, and I should not care to live another year if I did not hope that somehow maybe I might become better fit to die.”⁶¹

While White continually tried to counsel Kellogg out of his darkness, and wrote that she was “made sad” by his letter and that she wished she could comfort him, she had little effect from her mission headquarters in Australia.⁶² Indeed the immense physical distance between them afforded more opportunities for apparent misunderstandings and accusations, and this came to a head in the late 1890s. Most historians place Kellogg’s deviation from Adventism at one of two major points. The first was in 1903, when Kellogg published his controversial work *The Living Temple*. The second is more substantial with Kellogg’s excommunication, or “disfellowshipment” as Adventists refer to it, from the denomination in 1907. While these may serve as adequate dates for Kellogg’s public separation from the denomination, the major breaking point in Kellogg’s faith—the true moment he started to shift from his Adventist foundations—was in 1899.

Ellen White may have had a deep affection for Kellogg as her adopted son, but this fact did not keep her from being critical of his work. In 1899, out of frustration for a lack of financial aid for her Australia mission, she wrote a series of letters in which she was highly critical of the health institutions at Battle Creek. In January, White (who typically spoke in the third person when writing in her authority as God’s messenger) wrote of “men who bore the responsibility of

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ellen White to Kellogg, J. H., February 19, 1893, K-035-1893, EGW Letters, EGW Estate.

the Battle Creek Sanitarium” failing to “cherish the principles of God’s Word,” and that because “selfishness is woven into their work, [and] a desire to carry out ambitious projects in various lines...we were left all alone to struggle with the difficulties of the situation here.”⁶³ She continued to accuse Kellogg of misappropriating funds from the church for his own purposes instead of allowing said money to be sent to the mission field (i.e. White’s Australia mission field), and left no doubt as to her anger when she wrote: “My spirit burns within me to think that this destitute field should be treated as it has been treated.”⁶⁴

White’s diatribes continued well into February and April, when she accused Kellogg of such things as giving in to allowing the use of prescription drugs at the Battle Creek Sanitarium, having too close a relationship to the “medical fraternity” (which White stated seemed to have a “spirit of Freemasonry” in their secrecy and obfuscation of simple medical truths), and, probably most offensive of all to Kellogg, that he was weak in his faith in God.⁶⁵ White’s specific mention of prescription drugs and the medical fraternity are telling of a struggle within the Adventist health message between the professional medical community and the Homeopathic movement that had swept through Europe and the United States under the auspices of German physician Samuel Hahnemann.⁶⁶ Prescription drugs in the late nineteenth-century United States were unregulated and relied on substances such as the coca plant and opium for their potency. The use of such dangerous, addictive, and destructive drugs would have indeed been contradictory to Adventist beliefs on whole body wellness, and it is very unlikely that such drug usage was occurring at the Sanitarium under Kellogg. With the emphasis on health and lifestyle reform and

⁶³ Ellen White to Kellogg, J. H., January 6, 1899, K-004-1899, EGW Letters, EGW Estate.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ellen White to Kellogg, J. H., April 6, 1899, K-067-1899, EGW Letters, EGW Estate. See also, Ellen White to Kellogg, J. H., January 14, 1899, K-010-1899; January 15, 1899, K-008a-1899; February 23, 1899, K-040-1899; and March 24, 1899, K-055-1899.

⁶⁶ See John S. Haller Jr., *The History of American Homeopathy: The Academic Years, 1820-1935* (New York: Pharmaceutical Products Press, 2005); and Martin Gumpert, *Hahnemann: The Adventurous Career of a Medical Rebel* (New York: L. B. Fischer, 1945).

the changing of the body as a whole, Adventist health reform seemed to find common ground with homeopathic practices.

Stunned, hurt, and obviously feeling betrayed, Kellogg returned White's salvo with a broadside of his own. On March 8 he wrote: "I hereby tender to you my resignation of all and every connection with the active work of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. This resignation to take effect immediately if you so desire...I shall offer resignations to all the Boards I am connected with." Kellogg continued to explain to White in detail the nature of her betrayal and why it affected him so deeply:

I have loved and respected you as my own mother...I have always felt that your counsel and encouragement and confidence was an unfailing reliance...I have battled on, and kept up a courageous front feeling sure of your confidence and support. I have dared to believe that you knew me well enough and long enough to be willing to give me a chance to tell the truth in cases in which I was misrepresented or misunderstood, before pronouncing judgment upon me; but from time to time in recent years things have been coming that showed me that you gave credit to the wrong statements against me...I feel utterly crushed and defeated in advance. Your letter struck me like a thunderbolt and I cannot recover from it. I have spent many days and sleepless nights in the struggle to reconcile myself to the belief that your charges are correct and just and I cannot. I have gone through the agonies of death over this matter. I have wept until my eyes are dry, I can see no future...I have written this with tears and a broken heart.⁶⁷

⁶⁷ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, March 8, 1899, 14056-o, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

Kellogg further noted that these accusatory letters were duplicated and were being spread around various members of the church in an effort to discredit him (an accusation that appears to be true).⁶⁸

Upon receiving his letter of resignation, White immediately wrote Kellogg a conciliatory letter: “I have received and read your letter with surprise. I cannot sleep past twelve o’clock p.m. I am inquiring what I ought to do or say that will change the condition of your mind...If my words have wounded and bruised your soul, I am sorry, for I am wounded and bruised also.”⁶⁹ Yet, for all her compassion, White seemed truly puzzled over why Kellogg was so hurt; at times she even seemed to possess selective amnesia as to what she had written to Kellogg not several months before: “I cannot think that I have written anything to you that should make you write me such a letter...Please send me the letter in which you suppose that I have not confidence in you...I have written earnest words, but never, never to denounce or condemn you.”⁷⁰ This statement is strange considering that three months prior she had written of the failure of those in charge of the Battle Creek Sanitarium (Kellogg) to cherish “the principles of God’s Word,” and that their work was “woven” with avaricious intent.⁷¹ Regardless of what was said or its intent, White wished above all else reconciliation in her letter: “Our work, a strange work, a great work, given us by God, links us heart and soul...I would not wound or bruise your soul, but restore and heal...I may have written too strongly, and not as guardedly as I should have written.”⁷² She signed her letter with “In much love and sorrow because I have caused you sorrow.”⁷³

⁶⁸ Ibid

⁶⁹ Ellen White to Kellogg, J. H., April 17, 1899, K-073-1899, EGW Letters, EGW Estate.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ellen White to Kellogg, J. H., January 6, 1899, K-004-1899, EGW Letters, EGW Estate.

⁷² Ellen White to Kellogg, J. H., April 17, 1899, K-073-1899, EGW Letters, EGW Estate.

⁷³ Ibid.

As loving and conciliatory as her letter was, the vast physical distance between White and Kellogg did not allow her words to reach him in time. Exasperated by his mental condition, White's cutting words churned in Kellogg's mind until it threw him into complete despair. At first, it seemed as if Kellogg was fine and nothing was interrupting his daily routine. The very next day (March 9) after writing his resignation, Kellogg sent a typed letter that contained no evidence of the extreme discourse between him and White, except to refer to the letter of March 8, in which he had also promised to send funds to Australia.⁷⁴ A little over a week later, Kellogg wrote another letter that seemed retrospective, in which he referred to his feelings as if they had passed: "The day I wrote you and the three days before were the darkest of my life. I felt that you had forsaken me, and that my work was done."⁷⁵

After this, Kellogg left for a conference in Paris in late March to early April (well before White had even received his correspondence). While he was only supposed to take a few weeks respite, he did not return until late June. Though Kellogg had visited Europe several times before and would after, his travels in 1899 would prove to be the most impactful on his personal life and his decisions regarding his faith. In following his travel letters to White—which begin and end on cruise-liner stationary—Kellogg is seen at his most vulnerable. His first letter was written during his transatlantic voyage aboard the Cunard Line's *R.M.S. Campania*. Again, Kellogg seemed calm and accepting of White's critiques and wrote, "your last letter came containing things which I could not and cannot see; but all these letters did me good and did us all good."⁷⁶ He also seemed to have a new determination of spirit and announced, "The world is dying and must be warned by every means possible. So long as God lets me, my voice and pen will go on

⁷⁴ See Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, March 9, 1899, 14057, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

⁷⁵ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, March 18, 1899, 14059-o, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

⁷⁶ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, 1899, 14060-o, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

in the work he set me about...I have left my perplexities with the Lord, and have peace of mind at last.”⁷⁷

Whatever tranquility Kellogg had come to, it was very short-lived. Upon reaching the Adventist sanitarium, *Institut Sanitaire*, in Basel, Switzerland, after his conference in Paris, Kellogg found yet more letters from White waiting for him. The letters’ contents were much the same as those written to him in early January, and this time Kellogg found himself pushed too far. His letter dated April 17 (ironically the same date White wrote her letter of apology), was very pointed in its language. Kellogg lapsed back into an emotional nose-dive and the feelings of hurt and betrayal hit him all over again. He made his feelings very clear to White when he wrote:

It is evident that many statements have been made to you that are utterly false, and I feel inclined to write you the truth about some of these matters, but I shall not trouble you...I seem cut loose from every body and every thing on earth. There is no one I can look to or cling to anymore...I don’t know what my future is to be. I feel that somehow there has come in a gulf between me and you. That you do not trust me. That you believe things of me that are utterly false through representations that have been made to you.⁷⁸

Quite simply, Kellogg had had enough. Not only had White continually criticized him, she was doing so from a vantage point that was literally on the other side of the world. For Kellogg, it seemed impossible for her to truly know what was happening daily at the Sanitarium or in the health work. While White spoke in her prophetic voice and claimed she was directed by God to say what she said, Kellogg’s relationship with her may have prevented him from seeing her in the context as the Lord’s messenger.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, April 17, 1899, 14065-o, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

These letters, combined with Kellogg's state of mind and the deterioration of his bond with his adoptive mother, culminated with him deciding to change the nature of his relationship with White. Since his childhood in the White household, Kellogg had put absolute trust in Ellen. She was his confidant, his rock, and the light through which he based his faith. He depended on her as the one person who always supported him through anything, and he trusted her enough to reveal not only his depression and mental state, but also his trials of faith. As strong as their relationship was, White's continued barrages and what Kellogg considered to be passing of judgment, brought him to the breaking point:

I have become a target, and now it cuts me all to pieces that you should charge me as guilty...I have clung to you as a child clings to a mother as I have trusted you and believed you trusted me...It seems to me that you have cast me off...I have grieved over this thing till I am sick and it seemed to me I should lose my mind. I do not doubt your sincerity, but I cannot confess to what is not true. I pray to God hours at a time in the night when this thing haunts me till I cannot sleep to take it out of my mind and let me rest, and sometimes I shake it off. Now this may appear trifling to you. I do not know. I somehow feel that you do not trust me any more...I feel that I am likely to be denounced when I have done my best and condemned when I am not guilty. I have never felt that way before. You have always given me a chance to give you the facts before pronouncing judgment.⁷⁹

The sense of loss Kellogg felt was overwhelming, and his solution was to travel where no one could find him and determine what his next steps would be.

Kellogg did not write to White again until he reached Vienna, Austria, in May 1899, where he revealed that his travels took him well outside the boundaries of Europe to North

⁷⁹ Ibid.

Africa (specifically Egypt) and Turkey. Along the way he determined to go on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem to receive rest and spiritual renewal from the “hallowed associations of the place.”⁸⁰ Kellogg wrote White that “with my Bible in hand I walked and rode over the very ground on which the Saviour trod, and prayed earnestly that his sweet and self-sacrificing spirit might enter into my heart and completely transform my life.”⁸¹ Kellogg seemed to be fully recovered and renewed from this experience and was elated to describe to White his change of attitude: “My head is getting clear. I can sleep so much better than I could. I don’t feel so dreadfully depressed and hopeless...can think and pray and meditate undisturbed really for the first time, almost, in twenty-five years.”⁸²

From Vienna, Kellogg traveled to the Adventist Sanitarium at Skodsborg, Denmark, via Hamburg. There, he received more letters from White repeating her earlier criticisms of his medical work at Battle Creek. While he seemed to brush-off the charges of a “Free Mason spirit” and the use of drugs, he did promise to make inquiries.⁸³ However clear his mind may have been from his recent pilgrimage in Jerusalem, Kellogg again wrote White about how depressed he was: “I daily fear that I shall lose the way amid the tangle of complications new and old. I am so depressed, if it were not for my wife and children who need me, I would long to die and ask God to let me. The dark rest of the grave seems sweet and comfortable.”⁸⁴ But Kellogg also determined that he would not let himself be pushed into the darkness of despair anymore, and he defended himself and fought back against White a final time:

But God knows, and though it cut me all to pieces when you told me I was selfish and covetous in my dealing in these matters, I have turned the matter over to the Lord and

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, May 30, 1899, 14068-o, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

will not weep over it any more... When I read your letter intimating that I was covetous and selfish in my plans and dealings I felt crushed to earth. I have tried to see things in that light, but I cannot feel that the reproof is just. I know well enough I am not perfect, and I pray for more grace and more love and more sympathy. But it seems to me impossible for me to do more... I am sure I have done more than you know anything about, and more for Australia than you have any idea of. But I will not boast of what I have done. God knows all about it, and I turn to him for help and guidance, and hope to find peace.⁸⁵

This pivotal letter, in which Kellogg lashes out at White for the first and only time, served as a notice of disconnect. Kellogg felt that White's accusations were not only unjust and hurtful, but also dangerous to his well-being and state of mind. So he decided to disconnect himself from the relationship that had been his spiritual bedrock from childhood.

Never again does Kellogg open up to White on the personal level that had defined their entire relationship. Her betrayal and preconceived judgments had convinced him that to continue to write to her of personal matters (his mental state and struggles with faith etc.) would only serve to hurt him in the long run, and jeopardize his position in the church's medical work. Like any other estranged mother-son relationship, Kellogg still had affection for White and respect for her work in the church, but refused to open up to her personally. On his way back from Europe Kellogg wrote to White to pledge his support and appreciation: "I want to assure you of my most entire confidence in you and my gratitude for your many kindnesses and constant encouragement during many years."⁸⁶ But love and verbal support is all that White could expect from that point forward. Kellogg was tearing down his theological house and rebuilding on a new foundation—

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, June 24, 1899, 14070-0, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

one that did not include dependence on White for spiritual matters. As he very curtly put in a letter not long after the 1899 incident, that year was the worst of his life and he realized that he had leaned too much on White: “I trust my experience will help me be more charitable and to lean less upon human beings, some of whom I am afraid I have almost placed before God himself and to be able to stand, if need be, all alone with God on the everlasting rock of truth.”⁸⁷ It was the last part of this line that would define Kellogg’s new spiritual journey—he would no longer look to White or any other human authority for spiritual guidance, but would look directly to the Lord for help. In this endeavor, Kellogg would search out new ways of communing with the divine, and he would look for them from the place where he had found so many other answers—Europe.

1.3 The Miracle of Science: Faith and Medicine in Late Nineteenth-Century Europe

The Europe of Kellogg’s day was, in many respects, religiously in flux. Ever increasing imperial territories abroad and urbanization in the metropol brought a multitude of religious beliefs and practices into a Roman Catholic and Protestant dominated Europe. Although Kellogg was exposed to a multitude of religious beliefs in his various journeys to Europe, he seemed to develop close relations with a number of Roman Catholics. This was probably inevitable due to his subsequent medical training in Vienna—Austria at the time was predominantly Roman Catholic and the Seventh-day Adventist Church had not yet established a presence in the country. Kellogg’s relationships with his professors and colleagues no doubt swung his denominational sensibilities towards Catholic concepts and allowed him to feel comfortable with such associations (a trait most high-ranking Seventh-day Adventists at the time did not share).

⁸⁷ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, January 11, 1900, 15401, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

It is difficult to assess religious influence on European science and medicine due to a lack of consensus among historians. Hugh McLeod identifies two sides to the question of religious impact on modern Europe: historians who held the “orthodox view...that there was an intimate relationship between urbanization and secularization in nineteenth-century Europe,” and the “revisionists” who are often “offended by attempts to minimize the role of religious forces in situations where they are manifestly important.”⁸⁸ For many of the “orthodox” viewpoint, this secularizing trend began well before the eighteenth-century urbanization in Europe. In his study of the effects of the Enlightenment on religion Thomas Broman writes:

In the minds of most people, historian and non-historians alike, the eighteenth-century Enlightenment occupies a pivotal position in the evolving relationship between science and religion. For it was during the Enlightenment that the cultural landscape of Europe was first reshaped in a way that enabled “science” and “religion” to emerge as separate and hostile camps in a long polemical struggle.⁸⁹

However, Broman noted that as “enduring as these perceptions are...they can be deeply misleading,” and that “scholars as diverse as Newton, Haller, and Priestley saw religious belief and scientific inquiry as mutually supportive.”⁹⁰

If the eighteenth-century Enlightenment was, for “orthodox” historians, the beginning of the secularization of Europe, then the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were the pinnacle. Revolutions, wars, and an almost constant restructuring of political Europe all played a part in confrontations with religion; adding more clout to the historical acceptance of a secularized

⁸⁸ Hugh McLeod, “Introduction,” in *European Religion in the Age of Great Cities: 1830-1930*, ed. Hugh McLeod (London: Routledge, 1995), 9, 17-18.

⁸⁹ Thomas H. Broman, “Matter, Force, and the Christian Worldview in the Enlightenment,” in *When Science & Christianity Meet*, ed. David C. Lindberg and Ronald L. Numbers (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 85.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 87, 107.

Europe whose social and cultural movements were devoid of religious input. Yet for all these developments, religion remained as a fixture in European life and discourse. Robert Mullin remarked that “the ‘prayer-gauge’ controversy...swirled on both sides of the Atlantic during the early 1870s,” in which “whether or not prayer could affect the course of natural events and aid in healing became a hotly controversial question.”⁹¹ While Mullin provided an ample sampling of Christian doctrine on miracles—both Catholic and Protestant—he focused on English sources as English was the language in which the “prayer-gauge” debate evolved. This ignored, though not intentionally, the same debate over the place of miracles and prayer in relation to medical science within the Roman Catholic Church, and more specifically the work of the Chief Papal Physician—Giuseppe Laponi (1851-1906). Laponi’s place in the Catholic Church’s debate over miracles and science is important, as he was one of the links between Kellogg and Catholic doctrine.

To understand Laponi’s work and connection to Kellogg, it is first necessary to understand the Catholic Church’s condition and agenda at the time. The nineteenth century was not exactly a time of prosperity for Catholic institutions. The embarrassment of Pope Pius VI’s arrest and imprisonment by the forces of Napoleon in 1798 had given way to a Catholic Church that was continually losing its land-holdings and political influence at the hands of emboldened European dynasties. In the year 1870, the King of Sardinia (and newly crowned King of Italy)—Victor Emmanuel II—dealt a mortal wound to the Catholic Church when his troops smashed into Rome, imprisoned Pope Pius IX inside the Vatican, and removed his thousand year temporal authority over the Papal States. By the time Pius IX’s successor, Pope Leo XIII (r.1878-1903),

⁹¹ Robert Bruce Mullin, “Science, Miracles, and the Prayer-Gauge Debate,” in *When Science & Christianity Meet*, ed. David C. Lindberg and Ronald L. Numbers (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003), 203.

came to power, the prospects of the Catholic Church having any meaningful impact on European social and cultural discourse seemed very scant.

Leo understood that for the Church to have any real impact on the world—since its political power and even some spiritual authority had been denied via the new Kingdom of Italy—it would have to join in the debates and discourses of the day. To that end, he determined that the Church needed to regain a foothold in scientific matters and philosophy. In his famous encyclical *Aeterni Patris* (Eternal Father), he laid the groundwork for the coexistence of scientific philosophy and the Catholic religion:

Both by reason of the gravity of the subject and the condition of the time, we are again compelled to speak to you on the mode of taking up the study of philosophy which shall respond most fitly to the excellence of faith, and at the same time be consonant with the dignity of human science... Therefore, Divine Providence itself requires that, in calling back the people to the paths of faith and salvation, advantage should be taken of human science... Its solid foundations having been thus laid, a perpetual and varied service is further required of philosophy, in order that sacred theology may receive and assume the nature, form, and genius of a true science. For in this, the most noble of studies, it is of the greatest necessity to bind together, as it were, in one body the many and various parts of the heavenly doctrines, that, each being allotted to its own proper place and derived from its own proper principles, the whole may join together in a complete union.⁹²

Leo sought to unite science and faith into a mutual understanding of the divine. Human science and religion were to be two lenses in the same bifocals; one supported the other because both were grounded in the truth of the divine power of God. Unfortunately for Leo, Papal fiat did not

⁹² Pope Leo XIII, *AETERNI PATRIS: Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on the Restoration of Christian Philosophy*, August 4, 1879, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_04081879_aeterni-patris.html.

have the same effect on society as it had for his predecessors. He needed to provide a mechanism, a tool, for contemplating and reshaping doctrine to accommodate the science of the modern world. His answer, rather than a new and modern approach, was medieval in its origins—the philosophical teachings of the thirteenth-century saint, Thomas Aquinas. In the same encyclical Leo wrote, “We exhort you, venerable brethren, in all earnestness to restore the golden wisdom of St. Thomas, and to spread it far and wide for the defense and beauty of the Catholic faith, for the good of society, and for the advantage of all the sciences.”⁹³

In keeping with this new approach to doctrine, Lapponi, with his focus on the place of faith and miracles in medical science, was perfect for the post of Chief Papal Physician; a position akin to that of a Surgeon General for the Holy See.⁹⁴ His opinion on medical and scientific matters carried the weight of papal approval, and his arguments on faith and science were published and circulated throughout the Catholic world. One of Lapponi’s first publications dealt with the Miracle of Lourdes, France, where, in 1858, a series of apparitions of the Virgin Mary reportedly appeared. Afterward, church authorities confirmed these appearances and built a pilgrimage-church over the site. Many pilgrims to the site claimed to be healed of disease and the presence of a natural spring provided for claims of holy water. Lapponi was less concerned with the authenticity of the miracle healings, and more interested in the objections of doctors at the time. He pointed out that regardless of religious belief doctors had to admit that people who were sick before visiting the shrine appeared healed afterward, and noted that belief in the miraculous seemed divided between educated and non-educated backgrounds. Lapponi noted that commoners who witnessed these occurrences were naturally inclined to shout “It’s a miracle!”

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Chief Papal Physician is a title that is as close as possible to the original title Lapponi held, which was *Archiatro della Santità di Leone XIII*. This title carries the connotation of builder or architect of health for the Pope. This went beyond papal health to include the wellbeing of the Holy See, or rather all people in the Catholic Church.

but the educated, specifically doctors, sought to defend medical science and reduced the wonders of Lourdes to natural occurrences.⁹⁵ He admitted that equating every healing to a miracle was, at least in part, due to the common sensibilities of the people, but he was equally critical of physicians who denounced such notions purely out of contempt for religious belief and to further natural science.

However equitable his position may have seemed, it must be remembered that as Chief Papal Physician Laponi was under the direct authority of Pope Leo, and was tasked to carry out the new doctrinal programs of uniting religion and science—or in his case medical science. To this end, he concluded his essay to specifically allow for the possibility of natural and supernatural phenomena as explanations for the healings at Lourdes. Laponi emphatically stated that instruction in natural science would free peoples' minds from the darkness and the charm of error.⁹⁶ Yet he also argued that knowledge of the natural world would support their religious belief in that hymns of praises would erupt from their hearts, and manifest a new desire to venerate the Virgin of Lourdes.⁹⁷

Laponi's influence soon extended beyond the borders of Italy and into the United States primarily through his published work *Hypnotism and Spiritism*, which was translated into English and published in New York in 1907; shortly after he died.⁹⁸ But before his death, Laponi made several trips to the United States. On one such occasion in 1903, he sampled some mineral water (most likely Buffalo Lithia Water from Virginia) and promptly ordered seventy-

⁹⁵ Giuseppe Laponi, "I Miracoli Di Lourdes E Le Obbiezioni Dei Medici," in *Conferenza del Dott. Giuseppe Laponi, Archiatro Della Santità De Leone XIII* (Roma: Tipografia Editrice Romana, 1895), 11. Call Number: R.G. Miscell. L. 4 (int. 3), Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 32.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

⁹⁸ See Joseph Laponi, *Hypnotism and Spiritism: A Critical and Medical Study*, trans. Mrs. Philip Gibbs (New York: Longmans, Green, and CO., 1907).

five bottles of it for the Vatican.⁹⁹ But Lapponi's time spent in the United States is not well documented and his connections to Kellogg are almost non-apparent. A search of the Vatican Secret Archives produced no evidence of correspondence between Kellogg and the Vatican, but this does not necessarily preclude the possibility of such communications due to the vastness of the archives and the fact that only a small percent of it has been indexed.

One thread of connectivity emerged upon examination of the Vatican Library's holdings. An original copy of a rare work of Kellogg—*The Living Temple*—is in the Vatican Library.¹⁰⁰ This book is rare in that it was never made publically available for sale, and the only copies left in existence come from a small group of pre-ordered copies that Kellogg sent out to various individuals for review. Further investigation of the library's records revealed that after Lapponi's death his daughter, Maria, donated the book as part of her father's medical library.¹⁰¹ Seeing as there were very few copies of the book available, and combined with the fact that most Adventists did not share in close relationships with Catholics at the time—much less high-ranking Catholic officials—at some point Kellogg must have sent the volume to Lapponi for his opinion. It is even possible that Kellogg gave Lapponi the book when Lapponi visited the United States in 1903. In either case, such a phenomenon demonstrates a link between Kellogg and the Vatican, as well as his exposure to the wider Catholic world. These professional connections, along with Kellogg's open mind and quest for a new way to view God, allowed for Pope Leo's new Catholic doctrine on science and philosophy to slip into his personal belief system—as well

⁹⁹ See “Acqua minerale della sue sorgenti di Radein,” SEGR. STATO, ANNO 1903, RUBR. 1D, FASCICOLO 6 (77393), Archivio Segreto Vaticano, Vatican City.

¹⁰⁰ See John Harvey Kellogg, *The Living Temple* (Battle Creek, Michigan: Good Health Publishing Company, 1903). Call Number: R.G. Medic. IV. 2961, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City.

¹⁰¹ See Francesco D' Aiuto e Paolo Vian, *Guida Ai Fondi Manoscritti, Numismatici, A Stampa Della Biblioteca Vaticana*, vol. 2 of *Studi E Testi* (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 2011), 849. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City. As well as entry for April 23, 1925 in manuscript collection (cfr. Arch. Bibl. 115, f. 30r). Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatican City.

as into *The Living Temple*. It is also not a coincidence that Kellogg turned to this doctrine (founded in Aquinas theory) right after his spiritual break with White in 1899.

1.4 The Gospel According to Kellogg: Shaping Health Reform into a Religion

In the history of Seventh-day Adventism, probably no single book was more contentious or problem-causing than Kellogg's *The Living Temple*. While not the only issue or controversy surrounding the head of the Seventh-day Adventist Health Message, the theology of *The Living Temple*, and the denomination's reaction to it, set into motion a chain of events that church historian Richard Schwarz later defined as "The Kellogg Crisis."¹⁰² Although many claimed (and still claim) to know all about Kellogg's theology and his beliefs contained in *The Living Temple*, few have indeed ever read the work or really sought to study its doctrinal origins. This could be, in part, due to the scarcity of the work. The Seventh-day Adventist Church's condemnation of the book, and the small number of copies that survived, made it unlikely that even historians of Seventh-day Adventism often came into contact with the tome.

Another issue is the certainty with which the church analyzed the book and pronounced it heretical—specifically citing the heresy of pantheism. Schwarz upheld this viewpoint in the first and only biography of Kellogg when he wrote: "Dr. Kellogg's pantheistic ideas centered around statements concerning the personality of God and the divine presence in all living things which appeared in the doctor's book *The Living Temple*."¹⁰³ Schwarz even went on to title the issue "the pantheism controversy."¹⁰⁴ Schwarz's pro-church slant is readily evident, and no attempt is

¹⁰² See R. W. Schwarz, *Light Bearers to the Remnant: Denominational History Textbook for Seventh-day Adventist College Classes* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1979). Specifically Chapter 18, p. 282.

¹⁰³ Schwarz, John Harvey Kellogg, M.D., 184.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 185.

made to deviate from the official position the denomination took on *The Living Temple* nor even explore other influences besides pantheism. But this is not entirely surprising; Schwarz was, after all, a Seventh-day Adventist Church historian and was employed by the denomination. The issue with Schwarz's work was that it defined Kellogg's beliefs as pantheism in absolute terms. Even in his later textbook on Seventh-day Adventist history, Schwarz accuses Kellogg of the "promotion of pantheistic ideas."¹⁰⁵ As a result, a number of denominational and secular historians have not questioned this stance. Seventh-day Adventist historians and theologians such as George Knight, Woodrow Whidden, Benjamin McArthur, and Gilbert Valentine all support Schwarz's opinion, writing such lines as: "These 'deadly germs,' of which Kellogg's reputed pantheism was an example, could not be allowed to infect Adventism," and "by the beginning of the twentieth century inadequate and false teachings on the Holy Spirit would lead to...the pantheistic teachings of Waggoner and J. H. Kellogg."¹⁰⁶

Secular historians wanting to write on Kellogg outside the context of a biography also rely on Schwarz's work. In their study on Seventh-day Adventism and American culture, Malcolm Bull and Keith Lockhart wrote that even Ellen White could not "prevent the diffused understanding of the divine presence from developing toward the pantheistic notion that God was in everything in the universe. The Adventist who took up this view was John Harvey

¹⁰⁵ R. W. Schwarz, *Light Bearers to the Remnant: Denominational History Textbook for Seventh-day Adventist College Classes* (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1979), 288.

¹⁰⁶ Benjamin McArthur, *A. G. Daniells: Shaper of Twentieth-Century Adventism* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 2015), 202; George R. Knight, *A Search for Identity: The Development of Seventh-day Adventist Beliefs* (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2000), 114. See also George R. Knight, *A. T. Jones: Point Man on Adventism's Charismatic Frontier* (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2011); Woodrow W. Whidden II, *E. J. Waggoner: From the Physician of Good News to Agent of Division* (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2008); and Gilbert M. Valentine, *W. W. Prescott: Forgotten Giant of Adventism's Second Generation* (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2005).

Kellogg.”¹⁰⁷ Howard Markel, in *The Kelloggs*, wrote that, “John’s critics charged that it [*The Living Temple*] espoused pantheism and, hence, professed the heretical belief there was no singular God in charge of the whole realm of life.”¹⁰⁸ Markel was fair in pointing out that this was perhaps a “witch hunt” of sorts, but he offered no explanation as to when or how Kellogg might have changed his beliefs, and he certainly misjudged Kellogg and White’s relationship when he stated, “the book [*The Living Temple*] and its author, Sister White commanded, must be extinguished.”¹⁰⁹

In either secular or denominational contexts, Schwarz’s narrative of plain and simple pantheism was held as true, and no one was willing to question the fifty-year narrative. The exception was Brian Wilson’s study on Kellogg’s religious transformations, in which he brilliantly argued that *The Living Temple* was the major beginning of Kellogg’s shift into his own religion of “Biologic Living.” Wilson correctly pointed out that the book “contained few theological ideas that Kellogg had not already expressed in one way or another during the previous decade.”¹¹⁰ But Wilson and I differ on the function of Kellogg’s idea on God within man. Whereas he sees it as a path to Kellogg’s new religion, I do not believe this to be Kellogg’s original purpose as his intent of making health reform a matter of salvation predates *The Living Temple*. But before examining Kellogg’s attempted coup d’état, we need to put the rumors of pantheism to rest.

If Kellogg was looking to his contacts in Europe—after his break from Ellen White in 1899—for new ideas on how to commune with God then he did not have to look very far. Pope Leo’s command to teach Aquinian theory in relation to Roman Catholic doctrine was well

¹⁰⁷ Malcolm Bull and Keith Lockhart, *Seeking a Sanctuary: Seventh-day Adventism and the American Dream*, 2nd ed. (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2007), 80.

¹⁰⁸ Markel, *The Kelloggs*, 168.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 169.

¹¹⁰ Wilson, *Dr. John Harvey Kellogg and the Religion of Biologic Living*, 85.

established in the two decades since its implementation, and beyond Europe, American institutions readily received these new philosophies on the nature of God. The New England region in the 1830s to 1850s was, after all, the breeding ground for American transcendentalism—a belief that divinity flows through all things in nature and permeates humanity. In this theory God was not so much a person ruling in heaven, but was “innately present in each individual” as a “spiritual principle that, of itself, without any external stimuli, allows one to distinguish between right and wrong.”¹¹¹ Religious intellectual discourse and theory was at its pinnacle in the nineteenth-century United States, so it is not surprising that many Americans were open-minded to new theological teaching—even if it emanated from a Catholic source.

The teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas are vast in their scope. His most recognized work, the *Summa Theologiae*, was a massive undertaking to define all Christian theology, but, for purposes of analyzing the effects on Kellogg’s personal theology, only a small part need be evaluated; the theory of God in nature and man. In his *Compendium Theologiae*—a condensed version of his enormous *Summa Theologiae*—Aquinas stated that, “God is in all things by His *power*, inasmuch as all things operate in virtue of Him. And God is in all things by His *presence*, inasmuch as He directly regulates and disposes all things.”¹¹² Philosopher Peter Kreeft, in trying to explain this theory, wrote:

But being is everywhere, in every grain of sand and subatomic particle. So we can find God in every grain of sand—because He is really there, acting, keeping it in

¹¹¹ Philip F. Gura, *American Transcendentalism: A History* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007), 11. For debates over transcendentalism as a religious or secular movement see, Bruce A. Ronda, *The Fate of Transcendentalism: Secularity, Materiality, and Human Flourishing* (Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 2017).

¹¹² St. Thomas Aquinas, *Light of Faith: A Compendium of Theology*, trans. and ed. Cyril Vollert (Manchester, New Hampshire: Sophia Institute Press, 1993), 152. The change of title from *The Compendium Theology* to *Light of Faith* is explained in the “Editor’s Note,” ix-x.

being...When an author says “Let it be!” to his novel, he says that to every event in the novel, to the whole novel. He is outside it, as God is outside the universe; but the author is also in every word of his story, as God is in every grain of sand...everything would disappear if God stopped loving it into existence.¹¹³

In other words, according to Aquinas, God sustains all life and existence through his power, which is a form of his presence, and if that power were withdrawn from anything it would cease to exist.

Kellogg, in trying to explain the relation of God to creation, reflected these beliefs in *The Living Temple* stating:

God is the explanation of nature,—not a God outside of nature, but in nature, manifesting himself through and in all the objects, movements, and varied phenomena of the universe...The process of tree-making in the living tree, is never complete so long as the tree is alive. The tree does not create itself; a creative power is constantly going forward in it...So there is present in the tree a power which creates and maintains it, a tree-maker in the tree, a flower-maker in the flower,—a divine architect who understands every law of proportion, an infinite artist who possesses a limitless power of expression in color and form; there is, in all the world about us, an infinite, divine, though invisible Presence, to which the unenlightened may be blind, but which is ever declaring itself by its ceaseless, beneficent activity.¹¹⁴

Being well aware that his statements might be taken as a denial of the personal being of God—which is central to pantheism—Kellogg clarified his position: “ ‘But,’ says one, ‘this thought destroys the personality of God. Do you not believe in a personal, definite God?’ Most certainly.

¹¹³ Peter Kreeft, *Practical Theology: Spiritual Direction from St. Thomas Aquinas* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2014), 52.

¹¹⁴ J. H. Kellogg, *The Living Temple* (Battle Creek, Michigan: Good Health Publishing Company, 1903), 28-29.

An infinite, divine, personal being is essential religion...Belief in a personal God is the very core of the Christian religion.”¹¹⁵ The statement “God is in nature” was what motivated Seventh-day Adventists to charge Kellogg with pantheism at the time, but they failed to consider Kellogg’s meanings of God’s “presence and power.” Kellogg never advocated for the worship of nature as God; by demonstrating that the power of God was inside nature and man—sustaining both—he revealed the connectivity of nature and man to God. This makes perfect sense in context with his spiritual break with Ellen White. Kellogg very specifically stated that he would “stand, if need be, all alone with God on the everlasting rock of truth.”¹¹⁶ In search of a way to commune with God and anchor onto the “rock of truth,” Kellogg found a mystical doctrine that provided him with an image of God who was so personal that his divine power and presence dwelt with humanity. It is not surprising that Kellogg’s new mystic beliefs were considered pantheistic as “mysticism, with its passionate desire for union with the Divine, has often been charged with pantheism.”¹¹⁷ Even Thomas Aquinas was worried that his theories would be mistaken for pantheism.¹¹⁸

Pantheism very distinctly denies the personage of God as a being in that it holds “the view that the universe is identical with God, and that God is identical with the universe. A slightly similar position, called panentheism, identifies the universe as divine but also assumes that God is more than the universe and hence remains an object of veneration and worship.”¹¹⁹ Kellogg never denied that there was a personal God ruling from heaven, nor did he specifically

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 29.

¹¹⁶ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, January 11, 1900, 15401, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

¹¹⁷ *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed., s.v. “Pantheism.”

¹¹⁸ See Fergus Kerr, Thomas Aquinas: *A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009). Specifically, pages 42-43.

¹¹⁹ *Religions of the World: A Comprehensive Encyclopedia of Beliefs and Practices*, 2nd ed., s.v. “Pantheism.” While Woodrow Whidden identified and discussed, at length, panentheism as the belief held by E. J. Waggoner and, thus, possibly also held by Kellogg, the statements made by Kellogg are of a very specific nature and do not demonstrate the same beliefs. See, Woodrow W. Whidden II, *E. J. Waggoner: From the Physician of Good News to Agent of Division* (Hagerstown, Maryland: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2008).

see objects in nature—such as a tree—as being God. In short, Kellogg was not a pantheist. If anything, Kellogg was expressing, in no uncertain terms, that he believed in the necessity of the indwelling of divine power for every function of life; which brings his belief into line with Thomas Aquinas as taught by the Roman Catholic Church.

While similarity does not necessarily mean a direct connection, a meeting predating *The Living Temple* gives more evidence of Catholic doctrinal influence on Kellogg's beliefs. In 1901, during a lecture given at a Seventh-day Adventist General Conference session, Kellogg recounted a meeting between himself and an unnamed Roman Catholic bishop, in which the bishop proselytized to Kellogg on the nature of God in man, saying:

“God is the head of everything; he is the head of you, and he is the head of me. When I reach out my arm, and draw it in, there is a creation. God is creating in my arm the power with which I use my arm.” “Do you really believe that?” I asked. “Why, that is exactly what I believe,” he answered. “Of course I believe it. It is certainly the truth.” “Well,” I said, “I believe that too.”...God is in me, and everything I do is God's power; every single act is a creative act of God...this Catholic bishop was talking the same lesson I am trying to talk to you to-night.¹²⁰

In using the example of moving his arm, the bishop was instructing Kellogg in a very specific Aquinian doctrine. In his commentary on Thomas Aquinas' teaching in *The Twenty-Four Fundamental Theses of Official Catholic Philosophy* P. Lumbreras notes:

The agent [a human] depends on God for its existence, for its powers, for the conservation of that existence and of these powers. It depends also on God for the very exercise of these powers. Because in exercising these powers the agent passes from

¹²⁰ J. H. Kellogg, “Illustrated Stereopticon Lecture,” April 18, *The General Conference Bulletin: Thirty-Fourth Session* IV, no. 2 (Second Quarter, 1901): 496-497.

Potency to Act, its faculties do not move except in so far as they are moved; there must be a motion coming from the immovable mover [God].¹²¹

The bishop's example of arm movement as proof of God's creative power in man is directly based on Aquinas' teachings and the Roman Catholic doctrine on God in man. Kellogg himself also used examples in his lecture that were similar to the bishop's: "God is working to-day just as much as he did in creation...there is a will that controls the heart. It is the divine will that causes it to beat...[this is] evidence of the divine presence that we have within us, that God is within, that there is an intelligence, a power, a will within, that is commanding the functions of our bodies and controlling them."¹²²

Even though Kellogg was teaching Roman Catholic doctrine and not pantheism, it made little difference to Seventh-day Adventist leadership and Ellen White. Kellogg was falsely denounced as a pantheist, with more punitive measures to follow. However, the issues regarding Kellogg's Roman Catholic doctrine masked a larger and less-discussed issue—Kellogg's desire to make his health reform a means of salvation. Focused on what they thought was pantheistic heresy, Seventh-day Adventist leaders did not address this issue, and it was entirely possible that they were never aware of it since the only place Kellogg discusses it was in a 1898 letter to Ellen White before their break. In this incendiary letter Kellogg announces his attempt to move Seventh-day Adventist doctrine on salvation toward a union with his health reforms:

Those who meet the Lord when he comes will be above the power of disease as well as above the power of sin...they will reach this condition by obedience to the truth...the healing of disease is simply the completion of the work of forgiveness...It seems to me very clear that the sealing time cannot be very far in the future and that the sealing of God

¹²¹ P. Lumbreras, *The Twenty-Four Fundamental Theses of Official Catholic Philosophy*, <http://www.u.arizona.edu/~aversa/scholastic/24Thomisticpart2.htm>.

¹²² J. H. Kellogg, "Illustrated Stereopticon Lecture," 493.

is a physical and moral change which takes place in the man as the result of truth [health reform] and which shows in his very countenance that it is the seal of God...It seems to me our people have been wrong in regarding Sunday observance as the sole mark of the beast...when the individual yields to God complete obedience, every function of the body will be a faculty of the Divine mind. It is the life of God that rules everything in the body of the righteous man and if the will is completely surrendered to God...the power of God which is in the man must restore all the faculties and functions to their Divine perfection...The Greater Gospel which includes healing for the body and mind as well as for the soul through obedience, our people do not seem to appreciate...We are doing all we can to get this truth before the people.¹²³

When Kellogg laid out his entire theory of salvation through health reform, he revealed the end-goal of his work—the salvation of souls through the “Greater Gospel.”¹²⁴ This was an incredibly bold move for, if salvation came through obedience to health reforms, then Kellogg, as the keeper and setter of those reforms, became the arbiter of salvation.

This was the basis for Kellogg’s religion of “Biologic Living” in Wilson’s study, and yet it is completely overlooked due to the controversy over *The Living Temple*. For her part, Ellen White does not seem to have responded to this issue at all. Her efforts were wholly devoted to attacking *The Living Temple*, yet this latter issue seems the more perilous of the two. Either way, by 1907, Seventh-day Adventist leadership had had enough, and on November 10 of that year Kellogg’s name was dropped from the membership books at the Seventh-day Adventist Tabernacle in Battle Creek. Besides his religious beliefs, there were a plethora of issues and

¹²³ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, June 28, 1898, IN-023-026, Incoming Correspondence, Microfilm, Reel 25, Ellen G. White Research Center, Southwestern Adventist University Library, Keene, Texas.

¹²⁴ Kellogg frequently referred to health reform as the “Greater Gospel.” See John Harvey Kellogg, “The Greater Gospel,” *Good Health* 33, no. 6 (June, 1898): 377-380.

infighting between Kellogg and Seventh-day Adventist leadership over ownership and control of the Sanitarium.¹²⁵ Though strangely enough, official records show Kellogg was not disfellowshipped on charges of pantheism, but rather for not attending church, failing to pay tithe, non-participation in the ordinances of foot washing and communion, and, most offensive of all, the heresy of giving “up his faith in the Spirit of Prophecy [Ellen White].”¹²⁶ The pastor of the Battle Creek Tabernacle, M. N. Campbell noted that, “We do not discipline persons for cherishing unbelief in the Testimonies [Ellen White’s writings], but when they come out in opposition to them, that is an altogether different matter.”¹²⁷

The charge of disbelief in Ellen White’s writings seemed to take precedence over any charges of pantheism. Ironically enough, Kellogg had never professed such disbelief. In an eight hour-long interview with two elders sent from the church to check Kellogg for heresy, he accused Seventh-day Adventist leadership of misleading White and misusing her writings by removing and compiling sentences out of context from private letters and using them as “testimonies” to prove their points.¹²⁸ Frustration over these matters caused him to ask: “How do I know what is truth?”¹²⁹ But he never stated that he believed her writings were false, at least the ones that he believed Seventh-day Adventist leaders had not tampered with. It was these smaller concerns that clouded the main issues of Kellogg’s personal doctrinal beliefs, and buried his true problematic theories based in Aquinian theory and salvation through health reform. In either case, it was probably for the best that the church separated from Kellogg—had he been allowed

¹²⁵ For a more comprehensive look at these other issues see, Richard W. Schwarz, “The Kellogg Schism: The Hidden Issues,” *SPECTRUM* 4, no. 4 (Autumn, 1972): 19-35.

¹²⁶ Emmett K. Vande Vere, ed., *Windows: Selected Readings in Seventh-day Adventist Church History 1844-1922* (Nashville, Tennessee: Southern Publishing Association, 1975), 231.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 231.

¹²⁸ See *Interview Between Elders Amadon and Bourdeau and Dr. J. H. Kellogg*, October 7, 1907, Papers of M. N. Campbell, Private Collection of Sue Guinn, Keene, Texas.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 45.

to follow through with his plans, the Seventh-day Adventist Church may very well have become the Seventh-day Adventist Church of Kellogg.

1.5 Conclusion: The Greater Gospel

This chapter demonstrates four main points: Kellogg's mother-son relationship with Ellen White, the presence and effects of his depression and hypomania, his teaching of Roman Catholic doctrine—not pantheism, all of which reveal the final and central point of the pivotal role religion played in Kellogg's life and work. It is extremely difficult to flesh out an historical individual's religious beliefs, as it asks for judgment calls about inner motivations and hidden thoughts. I have done the best I can with Kellogg's statements both public and private, as well as with his connections at home and abroad and the possible influences in his life outside of Seventh-day Adventism. What is somewhat more challenging is his religious position after the denomination voted him out of membership.

Though many historians argue that Kellogg became wholly secularized after 1907, Wilson noted that Kellogg “had always been fascinated with religious traditions other than Seventh-day Adventism, and although he never joined another church after his break with the Seventh-day Adventists, he retained a lively interest in other religions...”¹³⁰ In my estimation Kellogg never joined another religion for a simple reason; he still identified with the religion of his childhood, the religion of his adopted mother—the religion that defined his life and work. For all of Kellogg's secular activities and notions after 1907, there seems to be an underlying religiosity to his motivation. One specific example, among many, are some lecture notes he wrote towards the end of his life in 1940. Entitled *Philosophy of Life*, Kellogg relates the need

¹³⁰ Wilson, *Dr. Kellogg and the Religion of Biologic Living*, 114.

for a belief in the divine: “Vain man does not like to acknowledge an intelligence superior to his own, and the scientists of the last century sought to account for creation without a Creator, taking for their starting point inanimate matter instead of Infinite Intelligence and Infinite Personality... The profound researches into the nature of matter, the cosmic ray, and other radiant forces all declare in such unequivocal terms... that no standing place is left for atheism or even skepticism.”¹³¹

Besides demonstrating his still Christian nature, Kellogg showed traits that he still held Seventh-day Adventism as his belief system. This was evident to Ellen White who, in 1911, wrote to her estranged son one last time to plead for his return to the church:

I have seen no way in which we could honor God but to separate from you and your associates and take a decided stand against your sophistries. I know where the people of God should stand, and I am sure that when you are worked by the Spirit of God, you will make thorough work for repentance... Your course of action has nearly cost me my life, but my greatest sorrow is the thought of the souls that might have been saved... My soul has longed to see you separating from every false dependence and casting your helpless soul on Christ. Without delay make sure that your feet are placed upon the sure foundation.¹³²

Though Kellogg did not respond to her plea for his return to the denomination, White's death three years later in 1915 no doubt traumatized him. Years later, he told his personal secretary, Alonzo L. Baker, that while he no longer attended Sabbath services at the Seventh-day Adventist Church, he spent his Saturdays reading the Bible and White's books on Christ, but it was what

¹³¹ John Harvey Kellogg, “Philosophy of Life,” June 5, 1940, Lectures, Speeches, and Related Materials, Box 7, John Harvey Kellogg Papers, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan. Hereafter cited as (John Harvey Kellogg Papers).

¹³² Ellen White to Kellogg, J. H., November 21, 1911, K-100-1911, EGW Letters, EGW Estate.

Kellogg did after his readings that is remarkable: “In the afternoon I had Freddie [his masseur and chauffeur] drive me out to the cemetery, for I wanted to pray beside Mrs. White’s grave there.”¹³³ The imagery of Kellogg praying beside the grave of his lost mother reveals perhaps an attempt at penitence and desire for the return of the old days of his childhood and his life’s work. In his much-ignored article about Kellogg’s latter years, Baker (himself a Seventh-day Adventist) defended Kellogg and revealed that “Kellogg kept the Sabbath right up to the last day of his life.”¹³⁴ The final piece of evidence regarding Kellogg’s religious views comes from a chance “letter to the editor” in the *Adventist Review*, in which a Ralph Balley recounted a statement made to him by the Adventist pastor of the Battle Creek Tabernacle during the 1940s—pastor E. L. Pingnot:

During the early days of Elder Pingnot’s pastorate in Battle Creek, Dr. Kellogg spent most of his last two years of life as a patient at the Battle Creek (Phelps) Sanitarium. Elder Pingnot visited Dr. Kellogg almost daily at the sanitarium, praying and reviewing the Scriptures with him...Elder Pingnot stated that during the last months of his life Dr. Kellogg admitted that he had strayed from the pathway to the kingdom of God, and became reconciled to the Lord in confession and repentance. Elder Pingnot asked Dr. Kellogg if he would like to have his name presented to the Battle Creek Tabernacle for membership. Dr. Kellogg replied, “No, no, Elder Pingnot. The brethren would never understand, and it would only stir up old feelings that might disrupt the church. Let the bygones of the past be past. The Lord knows and understands, and that is all that really counts.” Dr. Kellogg passed to his rest shortly thereafter.¹³⁵

¹³³ Alonzo L. Baker, “My Years with John Harvey Kellogg,” *SPECTRUM* 4, no. 4, (Autumn, 1972): 45.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 44.

¹³⁵ Ralph P. Balley, “Letters,” *Adventist Review*, July 22, 1999, 3.

Whether or not Kellogg repented and officially reclaimed his Seventh-day Adventist roots mattered little to him in the end. Truth to him was the light of health reform, and he had done everything in his power to take that light to the world.

Religion controlled every aspect of Kellogg's life. It shaped his health reforms and infused them with religious language and imagery, and eventually, health became his religion. One of the rarities when writing history is being able to define an historical individual's motives. Such a feat might indeed be impossible since we must view their life through what records are left to us. Nevertheless, in this very brief overview of the religious movements surrounding Kellogg and their effect on his work, I have suggested that religion was his motivation. For him, health reform was light from God, shining into a dark world filled with the sick; it was the truth that would raise humanity up from the depths and into a new world. Though not always clear, and seldom (if ever) smooth, Kellogg's journey from working in a broom shop to one of the world's most renowned health reformers came about only by virtue of his religious belief. In the following chapters, not only will we explore Kellogg's ideas and excursions in various health reform topics, we will see a religious thread of continuity that ties them all together. As Kellogg put it, "This is God's work. It is everlasting truth. It is in my very bones. I am nothing without it, or apart from it, I cannot separate from it, it will not let me go, and I am not the least bit inclined to want to let it go."¹³⁶

¹³⁶ Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, March 9, 1901, 15421-o, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

Chapter 2

Pure Food

2.1 The Need for Pure Food

In 1906, the United States Government passed into law two pieces of legislation that concerned the quality and safety of food—the Pure Food and Drug Act and the Federal Meat Inspection Act. It is hard to overstate the necessity of this significant piece of legislation. Such was the dilapidated state of food and health safety in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that it permeated every strata of society. In his 1906 novel, *The Jungle*, Upton Sinclair gave disturbing descriptions of the meatpacking industry in Chicago; in one of a litany of passages he wrote about the making of sausage. Sinclair described how moldy sausages were scrubbed down with borax and treated with other chemicals before they were mixed in with other meat into a hopper.¹ As if this were not stomach-turning enough, Sinclair continued, writing:

There would be meat stored in great piles in rooms; and the water from leaky roofs would drip over it, and thousands of rats would race about on it. It was too dark in these storage places to see well, but a man could run his hand over these piles of meat and sweep off handfuls of the dried dung of rats. These rats were nuisances, and the packers would put poisoned bread out for them; they would die, and then rats, bread, and meat would go into the hoppers together.²

While Sinclair was aiming more to reveal the plight and despair of the workers and poor immigrants in the meatpacking industry, his book filled the American public with revulsion for

¹ Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: J.W. Edwards Inc., 2009), 133.

² Ibid.

the meat industry—for, although written as a novel, Sinclair had spent about four weeks working among the meatpackers in research for his writing. Contaminated meat was also indiscriminant in its distribution; the wealthy had just as much a chance at ingesting it as the poor. However, the former could afford to dispose of perceived tainted meat more than the latter. Historian James Young noted that this was not the first exposé of the health dangers contained in the meat industry, yet various newspaper reports and magazine stories had “left the citizenry largely unmoved.”³ Sinclair’s novel also had little effect on Americans when it was first published as a serial in the socialist newspaper *Appeal to Reason*. Young explained that it was not until publishers (Doubleday, Page) printed *The Jungle* as a book and “engaged in extensive promotion,” that citizens were alerted to the work’s “charges about tainted meat.”⁴ The results, as Young put it, “spurred a mighty reaction in the body politic that, in four months, led to the enactment of two laws.”⁵

The perpetual quest for “pure food,” Young notes, goes “far back to the time beyond memory when unscrupulous bakers and vintners began to adulterate bread and to water wine.”⁶ Arguments for unadulterated food continue to the present day. One modern food “defender” is journalist Michael Pollan, who wrote: “Ordinary food is still out there, however, still being grown and even occasionally sold in the supermarket, and this ordinary food is what we should eat. But given our current state of confusion and given the thousands of products calling themselves food, this is more easily said than done.”⁷ Pollan’s work typifies one of several approaches to seeking “pure,” “healthier,” or “ordinary” food. In this case, the way we eat food

³ James Harvey Young, *Pure Food: Securing the Federal Food and Drugs Act of 1906* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 229.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁷ Michael Pollan, *In Defense of Food: An Eater’s Manifesto* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2008), 147.

and what we eat becomes a lifestyle—an ideology. Pollan was very apropos in his work, *In Defense of Food*, when he subtitled it *An Eater's Manifesto*.

Concerned with delineating the complexities facing the modern eater, Pollan delved into the history of food processing and nutritionism, and laid down rules and guidelines for healthier eating—all of which were summed up in his opening mantra: “Eat Food. Not too much. Mostly Plants.”⁸ His work stands out among the many books seeking to specifically change eating habits in the United States because it is less concerned with diet and more about reform. John Harvey Kellogg would have appreciated Pollan’s call to return to a diet of “real” food, and being conscientious about what we eat. However, he would have vehemently argued against the last tenet of Pollan’s mantra to eat mostly plants. For Kellogg, the eating of plants was mandatory, and meat was to be totally avoided. This was not due—at least in part—to the dangers of the meatpacking industry of Kellogg and Sinclair’s day, but rather because Kellogg was an ardent proponent of vegetarianism.

Vegetarianism, as a term, is as varying as the people who practice it. The two most common forms of practice in the United States are not often differentiated from each other; they are vegetarian (a person who does not eat any meat) and vegan (a person who, besides not eating meat, refuses to eat any type of animal product such as milk, eggs, and cheese). It should be noted that vegans would classify their practices as a term separate from vegetarianism, in this case veganism, even though it descended from a vegetarian past. While these terms seem fairly straight forward, they are more fluid and subjective in practice. I have met vegetarians who, while not eating “red” meat such as beef, would still eat “white” meat such as chicken and fish. Likewise, I have met vegans who, besides abstaining from eating any animal products, also refuse to use any animal byproducts such as leather and beeswax. The practitioner, then,

⁸ Ibid., 1.

identifies their self along the spectrum of vegetarianism, but may not always practice their eating habits in the same manner as the next vegetarian. But mostly, all follow the central tenet of a predominantly plant-based diet.

Kellogg's vegetarianism found its genesis in his Seventh-day Adventist belief, and he quickly became its chief proponent within and outside the denomination. But for him, vegetarianism was more than abstention from meat. Kellogg was just as concerned with the quality of the food entering the body as the type. He wrote in 1896:

The numerous adulterations of food which are now so extensively practiced must be recognized as a not unimportant cause of functional disease of the stomach. Alum in bread and in baking-powders; lead in drinking-water which has passed through lead water-pipes...lead occurring in the tin cans used for preserving fruit, or in tin pans or other tinned ware...vinegar containing sulphuric [sic] and other strong mineral acids...sugar made from corn, refuse starch, etc....⁹

Kellogg's food reform sought to move beyond the margins of dietary theory and into changing the life-habits of Americans. In a statement that would find common ground with Pollan's modern food movement, Kellogg wrote that sensible "diet reform must begin before sitting down to the table to eat. It must begin in the kitchen; indeed, we must even go beyond the kitchen. Even the wisest, most skillful and conscientious cook cannot prepare good food from poor materials."¹⁰

But to understand Kellogg's position on vegetarianism and the reasons for his viewpoints, we must first discuss the concept of Western Vegetarianism. To do this we must go

⁹ J. H. Kellogg, *The Stomach: Its Disorders, and How to Cure Them* (Battle Creek, Michigan: Modern Medicine Pub. Co., 1896), 122.

¹⁰ J. H. Kellogg, *Life, Its Mysteries and Miracles: A Manual of Health Principles* (Battle Creek, Michigan: Good Health Publishing Company, 1910), 111.

back beyond Kellogg and Adventism to Europe—where abstention from eating meat was already long debated before the nineteenth century. Indeed, Western Vegetarianism finds its roots deep in the ancient religious culture of India and Christian mythos, and these hallmarks created a decidedly sectarian movement for and against consuming meat. Understanding Kellogg’s place in the history of vegetarianism requires understanding a central debate between two motivations for practicing vegetarianism: first, as a moral and religious movement, and second, as a health movement.

In starting with Europe, we can successfully trace vegetarian ideas from their ancient roots to their transfer from countries, like England, to the fledgling United States in the early nineteenth century. While there is no one European health reformer who seems to have impacted Kellogg in this area, vegetarianism in the United States was an outgrowth of movements in Europe to abstain from meat—specifically England, where the Vegetarian Society of England introduced the term “vegetarian” in the 1840s. Kellogg’s contributions to vegetarian advancement exemplify the two motivations (religious and health) inherent in the movement from its beginnings. But vegetarianism as a health movement was relatively new in the long history of abstention from meat, and European vegetarians were more concerned with their morality than a healthful diet.

2.2 The Roots of European Vegetarianism

While it is impossible to cover the enormity of traditions for and against abstention from eating meat in Europe, we must nonetheless review (very briefly) some of the details involved in these customs. Western vegetarianism found its roots in medieval ideas of ritual fasting and feasting, as well as religious and moral asceticism. As Christianity and the collective identity of

“Christendom” largely dominated European history, it is not surprising that arguments of diet largely relied on interpretations of biblical scriptures.

Tristram Stuart, in his cultural history of vegetarianism, notes that Europe’s moral and religious arguments for or against eating meat centered on the book of Genesis.¹¹ From the beginning of creation, humanity was instructed to “subdue” the earth and was given “dominion” over it and its animal inhabitants.¹² This formed the basis of moral arguments on meat eating for some interpreted “subdue” and “dominion” as license to kill animals, whereas others defined them in terms of stewardship—insomuch as a good steward does not kill or destroy that over which they are charged with protecting. These arguments persisted and were later augmented with classical and enlightened ideals, though they were separated from arguments over divine commands on diet. European scriptural understanding of diet came from two main verses in Genesis: “And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which [sic] is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.”¹³ The divine injunction seemed clear—meat was off the table. Even in the Latin Vulgate, the order of a plant-based diet was clearly delineated with *ut sint vobis in escam* (to you it shall be food).¹⁴ However, this command was later amended after the biblical flood when God said to Noah: “And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth...into your hand they are delivered. Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.”¹⁵ This second verse—as far as medieval

¹¹ Tristram Stuart, *The Bloodless Revolution: A Cultural History of Vegetarianism from 1600 to Modern Times* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), xvii-xviii.

¹² Genesis 1:28 (King James Version, Cambridge).

¹³ Genesis 1:29 (King James Version, Cambridge).

¹⁴ Genesis 1:29 (Nova Vulgata, Libreria Editrice Vaticana).

¹⁵ Genesis 9:2-3 (King James Version, Cambridge).

eaters were concerned—lifted any biblical sanction on the butchery of animals and the eating of meat.

Throughout the Middle Ages meat was allowed as food but not always available. Colin Spencer noted that most “have an exaggerated view of the daily diet of the rich in the Middle Ages as it is only the menus of the great feasts which have come down to us.”¹⁶ There was also a sharp difference between the diets of the nobility and the peasantry. Whereas members of the nobility might consume a meal consisting of “fresh and salted meats, game, venison and waterfowl, salted and pickled vegetables as well as fresh onion, leeks and garlic...,” a peasant “sustained themselves on a diet of grains, vegetables and what was known as ‘white meat’, which meant dairy produce.”¹⁷ So while meat was permissible to eat it was not readily available and the “majority of Christian Europe had to survive on a vegetable diet but not from choice or ideology.”¹⁸ Eugen Weber suggested that the reality of the rich being “typical carnivores” who “lived either in cities or in châteaux and palaces,” became a metaphor widely seen in the fairy tales produced at the time, in which “only the wicked eat meat.”¹⁹ Thus, characters such as the witch (who was wealthy in food) in the story of Hansel and Gretel and the evil queen in the tale of Snow White represented “highborn ladies” who wished to gorge themselves on flesh—the immorality of which was represented in the act of cannibalizing children.²⁰ These stories helped shape the “noble peasant” trope, in which the moral life of the peasantry was contrasted to the evil excesses of the immoral rich, which may have impacted later health reformers, such as Kellogg, who praised the virtues of the diet of the “noble peasant” as a reason for reform.

¹⁶ Colin Spencer, *Vegetarianism: A History* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows, 2000), 170.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 171.

¹⁹ Eugen Weber, “Fairies and Hard Facts: The Reality of Folktales,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 42, no. 1 (January-March 1981): 100-101.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

Meat eating would not come into question again until the Renaissance—when, in their study of the classical world, Europeans came into contact with the writings of (among others) Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, and Plutarch concerning the consuming of flesh. Of all these Pythagoras—who discovered the Pythagorean theorem—is perhaps the most well known, and is considered the ancient “father” of vegetarianism.²¹ In the mid-sixth century B.C.E. Pythagoras established a commune at Croton that famously practiced vegetarianism. But more importantly, as Janet Barkas pointed out, Pythagoras established “the association of vegetarian sects with male and female equality” as well as “the association of a meatless diet with pacifism.”²² This mixture of diet restrictions with religious philosophy created an atmosphere of fanaticism, as was demonstrated in a famous story of Pythagorean followers being slaughtered during an attack rather than escaping through a bean field—lest they should trample the plants.²³

Yet, for all their study of classical ideas, eaters in the Renaissance were not wholly given over to arguments for vegetarianism. As it was in Pythagoras’ day, to practice vegetarianism was to participate in a semi-religious ritual, and led to questions as to the Roman Catholic Church’s position on the slaughter and consuming of animals. Added to the other debates on religious principles—which would eventually lead to the Protestant Reformation—discourse on vegetarianism became just as dangerous and controversial as the doctrines of purgatory or transubstantiation. Of all the philosophers and famous names from the Renaissance such as Sir Thomas More and Erasmus (both dissenting voices of killing animals), perhaps the best-known name is also the least recognized for his vegetarianism—Leonardo da Vinci. The man often held as the original “Renaissance man” is known for his paintings, sketches, inventions, writings, and even his sexual preferences, but few realize that Leonardo, as Spencer noted, “passionately

²¹ Janet Barkas, *The Vegetable Passion* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1975), 48.

²² *Ibid.*, 48-49.

²³ *Ibid.*, 50.

denounced the slaughter of animals and loathed meat-eating.”²⁴ In his analysis of Leonardo and other men of the Renaissance, Spencer observed that thoughts on vegetarianism became linked to humanism:

His [Leonardo’s] heart and soul are turned in another direction, to humankind itself, alone with nature, part of the living universe. Leonardo is the first great humanitarian. In Leonardo, Montaigne, More and Erasmus, the knowledge of their own humanity and what they feel for the plight of others in their suffering engulf notions of Christian ideology....But in their humanity are the beginnings of an ideological structure to compete with Christianity.²⁵

Vegetarianism then became part of the larger movement of humanism in the Renaissance and was marginalized. Yet, to accept and practice a vegetarian lifestyle meant becoming inexorably linked to humanistic ideology. As Spencer put it, this meant that vegetarianism became part of a movement away from Christianity; a void that reached its height in the seventeenth century.

As the flourishing Renaissance of the late-fifteenth and sixteenth century gave rise to the Reformation and other movements against the norms of the Church, the seventeenth century saw the fallout of these movements. The Thirty Years War, which decimated the population of Central Europe from 1618 to 1648, forever changed European society and began a desperate search for ways to prevent another catastrophe that historian Peter Wilson termed “Europe’s Tragedy.”²⁶ Wilson asserted that the war had the profound effect of destabilizing the institutions of Medieval and Renaissance Europe and the surety those foundations provided:

European culture was already changing rapidly under the impact of world exploration, trade and scientific discoveries, all of which helped free minds from the deadening grip

²⁴ Spencer, *Vegetarianism*, 177.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 179-180.

²⁶ See Peter H. Wilson, *Europe’s Tragedy: A History of the Thirty Years War* (New York: Allen Lane, 2009).

of theology. The conflict furthered this by demonstrating the futility of religious fundamentalism, but this came at a very high price. While creativity and ingenuity still flourished, much was needlessly destroyed. The human cost becomes clearest when we examine the psychological impact of the war....²⁷

The consequence Wilson referred to was the immense and pervasive fear of violence that gripped European society during and after the war—a fear that “proved debilitating, reducing the quality of life.”²⁸ Europe was already violent enough with half its population dying by age fifteen; the “war heightened these everyday anxieties” with most “afraid to travel, send messages or goods” and the “increased uncertainty violated the familiar.”²⁹ The fear of violence and the need for security in Europe produced a desperate search for a way of ending violence and aggression in society and led to a rediscovery of vegetarianism from an unlikely source.

The search for a way to combat humanity’s carnal nature coincided with an explosion of trade and exploration in the late seventeenth century. Merchants from all over Europe—and more specifically the English and Dutch—moved enormous quantities of goods from around the world. But some of the most sought-after items came from India. The exotic land to the east produced luxury goods such as sugar and spices, along with gemstones and textiles. The British, Dutch, French, and Danes all developed colonies for trade in India—with the British East India Company eventually ruling large parts of the subcontinent. Soon, merchants and explorers began filling Europe with tales of a mystical land of yogis, Brahmans, and their gods. But one important detail stood out to most Europeans—India was reported to be a land of peace and prosperity, where violence was curtailed through cultural self-control. Most notable was the almost wholly practiced avoidance of meat eating, which became associated with the peaceful

²⁷ Peter H. Wilson, *Europe’s Tragedy: A History of the Thirty Years War* (New York: Allen Lane, 2009), 821.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 841.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

imagery of India. Though this narrative is largely suspect, as not two hundred years earlier Europeans would have found the Mughal emperors fighting with Rajput kings; nonetheless, the idea of a peaceful and vegetarian Indian society persisted in the European mind.

While Europeans became enlightened on Indian vegetarianism in the seventeenth century, the practice of abstaining from eating meat in India dates to the ancient world—more specifically, to the Aryan invasion of India around 800 BC. The Aryans used meat for sacrifice and thus rarely ate animals, preferring to save such resources for their Vedic gods. Their diet mainly consisted of milk products, grains, and vegetables.³⁰ Vegetarianism came to fruition in India primarily with the rise of Hinduism in 600 BC, which focused on reincarnation of the human soul and raised the cow, specifically, to a holy animal. Spencer remarked on the complexity of cow worship in India and its importance to vegetarian practices: “Certainly Hindu theology, in reckoning the number of gods and goddesses in a cow’s body at 330 million, raises apotheosis to a fine art. It takes eighty-six transmigrations for a soul to rise from devil to cow, and in one more migration the soul becomes a human form....Cow worship and vegetarianism are both subsequent to this idea of transmigration and rebirth, the central doctrine of India’s religion.”³¹ Vegetarianism became a much-needed mandate in a religion that saw the killing of a cow as “such a base deed that a soul” would “slip back all eighty-six transmigrations and become a devil again.”³²

But this did not mean that meat was completely banished from the Indian diet. As Stuart pointed out, not all Indians were vegetarians, but the Brahmins (those of the religious caste or class) “upheld their caste purity laws by abstaining from meat,” which in turn gave them “an

³⁰ See Chapter 3 in Spencer, *Vegetarianism*.

³¹ Spencer, *Vegetarianism*, 77.

³² *Ibid.*

aura of austere sanctity” to the Europeans.³³ The Europeans became fascinated with Indian culture and consumed travel stories from explorers as quickly as they could write and tell them. In trying to understand the complexities of vegetarian practices, Europeans were “fixated with the belief system underlying the Indians’ vegetarianism.”³⁴ Thus the study of vegetarianism in Europe became a pursuit to understand Hinduism. Questions on whether it was morally right to eat meat or even slay animals, and whether or not this type of social change could bring an end to violence in nature, evolved within the context of Hinduism. As Stuart noted, the Hindu religion provided “the arena in which these issues were fought out.”³⁵

As the popularity of these beliefs spread, so did the conflict between vegetarianism’s Hindu origins and Christianity. If the consumption of meat was the biblical standard that informed the European diet, then to practice vegetarianism was to turn away from biblical beliefs. To practice vegetarianism was to embrace a Hindu ritual and to overrule the divine approval of meat eating in Genesis. For critics, though, even worse than the turning away from biblical principles was the readily apparent idolatry of animals in Indian culture. Besides the cow—which to many European Christians already invoked the imagery of Israel’s idolatry in the desert—Hindu temples were filled with carvings of a verity of animals, as well as several deities who were animalistic themselves, such as Ganesha (the elephant-headed god of wisdom and success) and Narasimha (a man-lion avatar of the god Vishnu).

Besides religious arguments, many in the seventeenth century debated the practicality of Hindu vegetarians. Although the belief of man’s dominance over the animal world was biblical in its origin, by the 1600s such beliefs had become part of the cultural norm in Europe. Animals were to be used for humanity’s purposes and then dispassionately disposed of once their

³³ Stuart, *The Bloodless Revolution*, 50.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

usefulness had run its course. So when explorers returned and recounted the existence of animal hospitals in India, Europeans were puzzled and more than a little repulsed with the waste of resources and the upending of their social norms.³⁶ Almost immediately, critics of vegetarianism sought to discredit the Hindu idea of *ahimsa* (which called upon people to abstain from violent behavior) as it challenged the perceived moral superiority of the West, which was inundated with violence. Their efforts culminated in comparing Hindu abstention from meat to the teaching of Pythagoras. In an attempt to give Europeans a superior status, critics theorized that it had been Pythagoras that had taught the Indians vegetarian doctrines, when in reality it was India that taught Pythagoras. This was done in an attempt to produce a more European-centered narrative for the acceptance of Vegetarianism. As Stuart noted: “This gave Pythagoras the European a superior status, and it also meant that Brahmins could be more readily assimilated into biblical history by claiming that they and their philosophy were descended from the Egyptians.”³⁷

With vegetarianism defined as Pythagorean heresy, Europeans were free to ignore the inconvenient, vegetarian parts of Hindu principles and move forward with their arguments against violence in society. In his analysis of the writings of Puritan chaplain Edward Terry, Stuart points to Terry’s ability to negate Indian vegetarianism while accepting the concept of *ahimsa* as compatible with Christianity. Terry claimed that the Hindu’s central motives for vegetarianism were centered on Pythagorean teachings and a misconception of biblical scriptures. But, at the same time, he “nevertheless acknowledged that they provided a better moral example than Christians who fought unrighteous wars.”³⁸

With such an explanation of Indian-Hindu beliefs, Europeans were free to move forward in concepts of non-violence, but there would be no widespread adoption of vegetarianism in

³⁶ Ibid., 53.

³⁷ Ibid., 54.

³⁸ Ibid., 55.

Europe. Though later travel writers such as François Bernier and John Ovington argued for the health advantages of Indian vegetarianism, seventeenth-century Europeans were afraid that such practices could result in feebleness, lethargy, or effeminacy.³⁹

These foundational arguments were carried into eighteenth-century Europe where they became mixed-in with Enlightenment ideas and writings. Vegetarianism saw a resurgence as society more and more abandoned biblical views on diet. Voltaire lauded Hinduism and its treatment of animals over biblical ideals that encouraged Europeans to slaughter and eat their fill of meat. Sir Isaac Newton was said to have practiced vegetarianism, and many considered his long life and intellect to be a result of his special diet. All of Europe was shaken with the sudden rise of atheism and deism that spread from philosophers of the Enlightenment, and, as Christian norms were further abandoned, religious doctrines on diet were replaced with observations of the natural world and humanity's "natural diet."

Those who valued their diet of meat were quick to repel these new concepts. However, English defenders of a meat-based diet were confronted with growing influences from India as the subcontinent was drawn slowly into the British Empire. The nineteenth century saw Hinduism become romanticized and revered. The methods of science also showed the effects of a vegetarian diet upon the body and its functions. The foundations for the health benefits of vegetarianism—as well as its moral and utilitarian applications—were thus laid by the time vegetarianism found its way to the United States, where it was utilized not to move away from Christianity, but to spread it.⁴⁰

³⁹ See Stuart, *The Bloodless Revolution*, 56-59.

⁴⁰ While the movements of vegetarianism in the eighteenth century were important to its progression and acceptance, the study of each individual philosopher and their opinions would have taken too much time and space here. I decided to spend more time focusing on the developments of vegetarianism in the seventeenth century as it is less studied and more vital to the overall context of India's influence on European vegetarianism. To see more research and documentation on vegetarianism in the eighteenth century and the Enlightenment see Stuart, *The Bloodless Revolution*, specifically his introduction and chapters 8-18; and Spencer, *Vegetarianism*, chapter 10.

2.3 Vegetarianism an Issue of Health and Commodity

In 1817, the Reverend William Metcalfe reached the shores of the United States with a small band of followers. He and his congregation were from a relatively unknown and small group of Christians called Swedenborgians from England, who held, among other things, the belief that God was Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (all one God—Jesus), the Bible was divinely inspired, and practiced vegetarianism. While Metcalfe was not the first proponent of vegetarianism in North America, he was certainly one of the earliest and best recorded, and his work brought the vegetarian movement into the mainstream. Karen and Michael Iacobbo noted the presence of vegetarians in North America from the early 1700s. It was even observed that there might have been several Native American tribes who practiced a form of vegetarianism.⁴¹ However, these early movements were localized to their individual groups and villages. Vegetarianism as a national, or at least collective, movement did not start until Metcalfe and the Swedenborgians reached the United States. It should also be noted that early vegetarianism in North America was almost always in the context of Christian religion. Metcalfe himself was an acolyte of Swedenborgian minister William Cowherd, but both adhered to the principles Emmanuel Swedenborg laid out. Swedenborg, a Swedish philosopher, theologian, and Christian mystic, believed that God had revealed to him a new understanding of the Church and scriptures. While his teachings covered a litany of subjects, his writings on vegetarianism, as Spencer noted, denounced meat eating “as the most vivid symbol of our fall from grace and the source of all evil.”⁴²

⁴¹ Karen Iacobbo and Michael Iacobbo, *Vegetarian America: A History* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2004), 1.

⁴² Spencer, *Vegetarianism*, 239.

This idea was not original to Swedenborg. Meat eating as the symbolic representation of man's sinful nature and expulsion from paradise can be traced back to the Cathars who were persecuted by the Roman Catholic Church in Southern France from the twelfth to fourteenth century, and the concept of prelapsarianism was an outgrowth of the late-seventeenth-century quest to create a non-violent society. Prelapsarianism refers to the attempt to restore humanity to its biblical pre-fallen state—of which meat eating was not a part. The influence of prelapsarianism on Swedenborg (and later Metcalfe) was evident in his preference for a vegetarian diet based on the symbolism of the fall. Metcalfe dedicated most of his ministry to educating the public and advocating for vegetarianism, which culminated in his founding of the American Vegetarian Society in 1850. Metcalfe and his congregation found themselves physically separated in their work and daily lives after they settled in and around Philadelphia, but their message began to take hold.

In 1821, Metcalfe published an essay entitled *Abstinence from the Flesh of Animals*, which inspired a sermon published in 1840 that was close to the same title—*Bible Testimony, on Abstinence from the Flesh of Animals as Food*. In his sermon Metcalfe made vegetarianism the center of Christian character:

And shall Christianity hold out to us these blessed truths of our holy religion in vain?...Shall we not be ready “to present our bodies, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is indeed but our reasonable service?”...Let us bear in mind, that to us, most especially my Christian Friends, the world turns for such an example; that to us pure and undefiled religion calls for such a conduct; to the consistency of our practice with the clemency and humanity of our profession, as believers in the Bible Testimony, that it is good neither to eat flesh nor drink wine, bleeding Christianity looks as her only refuge.

Let her not look in vain. Stand for the cause of Truth against all the efforts of those ‘who live in the flesh.’⁴³

In evoking the imagery of flesh and wine, Metcalfe recalled old arguments of Protestantism concerning the doctrine of transubstantiation, which many considered to be a form of cannibalism. Reformers Martin Luther and Ulrich Zwingli famously debated this issue at the Marburg Colloquy in 1529. Metcalfe’s call to vegetarianism placed it at the center of his congregation’s Christian service. To continue eating meat would mean the pollution of the body and the inability to “present” a sanctified body before God. But he was careful to discourage militant Christianity and advocated pity for those eating meat as well as a peaceful means of spreading vegetarianism:

Our aim is not *violently* to snatch the fatal knife from the bloody hands of the butcher, nor ruthlessly to tear the *feast of death* from the teeth of the *riotous eaters of flesh*.—Our high object is to instruct; to correct general sentiment and to determine the principles of public habits so as to cherish universal humanity; believing that in proportion as the minds of the moral and intellectual among our fellow mortals are sufficiently awakened to the importance of the *dietetics* of the Bible, they will withdraw themselves from a system of cruel habits, which involves a portion of the animal creation in needless suffering and untimely death; and which has unquestionably a baneful effect upon the physical existence and the intellectual, the moral and religious powers of man.⁴⁴

Swedenborgians were to convince others of the virtues in abstaining from flesh foods, and avoid violent means and confrontation. They would have to convince their fellow Christians of the importance of a vegetarian diet through their words and deeds. As if to make this point even

⁴³ William Metcalfe, *Bible Testimony, on Abstinence from the Flesh of Animals as Food* (Philadelphia: J. Metcalfe & Co. Printers, 1840), 31-32.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 33.

clearer, Metcalfe included the hymn that was sung at the end of the sermon. The last verse of which reads: “Hold, daring man! From murder stay: God is the life in all, You smite at God! When flesh you slay:—Can such a crime be small?”⁴⁵ While Swedenborgism was growing in popularity, it was still rather small compared to the other denominations in Pennsylvania, and while Metcalfe’s intentions seemed as genuine as any other Christian’s, other ministers attacked him through the press and denounced him as a heretic. But Metcalfe and the Swedeborgians soon received a boon from an already established public voice—temperance reformer Sylvester Graham.

Like the small pockets of eighteenth-century vegetarians in North America before them, the Swedenborgians, for all their enthusiasm, were unable to convert listeners on a large scale. Vegetarianism found its true champion in the Presbyterian minister and reformer Sylvester Graham. Often labeled the “Father of Vegetarianism,” Graham was far more charismatic and influential among Americans, and his Presbyterian credentials made him less suspect than his Swedenborgian counterparts.⁴⁶ However, the nature of the relationship between Graham and Metcalfe is unclear. Stephen Nissenbaum argued that “it would be silly to attribute Graham’s vegetarianism to the influence of an encounter with the English minister [Metcalfe].”⁴⁷ Nissenbaum allowed for the possibility of a meeting between Metcalfe and Graham, but ruled out any cooperation to further the vegetarian cause due to their contrasting motivations. According to Nissenbaum, Graham based his vegetarianism “on purely physiological considerations,” whereas Metcalfe “derived his vegetarianism from an interpretation of certain

⁴⁵ Ibid., 35.

⁴⁶ Iacobbo and Iacobbo, *Vegetarian America*, 15.

⁴⁷ Stephen Nissenbaum, *Sex, Diet, and Debility in Jacksonian America: Sylvester Graham and Health Reform* (Chicago: The Dorsey Press, 1980), 39.

Bible texts.”⁴⁸ But this conclusion was predicated on the belief that Graham marginalized his Presbyterian leanings and training.⁴⁹ Spencer differed from Nissenbaum, and argued that Graham was “completely won over by Metcalfe’s message.”⁵⁰ Spencer continued to note the apparent cooperation between the two in publications and referred to Graham as a “convert” and the “star of the movement” born from Swedenborgism.⁵¹

In either case, Graham was the health reformer of his time; and while his motives seemed split between making vegetarianism a matter of health and religious morals, he paved the way for Kellogg to approach vegetarianism from a physiological standpoint. Indeed, even though Graham died in 1851, a year before Kellogg’s birth, Kellogg still felt Graham’s lectures on diet and health important enough to republish in 1872. While it is unclear if Kellogg authored the preface himself, the writer laid the founding of health reform principles at Graham’s feet:

By this it will be seen that he [Graham] was the pioneer in health reform; and those who read his Lectures carefully must be convinced that he did not, as many first movers in great reforms, catch merely a glimpse of a great truth in the distance, but, reaching out as by an inspiration, he grasped the subject in its length and breadth, leaving but little for those who came after him but to elaborate the truths he taught, and, by practice, to prove to the world the correctness of his views.... Ignorance of the human system and of the laws that govern it, lies very much at the foundation of many great errors in prevailing habits. No-one has done more than Mr. Graham to dispel this ignorance, and to present

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Nissenbaum implied that any meeting or friendship between Graham and Metcalfe was most likely fictional. He also ignored any Indian contribution to vegetarianism, and instead credited Pythagoras for originating the idea; thus erroneously drawing a direct line from Pythagoras to Graham.

⁵⁰ Spencer, *Vegetarianism*, 256.

⁵¹ Ibid.

scientific facts in a plain, simple manner. It is the duty of every friend of reform to become acquainted-with his writings...⁵²

For Kellogg, Graham was the true author of health reform, and he was to build upon the foundations already laid down long before him. But Adventism would not leave Graham's vegetarianism as it had found it, and Kellogg himself transformed vegetarianism in the United States and throughout the world.

Kellogg's commitment to vegetarianism and to health reform in general stemmed from his Seventh-day Adventist belief. But the denomination's turn to health reform as a major part of its central tenets came in the same year in which the Seventh-day Adventist Church was officially incorporated in 1863. Though James White (Ellen White's husband) had been focusing on health reform principles as topics for his periodical *The Review and Herald*, the denomination truly accepted health reform after Ellen White reported receiving a vision from God in early June. In keeping much in line with Metcalfe's writings on presenting the human body to God in a pure state for service, White wrote:

The body, which God calls his temple, should be preserved in as healthy a condition as possible. Many act as though they had a right to treat their own bodies as they please. They do not realize that God has claims upon them. They are required to glorify him in their bodies and spirits, which are his. While they give themselves up to the gratification of unhealthy appetites, and thus bring disease upon themselves, they cannot render to God acceptable service. None should remain in ignorance of God's claims. All his promises are on conditions of obedience....It is a sacred duty which God has enjoined upon reasonable beings, formed in his image, to keep that image in as perfect a state as

⁵² Sylvester Graham, *Lectures on the Science of Human Life* (Battle Creek, Michigan: The Office of the Health Reformer, 1872), 5-6.

possible. Those who bring disease upon themselves, by self-gratification, have not healthy bodies and minds. They cannot weigh the evidences of truth, and comprehend the requirements of God. Our Saviour will not reach his arm low enough to raise such from their degraded state, while they persist in pursuing a course to sink themselves still lower.⁵³

Although vegetarianism was never fully advocated at such an early stage, White warned of the dangers of eating poisonous meats and flesh, and exactly copied Metcalfe's words when she wrote: "It was God's wise arrangement to save fallen man...He requires them to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul, and present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is the only service he will accept from reasonable mortals."⁵⁴

How much White knew of health reform and reformers like Graham and Metcalfe before 1863 is unclear. It certainly seems likely that she would have been exposed to some form of health reform as a child growing up in New England (the seat of health reform in the United States). Ronald Numbers debated these same issues, noting that when she was questioned about the similarities between her writings and those of the health reformers who had come before her White "issued a formal statement in the *Review and Herald* disclaiming any familiarity with health-reform publications prior to receiving and writing out her vision."⁵⁵ Numbers contended that there was really nothing original in White's health vision that health reformers such as Graham had not stated before. The importance of the 1863 vision, therefore, was its reorientation of the denomination's focus toward health principles. In either case, White's writings were not wholly vegetarian in nature and seemed to allow for meat-eating in small quantities if the meat

⁵³ Ellen G. White, *Spiritual Gifts, Important Facts of Faith: Laws of Health and Testimonies Nos. 1-10* (Battle Creek, Michigan: The Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1864), 148.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 149.

⁵⁵ Ronald L. Numbers, *Prophetess of Health: A Study of Ellen G. White*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008), 136.

could be made safer. There was also no injunction placed on meat eating for Seventh-day Adventists, merely a warning of over-indulgence in meat. This resulted in a marginalizing of vegetarianism among other health reform principles the Adventists utilized, such as hydrotherapy, fresh air, and exercise.

It was Kellogg who championed the vegetarian cause not long after his entry into the sphere of health reform in the 1870s. Trying to convince the world of the benefits of a vegetarian diet was hard enough, but his mission was made even harder with a continued lack of support from his church. Kellogg was continually met with resistance from Seventh-day Adventists who could not let go of their lust for meat. This was particularly evident during Adventist spiritual gatherings (Camp Meetings), when food concessions would sell meat and other abominations. Several times Kellogg attempted to remove the temptation of meat from Adventist events by throwing it away, only to have Adventist ministers retrieve it and divide it amongst themselves.⁵⁶ Even more egregious than this incident was Ellen White's apparent backsliding on the vegetarian issue. Numbers pointed out that later in her life White "was for a time the most prominent backslider of all," and that she ate meals of duck, fish, and chicken.⁵⁷ Indeed, White would not fully abstain from meat until 1896, when a Catholic woman in Australia—while kneeling at White's feet—convinced her of "the selfishness of taking the lives of animals to gratify a perverted taste."⁵⁸ White wrote: "I felt ashamed and distressed. I saw it in a new light, and I said, I will no longer patronize the butchers. I will not have the flesh of corpses on my table."⁵⁹ After a Catholic had brought new light to White in 1896, she appears to have made good on her

⁵⁶ See Numbers, *Prophetess of Health*, 230-231.

⁵⁷ Numbers, *Prophetess of Health*, 231.

⁵⁸ Ellen White to Maxson, Brother and Sister, August 30, 1896, M-073a-1896, EGW Letters, EGW Estate.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

commitment to vegetarianism. But the question still remains: Why was it so difficult for Adventists and other Americans to give up meat?

Perhaps nothing kept people from converting to vegetarianism more than the lack of food options once they had “gained the victory” over meat. Kellogg knew the importance of a properly balanced diet—his wife after all was one of the first nutritionists in the United States—and decided that if Americans and everyone else in the world were going to attempt to abstain from meat then he would have to give them something to replace it on their plates. To that end, Kellogg set about to create meat substitutes that would not only provide nutritional value, but also appeal to those who hungered for meat. This fostered the development at the Battle Creek Sanitarium of a food factory of sorts, in which experimentation of new soy and plant-based foods were in almost continual operation. In 1908, Kellogg lauded his “culinary department,” which was “in fact, simply a large food laboratory.”⁶⁰ This laboratory produced a plethora of “health foods” as they were called from the late nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, such as nut butter, “protose,” and peanut butter (which Kellogg had invented himself). But probably no other health food had such an impact on the United States or the world as Kellogg’s toasted cornflake cereal.

There is no other invention of Kellogg’s that had so far-reaching an effect or greater impact on health reform than cornflakes. But cornflakes, for all their success, also proved disastrous to the reputation of health food. As Howard Markel pointed out: “As the news spread that the Kelloggs had figured out how to spin 60 cents’ worth of wheat into 12 dollars of gold, a phalanx of businessmen, and not a few charlatans, herded themselves to Battle Creek to start

⁶⁰ J. H. Kellogg, *The Battle Creek Sanitarium System: History, Organization, Methods* (Battle Creek, Michigan: Gage Printing Co. LTD., 1908), 125.

their own cereal companies.”⁶¹ The result of this mass influx was the startup of over 100 new cereal companies from 1888 to 1905.⁶²

Even Kellogg became worried as the number of “health food” businesses rose. In 1908, Kellogg published *The Battle Creek Sanitarium System* in an effort to promote his health principles and set his institution apart from others, which was no doubt also an attempt to distinguish his institution from other Seventh-day Adventist ones since his removal from the denomination the previous year. One section refers to “The Original Sanitarium Health Foods,” in which Kellogg delivers a stern warning not to be deceived by imitations:

All the so-called Sanitarium health foods are regularly found on the Sanitarium bill of fare, having been originally devised solely for this use. The character of these foods cannot be judged by the numerous imitations and piracies which are lauded by newspapers and signboard advertisements in terms not unlike those employed by the patent medicine vendor. The Battle Creek Sanitarium has no connection whatever with these questionable exploitations. The first thoroughly cooked and dextrinized cereal food preparation was a Battle Creek Sanitarium product.⁶³

Recognizing the impact his cornflakes had beyond his institution Kellogg wrote: “That the eating habits of the American public have been materially modified is evidenced by the fact that thirty to forty carloads of toasted flaked cereals are being eaten daily under various names in the United States alone, and the consumption is steadily increasing and is rapidly extending to foreign countries.”⁶⁴

⁶¹ Markel, *The Kelloggs*, 135.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Kellogg, *The Battle Creek Sanitarium System*, 137.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

But the original purpose of cornflakes and other various health foods was not to make money or bring fame, but rather—like everything else Kellogg made—to heal. To Kellogg cornflakes and other health foods were to “be prescribed and administered with the same precision with which powerful drugs are given.”⁶⁵ Health foods were to be medicine, with doctors prescribing various types and amounts according to the various illnesses of their patients. Although Kellogg did write to Ellen White in 1895 of his vision of health food factories all over the United States and eventually the world, it was clear that his intent was to spread the vegetarian message and to use the profits to support health reform.⁶⁶ Kellogg even experimented with vegetarian restaurants and cafes throughout the United States in places such as San Francisco, Chicago, Madison, and Philadelphia with promising results.⁶⁷ All these elements combined to generate positive reactions among the American public, and by the twentieth century a new form of vegetarianism in the health food industry had spread back across the Atlantic—particularly to Germany. Madeleine Ferrières observed that “the health dimensions of eating was stressed on both sides of the Atlantic by the two countries [the United States and Germany] that led all others in economic development, where the horn of plenty seemed to pour out its edible riches.”⁶⁸

This intercultural transfer across the Atlantic along with the flood of marketable health foods led to an unintentional commoditization of vegetarianism. Adam Shprintzen made a case for the vegetarian movement’s capitulation to consumerism when he wrote that thanks “to the

⁶⁵ Kellogg, *The Battle Creek Sanitarium System*, 117.

⁶⁶ See Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, September 18, 1895, 03558, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

⁶⁷ See Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, January 21, 1901, 15417; and Kellogg, J. H. to Ellen White, January 26, 1903, 17197, Incoming Correspondence, EGW Estate.

⁶⁸ Madeleine Ferrières, *Sacred Cow, Mad Cow: A History of Food Fears* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 318.

dedicated efforts of J. H. Kellogg, vegetarianism became a commercial success.”⁶⁹ And he even suggested that in “a society that valued social, economic, and personal advancement, Kellogg’s brand of vegetarianism offered product consumption as a path to self-improvement.”⁷⁰ Kellogg had succeeded in capturing the attention of the American public. His health foods allowed people for the first time to *buy* into vegetarianism rather than to *convert* to a religious movement. According to Shprintzen, Kellogg’s health foods moved “vegetarians away from reform concerned with the external, social effects of diet to a fascination with the possibilities of personal empowerment through consumption....In the process vegetarians morphed into consumers, looking to purchase health, happiness, and individual triumph in a tin can.”⁷¹

This was not what Kellogg had in mind. For him vegetarianism was as much a part of the great “truth” as Christ’s death on the cross. Even Shprintzen noted that Kellogg “attempted to keep some of his ideological purity, insisting that his products remain healthy.”⁷² Ferrières also contended that Kellogg “advocated pure foods, from a very impure ideological perspective, since he freely mixed religious considerations and health concerns.”⁷³ The triumph and success of Kellogg’s work in vegetarianism caused unintended consequences for a reformer who originated from a sectarian world. Vegetarianism was rapidly shedding its religious skin to become its own way of life, and Kellogg was being left behind. But what was even more devastating to the reformer was that the central tenet of his vegetarianism was being replaced. People no longer looked at vegetarianism as a way to purify their bodies for God’s work—a misconception Kellogg set out to correct.

⁶⁹ Adam D. Shprintzen, *The Vegetarian Crusade: The Rise of an American Reform Movement, 1817-1921* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 143.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 146.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 143.

⁷³ Ferrières, *Sacred Cow, Mad Cow*, 317.

2.4 Eating God

In 1899, the same year in which Kellogg spiritually broke with Ellen White, he published a new work on vegetarianism. In *Shall We Slay to Eat?* Kellogg laid out the principles for a return to the moral arguments of vegetarianism:

The basis for the ethical argument against flesh eating is to be found in the fact that lower animals are, in common with man, sentient creatures. We have somehow become accustomed to think of our inferior brethren, the members of the lower orders of the animal kingdom, as things; we treat them as sticks or stones, as trees and other non-sentient things that are not possessed of organs of sense and feeling. We are wrong in this; they are not things, but *beings*.⁷⁴

In the preceding pages, Kellogg also referred to the biblical commands of Genesis, and observed that it was “an interesting fact that the description of the dietary assigned by the Creator to the human family, according to Genesis, agrees precisely with the bill of fare that science assigns man.”⁷⁵

In these passages Kellogg was attempting to effect change among vegetarian converts. The rapid growth of vegetarian food options and the commoditization of the vegetarian movement had corrupted vegetarianism’s original purpose, and Kellogg was vexed that converts did not truly understand the ethical, moral, or religious reasons for their abstention from meat. From Kellogg’s perspective, vegetarians were obeying “the divine order,” which was “clearly shown by nature as well as by revelation,” and he was convinced that “the man whose eyes have been enlightened by the study of nature may look down and see in the millions of beings that

⁷⁴ J. H. Kellogg, *Shall We Slay to Eat?* (Battle Creek, Michigan: Good Health Publishing Company, 1899), 126.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 125.

God has made to share with him the divine spirit, the breath of life, some traits of himself that must now and then bring blushes to his cheek or strike deep into his soul barbed arrows of remorse.”⁷⁶ Kellogg’s purpose was made clearer with two rhetorical questions: “Did not God make each creature to be, in its own way, on its own behalf, a representative of some phase of himself, an incarnation of a divine thought? Is not the whole of creation, sentient and insentient, an expression of God?”⁷⁷ With these guiding principles, Kellogg attempted to reorient vegetarianism back to his sectarian roots. *Shall We Slay to Eat* was an indictment of meat eating, complete with pictures and descriptions of slaughterhouses and the suffering of animals butchered for man’s thirst for blood. Kellogg was pleading for his readers to understand that the suffering and killing involved in meat eating was wholly abhorrent to the God who had created each individual life.

Kellogg was not alone in wanting to return vegetarianism back to a decision of morality. Howard Williams, a Cambridge scholar of history and a vegetarian, wished to record an anthology of the ethics behind vegetarian thought in order to demonstrate the continuity of moral virtues in vegetarianism, and in 1883 he published *The Ethics of Diet*. Williams wrote, in rather elegant prose that the purpose of vegetarianism was to return man to a moral harmony with nature and its creatures. He noted that such a “step, which leaves for ever [sic] behind it the barbarism of slaughtering our fellow-beings, the Mammals and Birds, is, it is superfluous to add, the most important and most influential of all.”⁷⁸ Williams wanted those about to take that first step into vegetarianism to understand that they were about to partake in a long line of ethical

⁷⁶ Ibid., 128.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Howard Williams, *The Ethics of Diet: A Catena of Authorities Deprecatory of the Practice of Flesh-Eating* (1883; repr., Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003), xxxiii.

eaters. His compilation included discussions of Pythagoras, Plato, Ovid, Clement of Alexandria, Thomas More, and others from the ancient world, to the Renaissance, and beyond.

Similarly, Kellogg included examples from ancient history to sway his readers, but his crusade to reinstate moral vegetarianism took a surprising turn towards salvific vegetarianism. However, it is important to remember that Seventh-day Adventism had a history of merging salvation with its health message. In 1866, an early Adventist pioneer and minister, J. H. Waggoner, wrote in *The Review and Herald* on his perspective of the health message:

As mere physiological and hygienic truths, they might be studied by some at their leisure, and by others laid aside as of little consequence; but when placed on a level with the great truths of the third angel's message by the sanction and authority of God's Spirit, and so declared to be the means whereby a weak people may be made strong to overcome, and our diseased bodies cleansed and fitted for translation, then it comes to us as an essential part of *present truth*, to be received with the blessing of God, or rejected at our peril.⁷⁹

In equating the health message to the “third angels message,” Waggoner’s readers would have understood that they were to proclaim it as much as the gospel and soon advent of Christ, which formed the central tenet of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The “Third Angel’s Message” was a reference to Revelation 14: 6-11, which became the central message of Seventh-day Adventists, and oriented them in their apocalyptic mission to spread the gospel and hope in the Advent. Waggoner’s language also specifically links the health message to salvation. The health message showed the Seventh-day Adventists the path for overcoming sin and for making themselves fit for translation. In other words, if members of the denomination wanted to go to heaven their bodies would have to be made ready through the principles of health reform,

⁷⁹ J. H. Waggoner, “Present Truth,” *The Review and Herald* 28, no. 10 (August 1866): 77.

whereas rejection of said principles would lead to their “peril” (damnation). The foundations for salvific vegetarianism were, therefore, laid long before Kellogg’s foray into health reform. As the typesetter for the very publication in which Waggoner wrote, it is also possible that Kellogg read and set the type for the very article that planted the seeds of health reform as a mode of salvation in his mind. In either case, Kellogg took Waggoner’s words to heart and continually referred to health reform as the “great truth.”

Kellogg continued Waggoner’s sentiments in his professional work, and in an article published in September, 1898 entitled “Physical Righteousness,” he laid out the same warnings of three decades earlier:

We trample upon the laws of God which relate to eating, to exercise, to dress, and to other matters of daily behavior toward our bodies...we have wandered so far away from God that we are conscienceless respecting these deviations from the path of physical rectitude....The important point is the fact that we *have fallen*, that we *are down*, and that we are sinking deeper and deeper into the quagmire of disease and physical unrighteousness....⁸⁰

If there was any doubt as to Kellogg’s meaning, readers only had to reference another article a few months before in which Kellogg pronounced:

If the church is to rescue the world, it must give the gospel trumpet another and different tone. It must teach physical righteousness, as well as moral rectitude. It must teach the gospel of diet...We must recognize as a solemn reality that religion includes the body, and that the laws which govern the healthful performance of the bodily functions are as much the laws of God as those of the decalogue.⁸¹

⁸⁰ J. H. Kellogg, “Physical Righteousness,” *Good Health: A Journal of Hygiene* 33, no. 9 (September 1898): 525.

⁸¹ J. H. Kellogg, “The Greater Gospel,” *Good Health: A Journal of Hygiene* 33, no. 6 (June 1898): 380.

As if to drive the point home, Kellogg entitled his article “The Greater Gospel”—a fact not easily missed by a church that took the preaching of the gospel as its central mission.

Kellogg considered his health reform principles to be another path to salvation, but this belief took on a completely new form when, in 1910—three years after his removal from the Seventh-day Adventist Church—he wrote a new book on health reform principles. Kellogg extolled the virtues of “pure food” and displayed, as any good minister would, his doctrine of salvific vegetarianism:

As we have elsewhere said, pure food is light—light stored, done up in bundles convenient to enter into the service of the temple—the vehicle by means of which God’s own life and energy become a part of the living body...But the eating must be done in harmony with the divine order. We see, then, that in one sense the filling of the body with light, illuminating it, so to speak, may be accomplished by eating pure food; and that, if we would have ‘no part of dark,’ we must be careful to introduce into it nothing by which darkness will be communicated to it. Light is life; darkness is death. A body full of light is a body full of life, activity, and energy; a dark body is dead or dying. It is evident that the words of the Christ have a profound spiritual meaning; but it is equally evident that, like other great fundamental truths, their application is as exact and apt in relation to physical, as in relation to spiritual things.⁸²

Kellogg contended that through the partaking of pure food “the wall of partition between the natural and the spiritual is broken down, and all things become changed; not that the spiritual is brought down, but that the natural and the physical are lifted up, spiritualized, transfigured.”⁸³ In these two central passages, Kellogg remarkably mirrors the Catholic doctrine of the eucharist.

⁸² Kellogg, *Life, its Mysteries and Miracles*, 103.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 104.

Pure food was the way through which God entered the body to transform it—to make it fit for translation. In these statements Kellogg once again showed his understanding, or at least exposure to, medieval doctrines about the eucharist. Food was just as revered in the medieval context as it was to Kellogg. In her work *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*, Caroline Walker Bynum observed:

Eating was also an occasion for union with one's fellows and one's God, a commensality given particular intensity by the prototypical meal, the eucharist, which seemed to hover in the background of any banquet. Because Jesus had fed the faithful not merely as servant and waiter, preparer and multiplier of loaves and fishes, but as the very bread and wine itself, *to eat* was a powerful verb. It meant to consume, to assimilate, to become God. To eat God in the eucharist was a kind of audacious deification, a becoming of the flesh that, in its agony, fed and saved the world. Thus, to religious men and women, renunciation of ordinary food prepared the way for consuming (i.e., becoming) Christ, in eucharist and in mystical union.⁸⁴

Kellogg led his followers away from the ordinary food of the world (i.e., meat) and showed them the pure food of God. He took vegetarianism and made it into a eucharistic path to commune with the divine. Pure food was the physical mode of God (his power and presence) entering the body to purify it. Thus, the body became holy through the practice of vegetarianism.

While it is unclear how Kellogg may have become exposed to, or if he was even aware of, the medieval ideas of the eucharist, it is not altogether an impossible supposition given his acceptance of Thomas Aquinas' theology of God in man. Indeed, vegetarianism, pure food, and the eucharist seem to be the natural culmination of Kellogg's Adventist beginnings. From an

⁸⁴ Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 3.

early age he was taught that the health message was a path to salvation on par with the gospel. How could one expect him to end up anywhere but where he did?

2.5 Conclusion: Salvific Vegetarianism in a Health Movement

From the beginning, vegetarianism was a movement of religious morals—as much concerned with saving humanity as it was with saving God’s creation. Most present-day practitioners of vegetarianism are unaware of the rich history and intercultural and interreligious transfer involved when they eat their veggieburgers, soy cheese, or kale. We have come a long way as a society since Kellogg first championed vegetarianism, and even further from the Swedenborgians who first preached of the moral rectitude of abstaining from meat in the United States. But with all that time we have forgotten the religious nature of our modern-day practices. This is not surprising, as we have seen three main periods of secularization within vegetarianism. The first period occurred during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when Enlightenment ideals embraced vegetarian practices from India in an attempt to turn away from biblical interpretations of diet. The second period was the unintended result of Kellogg’s invention of health food. The commodification of vegetarianism allowed people to purchase the healthy vegetarian lifestyle without the theological baggage. The third period is perhaps just a continuation of the second, as Kellogg’s attempts to turn people back to the sectarian nature of vegetarianism had little effect against the tidal wave of consumerism that swept over his health reform. The message of salvific vegetarianism fell on deaf ears, and no one was willing to accept the warnings of the prophet who had led them to be vegetarians in the first place.

Not even the Adventists have maintained a strict doctrine of vegetarianism. Donna Maurer notes that “today, about one-half of the estimated five hundred thousand U. S. Seventh

Day Adventists follow a vegetarian diet.”⁸⁵ Although this is not a surprising revelation, as, in truth, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in its history has never fully mandated a vegetarian diet, nor has its membership fully accepted a vegetarian lifestyle. Much to Kellogg’s chagrin, there has never been a time when the Seventh-day Adventist Church has fully abandoned meat eating.

This does not mean that Kellogg’s vegetarian message was a failure, nor that vegetarianism does not maintain a place of prominence in Adventist culture. Maurer continues to note that:

The fact that church members constitute a large, definable, vegetarian population enables researchers to conduct longitudinal studies on the health consequences of following a vegetarian diet. The Seventh Day Adventist church has contributed significantly to the spread of vegetarian ideas and knowledge through the establishment of a research institution, Loma Linda University (which has published its research data in mainstream and medical and nutritional journals since the 1950s); a health foods corporation, Worthington Foods; a chain of restaurants, Country Life; and a magazine, *Vibrant Life*.⁸⁶

Vegetarianism, then, while never finding full acceptance within the denomination to the degree as Kellogg desired it, did and still does take a prominent role in its culture. So much so that in 2003, Gary Fraser published a study of the Seventh-day Adventists’ vegetarian practices in which he concluded that the Adventist lifestyle of vegetarianism led to less risk of disease and longer life expectancy.⁸⁷ Fraser observed that “most Adventists do follow many of the church’s recommendations regarding lifestyle, and have done so for generations,” and that this “is a testimony to the powerful impact of incorporating the subject of health into a system of religious

⁸⁵ Donna Maurer, *Vegetarianism: Movement or Moment?* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2002), 27.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ See Gary E. Fraser, *Diet, Life Expectancy, and Chronic Disease: Studies of Seventh-day Adventists and Other Vegetarians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

beliefs. Seventh-day Adventists have never believed that good health practices are a measure of religious virtue, but they do see the choice of good health habits as a valuable spiritual discipline.”⁸⁸

What is inevitably clear is that vegetarianism never lost its religious overtones. Modern-day practitioners of yoga, still hold to a vegetarian lifestyle as Steven Rosen explains:

Yogic union is also perceived as a sort of joining of the individual self with the higher self within, an awakening of spiritual consciousness, in which one realizes one’s own divinity. This divinity is said to glisten with *sattva-guna*, or “the mode of goodness.”

Here, too, vegetarianism is implicit, for true goodness manifests in terms of compassion and love for all living beings. It’s hard to love them if you eat them.⁸⁹

The yogic tradition of uniting with the divine is not unlike Kellogg’s doctrine of spiritualization and transformation via salvific vegetarianism. But why does vegetarianism always seem to be saddled with religious connotations? Simply put, vegetarianism was always a religious and moral issue.

There is a reason Kellogg’s vegetarianism is often referred to as “militant vegetarianism.” Religious movements sometimes tend to breed fanaticism.⁹⁰ There is a reason why many who practice vegetarian and vegan lifestyles feel the need to proselytize those who still eat the flesh of animals. There is a reason why those who practice communal living and Indian mysticism tend to be vegetarians. Vegetarianism is still very much a religious conversion at its core. What else but religion could convince people to change their lifestyle in such a drastic way?

Throughout its history it may have found a welcome in the secular world, but the predominant

⁸⁸ Gary E. Fraser, *Diet, Life Expectancy, and Chronic Disease: Studies of Seventh-day Adventists and Other Vegetarians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 3.

⁸⁹ Steven J. Rosen, “Introduction,” in *Food for the Soul: Vegetarianism and Yoga Traditions*, ed. Steven J. Rosen (Santa Barbara, California: Praeger, 2011), vii-viii.

⁹⁰ Wilson, *Dr. Kellogg and the Religion of Biologic Living*, 47.

motivation to convert to vegetarianism was, and for the foreseeable future will be, a religious experience—a chance to commune with the divine.

Chapter 3

Good Sex

3.1 The Need for Good and Righteous Sex

On the evening of November 28, 1886, John Harvey Kellogg addressed a large and eager crowd of over 1,000 at his Battle Creek Sanitarium. His address did not cover the popular topics of the day: such as hydrotherapy, vegetarianism, hygienic living, or dress reform. That night the great health reformer lectured on a topic rarely spoken of in nineteenth-century society—at least in polite conversation. Kellogg spoke to his audience on sex, or in its more acceptable term “social purity,” and labeled its abandonment as “the greatest evil of the age.” His address opened with one of the sternest warnings he would ever write:

Every grade of society is being permeated and corrupted by the most horrible and ineradicable diseases, maladies which have their origin in social impurity. And there are evils still more hidden which are doing their work of physical and moral destruction. Personal impurity is sapping the vital energies, debasing the mental faculties, and blunting the conscience of thousands of youth, who are ignorant of the present and eternal ruin which they invite. Unwarned and unrepentant, thousands are going down into the grave a sacrifice to hidden vices. If I could unfold to you one-tenth part of the iniquity which is covered by a garb of decent respectability in every community, it would seem to you that the days of Sodom and Gomorrah had returned; that ancient Pompeii and

Herculaneum had been resurrected from the lava and ashes of retributive Vesuvius; that perdition itself had vomited upon the earth.¹

Indeed, for the danger it seemed to possess, Kellogg rarely spoke in public (outside the Sanitarium) about sex. But what he lacked in public discourse he more than made up for in the written word. In his lifetime Kellogg published close to seven books that either directly dealt with the issues of sex or contained chapters on the taboo issue. One of which, *Plain Facts for Old and Young*, became, according to Brian Wilson, one of “the best-known volumes on sex education in the nineteenth-century United States.”²

But why was Kellogg so interested in sex? It seems to have little in common with his other areas of reform, and, at the time, it certainly was not as acceptable a subject to speak of as healthy living. Yet, sex, regardless of censure, was a fundamental part of humanity, and Kellogg devoted much of his time and energy studying and writing about “good” or “pure” sex. Almost immediately we can perceive the sectarian language inherent to his Christian beliefs. The use of the word “pure” or “purity” was not used to describe the sex-act itself, but rather the nature of the human body in relation to a spiritual ideal. However, my aim is to analyze how Kellogg pursued “good” sex as a methodology for helping others to reach social purity.

To do this, we need to understand concepts of sex in Kellogg’s world. But that is a complicated task; social perceptions of sex varied from culture to culture and through different time periods. As usual, Kellogg had strong connections with Europe regarding this issue. But to try to cover the span and wealth of material concerning European sexuality is not feasible here, nor is it the purpose of this chapter. Nor is it my intention to give a complete account of the

¹ J. H. Kellogg, *Social Purity: An Address* (Battle Creek, Michigan: Health Publishing Company, 1887), 6-7.

² Wilson, *Dr. Kellogg and the Religion of Biologic Living*, 45.

sexual history of the United States. Complete studies of these two sexual histories are readily available and numerous in quantity.³

Nevertheless, we must place Kellogg in the context of the sexual histories of both Europe and the United States in order to understand his reasoning and methods. While there does not seem to be any one pivotal moment of transfer, or agent of transfer to facilitate the exchange of sexual practices and beliefs as a whole, there are connections between Kellogg and his European colleagues and mentors concerning sex. Therefore, it would be useful to briefly recount European attitudes towards sex as well as those in the United States, and more specifically perceptions of sex among the Adventists.

3.2 Western Europeans Have Sex

As with most topics concerning Europe, delving into European history presents a challenge as Europe can claim over a thousand years of historical change. Sex is no different. While it is tempting to start a discussion of European practices of sex at the Roman era, such a span is neither necessary nor practical for the purposes of establishing a European context of sex. A more sensible approach is to focus on the different perspectives of sex throughout European history. As with food in the previous chapter, the Roman Catholic Church largely influenced concepts of sex in Europe—and the church's perspectives, in no small part, found their genesis in the writings and hagiography of its early saints.

³ For works on European sexual history see, Katherine Crawford, *European Sexualities, 1400-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007) and Anna Clark, *Desire: A History of European Sexuality* (New York: Routledge, 2008). For works on American sexuality see, Thomas L. Altherr, ed., *Procreation or Pleasure?: Sexual Attitudes in American History* (Malabar, Florida: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1983) and Helen Lefkowitz Horowitz, *Rereading Sex: Battles over Sexual Knowledge and Suppression in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002).

Out of the multitude of saints within the Church's history, none perhaps debated sex more than St. Augustine (354-430 AD) and St. Benedict (c. 480-547 AD). Yet, these two fathers of the Church approached sex from very different standpoints, which would leave their mark on European concepts of sex in very different ways. In his fifth-century work, *The City of God*, St. Augustine remarked that:

Lust requires for its consummation darkness and secrecy; and this not only when unlawful intercourse is desired, but even such fornication as the earthly city has legalized. Where there is no fear of punishment, these permitted pleasures still shrink from the public eye. Even where provision is made for this lust, secrecy also is provided; and while lust found it easy to remove the prohibitions of law, shamelessness found it impossible to lay aside the veil of retirement. For even shameless men call this shameful; and though they love the pleasure, dare not display it. What! does not even conjugal intercourse, sanctioned as it is by law for the propagation of children, legitimate and honorable though it be, does it not seek retirement from every eye? Before the bridegroom fondles his bride, does he not exclude the attendants, and even the paranymphs, and such friends as the closest ties have admitted to the bridal chamber?⁴

For St. Augustine, the sexual act was inherently shameful. While sexual intercourse was a natural and lawful act under the auspices of marriage, it was still inescapably shameful, and thus always required the dark and privacy of the bedroom. In his more popular work, *Confessions*, Augustine recalled his intemperate youth and blamed his sexual desires on the lack of shame enforced upon him: "Where was I in the sixteenth year of the age of my flesh? 'Far away in exile from the pleasures of your house' (Mic. 2: 9). Sensual folly assumed domination over me, and I

⁴ Saint Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God*, trans. Marcus Dods (Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 2017), 421.

gave myself totally to it....My family did not try to extricate me from my headlong course....The thorns of lust rose above my head, and there was no hand to root them out.”⁵

Shame, then, was to be used to combat illicit sex and sexual desire; it was to be the “hand” that was missing in Augustine’s youth. This did not mean that Augustine was against the act of sex itself. Indeed, the saint kept a concubine in his twenties and even had a child by her.⁶ Gilbert Meilaender noted that even in his celibate years Augustine extorted the virtues of sex: “We may, then, summarize Augustine’s view...as follows: Just as nourishment constitutes the good of food, the eating of which also, as it happens, gives pleasure, so children constitute the good of sex, the experience of which also, as it happens, gives pleasure.”⁷ Augustine necessitated the needs of procreation to form the core of sexual intercourse, but had no issues with the pleasures found in the act itself.

St. Benedict’s approach to combating sex and lust was far more fervent, as demonstrated in his hagiography:

One day, while the saint was alone, the Tempter came in the form of a little blackbird....The moment it left, he was seized with an unusually violent temptation. The evil spirit recalled to his mind a woman he had once seen and before he realized it his emotions were carrying him away. Almost overcome by the struggle, he was on the point of abandoning the lonely wilderness, when suddenly with the help of God’s grace he came to himself. He then noticed a thick patch of nettles and briars next to him. Throwing his garment aside he flung himself into the sharp thorns and stinging nettles. There he rolled and tossed until his whole body was in pain and covered with blood. Yet, once he

⁵ Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 26.

⁶ See Saint Augustine, *Confessions*, 52-53.

⁷ Gilbert Meilaender, “Sweet Necessities: Food, Sex, and Saint Augustine,” *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 29, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 11-12.

had conquered pleasure through suffering, his torn and bleeding skin served to drain the poison of temptation from his body. Before long, the pain that was burning his whole body had put out the fires of evil in his heart. It was by exchanging these two fires that he gained the victory over sin.⁸

This graphic account of Benedict's battle with lust demonstrates another, more extreme, way to combat illicit sexual desire—pain. Through his experience, Benedict typified that lust and the temptation of sexual sin could be eradicated through physical pain. While this may seem extreme to some, it is important to note that for Benedict, it was better to endure pain in his mortal life on earth, than to suffer damnation due to unrestrained sexual vice.

With the accounts of both Augustine and Benedict as guides, the Medieval Catholic Church taught of the dangers of sexual sin and desire, or lust. But these early teachings of shame and pain continually assigned sex, even within the confines of marriage, as a tool of the devil. Ruth Karras noted that “Christianity rejected any positive aspects of sexual pleasure even within marriage and considered sex outside of marriage even more abominable.”⁹ Sex, therefore, was divided between intercourse (which constituted procreation) and pleasure (which constituted sin). One could have sex without sinning as long as there was no pleasure taken in the act (an almost, but not impossible task). Reay Tannahill noted that this belief came from St. Augustine, who had brilliantly postulated that although “God had irradiated the first man and woman with a blameless physical instinct designed to provide for continuation of the species, lust had converted it into something shameful.”¹⁰ Anna Clark further explained that Medieval Europeans also separated sexual desire from pleasure. Desire was necessary for the act of sex, but pleasure,

⁸ Mary-Ann Stouck, ed., *Medieval Saints: A Reader* (Canada: Broadview Press, 1999), 173.

⁹ Ruth Mazo Karras, “Holy Harlots: Prostitute Saints in Medieval Legend,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 1, no. 1 (July 1990): 3.

¹⁰ Reay Tannahill, *Sex in History* (New York: Stein and Day/Publishers, 1982), 142.

“like other sensations of parts of the body,” could be “potentially harmful and dangerous.”¹¹ She continued to note that while “medieval people often regarded desire as an overwhelming force,” church authorities continually “denigrated sexual desire, except in tightly controlled situations in marriage....”¹²

If medieval people saw sexual desire as an all-consuming force of the human existence, then there was indeed little hope of avoiding sexual sin. But an alternative was offered to the sexual temptations of the world—celibacy. Elizabeth Abbott posited that the celibate life was “at Christianity’s core,” as “the story of a divine infant miraculously born to a human, virgin mother” was one of its central tenets.¹³ Indeed, celibacy was strongly advocated in the writings of the apostle Paul: “It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband.”¹⁴ Paul clarified his position, writing: “For I would that all men were even as I myself [celibate]. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that. I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn [with lust].”¹⁵ In other words, Paul preferred a celibate lifestyle, but also understood that many (as in the medieval mindset) were overwhelmed with sexual desire to where they could not contain themselves. Thus, for these unhappy ones, it would be better to marry, thereby denying themselves the joys of serving God outside of sexual desires. Tannahill observed that the focus of the non-carnal birth of Christ mixed with an oversimplification of Paul’s writings in the medieval mindset, in which they “implied that humanity’s best hope of redemption lay in rejecting coitus and, with it,

¹¹ Anna Clark, *Desire: A History of European Sexuality* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 63.

¹² *Ibid.*, 64.

¹³ Elizabeth Abbott, *A History of Celibacy* (Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press, 2001), 17.

¹⁴ 1 Corinthians 7:1-2. (King James Version, Cambridge).

¹⁵ 1 Corinthians 7:7-9. (King James Version, Cambridge).

the burden of guilt inherited from Adam and Eve. Only the celibate could hope to achieve the state of grace that had existed in the Garden of Eden.”¹⁶

By the end of the Middle Ages—with Europe well on its way into the Renaissance and soon-coming Protestant Reformation—the three major approaches to combating illicit sex (shame, pain, and celibacy) were as set in European spiritual institutions as the Ten Commandments. Yet, for all their proselytizing, the Church seemed to have little success during the Renaissance. As Tannahill put it, “if it was sinful to find enjoyment in sex, then the great majority of ordinary people were sinners.”¹⁷ The Renaissance, by its very name, meant the rebirth of the classical world. The culture of ancient Greece and Rome was soon found in the poetry, architecture, and art of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, especially in the northern city-states of Italy such as Florence, Venice, and Milan. Powerful families, the Medici, Borgia, Sforza, and Orsini engaged master artists such as Brunelleschi, Michelangelo, Leonardo, and Donatello to recreate the ancient world in their homes and cities.

The Renaissance is often seen as a major turning point in European history. The spread of classical knowledge along with new, perceived liberties made way for the Protestant Reformation, the Enlightenment, and succeeding revolutions. But if society felt the impact of these new ideas, then sex did too. The rebirth of Greco-Roman ideas in art and culture fashioned a society that abandoned the sexual restraints of its forbearers. As Tannahill explains: “Sex—or, more accurately, talking about sex—was one of the most popular outlets for self-expression in the fifteenth [century].”¹⁸ Sex was free to be the topic of conversation, and it was certainly the topic of art. Sculptors and painters studied classical nudes and erotic themes and sought to recreate such ancient treasures for their patrons.

¹⁶ Tannahill, *Sex in History*, 142.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 143.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 283.

Even the Church, which not long before had advocated the positions of the early church fathers, excavated and collected the ancient statuary in the Roman ruins surrounding its headquarters in Rome, and papal artists continually pushed the boundaries of sexuality within the Vatican itself. Michelangelo's famous Sistine Chapel fresco of the last judgment was filled with nudity. So much so that the pope hired another artist to paint over the offensive parts. Another such example was Aretino, whose literary career in the papal court consisted of sexually explicit material including a poetic sex manual (*Aretino's Postures*) complete with naked figures in the classical style joined in various positions of coitus.¹⁹

One particular outcome of the revitalization of Greco-Roman concepts of sex was an increase of sexual activity between men. Tannahill noted that by the fifteenth century, the influence of Greek art and philosophy led men to be "more interested in male than in female nudity," which "showed not only in the somewhat ambiguous adolescent nudes of Verrocchio, Botticelli, and Leonardo, but in the increasingly bisexual tastes of Italian men."²⁰ Men having sex with each other was typically referred to as sodomy, but Clark pointed out that the "definition of sodomy rested on the distinction between natural and unnatural acts."²¹ Sex that did not lead to procreation (such as oral and anal sex) was also considered sodomy. Thus, sodomy could occur between a man and a woman just as easily as between men. Clark further noted that the Roman Catholic Church seemed hesitant to fully punish such sins, and that "authorities alternated between moral panics and ineffective regulation."²²

The Renaissance represented one of the most sexually liberated periods in European history. Sex was practiced gratuitously and with little restraint, and the revival of classical ideas

¹⁹ Ibid., 282-283.

²⁰ Ibid., 284.

²¹ Clark, *Desire*, 73-74.

²² Ibid., 75.

allowed for the exploration of sexual desires. This does not mean that many in the Church did not try to prohibit such sins, but such regulation was difficult when the clergy itself indulged in sex. Many public houses for women were attached to religious monasteries as benevolent enterprises, but it was not uncommon to see such women on the arm of “charitable” monks. Above all, many of the Renaissance popes had children, and Pope Alexander VI (r. 1492-1503) famously kept a concubine, Giulia Farnese, in the papal palace. Ironically, Giulia’s brother, Alessandro Farnese—later Pope Paul III (r. 1534-1549)—would attempt to reinstitute celibacy among the clergy as part of the Catholic Reformation; even though he had sired several children.

The sexual excesses of the Renaissance began declining with the advent of two major developments in Europe towards the end of the sixteenth century. The first was the rampant spread of syphilis throughout Europe. Though many medical historians traditionally believe that this disease came from the New World—as much of Europe was infected in a little over a year after Columbus’ return in 1493—Tannahill points out that if this was the case then Columbus’ “50 crew members must have had a very strenuous time when they got back.”²³ However, many sixteenth-century victims of the disease, such as Ulrich von Hutten, were aware of the origins of syphilis and readily blamed American exploration for their troubles.²⁴ The second, and more violent cause was the Protestant Reformation, which traditionally began with Luther’s publishing of his 95 Theses in 1517, and led to the German Peasant’s War in 1524 and eventually to the extremely violent and sectarian Thirty Years War.

The Protestant Reformation renewed ideas of sexual morality in Christian Europe. But it also further eroded the church-sanctioned practice of celibacy. Lyndal Roper posited that when Martin Luther (a monk) married Katherine Bora (a nun) their marriage and Reformation

²³ Tannahill, *Sex in History*, 282.

²⁴ See Thomas Adam, ed., *Germany and the Americas: Culture, Politics, and History* (Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 2005), s.v. “Hutten, Ulrich von.”

“embarked on a course which involved far more than mere tinkering with the moral regulation of the priesthood. Clerical marriage necessitated a reconsideration of one of the oldest Christian conundrums, the relationship between the holy and the body.”²⁵ While many assume that Protestants were the antithesis of Catholic sexual immorality, they invariably were not. Katherine Crawford pointed out that on a theological level, “Luther and the Protestants who followed him undermined some parts of the Christian sexual consensus and confirmed other aspects.”²⁶ For instance, Protestants completely destroyed the idea of virginity and celibacy as spiritually purer, but “reviled sodomy just as thoroughly as did Catholics.”²⁷ Luther also endorsed St. Augustine’s belief that sexual sin was a result of man’s fallen state, and it therefore necessitated self-control of desire, but without the addition of celibacy.

Some Protestants took sexual reform to extremes in order to create artificial, holy communities. John Calvin, whose community of believers settled in Geneva, created consistories to combat sin amongst his followers. Calvin believed that once more than one person knew about someone’s sin, that sin became public sin for the entire community, including sexual sin. The result was, as Crawford noted, there were “almost no private sins, and all sexual encounters with others were public sins by nature.”²⁸ This meant a private sexual indiscretion, which usually involved two people, was automatically public and therefore endangered the entire community, and those who refused to repent were excommunicated or charged with criminal acts against the community by civil magistrates. Crawford argued that Calvin’s “theocracy in Geneva attracted hardcore Protestants,” and spread to other parts of Europe—most notably to the English

²⁵ Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality and Religion in Early Modern Europe* (London: Routledge, 1994), 79.

²⁶ Katherine Crawford, *European Sexualities, 1400-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 75.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 76.

Puritans.²⁹ It is this small, zealous group within the Church of England that played an important part in the renewal of early Christian approaches to combating illicit sex; for if sexual sin was always public, it constantly exposed the whole community to sin. Thus, public shaming of illicit sex was inherent within Puritan doctrine, as all sexual sins were a public matter.

Such fanatical practices to combat sex were not altogether accepted in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Michel Foucault, in his opening of his work *The History of Sexuality*, wrote:

At the beginning of the seventeenth century a certain frankness was still common, it would seem. Sexual practices had little need of secrecy; words were said without undue reticence, and things were done without too much concealment; one had a tolerant familiarity with the illicit. Codes regulating the course, the obscene, and the indecent were quite lax compared to those of the nineteenth century. It was a time of direct gestures, shameless discourse, and open transgressions, when anatomies were shown and intermingled at will...it was a period when bodies “made a display of themselves.” But twilight soon fell upon this bright day, followed by the monotonous nights of the Victorian bourgeoisie.³⁰

Foucault was correct in that the Victorian Era ushered in a wholesale acceptance of the muzzling of sex in polite society. But movements to control sex began long before the Victorians, and the sexual deviancy of the seventeenth century described above saw its own backlash.

The Puritans very famously grew tired of being surrounded by those who were less zealous and reformed in the Church of England, and in the early 1600s left for the shores of North America to found their new theocratic societies. The Pilgrims (an ultra-fanatical group

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Michel Foucault, *An Introduction*, vol. 1 of *The History of Sexuality* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 3.

within the Puritans) founded Plymouth Colony in 1620, and the Puritans soon followed and established the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1629. Thus, ancient ideas of combating sexual desire and sin embedded within Christianity from early church fathers were transferred to North America, to shape and control sex in future generations.

3.3 Americans have Sex, Adventists Too

The Seventh-day Adventist Church came out of the Methodist Church via the Millerite movement of the 1840s. But the physical location of its origin in upper New England meant that culturally, Puritanism had heavily influenced them. Understanding the world in which Seventh-day Adventism developed means understanding the religious history of New England and its Puritan society. While the Puritan Church had lost its monopoly on religious beliefs well before the incorporation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the mid-nineteenth century, the attitudes and customs of Puritan rule were still a force in the New England mindset.

In his survey of American theological history, Mark Noll remarked that the “foundation of American theology was European theology,” and that “Congregational Puritanism provided far and away the most influential formal theology in the colonies.”³¹ But defining the theological and cultural heritage of early Puritanism has proved challenging for many historians. The prevalent image of New England Puritans has consistently been one of stringent rules and extreme reactions. These stereotypical perceptions were not aided with the disastrous effects of the 1692 witch trials in Salem, Massachusetts Bay Colony, which forever marked the Puritans as a tyrannical, misogynistic, and fanatical society in popular American memory. The vitriol against the perceived unyielding Puritan led American novelist Nathaniel Hawthorne—himself a

³¹ Mark A. Noll, *America's God: From Jonathan Edwards to Abraham Lincoln* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 19.

descendent of the Salem witch trial magistrate John Hathorne[sic]—to write his famous work *The Scarlet Letter* in 1840, which forever vilified Puritan society for its apparent fanaticism and hypocrisy. Hawthorne was exceedingly critical of Puritans, and wrote that one might expect a crowd to gather around a prison door to witness the execution of a criminal or other severe offender, but “in that early severity of the Puritan character, an inference of this kind could not so indubitably be drawn.”³² The Puritans, Hawthorne wrote, were more likely to see “that a sluggish bond-servant, or an undutiful child, whom his parents had given over to the civil authority, was to be corrected at the whipping post.”³³ Such expectations were common for those “people amongst whom religion and law were almost identical, and in whose character both were so thoroughly interfused.”³⁴

Aside from displaying his obvious dislike of Puritan society, Hawthorne’s story focused on an occurrence of sexual sin. The actual cloth scarlet letter itself stood for adultery, which the heroine of the story, Hester Prynne, was forced to wear embroidered on her chest. Thus, everyone in the Puritan community would know that she had committed the sin of adultery—as if the child in her arms was not proof enough. While an embroidered red “A” on clothing does not necessarily appear to be an oppressive punishment, its purpose was to bring shame upon its bearer. What was more disturbing was the reaction of the other Puritan women at such a light punishment:

“The magistrates are God-fearing gentlemen, but merciful overmuch,—that is a truth,” added a third autumnal matron. “At the very least, they should have put the brand of a hot iron on Hester Prynne’s forehead. Madam Hester would have winced at that, I warrant me. But she,—the naughty baggage,—little will she care what they put upon the bodice

³² Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1994), 34.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 35.

of her gown!... “What do we talk of marks and brands, whether on the bodice of her gown, or the flesh of her forehead?” cried another female, the ugliest as well as the most pitiless of these self-constituted judges. “This woman has brought shame upon us all, and ought to die....”³⁵

While the story of Hester Prynne was fictional, it nonetheless established the archetype of the intolerant and cruel Puritans who shamed and killed those who committed sins, especially sexual sin. But this model was far from accurate. Kathleen Verduin notes that the “greatest hindrance done to Puritan studies early in this century was the Puritan caricature—joyless, heartless, and sexually repressed.”³⁶

Verduin’s work built on the work of Edmund Morgan who asserted that the Puritans were vigilant of “sexual offenses, because there were so many,” and that upon examining seventeenth-century New England records he found that “illicit sexual intercourse was fairly common.”³⁷ Morgan noted that the “testimony given in cases of fornication and adultery—by far the most numerous class of criminal cases in the records—suggests that many of the early New Englanders possessed a high degree of virility and very few inhibitions.”³⁸ Morgan’s reading of Puritan sources led him to argue that despite common beliefs of Puritan prudishness about sex, they saw it as “a human necessity and marriage the only proper supply for it.”³⁹ He further states that these were not the views of a fringe few, but of the “New England clergy, the acknowledged leaders of the community, the most Puritanical of the Puritans.”⁴⁰

³⁵ Ibid., 36.

³⁶ Kathleen Verduin, “Our Cursed Natures: Sexuality and the Puritan Conscience,” *New England Quarterly* 56, no. 2 (June 1983): 220.

³⁷ Edmund S. Morgan, “The Puritans and Sex,” in *Procreation or Pleasure?: Sexual Attitudes in American History*, ed. Thomas L. Alther (Florida: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1983), 8.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid., 6.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

While Morgan's view of American Puritans was more moderate than most, it should be remembered that this was the same society that accused more than 200 people of witchcraft in 1692—nineteen of whom were hanged, while another was pressed to death, and five others died in jail. And while witchcraft may seem more serious than a crime of illicit sex, there was almost always a sexual nature inherent to accusations of being a witch. Indeed, witches were often accused of having intercourse with the devil. Crawford noted that in Europe, accused witches “tried to avoid or lessen torture by confessing to sexual debauchery such as orgies of the Sabbat.”⁴¹ In either case, even Verduin noted the solemnity surrounding sexual crimes in the Puritan mindset: “In Scripture, the clergy discovered historical evidence for their correlation of unchecked sexuality and divine retribution, for shameless sensuality was a hallmark of worlds God had in anger destroyed.”⁴²

While Morgan and Verduin agreed that Puritans allowed for the good of sex within the context of marriage, it was clear that Puritans saw illicit sex as extremely dangerous to their society. Sexual desire outside marriage had to be controlled, and since celibacy was not an option, as Morgan pointed out, Puritan leaders utilized shame (usually via public confession) and pain (corporal punishment). Tannahill noted that punishment for sexual sins was harsh and used unreservedly: “Fornicators were flogged, and then had to make public confession in church; adulterers were similarly treated, and sometimes branded as well; the pillory or the stocks were the penalty for parents whose first child was born too soon after the wedding day; an infant born on Sunday was often refused baptism because it was believed that it must have been conceived on a Sunday.”⁴³

⁴¹ Crawford, *European Sexualities*, 91.

⁴² Verduin, “Our Cursed Natures,” 228.

⁴³ Tannahill, *Sex in History*, 329.

As American colonial society progressed, Puritan notions of sin and control began to erode. By the mid-eighteenth century, Puritan control of New England had almost vanished and various denominations began to break away from the main church. However, Noll argued that the legacy of the Puritans survived in that “an Augustinian-Calvinist picture of the fallen human condition, of merciful divine sovereignty in redemption, and of the self-authenticating all-sufficiency of divine revelation still prevailed.”⁴⁴ More to the point about Puritan influences on sex in later American generations, Tannahill noted that Puritans had three major effects on future American society: “It produced a mental state of Victorianism fifty years before Victoria herself mounted the throne on the other side of the Atlantic. It taught American women how to control their menfolk by sickly-sweet virtue and purity that sometimes reached caricature proportions, while yet appearing to submit to them like good Old Testament wives. And it gave extraordinary importance to the concept of ‘the family.’”⁴⁵ But Tannahill overlooked another major influence of the Puritans on future American society—the normalization of employing shame and pain to combat illicit sex.

By the time of the Second Great Awakening in the United States (c. 1790-1840), the Puritan conception of sex as good and necessary in marriage had not changed much in its influence upon American society. But early health reformers soon changed perceptions of what was “good” sex and reignited a fervent movement to combat illicit sexual behavior. Stephen Nissenbaum suggested that this might have been a reaction to the sexual excesses of the late 1700s as “eighteenth-century American society was characterized by an extraordinary high rate

⁴⁴ Noll, *America's God*, 21.

⁴⁵ Tannahill, *Sex in History*, 330.

of premarital pregnancy.”⁴⁶ He continued to note that the late eighteenth century was perhaps “sexually the most open period in American history.”⁴⁷

These sexual excesses created a national panic at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and reformers moved to swing the pendulum far to the other side. In 1837, Sylvester Graham published *A Lecture to Young Men on Chastity* in an effort to reach out to the public in a formal fashion on sexual issues. In its preface, Graham lists four reasons for his lectures on sex:

In the first place, self-pollution is actually a very great and rapidly increasing evil....In the second place, illicit commerce between the sexes is a very great and rapidly increasing evil in society....In the third place, sexual excess within the pale of wedlock is really a very considerable and an increasing evil....In the fourth place, efforts to encourage illicit and promiscuous commerce between the sexes are already very extensive, and are daily becoming more extensive, bold and efficient.⁴⁸

Readers, accustomed to the safety from illicit sex in marriage, might have found his third reason disconcerting. But this may have been due less to concerns about immorality and more the fact that they lacked proper knowledge of how sexual diseases were transmitted. Indeed, it was the quest to understand the transmittance of sexual disease that put sex reform in Kellogg’s sphere of influence. Even the Puritans of old never had issues with sex in the context of marriage. But Graham denounced the overindulgence of sex in marriage and sought to limit it:

The mere fact that a man is married to one woman, and is perfectly faithful to her, will by no means prevent the evils which flow from venereal excess, if his commerce with her transgresses the bounds of that connubial chastity which is founded on the real wants of

⁴⁶ Nissenbaum, *Sex, Diet, and Debility in Jacksonian America*, 26.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Sylvester Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men, on Chastity* (Boston: Light & Stearns: Crocker & Brewster. New York, Leavitt, Lord & Co., 1837), 15-17.

the system. Beyond all question, an immeasurable amount of evil results to the human family from sexual excess within the precincts of wedlock.⁴⁹

Graham was thorough in his listing of the “evil” results of excess sex within marriage, and provided a list, which seemed designed more to shock and terrify; yet, he no doubt believed its contents:

Languor, lassitude, muscular relaxation, general debility and heaviness, depression of spirits, loss of appetite, indigestion, faintness and sinking at the pit of the stomach, increased susceptibilities of the skin and lungs to all the atmospheric changes, feebleness of circulation, chilliness, head-ache, melancholy, hypochondria, hysterics, feebleness of all the senses, impaired vision, loss of sight, weakness of the lungs, nervous cough, pulmonary consumption, disorders of the liver and kidneys, urinary difficulties, disorders of the genital organs, spinal diseases, weakness of the brain, loss of memory, epilepsy, insanity, apoplexy —abortions, premature births, and extreme feebleness, morbid predispositions, and early death of offspring,—are among the too common evils which are caused by sexual excesses between husband and wife.⁵⁰

Graham completely rejected the Puritan premise that intercourse was natural and to be enjoyed within the confines of marriage. According to him, nothing was “more erroneous, than the plea which many men set up, that this propensity was implanted in them by nature and; therefore, it is right and proper that they should indulge it, to all extent, consistent with matrimonial rights.”⁵¹

Indeed, Graham recommended that once a man had reached sexual maturity (about 25 or 30 years of age), he would be able to safely have sex with his wife, but only once a month as

⁴⁹ Ibid., 68-69.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 69.

⁵¹ Ibid., 69-70.

overindulgence was life threatening.⁵² This was also one of the first texts to link sexual deviousness with feebleness; a terminological paring that later provided the basis for the eugenic sterilization of those who were considered sexually deviant and, therefore, feeble-minded.

Kellogg echoed Graham's work and published his first book on sex in 1877. In *Plain Facts About Sexual Life*, Kellogg expanded on Graham's topics and even quoted the early reformer frequently. He agreed with Graham's suggestion of the dangers of over-excessive sex within marriage, but refused to engage the topic due to "being too cowardly" of the possibility of public backlash and quoted from "standard medical authors" instead.⁵³ But Kellogg had a much more final solution for avoiding the dangers of excessive sex—avoid having sex at all. While Puritans and most health reformers rejected the notion of celibacy, Kellogg revived it as legitimate way to combat illicit sex and sexual excess. But he was less concerned with arguing the religious morals of celibacy and concentrated more on the health aspects involved, asking the question: "Is continence healthful?"⁵⁴ Kellogg's use of the term "continence" in place of celibacy further demonstrated his desire to separate celibacy from its religious connotations, and betrayed a fear of public ridicule for reviving an ancient practice that most Americans had rejected before him. The association of the Roman Catholic Church to celibacy was also well established, meaning Kellogg had to remove celibacy from its religious, and specifically Catholic, contexts and legitimize it via health principles.

Kellogg was adamant that celibacy was healthy and warranted serious consideration in the fight against illicit sex and the dangerous health effects of marital sexual excesses, even if it

⁵² Ibid., 71, 73.

⁵³ J. H. Kellogg, *Plain Facts About Sexual Life* (Battle Creek, Michigan: The Office of the Health Reformer, 1877), 131-132.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 117.

went against the prominent opinion of the medical community. In 1877, Kellogg wrote in *Plain Facts About Sexual Life*:

It has been claimed by many, even by physicians—and with considerable show of reason—that absolute continence, after full development of the organs of reproduction, could not be maintained without great detriment to health. It is needless to enumerate all the different arguments employed to support this position, since they are, with few exceptions, too frivolous to deserve attention....Their [arguments against celibacy] general acceptance has been due, without doubt, to the strong natural bias in their favor. It is an easy matter to believe what agrees well with one's predilections. A bare surmise, on the side of prejudice, is more telling than the most powerful logic on the other side.⁵⁵

Arguments against celibacy ranged from the possibility of impotence to the spread of disease via a buildup of seminal fluid. While Kellogg quotes from various supportive authors to reject these notions, it still placed him in opposition to popular medical beliefs. His support for celibacy descended from a common (medieval) belief that semen was, along with blood, the life force of the body.⁵⁶ Abbott noted that the relating of diminished physical strength and prowess to the ejaculation of semen was an ancient belief dating to the Greeks and their athletes, who insisted that, “the vital bodily fluid...could transform into a God-given, performance-enhancing substance.”⁵⁷

In any case, Kellogg was living proof that celibacy was not harmful to health—as he claimed to have never had sex. Even though he was married to Ella Eaton Kellogg (1853-1920), the two never consummated their marriage, and their honeymoon, as Abbott remarked, “produced only clean copies of his manuscripts” as he and his wife “spent a chaste but bonding

⁵⁵ Ibid., 118.

⁵⁶ See Kellogg, *Plain Facts About Sexual Life*, 142.

⁵⁷ Abbott, *A History of Celibacy*, 209.

six weeks revising his books.”⁵⁸ Kellogg no doubt followed his own advice from those books, which described exercise, correct eating (a vegetarian diet), and good hygiene as ways to keep the body and mind celibate. But Kellogg did not count out the influence of religion on celibacy, and noted that if a man could still not remain celibate after “availing himself of all other aids to continence, if he wishes to maintain purity of mind as well as physical chastity...the individual must seek that most powerful and helpful of all aids, divine grace.”⁵⁹ Religion, therefore, was used to aid in staying celibate but was not the moral foundation for one’s decision to be celibate. Kellogg’s support of celibacy did not appear to be an effort to avoid sin, but rather to give the healthiest option available to the public. One did not become celibate out of religious convictions, but rather out of a desire to be as healthy as possible and avoid the dangers inherent in sexual activity. Thus, Kellogg removed celibacy from the realm of religious commitment to one of health.

The influences of Graham’s work and teachings were apparent in the writings of Ellen White and predate Kellogg’s work and influence on her. In 1864, she published *An Appeal to Mothers*, with a subtitle of *The Great Cause of the Physical, Mental, and Moral Ruin of Many of the Children of Our Time*. The publishing “Trustees,” of whom White was no doubt a part of, wasted no time in their opening remarks to drive home the salvific importance of the subject of sex: “As a people, who profess to be looking for the coming of the Lord, and preparing for translation into his holy presence, perhaps we have too long kept silent on this great source of physical, mental and moral pollution, and a high duty and responsibility remains to be discharged in this matter.”⁶⁰ They warned that Satan was opening the “flood-gates of corruption” and was

⁵⁸ Ibid., 206-207.

⁵⁹ Kellogg, *Plain Facts About Sexual Life*, 128.

⁶⁰ Ellen G. White, *An Appeal to Mothers: The Great Cause of the Physical, Mental, and Moral Ruin of Many of the Children of Our Time* (Battle Creek, Michigan: The Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, 1864), iii.

quickly “accomplishing the *utter* ruin of a fallen and fast degenerating race” using “the channel of unchastity and licentiousness.”⁶¹ This message was to be preached throughout the entire denomination and each family member was to “possess a copy for his and her own personal possession,” because salvation was at stake: “as you value eternal life, shun a vice which will forever debar you from the presence of Him who has said, ‘Be ye holy for I am holy.’”⁶²

But the topic of discussion was not whether or not sex was good within marriage, nor was it concerned with illicit sex as a whole. White’s *An Appeal to Mothers* was entirely dedicated to a more dangerous and destructive sin. For about thirty pages she warned of the heinous results of the secret sin and the solitary vice—White, and the Seventh-day Adventists, had declared war on masturbation.

3.4 If Thy Right Hand Offend Thee: Masturbation and Circumcision

Solitary vice, self-pollution, secret habits, secret indulgence, secret vice, secret sin, and the soul-destroying vice are but some of the many euphemisms used to describe masturbation in the nineteenth century. Of all the forms illicit sex could take, masturbation was by far the most feared and fought against. Thus, it is no surprise that when Ellen White wrote her work *An Appeal to Mothers* as a warning about sexual habits in children that masturbation was the topic of choice. Yet, it is unclear from where White received her knowledge on masturbation, its causes, its effects, or its effects on body and soul. The information and warnings in *An Appeal to Mothers* was originally claimed to have come directly from God in a vision to White. But Ronald Numbers noted that her writing mirrored other, earlier health reformers such as Sylvester Graham and James C. Jackson so much that “the publishers felt it necessary to add a note

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid., iv.

denying prior knowledge on her part.”⁶³ Indeed, those who wanted to cite her message as from God, could not deny that such messages had already been given: “She is not, therefore, a copyist, although she has stated important truths to which men who are entitled to our highest confidence, have borne testimony.”⁶⁴

In either case, if White’s writing was to be believed, masturbation was a path straight to damnation. She began innocuously enough, asking mothers if they had witnessed a diminishment in their children: “Have you not marked the lack of healthful beauty, of strength, and power of endurance in your dear children?”⁶⁵ She then listed occurrences or changes that one might find in any child going through puberty:

And have you not noticed that there was a deficiency in the mental health of your children? That their course seemed to be marked with extremes? That they were absent minded? That they started nervously when spoken to? And were easily irritated? Have you not noticed when occupied upon a piece of work they would look dreamingly, as though the mind was elsewhere?...Have you not been astonished at their wonderful forgetfulness?...Have you not felt distressed and anxious as you have seen the strong desire in your children to be with the opposite sex, and the overpowering disposition they possessed to form attachments when quite young?⁶⁶

White held her readers in suspense no longer and informed them that “the great cause of these physical, mental and moral evils is secret vice [masturbation] which inflames the passions, fevers the imagination, and leads to licentiousness.”⁶⁷ She also noted that masturbation would prepare “the young for disease of almost every description,” and left little to the imagination as she listed

⁶³ Numbers, *Prophetess of Health*, 211.

⁶⁴ White, *An Appeal to Mothers*, 34.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 6-7.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

the effects of masturbation she claimed she was shown in her vision: “Everywhere I looked, I saw imbecility, dwarfed forms, crippled limbs, misshapen heads, and deformity of every description....From what was shown me, a large share of the youth now living are worthless....I have been shown that children who practice self-indulgence...must pay the penalty of nature’s violated laws....”⁶⁸ This penalty was in the form of disease “such as affection of the liver and lungs, neuralgia [nerve pain], rheumatism, affection of the spine, diseased kidneys, and cancerous humors.”⁶⁹ White added later that even consumption (tuberculosis) could occur from the “practice of secret habits.”⁷⁰ Remarkably, in 1864 White provided a vision of the degeneracy and fall of society; a vision, which three decades later, eugenicists embraced.

To her credit, White claimed never to have practiced or even known what masturbation was until several women made deathbed confessions to her of the practice.⁷¹ Numbers was less certain of this claim and speculated:

Indirect evidence suggests that Ellen White experienced deep-seated conflicts over sexuality and aggression. Her accident confined her to bed for “many months” and left her an invalid for years. At about age twelve—often the onset of puberty—she described herself as feeling terribly guilty, unworthy, and sinful. One might suspect that these guilt feelings arose as a result not only of the sexual fantasies common to children of this age, but also from the first stirrings of pre-adolescence—and possibly from the sexual exploration of her own body as well....⁷²

The accident Numbers referred to occurred in White’s early childhood. At the age of nine, a girl threw a rock at White hitting her in the face. The resulting injury left her nose disfigured and a

⁶⁸ Ibid., 9, 17-18.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 18.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 28.

⁷¹ Ibid., 12.

⁷² Numbers, *Prophetess of Health*, 288.

very bad head wound. In either case, White made sure that her readers understood that masturbation was not just injurious to health, but also to their spiritual lives as well. White warned that partakers in masturbation could not be Christians, and that if they did not repent by stopping the practice and asking for forgiveness, they would “not be admitted into Heaven.”⁷³

Considering masturbation, as an illicit sexual practice, had a long history, White’s position was nothing new. Most Christians looked toward the story of Onan in the Bible as the oldest written account of masturbation and its immediate consequences:

Then Judah said to Onan, “Go in to your brother’s wife and perform the duty of a brother-in-law to her, and raise up offspring for your brother.” But Onan knew that the offspring would not be his. So whenever he went in to his brother’s wife he would waste the semen on the ground, so as not to give offspring to his brother. And what he did was wicked in the sight of the LORD, and he put him to death also.⁷⁴

Most took Onan’s spilling of semen on the ground to mean masturbation. The result of death by divine execution only served to demonstrate the heinousness of the action. Where and how semen was ejaculated was also a primary concern to medieval authorities, as it was believed demons could collect wasted semen and use it to impregnate women; thus producing children with a propensity to sin and witchcraft. In 1486, Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger published their infamous work *Malleus Maleficarum* (The Witch Hammer), in which they discussed the ability of demons and the devil to secretly impregnate women or eager witches with stolen semen: “The devil can receive and inject semen invisibly...but he prefers to perform this visibly as a Succubus and an Incubus, that by such filthiness he may infect body and soul of all humanity.... Through such action complete conception and generation by women can take place,

⁷³ White, *An Appeal to Mothers*, 25-26.

⁷⁴ Genesis 38:8-10 (English Standard Version)

inasmuch as they [demons] can deposit human semen in the suitable place of a woman's womb."⁷⁵

The *sin* of Onan was not forgotten in the Enlightenment either. In 1730, an anonymous writer published *Onania* in London, in which he warned: "Self-Pollution is a Sin, not only against Nature, but a Sin, that perverts and extinguishes Nature, and he who is guilty of it, is laboring at the Destruction of his Kind, and in a manner strikes at the Creation it self [sic]."⁷⁶ The consequences of such sin were swift and dire: "The frequent Use of this Pollution; likewise causes *Stranguries, Priapisms*, and other Disorders of the *Penis* and *Testes*, but especially *Gonorrhoea's* [sic], more difficult to be Cur'd [sic], than those contracted from Women actually laboring under foul Diseases...this Distemper often proves fatal...many young Men, who were strong and lusty before they gave themselves over to this Vice, have been worn out by it, and...sent to their Graves."⁷⁷ It should be noted that the author thought the consequences for women were just as dire, and that masturbation would also be fatal for the female sex as well.⁷⁸

A little over a century later, Graham took up where the author of *Onania* left off, writing that masturbation was "wholly unnatural; and, in every respect, does violence to nature. The mental action, and the power of the imagination on the genital organs, forcing a vital stimulation of the parts, which is reflected over the whole nervous system, are exceedingly intense and injurious."⁷⁹ Graham warned of the dangers to the entire body from the practice, especially to the mind: "Sometimes, this general mental decay continues with the continued abuses, till the

⁷⁵ Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger, *Malleus Maleficarum*, trans. Montague Summers (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1971), 26, 28.

⁷⁶ *Onania: Or, the Heinous Sin of Self-Pollution, and All its Frightful Consequences, (in Both Sexes,) Considered* (London: J. Isted, 1730), 7.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁷⁸ See *Onania*, 14-15.

⁷⁹ Graham, *A Lecture to Young Men, on Chastity*, 78.

wretched transgressor sinks into a miserable fatuity, and finally becomes a confirmed and degraded idiot....”⁸⁰

By the time Kellogg arrived to try his own hand at warning the public of masturbation, self-pollution was already a well-established issue. Thomas Laqueur noted that, starting with *Onania* in the eighteenth century, the “artful practice” of masturbation “that had once signified so little would come to represent the physical depths of boys and girls, men and women—as well as a danger to their relationships with their family, lovers, and the social order more generally—for the next three centuries.”⁸¹ Kellogg’s writing differed little from Graham or White’s earlier works. Although he softened the language concerning religious damnation (such as in White’s writing), he was just as strenuous in his warnings: “If illicit commerce of the sexes is a heinous sin, self-pollution, or masturbation, is a crime doubly abominable. As a sin against nature, it has no parallel except in sodomy. It is the most dangerous of all sexual abuses because [it is] the most extensively practiced.”⁸²

The problem was, therefore, vigorously identified, and the remedies were tremendous in number, and they ranged from wholesome to extreme in technique. Kellogg initially repeated much of Graham and White’s opinions on methods to prevent or cure masturbation. According to Kellogg (and White previously), cold baths, adequate sleep, and the proper diet all played a role in curing the disease, especially the avoidance of “stimulating drinks” such as “wine, beer, tea, and coffee,” which were to “be taken under no circumstances.”⁸³ These methods were by no means new. While Graham had popularized them in North America, Nissenbaum noted that they

⁸⁰ Ibid., 107-108.

⁸¹ Thomas W. Laqueur, *Solitary Sex: A Cultural History of Masturbation* (New York: Zone Books, 2003), 15.

⁸² Kellogg, *Plain Facts About Sexual Life*, 233.

⁸³ Ibid., 312.

were “present in the *Onania*,” and were “an accepted element in medical theory and practice for at least 2,000 years.”⁸⁴

What was different in terms of masturbation, were the numerous methods and devices invented to stop the practice and penile erections in general. Laqueur observed that by “the middle of the nineteenth century, devices of all sorts had joined the potions and pills of the anti-masturbation marketplace.”⁸⁵ American industrialization had moved remedies for masturbation out of the homeopathic attitudes of Graham and White and into the world of mechanical invention. Laqueur noted that the mixture of technology and the capitalist market generated “a steady stream of appliances—erection alarms, penis cases, sleeping mitts, bed cradles to keep the sheets off the genitals, hobbles to keep girls from spreading their legs—earned at least twenty patents in the United States alone.”⁸⁶

Kellogg was less apt to call for the use of such technological methods in his 1877 work. But by 1890, his *Plain Facts About Sexual Life* was updated and republished as *Plain Facts for Old and Young*, and the treatments for masturbation were much more mechanical in nature. But with the mechanization of treatments came another layer of deterrent—pain. The use of devices to inflict pain to stop masturbation and erections were already in use by Kellogg’s day. Of particular note were penis rings with sharp spikes on the inside, which would not only warn a sleeping man or boy of a coming erection, but also inflict pain to make sure the process was stopped.⁸⁷ But the modern-minded society of the United States demanded a move away from such medieval devices of pain, and Kellogg readily provided them the technological remedies they craved—yet even these advances seemed focused on using pain to eradicate the sexual sin

⁸⁴ Nissenbaum, *Sex, Diet, and Debility in Jacksonian America*, 35.

⁸⁵ Laqueur, *Solitary Sex*, 46.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ See Tannahill, *Sex in History*, 343.

of masturbation. As early as 1877, Kellogg promoted the use of electricity to combat masturbation, noting that perhaps “no single agent will accomplish more than this remedy when skillfully applied.”⁸⁸ Yet, Kellogg did not elaborate the specifics of the technique until his later work. In *Plain Facts for Old and Young* he noted that in cases of aiding younger and older men, a metal electrode was often inserted into the urethra, and electric current passed through the organ.⁸⁹

While such methods seemed extreme, the fear of masturbation amongst the American public warranted such measures. Kellogg recounted one such example when the father of a ten-year-old girl, who had fallen into the snare of masturbation, was said to have “felt so deeply upon the subject, and was so thoroughly awake to the consequences of the sin, that he declared he would take his daughter away into the wilderness, and leave her to die, if need be.”⁹⁰ This extreme act was preferred to letting her “grow up to womanhood with this vile blight upon her.”⁹¹ Kellogg noted that the father felt so passionately about this that “tears coursed down his cheeks as he talked, and we were most happy to be of service to him and aiding his daughter to overcome the fascinating vice.”⁹²

Kellogg also demonstrated the lengths society was willing to go to remove those who practiced self-abuse around them. In another report, when a young man came to the sanitarium after having “devoted himself to sin” for years, it was found that masturbation “had wrought sad havoc in his system,” and “his health was greatly deranged.”⁹³ It was decided that only “a serious

⁸⁸ Kellogg, *Plain Facts About Sexual Life*, 326.

⁸⁹ J. H. Kellogg, *Plain Facts for Old and Young: Embracing the Natural History and Hygiene of Organic Life* (Iowa: I.F. Segner & CO., 1890), 316-318.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 419.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 354.

and painful surgical operation” could treat his malady.⁹⁴ The operation did not succeed however, and the young man could not be saved from his “unhollowed lust,” and was placed, “in an institution devoted to the care of imbeciles and lunatics,” where he was left to sink into the “lower depths of physical and mental degradation—a soul utterly lost and ruined.”⁹⁵

While the forced institutionalization of a young man simply for masturbating was a horrific miscarriage of medical practice, of more particular concern was the “painful surgical operation” Kellogg used to try and stop the habit. Surgical solutions to halt the practice of masturbation, while common knowledge, were much less discussed, and in many cases were used only as a final solution. Yet, the idea of physically altering the body to prevent future degeneracy was picked up not a decade later by eugenicists. Mels van Driel noted that by the 1870s a German immigrant to the United States, Louis Bauer (1814-1898), practiced infibulation on men to “cure both masturbation and epilepsy.”⁹⁶ The operation consisted of puncturing the foreskin and tying it over the head of the penis with rings, or sewing it closed in lieu of rings. Driel observed that the result and goal of the procedure was “usually an extensive painful swelling for at least two months, which according to Bauer could ensure that the patient did not revert to his bad habits.”⁹⁷ This method also prevented erections, which further helped in avoiding masturbation. While Kellogg did not mention such techniques in his earlier work in 1877, he appeared to have picked up Bauer’s procedure by 1890:

We have become acquainted with a method of treatment of this disorder...and we have employed it with entire satisfaction. It consists in the application of one or more silver sutures in such a way as to prevent erection. The prepuce, or foreskin, is drawn forward

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 357.

⁹⁶ Mels Van Driel, *With the Hand: A Cultural History of Masturbation*, trans. Paul Vincent (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2012), 114.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

over the glans, and the needle to which the wire is attached is passed through from one side to the other. After drawing the wire through, the ends are twisted together, and cut off close.⁹⁸

Kellogg reported that such a procedure made it “impossible for an erection to occur,” and that the pain involved acted as “a most powerful means of overcoming the disposition to resort to the practice” of masturbation.⁹⁹ Driel noted that neither “Kellogg nor any other advocates of infibulation discussed the problems resulting from ‘pinning closed’, including of course difficulties with urinating as well as personal hygiene.”¹⁰⁰

Such drastic measures were not reserved for males only. As Kellogg’s own earlier account about the father and his daughter suggests, girls and women were subjected to various forms of treatment for masturbation as well. A particularly painful and disturbing “treatment” was the application of what was basically battery acid to the genitals of women and girls who were not responding to other treatments to stop self-abuse. Kellogg reported:

In females, the author has found the application of pure carbolic acid to the clitoris an excellent means of allaying the abnormal excitement, and preventing the recurrence of the practice in those whose will-power has become so weakened that the patient is unable to exercise entire self-control. The worse cases among young women are those in which the disease has advanced so far that erotic thoughts are attended by the same voluptuous sensations which accompany the practice. The author has met many cases of this sort in young women, who acknowledged that the sexual orgasm was thus produced, often several times daily. The application of carbolic acid in the manner described is also

⁹⁸ Kellogg, *Plain Facts for Old and Young*, 296.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ Driel, *With the Hand*, 115.

useful in these cases in allaying the abnormal excitement, which is a frequent provocation of the practice of this form of mental masturbation.¹⁰¹

Kellogg's sterilized language made casual what must have been a torturous experience. The acid would have burned the thousands of nerve endings in the area resulting in extreme pain, and even if the nerves healed and reformed, the association of pain with masturbation probably achieved Kellogg's goal of stopping the practice.

Kellogg's advocacy for circumcision, to combat the sinful disease of masturbation, faced little to no controversy or opposition from his contemporaries. His first mention of the practice as a treatment for masturbation occurred in 1877, when he wrote that a "remedy which is almost always successful in small boys is circumcision."¹⁰² Again, the idea of using pain to combat the illicit practice seemed the main purpose of such a procedure, especially since Kellogg recommended it "be performed by a surgeon without administering an anesthetic, as the brief pain attending the operation [would] have a salutary effect upon the mind, especially if it be connected with the idea of punishment."¹⁰³

Circumcision was far from new in the world of medical procedures—the Jews had practiced circumcising males for centuries. What was new was its use to combat masturbation. But this idea was not Kellogg's. Nineteenth-century circumcision as a treatment for masturbation found its genesis in England and Europe. In his work on the history of circumcision, Robert Darby noted that from the mid-eighteenth to the late nineteenth century there was a "demonization of the foreskin" in Europe, in which "the foreskin was transformed from an adornment that brought pleasure to its owner and his partners... to a 'useless bit of flesh' and an

¹⁰¹ Kellogg, *Plain Facts for Old and Young*, 296.

¹⁰² Kellogg, *Plain Facts About Sexual Life*, 303.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

enemy of society.”¹⁰⁴ Indeed, thoughts towards the foreskin in eighteenth-century Britain were that it was “central to male sexual identity,” and circumcision was seen as “a humiliating disfigurement.”¹⁰⁵ But this position soon changed with a redefinition of the effects of masturbation. Once seen as a moral issue between God and man, or priest and parishioner, by the nineteenth century masturbation was thought to cause any number of genital diseases. Thus, masturbation was no longer a problem that religion could solve, and modern medicine had to find a solution to ebb the relentless flow of masturbators proceeding through doctor’s practices.

Darby pinpoints this moment of change in the writings and practices of French surgeon Claude-François Lallemand (1790-1853). Lallemand served as a kind of bridge between the understandings of masturbation between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As more and more doctors from the early nineteenth century accepted the opinion that sperm was the vital force within men, they saw the loss of it in any context—masturbation, nocturnal emissions, or even in marital sex—as an extremely dangerous disease. This burgeoning belief no doubt explains the inclusion of such dire warnings against loss of vital fluids during sex in the writings of Graham, White, and Kellogg. But Darby credited Lallemand for lifting the sperm-wasting disease of *spermatorrhea* to proper medical consideration. Darby noted that spermatorrhea was Lallemand’s “particular brainchild,” and that his three-volume study of the disease was of extreme importance as it explained the “emergence of widespread circumcision [in Europe] in the 1860s,” and the “identification of the foreskin as the ringleader of the male genitals’ conspiracy against masculine well-being.”¹⁰⁶ Thus, masturbation became the cause of spermatorrhea and the pleasurable foreskin became the main instigator of masturbation.

¹⁰⁴ Robert Darby, *A Surgical Temptation: The Demonization of the Foreskin and the Rise of Circumcision in Britain* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), 4.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 62.

As Lallemand's work and theories spread, doctors from England and France were convinced that the removal of the foreskin was the surest way to halt the practice of masturbation. Kellogg's travels to Europe brought him into contact with several of these doctors. Two of them, specifically regarding the area of masturbation and circumcision, were English gynecologist Lawson Tait (1845-1899) and French physician Jean-Martin Charcot (1825-1893), who was the world's foremost expert on neurology, medical hypnosis, and hysteria. Kellogg worked with and studied under both these leading physicians and their work was discernable in his own.¹⁰⁷

Even more likely is the influence of Tait on Kellogg's beliefs on treatments for masturbation. Tait, as a gynecologist, was mainly concerned with the female sexual organs, yet in his discussion on the clitoris he inevitably deliberated masturbation as he considered the clitoris "the chief seat" of the practice.¹⁰⁸ While Tait said nothing of circumcision for treating masturbation in boys, he did note that sexual aggression and instinct "should be curbed, properly restrained, and judiciously directed."¹⁰⁹ However, Tait did support clitoridectomy (the surgical removal of the clitoris) as a means of stopping masturbation in women. He recounted the unfortunate story of surgeon Baker Brown in London, who apparently first thought to remove the clitoris as a treatment for masturbation. Brown apparently started showing signs of lunacy and, as Tait put it, "carried his efforts to a most injudicious extent, due to the fact that he was suffering from a very extensive cerebral softening."¹¹⁰ Eventually Brown's insanity caused his expulsion from the medical community and the discrediting of his work. Tait bemoaned the result, writing: "One disastrous result came from the decision of the Obstetrical Society at once,

¹⁰⁷ See John Harvey Kellogg, "While in Europe," Biographical Notes and Awards and Citations, Box 1, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

¹⁰⁸ Lawson Tait, *Diseases of Women* (New York: William Wood & Company, 1879), 29.

¹⁰⁹ Lawson Tait, *Diseases of Women and Abdominal Surgery* (Philadelphia: Lea Brothers & Co., 1889), 59.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 63.

as might have been expected. The operation of clitoridectomy was absolutely discarded, and I have never heard a surgeon say he had performed it since 1867. Yet I am certain that in many cases it would be useful. I have performed it once in a case....”¹¹¹

Regardless of its popularity or condemnation, Kellogg transferred these ideas of male and female circumcision to the United States, where it was readily accepted. Darby suspected that such an ease of acceptance was due to the ties of language and culture between Britain and the United States, and noted that although “the masturbation phobia was a European phenomenon, it is a striking fact that circumcision was widely adopted only in Britain and other English-speaking countries.”¹¹² In any case, Kellogg practiced and advocated male circumcision as a cure for masturbation at his Battle Creek Sanitarium, but he also transferred Tait’s use of female circumcision. In his book, *Ladies’ Guide in Health and Disease*, Kellogg hints at circumcision as a way to stop masturbation among girls: “In obstinate cases, very severe means must be sometimes adopted. We were once obliged after every other measure had failed, to perform a surgical operation before we were able to break the habit in the case of a young girl of eight or ten years who had become addicted to the vice to a most extraordinary degree.”¹¹³ Later in the same work, he prescribed circumcision as a cure for nymphomania:

This term is applied to a condition in which there is such an intense degree of sexual excitement that the passions become uncontrollable. A female suffering with this affection will sometimes commit the grossest breaches of chastity. Its principle causes are self-abuse and a complete abandonment of the mind to lascivious thoughts....The genitals are often found in a state of great excitement and abnormal enlargement in this affection.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Darby, *A Surgical Temptation*, 73.

¹¹³ J. H. Kellogg, *Ladies’ Guide in Health and Disease: Girlhood, Maidenhood, Wifehood, Motherhood* (Battle Creek, Michigan: Modern Medicine Publishing Co., 1902), 165.

Treatment: Cool sitz baths; the cool enema; a spare diet; the application of blisters and other irritants [carbolic acid] to the sensitive parts of the sexual organs, the removal of the clitoris and the nymphae [the labia minora], constitute the proper treatment.¹¹⁴

Kellogg also thought such treatments were useful in combating masturbation and noted his use of them in a case that sounded similar to the aforementioned little girl: “The same measures of treatment are indicated in the cases in which the disposition to practice self-abuse is uncontrollable by other means. In an extreme case of this kind brought to us for treatment a few years ago, we were compelled to adopt the last-mentioned method of treatment before the patient could be cured.”¹¹⁵

By the end of the nineteenth century, doctors all over the United States were calling for circumcision to be adopted in practice on males. Female circumcision was less talked about but also gained acceptance, and, as David Gollaher noted, was practiced in the United States through the 1950s—after which it “fell by the wayside,” but “surgeons continued to regard the clitoris with suspicion.”¹¹⁶ This cry of acceptance was not in the context of masturbation but rather in hygiene, purported avoidance of disease, and other aesthetic reasons. Interestingly, later advocates of circumcision would be largely Jewish doctors, and many historians wondered how the United States—a predominantly Christian nation—had come to wholly accept a Jewish rite. Leonard Glick noted that from the perspective of Jewish doctors, the American acceptance of circumcision created “new vistas,” and that “they might have been gratified to see circumcision lose its reputation as a peculiar badge of Jewishness and become instead an emblem of modern

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 550.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 551.

¹¹⁶ David L. Gollaher, *Circumcision: A History of the World's Most Controversial Surgery* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), 201.

standards of hygiene and sound moral values.”¹¹⁷ After all, during “a time when Jews were intent on becoming full-fledged Americans, what could have been so gratifying as the prospect of everyone’s adopting the most problematic sign of Jewish difference?”¹¹⁸ To this end, Jewish doctors began lobbying for circumcision in medical journals and conferences. In 1893, Mark J. Lehman, wrote in “A Plea for Circumcision,” that it behooved “the physician to advocate the removal of this ‘causa morbi’ [cause of disease]—whether necessary or not so as to have a beneficial effect in future generations.”¹¹⁹

Kellogg utilized circumcision as just another tool in his arsenal to stop the illicit practice of masturbation. But most twentieth-century doctors in the United States who advocated for circumcision either ignored or were just unaware of this initial purpose. Most historians point to an article from 1914 in the prestigious *Journal of the American Medical Association* as the turning point for the general acceptance of circumcision as a matter of health and sanitation. Its author, Abraham Wolbarst, wrote that many objections to circumcision were founded on its ritualistic nature, but that many non-Jewish doctors supported the procedure. He also presented evidence highlighting a lower number of cases of syphilis among circumcised men, but also failed to emphasize that the same sample of 400 had a higher amount of gonorrhea than those who were uncircumcised. Therefore, it was “the moral duty of every physician to encourage circumcision in the young,” and it was “immaterial whether it is done as a religious rite or as a purely sanitary measure.”¹²⁰ The article was well received and convinced the medical community to support circumcision as a sanitary measure.

¹¹⁷ Leonard B. Glick, *Marked in Your Flesh: Circumcision from Ancient Judea to Modern America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 163.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ Mark J. Lehman, “A Plea for Circumcision,” *Medical Review* 28, (July-December, 1893): 65.

¹²⁰ Abraham L. Wolbarst, “Universal Circumcision as a Sanitary Measure,” *Journal of the American Medical Association* 62, no. 1 (January 1914): 97.

By the 1920s, circumcision was the norm in the United States, but few remembered how it had arrived. As Kellogg practiced and advocated circumcision as a method for combating masturbation in 1877, he was one of the first, if not the first doctor to transfer circumcision to the United States outside of Judaism. This was not done out of a concern for overall health and sanitation but rather for the moral fight against the onslaught of masturbation, and in so doing he revived pain as a means to combat illicit sexual practices. The extreme methods Kellogg and his contemporaries practiced to stop masturbation would no doubt stun modern American sensibilities, but it must be remembered that for Kellogg this was truly a matter of life and death. He was raised believing that those who practiced self-pollution were not Christians and that they would not be welcomed into Heaven. Kellogg, therefore, was not just fighting to save humanity from the perceived physical and lethal degradations of masturbation—he was waging a war for their very souls.

3.5 Conclusion: Pure in Body and Spirit

When Kellogg revived pain as a legitimate tool for combating illicit sex, it was doubtful that he understood it in context with St. Benedict's episode of conquering sexual temptation through suffering. Nor was it likely that he reintroduced celibacy in honor of St. Augustine's call to a celibate life. Yet, one cannot help but see the similarities in their motives and actions. In the context of Christianity, it is remarkable that the three main approaches to combat illicit sex (celibacy, shame, and pain) were used repeatedly and at different times throughout history.

The early Church fathers laid out celibacy and pain as legitimate ways of combating sexual desire and illicit sex, only to have their descendants in the Roman Catholic Church disregard such principles during the Renaissance. And the Protestants were little better in their

almost (except for a few sects) complete abandonment of celibacy. Surprisingly, for the copious amounts of violence during the Renaissance and Reformation, pain was not often utilized to combat illicit sex, perhaps to punish it but not to prevent it.

Puritanical shame was used to punish sexual sins in early North America, but celibacy was seen as almost unnatural. Puritan sensibilities on sex, regardless of their stereotypes in today's society, were freer than their Victorian descendants. Sex was only illicit outside of marriage, yet for all the shame embedded in Puritan life, it still occurred and was dealt with as communal sin. Sexual sins were therefore open and the shame public, and punishment was administered through public confession and, often, through corporal punishment.

By Kellogg's time, society worried about secret sexual sins, hidden vices, and self-pollution, and members of society were ever watching and waiting for some sign, some strange occurrence, to confirm their worst fears of sexual sin. Parents were advised to spy on and virtually imprison their children to avoid the blight of secret vices; every aspect of childhood was to be carefully controlled and monitored lest sexual sin take their health and souls. Last but not least, pain and celibacy reemerged as means of preventing illicit practices, and Kellogg utilized them to great and terrible effect. Celibacy provided the strength necessary to live a better life—meaning one could better serve God. Through the interreligious and intercultural transfer of circumcision, Kellogg attempted to conquer “pleasure through suffering” in his crusade against masturbation, and forever changed the standard of sanitation concerning men's bodies—though the latter was certainly not his intent.

For Kellogg and the Seventh-day Adventists, this continuity with the early Catholic Church was largely unnoticed. Ellen White had received *new* messages from God about illicit sexual behavior as part of health reform. It was therefore just as important to reform people's sex

habits as it was their eating, drinking, and dress. In trying to reform the sexual habits of the public, Kellogg raised issues regarding sex to the level of importance characteristic of any other reform. In the larger scheme of health reform, good sex or illicit sex affected the purity of the body (and therefore soul) as much as vegetarianism. How one behaved sexually was just as important as fresh air, exercise, and what food one ate and how one ate it. Sex was thereby transformed to fit in the context of Kellogg's sphere of health reform, and he shaped it to his understandings of health, sin, and salvation. But this did not mean that Kellogg or the Seventh-day Adventists were unique in their call to sexual purity, nor were they immune from the cultural changes in sexual perception around them. In response to their own (and society's) changing views on sex, Seventh-day Adventists at the beginning of the twentieth century no longer taught that masturbators could not be Christians, nor did they see it as barring the path to Heaven. It is also doubtful that many modern Seventh-day Adventists have ever read White's *An Appeal to Mothers* and seriously practiced its guidelines.

Perhaps St. Augustine said it best when he prayed to God: "Grant me chastity and continence, but not yet."¹²¹ We are willing to practice sexual asceticism at different times for different reasons, but we also shape sex to fit our perceptions. Christians since Augustine have wanted to be pure in body and spirit, but also relished sexual desire. Even Augustine continued his prayer, saying: "I was afraid you might hear my prayer too quickly, and that you might too rapidly heal me of the disease of lust which I preferred to satisfy rather than suppress."¹²² For Augustine, sexual expression or lust seemed to be something to get out of the way first, before a dedication to God and the abandonment of sexual gratification. For others, in contrast, sex within marriage was as much a dedication to God as celibacy.

¹²¹ Augustine, *Confessions*, 145.

¹²² *Ibid.*

For Kellogg, sexual fulfillment did not have to be separate from salvation, and his reforms explained what was good and righteous and what was evil. For him, “good” sex was the path to a chaste body, and a chaste body meant a soul ready for translation to Heaven. Kellogg best summed up such beliefs at the end of his address on social purity:

In the name of a sacred Christian religion which affords us this opportunity, let us this night join hands in the crusade against these hidden foes of all that is true, and tender, and sweet, and good, and pure; let us engage in the earnest conflict against impurity,—a conflict which to-day is supported by the prayers of thousands of saintly mothers, and which will, in the eternal future toward which we are all hastening, receive the benediction of the good and pure of all the ages.¹²³

Everything Kellogg did in reforming sexual habits was toward this end goal, “good” sexual habits led to a “pure” body and an even more important “pure” mind. Good sex was not a misnomer to him. Sex, like most other topics of reform, was a matter of salvation or damnation. In this context, everything Kellogg did to combat his definition of illicit sex was justified in his mind—after all, people’s souls were at stake. Pain was but a tool to be used to save them from the fires of damnation.

¹²³ Kellogg, *Social Purity*, 39.

Chapter 4

The Healing Light

4.1 Let there be Light

The ancient Egyptian *Book of the Dead* begins with a singular praise of the sun god: “Adoration of Rā when riseth he in horizon eastern of heaven. . . . Thou risest, thou shinest. . . . Ascribe praise to Rā, the lord of heaven, the Prince, Life, Strength, Health, creator of the Gods. . . . The gods [are] rejoicing [when] they see Rā in his rising; his beams flood with light the countries. Advanceth the majesty of this god venerable.”¹ The cult of the sun is perhaps the oldest and ubiquitous of all recorded religions. Civilizations from antiquity, such as Sumer and Egypt, venerated the giver and mover of life, as did modern cultures such the Incas and Aztecs. What is interesting in the Egyptian context is the secondary name of Rā; along with being “Life” and “Strength,” Rā is also literally called “Health.” Depictions of Rā as the sun-disc (Aten) also personify sunrays as hands of blessing and healing, with some holding ankhs (the symbol of life) out to supplicants.² The use of the sun as a healer, both physically and symbolically, is therefore ancient in its inception.

But the scientific use of light to heal the body in modern times was predominantly an invention of nineteenth-century health reformers, and while the religion of the ancient Egyptians was far from the minds of the practitioners of light therapy, they were nevertheless participating in an ancient practice of looking to the sun for health. In his 1910 work, *Light Therapeutics*,

¹ E. A. Wallis Budge, trans., *The Egyptian Book of the Dead: The Papyrus of Ani in the British Museum* (1895; repr., New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1967) 1-3.

² For some depictions of the representation of sunrays in ancient Egyptian art, specifically during the reign of Pharaoh Akhenaten, see Lorna Oakes & Lucia Gahlin, *Ancient Egypt: An Illustrated Reference to the Myths, Religions, Pyramids and Temples of the Land of the Pharaohs* (London: Hermes House, 2007), 380-381.

Kellogg summed up the short history of light therapy (also called phototherapy and heliotherapy), yet also recognized its ancient roots:

Heliotherapy, or the use of sunlight as a curative means, is one of the oldest of natural healing agents....It is only within the last twenty years, however, that the physiological and therapeutic effects of light derived from natural and artificial sources have been made the subject of careful scientific study. Within this period numerous investigators have devoted themselves to the study of this subject, and the extended researches [sic] that have been made have resulted in the development of a new class of therapeutic methods, principles and measures which constitute the science of phototherapy.³

This new method of treating the sick seemed to always balance on the edge of scientific medicine and natural-healing faddism. Many of the inventions practitioners of light therapy created were ridiculed while others gained acceptance and are still used today—radiation therapy for cancer and surgical lasers for eye surgery came from the same movement as tanning beds and colored-light therapy. New understandings in the physics of light, along with the harnessing of electricity and artificial light, allowed for these new inventions, and Kellogg and others were quick to utilize the latest technology in light production.

Kellogg's exploration and implementation of light therapy is a prime example of transatlantic intercultural transfer. Not only did Kellogg study the publications of European practitioners, he spent time at their clinics learning their ideas and observing their methods firsthand. By observing the techniques of the physicians Kellogg visited along with his own methods, we can recreate the transfers of light therapy principles across the Atlantic. To do this I have selected three European individuals from whom Kellogg learned: Leopold Freund (1868-

³ J. H. Kellogg, *Light Therapeutics: A Practical Manual of Phototherapy for the Student and the Practitioner* (Battle Creek, Michigan: The Good Health Publishing Co., 1910), 9.

1943), Auguste Rollier (1874-1954), and Niels Ryberg Finsen (1860-1904). These three physicians represent distinct areas within light therapy—X-ray therapy and radiotherapy, heliotherapy, and actinotherapy (artificial-light therapy) respectively, and thus provide a broad scope for better understanding transatlantic light therapy. In order to facilitate a clearer narrative of transfer I will group the narrative of the three European medical doctors individually with Kellogg, as opposed to reviewing all three doctors at once and then Kellogg’s interactions with them. After this, I will move on to Kellogg’s experimentation in infrared light and its transfer back to Europe.

While the impact of light therapy is lasting in American and European society, not much has been written on it in way of historical scholarship. There are plenty of medical books relating to the methods and implementations of the therapeutic uses of light and such topics as radiology and surgical lasers, but there are very few practitioners who are aware of the rich history of transfers that were the foundation of modern medical uses of light. Unlike the topics of vegetarianism and sex in this study, the use of light therapy in health reform was relatively modern, and while the use of the sun for healing purposes was ancient in context, there was little continuity between ancient practices and nineteenth and twentieth-century light therapy. The beginnings of European light therapy date at least to the eighteenth century. Auguste Rollier noted that while “heliotherapy received a certain amount of attention” in “classical times,” it was not until the late eighteenth century that it in any way was revived.⁴

Thus, the sources for light therapy are necessarily limited to a few historical monographs and a plethora of medical manuals from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But this does not limit my study. The medical manuals on the light therapy of Freund, Rollier, and Finsen, combined with Kellogg’s, provide more than enough evidence for the narrative of transfer

⁴ A. Rollier, *Heliotherapy* (London: Henry Frowde and Hodder & Stoughton, 1923), 1.

between them, and the introductions to these works tend to provide personal information about the authors; such as their motivations, education, and personal experiences. Given that the major sources of light therapy are medical manuals and journals, discussion of the transfers of light therapy practices are bound to be technical in nature. That being said, we need to review the terminology surrounding the light spectrum as it was utilized in light therapy.

The light spectrum consists of wavelengths of light rays that range from long to short. These wavelengths are more easily understood in the context of visible light, which is perceivable to human eyes. The visible light spectrum ranges from the longest wavelengths of light (red light) to the shortest wavelengths (violet light). For the moment, let us focus on the red-light end of the spectrum. Light rays with wavelengths longer than visible red light are ultra-red lights, and are not visible to the human eye. These include, infrared (IR) light, microwaves, radar, radio waves, and broadcast bands. At the violet-light end of the spectrum, light rays with shorter wavelengths than visible violet light are in the ultra-violet light group, and are also not visible to the human eye. These include ultraviolet (UV) light, X-rays, gamma rays, and cosmic rays.

Health reformers isolated light rays in the ultra-violet end of the light spectrum as having the most bactericidal effects. Radiotherapy and X-ray therapy utilized these rays, as did actinotherapy in that it was the artificial recreation of ultraviolet light. These ultra-violet light rays were termed chemical rays or actinic rays. Kellogg's experiments in infrared light utilized the ultra-red end of the spectrum. He determined that infrared light rays (or as he called them, thermic or heat rays) were excellent for therapeutic uses since they could penetrate the body deeper than any other light. Heliotherapy is more complex as the sun encompasses the entirety of the light spectrum. Sunlight could be utilized for the bacteria-killing ultraviolet light in its rays,

or could also offer soothing heat from the infrared light, which penetrated earth's atmosphere more than shorter wavelengths of light.

While the language of light therapy is necessarily technical, Kellogg and his contemporaries translated these scientific ideas into cultural phenomena, and light therapy created new ideas about sunbathing, lighting in homes and public spaces, and even natural light in architecture—the impacts of which, I will examine at the end of this chapter. But for the moment, our first narrative of transfer begins where much of Kellogg's education in Europe took place: Vienna.

4.2 *Radiotherapie and Röntgentherapie*

The events of history are not often kind to individual figures and their work, and Leopold Freund was certainly one of the victims of historical circumstances. Not much is known about Freund or his work outside of academia and medicine (specifically the field of radiology), and even those sources are more likely to be German or Austrian in origin. As a result, one of the sole biographical sources concerning Freund's life was a dissertation from the University of Vienna in 1980, in which its author, Judith Bauer-Merinsky, focused on the effects of the 1938 German annexation of Austria on the medical faculty of the University of Vienna. Due to his Jewish heritage, in 1938 Freund was dismissed from the university faculty and, according to Bauer-Merinsky, had to leave Austria with his wife and went to Belgium (Brussels).⁵ After the beginning of the Second World War, German forces occupied Brussels and Freund was again

⁵ Judith Baur-Merinsky, "Die Auswirkungen der Annexion Österreichs durch das Deutsche Reich auf die medizinische Fakultät der Universität Wien im Jahre 1938: Biographien entlassener Professoren und Dozenten" (PhD diss., Universität Wien, 1980), 59. Available at Universitätsbibliothek Medizinische Universität Wien, <https://repositorium.meduniwien.ac.at/obvumwhs/content/titleinfo/2466614>.

exposed to persecution and emigration.⁶ He died not long after in Brussels on January 7, 1943 of colon cancer.⁷

Nazi persecution of Freund likely attributed to the lack of documentation on his life. Not only would the Nazi government have seized his assets, much of his personal writings were no doubt destroyed through the devastation of war, Nazi purges of Jewish literature, and forced migration. Most knowledge of him was predominantly preserved through his publications, which were numerous. Researcher Dieter Kogelnik noted that Freund's medical publications included over 100 papers "of which he was the sole author" and that he wrote "the world's first exhaustive 417-page textbook solely devoted to radiotherapy."⁸ Bauer-Merinsky placed the number of publications higher at over 340.⁹

Freund was distinguished for his scientific documentation proving the therapeutic uses of *Radiotherapie* and *Röntgentherapie* (radiation radiotherapy and X-ray therapy) in treating skin tumors and moles. According to Bauer-Merinsky, Freund was considered the founder of X-ray therapy, as he was the first to use X-rays in the treatment of skin diseases and, later, lower-lying organs.¹⁰ Freund's foundational experiment began on November 24, 1896, and involved treating a five-year-old girl for a hairy nevus (a hairy mole that resulted from a birth defect) that covered the entirety of the girl's neck, shoulders, and back. The procedure was successful, albeit with scarring, and the patient lived into her eighties.¹¹

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ H. Dieter Kogelnik, "Inauguration of Radiotherapy as a New Scientific Specialty by Leopold Freund 100 Years Ago," *Radiology and Oncology* 42, no. 3 (March 1997): 209.

⁹ Baur-Merinsky, "Biographien entlassener Professoren und Dozenten," 60.

¹⁰ Ibid., 59.

¹¹ For a complete and detailed explanation of Freund's experiment, see Kogelnik, "Inauguration of Radiotherapy as a New Scientific Specialty by Leopold Freund 100 Years Ago."

For his work, Freund was celebrated and esteemed throughout the medical community and was honored with seven Austrian and foreign awards for services in war and peace.¹² He was also nominated for the Nobel Prize in 1906. Nils Hansson, Michael Martin, and Heiner Fangerau recently detailed the previously unknown account of Freund's nomination, in which his colleague, Ernest Finger, wrote an extensive nomination letter that "portrayed Freund as a contemporary hero in medicine."¹³ Finger, a professor of dermatology at the University of Vienna, extolled the virtues of Freund's work, and Hanson, Martin, and Fangerau noted that, at the time, "radiotherapy was about to revolutionize medicine as a whole, not least because of the promising results on psoriasis and skin cancer," but "it had not yet reached its full potential."¹⁴

The X-ray itself was the product of Wilhelm Röntgen (1845-1923), who stumbled across the invisible light rays while experimenting in Munich, Germany with *Crookes tubes* in 1895. A Crookes tube was an elongated cylindrical glass tube with a partial vacuum in which was placed cathode (negative) and anode (positive) electrodes. When a high electric current passed through the gas (in this case air) inside the tube, it sped up the ions and electrons in the gas and produced light in the form of an electric discharge; much the same as a light bulb but without the filament. At the same time as producing these discharges of visible light, a certain amount of radioactivity was released in the form of invisible light, X-rays. Röntgen was not the first to produce X-rays, as others had experimented with Crookes tubes before him, but he was the first to identify them and denote their use for producing images on photographic plates. The type of light produced depended on the gas inside the tube. For example, modern neon and fluorescent lighting are descendants of Crookes tubes with gases such as helium, neon, argon, krypton, and xenon within

¹² Baur-Merinsky, "Biographien entlassener Professoren und Dozenten," 59-60.

¹³ Nils Hansson, Michael Martin, and Heiner Fangerau, "The Nobel Prize Runner-up Leopold Freund and the Origin of Radiotherapy," *Radiotherapy and Oncology* 119, no. 3 (June, 2016): 552.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* Psoriasis is a skin condition where an excessive amount of dead skin cells builds up at the surface of the skin to form itchy, and sometimes painful, red patches.

them. Because of his discovery, in many languages in Europe and the world, X-rays were often referred to as Röntgen rays (hence X-ray therapy was referred to as *Röntgentherapie*).¹⁵ The term X-ray simply came from the fact that Röntgen did not know what to call his discovery, and annotated them as X-radiation.

In 1898, two years after Freund's groundbreaking experiment, Marie Curie, working in Paris, France, discovered the radioactive element Radium. Radium itself—the radioactive element used in radiotherapy—had a surprisingly long and deadly history before its use in medicine. In his work *Deadly Sunshine* David Harvie traced the discovery of radium to fifteenth-century Bohemia (Freund's home country) and the numerous mining towns of the area, specifically the town of St. Joachimsthal (present day Jáchymov, Czech Republic).¹⁶ Miners, excavating gold, silver, copper, and bismuth, often complained of “a mysterious respiratory illness” that often caused death, and began to fear that mountain dwarves and demons were punishing them for stealing from the mountain by giving them *Bergsucht* (mountain sickness).¹⁷ The miners' illness was localized to a shiny black substance in the ore called *Pechblende* (pitchblende), the substance in which Curie discovered and isolated radium. Almost 100 years before Curie, in 1789, a German apothecary named Martin Heinrich Klaproth, isolated and discovered the element Uranium in the *Pechblende* from St. Joachimsthal. Thus, the miner's *Bergsucht* was most likely lung cancer as they were constantly inhaling radioactive dust and gas during their excavations.

¹⁵ For a more detailed description of the technical aspects of X-rays, and an excellent account of their history along with radiation therapy, see Richard F. Mould, *A Century of X-rays and Radioactivity in Medicine: With Emphasis on Photographic Records of the Early Years* (Bristol, United Kingdom: Institute of Physics Publishing, 1993).

¹⁶ David I. Harvie, *Deadly Sunshine: The History and Fatal Legacy of Radium* (Stroud, United Kingdom: Tempus, 2005), 20.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 17.

The discovery of radium set off a frenzy of experimentation and medical trials. Richard Mould noted that suggestions for the uses of radium were far reaching and almost miraculous in nature, scientists hoped that “radium might help restore sight to the blind,” and “baths of radium-bearing water were recommended for use at home.”¹⁸ Harvie described radium as a “medical slapstick” and observed that it was used both externally and internally in patients.¹⁹ The discovery of the less radioactive noble gas radon (which was produced when radium decayed) increased efforts to bring sick patients into contact with radium. Radon’s half-life (time for radioactive decay to take place) of about 3.8 days was far less problematic than radium’s approximate half-life of 1,600 years. Thus, Radon could be “safely” left in a patient. Harvie noted that such internal measures involved “controlled inhalation, ingestion, [or] injection,” and that an “entire industry devoted to impregnating other items with radium,” through radon, developed in the early twentieth century.²⁰ Radon-infused water was sold for drinking and bathing, and inventions to saturate people’s food and clothing “with the health-giving magic of radium in the comfort of their own home” flooded the market.²¹

Hoping to profit from the radium craze, radium hot springs and spas were built not only in Europe—such as the still-operating Radium Palace Hotel in Jáchymov—but also in the United States; examples of which were Curie Spring in Springdale, Colorado, Saratoga Springs in New York, and Mount Clemens in Michigan.²² Such hotel spas and springs became immensely popular with their wealthy clientele, who were convinced, through no small amount of charlatanry, that eating, drinking, and inhaling radium, as well as dressing and bathing in it,

¹⁸ Richard F. Mould, *A Century of X-rays and Radioactivity in Medicine: With Emphasis on Photographic Records of the Early Years* (Bristol, United Kingdom: Institute of Physics Publishing, 1993), 21.

¹⁹ Harvie, *Deadly Sunshine*, 107.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 107-108.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 108.

²² *Ibid.*, 108, 216.

would cure a multitude of health woes as well as rejuvenate them. On its surface, such treatments would have seemed to fit right in at Kellogg's Battle Creek Sanitarium as many patients regarded it as a kind of health resort integrated with a hospital. But Kellogg was far more cautious and less taken with radium treatments, due no doubt to his familiarity with Freund's work on the subject.

In 1903, Freund published *Grundriss der Gesamten Radiotherapie* (Comprehensive Outline for Radiotherapy) in which he defined radiotherapy as a broad term utilized for any use of radiation for therapeutic purposes, and noted that radiation was classified into two groups: electromagnetic radiation (radiation of electrical energy), heat radiation, light, and ultraviolet radiation, and cathode rays, such as X-rays, the Becquerel rays (gamma rays), and the radiations of radium and polonium.²³ He noted that all such radiations, by virtue of the physical properties inherent in them, had the capacity for therapeutic treatment, but his focus never strayed from the medical perspective and the use of radium in the context of faddist spa treatments was not even considered.²⁴ The next year *Grundriss der Gesamten Radiotherapie* was translated into English and sold in the United States.

In 1908, Kellogg was less certain of the use of radiation therapy, and stated in *The Battle Creek Sanitarium System* that the X-ray had found "its place in the armamentarium of the institution" and was "daily proving itself of service in an increasing variety of ailments," but that the full scope of X-rays in therapy could not "as yet be fully defined."²⁵ By the time he published his work *Light Therapeutics* in 1910, Kellogg notably shifted his focus towards X-rays and strong radioactive therapeutic treatments. While he employed the use of radium treatments to some extent, he was much more interested in treating patients with more natural chemical or

²³ Leopold Freund, *Grundriss der Gesamten Radiotherapie: Für Praktische Ärzte* (Wien: Urban & Schwarzenberg, 1903), 1.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Kellogg, *The Battle Creek Sanitarium System*, 89.

actinic rays and thermic rays.²⁶ While Kellogg also made use of X-ray therapy, he did not include X-rays in his description of chemical rays, but they could indeed have been grouped-in just above ultraviolet light. Kellogg was aware of Freund's work, but lamented that Freund had not recognized the uses of thermic radiation in therapeutic practices: "Until recently, the attention of investigators has been almost wholly directed to the effects of the actinic rays. Freund goes so far, indeed, as to exclude the thermic rays from the therapeutic field, thereby showing a lack of information concerning the exceedingly valuable curative effects of the heat rays when applied in appropriate cases with a correct technique."²⁷

While it is possible that Kellogg and Freund met, given Kellogg's visits and studies at the University of Vienna, the nature of their relationship is unclear, but they certainly knew of each other's work. Freund cited Kellogg in his own work, and noted Kellogg's work in light therapy.²⁸ Kellogg's preference for more natural sources of light (meaning those outside of radioactive elements) was perhaps due to his close relationships with Rollier and Finsen, but it could also have been from a pervading fear of the dangers of radioactive elements. Mould noted that ideas of protective measures against overexposure to radium and X-rays in Britain did not culminate into applied policy until 1921, and it would not be until 1934 that the United States first considered a national "principle of maximum tolerance dose of X-rays."²⁹ Without proper safety standards, X-ray and radium therapy could be extremely dangerous for both patient and doctor, as learned from the example of Marie Curie, who died in 1934 from radiation poisoning of her bone marrow. While Freund's work produced excellent results, it should be noted that he himself died of colon cancer, and one cannot eliminate his years of study and handling of X-rays and

²⁶ See Markel, *The Kelloggs*, 187.

²⁷ Kellogg, *Light Therapeutics*, 11.

²⁸ Freund, *Grundriss der Gesamten Radiotherapie*, 367.

²⁹ Mould, *A Century of X-rays and Radioactivity in Medicine*, 21.

radium without a full knowledge of the protective measures necessary to prevent tissue damage as a factor in his demise.

In either case, Kellogg aided in the successful transference of X-ray and radiation therapy from Europe to the United States through his endorsement—albeit not full-throated. But in order for the transference to work terms had to be changed. Americans were happy to submit themselves to treatments of radium and X-rays, but few were aware of their European origins. Terms such as *Röntgentherapie* and *Radiotherapie* were changed to X-ray therapy and radiation therapy. Such changes were necessary for an American public that was becoming more nativist and prejudiced, meaning that most outside the medical field in the United States would not remember the work of Freund. In the end, even Kellogg further simplified light therapy into the two distinct categories of chemical and thermic rays in an attempt to create a language that was more palatable to practitioners and patients alike.

4.3 Kellogg and Auguste Rollier's *La Cure de Soleil*

High in the Swiss Alps, the village of Leysin, Switzerland played host to an unusual experiment in nineteenth-century therapeutic practice. Visitors to the alpine village enjoyed sweeping vistas of green hills and snow-capped mountains, and in the winter months could take up the sport of snow skiing. But tourists might have been stunned to see an odd sight on the snow-covered slopes during the alpine winter—children skiing without clothes. Although wearing white loincloths, these children were otherwise naked in the cold air of the alpine winter, and not only skiing, but ice skating, hiking, exercising, and even having school classes in desks outside in the snow, but, more importantly, in the sun.

This was not the fun play of children, nor was it a local tradition. Such children were not students; they were patients of *La Cure de Soleil*—Heliotherapy—and they were under the care of “the Sun Doctor” himself, Auguste Rollier. Rollier began practicing heliotherapy at his clinic in Leysin in 1903. Originally a surgeon, Rollier studied under the noted Professor Theodor Kocher in Berne. With a promising career as a surgeon ahead of him, it seemed odd that Rollier abandoned his training in pursuit of heliotherapy. Richard Hobday suggested that Rollier became interested in heliotherapy because a close friend who had had his hip and knee joints removed due to tuberculosis of the bone committed suicide.³⁰ Hobday noted that the suicide “left a deep impression on the young doctor,” and Rollier was determined to find a more adequate cure for tuberculosis other than debilitating surgeries.³¹ Rollier chose Leysin as the site of his clinic in the hopes that the climate and cold mountain air would have a positive effect on his fiancée, who was herself suffering from pulmonary (lung) tuberculosis.³²

Tuberculosis was the scourge of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Although pulmonary tuberculosis was a common form of the disease (and the most recognizable to modern memory), many suffered from infections of tuberculosis in their bones, joints, and skin. This non-pulmonary form of the disease affected children more than adults, and was mostly bovine tuberculosis, contracted via infected milk. Tuberculosis not only ate away at the bones and skin of children, leaving open sores and deformed bones, it also caused malnutrition and a wasting away of the body. Theories on how to treat the disease were far-ranging, but a specific consensus of its cause developed towards the late nineteenth century. Linda Bryder noted that, medical treatments aside, tuberculosis “was regarded as a disease of civilization, the treatment of which

³⁰ Richard Hobday, *The Healing Sun: Sunlight and Health in the 21st Century* (Scotland: Findhorn Press, 1999), 100.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

required a return to Nature.”³³ Tuberculosis was not the only disease to be attributed to the pitfalls of civilization. In general, Kellogg and other reformers would also lay feeble-mindedness (a condition that encompassed a number of physical and mental disabilities) at the feet of civilization with its over-industrialized and crowded cities and its disregard for the natural world.

Most agreed that tuberculosis, as a disease of densely populated cities with unhealthy living quarters, could be conquered through a return to natural living. Across the globe social reformers embraced movements and developments that brought city dwellers into nature. This was the era of the creation of public parks, allotment gardens, and outdoor sports such as football (soccer). In Britain, according to Bryder, this translated to the open-air school movement, in which schools were designed in a pavilion style to facilitate proper ventilation, but this was “catered for those suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis,” which was “primarily a disease of adults.”³⁴ The bone and skin tuberculosis of children was not aided through better ventilation, and, more often than not, children died from tuberculosis as a result of malnutrition, secondary infections from their open sores, weakened immune systems, and radical surgeries that left them limbless and exposed to recurrences of the disease.

Rollier was aware of these challenges and set out not to simply treat the disease in its various forms in children, but to cure it as well. Acutely aware of the contextualization of tuberculosis as an effect of civilization and the calls for cures within nature, he employed the most natural of all elements, cold air and the sun. Hobday noted that Rollier was not the first to utilize the healing powers of the sun, and that Dr. Oskar Bernhard (also of Switzerland) was the

³³ Linda Bryder, “Wonderland of Buttercup, Clover and Daisies: Tuberculosis and the Open-air School Movement in Britain, 1907-39,” in *In the Name of the Child: Health and Welfare, 1880-1940*, ed. Roger Cooter (London: Routledge, 1992), 73.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

first to “use sunlight to heal first wounds and then tuberculosis.”³⁵ But while Bernhard’s success gained him notoriety, it was Rollier “who popularized heliotherapy.”³⁶

Rollier’s method of heliotherapy was first introduced in published format in 1915, entitled *La Cure de Soleil* it was later translated into English in 1923 under the title *Heliotherapy*.³⁷ In his work, Rollier’s first concern was with the overall well-being of his patients who were predominantly children. Noting the power of the sun to improve the mental mood of his patients, Rollier extolled the general virtues of sunlight in relation to medicine:

Subjective phenomena rarely receive the attention they merit in our text-books on surgery, and the reader...is apt to overlook, or at best to under-estimate, the importance of the mental condition of the patient....The close relationship between sunshine and happiness is so obvious that it hardly requires emphasis. Anyone who has seen the splendor of a typical winter’s day in the Alps with its brilliant sunshine and the still, cold air will realize what a stimulating effect it has. The intense heat of the sun is tempered and rendered wonderfully bracing by the action of the dry, cold air on the whole surface of the body.³⁸

Rollier observed that children were particularly responsive to such an environment, and that with the mixture of sunlight and cold air their mood improved along with their appetite, sleep, and digestion—all of which led to a better “clinical condition.”³⁹ More specifically, heliotherapy in the form of “sun-baths” sought to increase a patient’s metabolism. Rollier noted that while “a large number of vital reactions” were increased through “the absorption of radiant energy by the

³⁵ Hobday, *The Healing Sun*, 96.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 99.

³⁷ See, A. Rollier, *La Cure de Soleil*, (Paris: Baillièrre & Fils, 1915).

³⁸ Rollier, *Heliotherapy*, 4-5.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 5.

blood,” the exact mechanisms for how the blood carried and utilized sunlight were unknown; meaning much of his work was through trial and observation.⁴⁰

Rollier’s choice of an elevated alpine location (his clinic at Leysin was just above 4,100 ft. above sea level) served a dual purpose. The cold mountain air was clean and kept patients’ bodies from overheating, but the altitude also provided more exposure to the unfiltered ultraviolet rays of the sun. A. Rosselet, a physician under Rollier, noted that if one considered “the only factor of importance in heliotherapy, viz., the sum of the radiations received by the patient, the superiority of high altitudes so far as direct irradiation is concerned is plainly evident....75 per cent. of the total energy given out by the sun reaches an altitude of 6,000 ft., while only 50 per cent. reaches sea level.”⁴¹ While the altitude of Rollier’s clinic provided higher quality air and more powerful sun irradiation, the effects upon his tuberculosis patients could be devastating in their weakened conditions. To facilitate safety within his treatments, Rollier adopted a policy of acclimation.

Rollier advocated strict individualized treatments at his clinic, as each patient’s needs were invariably different. Upon arrival at the clinic, the patient was immediately given a complete physical examination to determine their overall wellness and ability to acclimate to the altitude, air, and sun. Patients were exposed to the cold air first and in small increments of time. This was done by opening their windows and allowing fresh mountain air to fill their room for regulated periods as prescribed by the attending physician. While such precautions may have seemed drastic, tuberculosis patients were often fragile and susceptible to infection. As trivial as cold mountain air might have seemed, a drastic change in body temperature could have been life threatening. Once the patient was adjusted to the air, they began a slow acclimation to the sun.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ A. Rosselet, “The Scientific Basis of Heliotherapy,” in A. Rollier, *Heliotherapy* (London: Henry Frowde and Hodder & Stroughton, 1923), 175.

This was accomplished through two methods: covering the patient with a white sheet or shade and exposing certain portions of the body to sunlight for short lengths of time, or rolling the patient's bed part way out their balcony doors. The idea was again to not allow the patient's body to be overcome with radiation from the sun. Rollier noted that this process was essential in that "the technique of heliotherapy resolves itself into the application of the sun-bath in gradually increasing doses carefully graduated according to the subjective and objective reactions presented by the patient."⁴² The patient was to be monitored every minute and careful record taken in order to prevent overheating and possible burning.

Rollier's results were beyond remarkable; tuberculosis of the skin, bones, and face—the bacteria unable to withstand the irradiation from the sun—were healed with great success. Rollier filled his book with images of patients before and after treatment, and in some cases showed individuals ten to fifteen years after their treatment. The curing of tuberculosis was no small feat, for according to Rollier most all, "or nearly all, children (95%)" would contract tuberculosis "before reaching adolescence."⁴³ The drive to reform society for the sake of the innocent children and humanity's future placed Rollier on the same level of health reform as Kellogg. Rollier often repeated one of Kellogg's favorite idioms: "*Mens sana in corpore sano*" (a healthy mind in a healthy body).⁴⁴

Kellogg's relationship with Rollier is evidenced predominantly with Kellogg's visit to the Leysin clinic sometime in the early 1900s. While at the clinic, Kellogg either took or purchased photos of Rollier's methods for reference, and attempted to recreate a heliotherapy clinic at the

⁴² Rollier, *Heliotherapy*, 20.

⁴³ A. Rollier, *Heliotherapy: With Special Consideration of Surgical Tuberculosis*, trans. G. de Swietochowski, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1927), 248.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 257.

Battle Creek Sanitarium.⁴⁵ Not long after his visit to Rollier's clinic, Kellogg wrote a lecture entitled "Sunlight: The Health Giver," in which he stated that Rollier had recently demonstrated sunlight "to be equally as valuable for the treatment of lung tuberculosis as for the treatment of tuberculosis of the bone, skin and other structures."⁴⁶ He continued to note that the children at Rollier's clinic spent "nearly all the time in the open air, and with very little clothing in the wintertime."⁴⁷

A major limitation for Kellogg in the practice of heliotherapy was his location. The town of Battle Creek, Michigan was hardly a substitute for the alpine climate and elevation of Switzerland—where Kellogg noted the "ultra-violet rays of the sun are very intense"—but he nevertheless attempted to implement the same practices as Rollier.⁴⁸ There was a Seventh-day Adventist Sanitarium in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado, but after Kellogg's removal from the denomination he lost control of it. To overcome the issue of elevation he turned to technology, but still endorsed the lifestyle heliotherapy advocated. Patients, especially children, were encouraged to play and learn outside in the sun while wearing the same white loincloths utilized at Rollier's clinic.⁴⁹ Kellogg also noted the importance of fresh air and sunshine in his publications, and mirrored Rollier's system of air and sunbaths. In describing the methods at his sanitarium, Kellogg wrote that fresh air had "always been a dominant feature" in his work, and that utilizing "the sun as a curative agent" was an ancient practice.⁵⁰ He also noted that it was "evident that little good effect" could come from sunlight when the body was "almost completely

⁴⁵ For Kellogg's collection of photographs of Rollier's clinic see, John Harvey Kellogg, Photographs: Leysin, Switzerland (Dr. Rollier's clinic), Box 19, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

⁴⁶ John Harvey Kellogg, Sunlight: The Health Giver, "Natural Living," Box 10, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ To see photos of Kellogg's recreation of a sun clinic at the Battle Creek Sanitarium see, John Harvey Kellogg, Photographs, Battle Creek Sanitarium (New) Physical Fitness Program, Box 19, John Harvey Kellogg Papers. For a photo of Kellogg himself sun-bathing see, John Harvey Kellogg, Photographs: Travels, California, 1928, Box 19, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

⁵⁰ Kellogg, *The Battle Creek Sanitarium System*, 107.

covered with clothing.”⁵¹ Kellogg wrote that it was “necessary that the ordinary clothing be removed, so that nearly the whole surface of the skin may be exposed to the actinic rays.”⁵²

One area of disagreement between Kellogg and Rollier was both Rollier’s insistence of an ancient pagan foundation for heliotherapy and his support of nudity as a natural state for humanity. Rollier tied his heliotherapeutic methods to those of ancient pagans and their sun cults, and also seemed to invoke Nature as a deity when he wrote that the sun was “an incomparable weapon which Nature” had placed in everyone’s hands.⁵³ When commenting on his use of loincloths on children, Rollier noted that there was “considerable prejudice against the reduction of clothing” in his methods and that he rejected notions of indecency as he did not see anything “more decent than the naked body of a child bronzed by the sun.”⁵⁴

Kellogg may have accepted the ancient utilization of the sun in healing, but he categorically opposed the concept of Nature as a deity. In 1940, Kellogg wrote “Philosophy of Life,” and noted that “a nebulous force called Nature was invented” to explain the “marvelous display of life” in the world.⁵⁵ Kellogg questioned how the “anomalous invention” of Nature had become “endowed with creative attributes and personality, [and] deified,” and, without any philosophical basis, had “become the false God of Christendom.”⁵⁶ He further observed that the “Nature God idea was inherited from heathenism,” and that even so, it was “still a feature of the religious faith of many Christians, both Catholic and Protestant.”⁵⁷

Kellogg also rejected full public nudity as a method of sunbathing. While he did accept that the removal of most clothing was essential for better skin circulation and sun absorption, he

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ See Rollier, *Heliotherapy*, 2nd ed., 1-4; Rollier, *Heliotherapy*, 2nd ed., 256.

⁵⁴ Rollier, *Heliotherapy*, 1st ed., 154-155.

⁵⁵ John Harvey Kellogg, *Philosophy of Life* June 5, 1940, Lectures 1939-1940, Box 7, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

always upheld strict practices of modesty. In *Light Therapeutics* he laid out the rules of modesty for his outdoor gymnasium while sunbathing:

Several patients of the same sex may be treated at once in such an inclosure [sic], the demands of modesty being satisfied by the scantiest of bathing attire. Male patients commonly wear very small trunks, jock-bands, or narrow loin cloths....When it is desired to expose the entire skin surface, and this is always an advantage,—tight screens may be placed about the patient in such a way as to protect him from observation while permitting the sun's rays to fall directly upon his uncovered body.⁵⁸

Even while Kellogg admitted that sunbathing nude was the best way to absorb the sun's rays, he always demanded that the “demands of modesty” be met.

However taken Kellogg was with Rollier's method, he did not cite him in *Light Therapeutics*. Though this could have been due to the fact that Rollier's book, *La Cure de Soleil*, was not published in English until 1923. It is also possible that Kellogg did not visit Rollier's clinic until after *Light Therapeutics* had been published in 1910. In either case, Rollier was left out of Kellogg's compendium on light therapy, and the work focused almost entirely on Finsen and Kellogg's technique in actinotherapy and Kellogg's own therapies utilizing thermic rays. Kellogg was more than willing to transfer Rollier's methods of sunbathing to his sanitarium, but he modified it to fit the sensibilities of his guests. Few would have accepted a fully public, nude sunbath—for them or their children. On top of everything else, Kellogg's sanitarium lacked both the climate and the altitude to appropriately treat patients utilizing Rollier's method. But Kellogg still saw value in the natural lifestyle promoted in Rollier's sunbath. The real issue for Kellogg was how to bring the full healing power of the sun to his patients. Fortunately, a doctor in Denmark had already addressed this challenge.

⁵⁸ Kellogg, *Light Therapeutics*, 74-75.

4.4 Creating the Sun: Finsen, Actinotherapy, and Kellogg

While heliotherapy could produce excellent results in tuberculosis patients, there were several limiting factors that mitigated its popularity in the medical field. For one, the sun was not always guaranteed to shine. In cities, such as London, the true issue was air pollution, which blocked out the sun; thus, one could not easily practice heliotherapy at will. Thus, weather dictated where physicians could practice. Another issue was the lack in elevation. At the time it was believed that the closer to sea level an individual was the less ultraviolet light could reach them.

Ultraviolet light (or the chemical rays) was the main combatant of tuberculosis bacteria and the most sought-after light within the spectrum of solar radiation. Rollier noted that the Alpine region of his clinic was ideal not only because of its clean air, which was free from dust and pollution that might block the light, but also because it provided the best access for utilizing ultraviolet light. He pointed out that “the atmosphere absorbs roughly 60% of the total amount of the solar radiation, whereby short wave rays [ultraviolet light] are kept back most of all.”⁵⁹ This meant that even in his clinic, Rollier could only harness about 40% of the sun’s total power. But the implication was that if one practiced heliotherapy at a lower altitude, the ultraviolet light would be further reduced and less beneficial.

Researchers were working on finding a way to create artificial light that would be equal in quality to the sunlight in high altitudes. In the Kingdom of Denmark the young physician Niels Finsen attempted to recreate the light of the sun using nineteenth-century technology. Finsen was born on the Faroe Islands in the North Atlantic (then, part of the Kingdom of Denmark), and attended medical school at the University of Copenhagen. After he graduated in

⁵⁹ Rollier, *Heliotherapy*, 2nd ed., 22.

1890, he started to research the effects of light on the human body. These experiments were personal at first, as Finsen himself suffered from Niemann-Pick disease (a disorder in which fatty lipids are accumulated in organs such as the lungs, liver, spleen, brain, and bone marrow), which could cause difficulty in eating and walking, bouts of recurrent pneumonia, trouble sleeping, and extreme muscle contractions. Finsen noted marked improvement of his overall wellbeing and determined that ultraviolet radiation had the ability to therapeutically affect the body, as well as destroy bacteria. In 1896, he opened the Finsen Institute in Copenhagen to further research light therapy and treat people primarily for skin and bone tuberculosis.

Kellogg was a recurrent visitor to Denmark as the Seventh-day Adventists had built a branch Sanitarium at Skodsborg (a seaside town just north of Copenhagen) in 1898. Kellogg first visited the Skodsborg Sanitarium in 1899, and then proceeded to tour the Finsen Institute during his stay. He marveled at Finsen's work, and wrote in an undated manuscript: "The streets in the vicinity of the Institute almost swarmed with people who had lost ears and noses through tuberculosis disease, or whose faces bore huge sores that had resisted every other mode of treatment. In the Institute we were shown scores of persons whose once ghastly features had been restored to healthy comeliness by the miracle-working sunlight."⁶⁰ Kellogg was so impressed with Finsen's work that he not only contracted Finsen to develop a light clinic at the Skodsborg Sanitarium, but also had the superintendent of Finsen's Institute, Axel Reyn, lecture at the Battle Creek Sanitarium, and eventually set up his own light clinic as part of the sanitarium's features.

Finsen understood that many men and women in the nineteenth century could not afford to travel to the Swiss Alps or other areas where solar ultraviolet radiation was more accessible. Even though Rollier's clinic would not be established for another seven years, Finsen recognized

⁶⁰ John Harvey Kellogg, *Sunlight: The Health Giver*, "Natural Living," Box 10, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

that the sun's rays at most lower elevations were not powerful enough to give quick and unobtrusive results. This was perhaps the main difference between Finsen and Rollier. Rollier's treatment was more of a lifestyle reform in that it demanded vast amounts of time in the sun and a change of diet and living. Finsen's goal was more practical, and focused on meeting patients with a clinical fix to their tuberculosis. Most could not afford to leave their vocations and families to convalesce in the sun for months on end or even a year. Finsen's method was far more convenient for those who needed treatment for their tuberculosis but did not have the money or time to devote themselves to heliotherapy. To accomplish this, Finsen experimented with different technologies and exchanged theories with Kellogg.

In *Light Therapeutics*, Kellogg noted that he first used lenses and concave mirrors to concentrate the sun's rays in 1883.⁶¹ Later in the text he also explained that Finsen used the same technique but both of them experienced the same "embarrassment which arises in the employment of concentrated light," which was "the great intensity of the calorific ray [heat rays], which renders the application intolerable after the first few seconds."⁶² Much like an ant under a magnifying glass, patients suffered extreme burns from what was basically a much larger version. Kellogg credited Finsen for overcoming this potentially dangerous side effect:

He [Finsen] filtered out the calorific and luminous rays by passing the solar rays through a blue solution made by dissolving copper sulfate in dilute ammonia water. The strength of the solution may be varied to suit the intensity of the sun's rays at different seasons. It should be just sufficient to reduce the heat to a degree which the skin will tolerate when the rays of the sun are brought into focus, the purpose being to obtain the highest degree

⁶¹ Kellogg, *Light Therapeutics*, 84.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 84-85.

of activity of the chemical rays while reducing the action of the heat rays to the point of tolerance.⁶³

Kellogg noted that the patient felt no pain through this method and was given the equivalent of an “intense sunburn.”⁶⁴ Using this method Finsen was able to treat patients with skin tuberculosis (also called *lupus vulgaris*) with great success.⁶⁵

But this method, while successful, was still limited by climate and seasons. Kellogg noted that while he was at Copenhagen, Finsen informed him that they achieved more satisfactory results “during the summer season, when patients were treated by the solar rays, than during the winter season” when they were treated indoors with an arc light (an artificial light that passed electricity through gas much like a Crooke’s tube).⁶⁶ But Finsen observed that arc lamps, while powerful enough to recreate the ultraviolet, chemical rays of the sun, were not able to concentrate the light appropriately. Thus, a new technology was needed to make arc lights more effective. Finsen recorded his new method in his 1901 work, *Phototherapy*:

The rays of the electric light being divergent, instead of parallel like the sun’s rays, it is obvious that the apparatus required to concentrate this light necessitates a construction quite different from that which I have just described [his sun lenses]. This apparatus...consists of two cylinders fitting like the parts of a telescope, and each containing two plano-convex lenses. The lenses Nos. 1 and 2, turned towards the source of light, cause the divergent rays of the arc light to become parallel. Between lenses Nos. 3 and 4, which render convergent the rays made parallel by lenses Nos. 1 and 2, there is a layer of distilled water (10 litres [sic]). At the end of the apparatus is attached a very flat

⁶³ Ibid., 85.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ The term *lupus vulgaris* should not be confused with the modern autoimmune disease Lupus, which can cause inflammation in such areas of the body as the face, organs, and joints.

⁶⁶ Kellogg, *Light Therapeutics*, 86.

cylinder, closed at its two extremities by flat glasses, and filled with an ammoniacal solution of sulphate of copper (light filter). The water and the ammoniacal solution of sulphate of copper are contained, for practical reasons, in different chambers, the distilled water very rarely needing to be changed, whilst the solution of copper sulphate quickly becomes thick, and must be frequently renewed. Besides this, each apparatus is provided with several light filters of different strengths, as the degree of temperature borne by each patient is very variable. The distance between the two systems of lenses being immaterial from an optical point of view, the two pieces of the apparatus may be brought nearer to each other or separated at will, which is very convenient in practice. The intensity of the arc light used varies from 35 to 50 ampères.⁶⁷

The new invention, referred to as the *Finsen Lamp*, quickly became a huge success. Since arc lamps isolated the chemical, or actinic rays, the therapy using artificial lights in place of the sun was dubbed *Actinotherapy*. Because of his work and success in curing patients of *lupus vulgaris* with his invention, Finsen was honored not only with his induction into the Knights of the Order of Dannebrog by King Christian IX of Denmark in 1899, in 1903, he was nominated and won the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine for his work.

Kellogg recognized the value of Finsen's creation, but was not quite convinced that actinotherapy was the best method for curing skin tuberculosis. In *Light Therapeutics* he wrote that Finsen's method for treating *lupus vulgaris* was "almost wholly superseded by the X-ray method," which provided "far greater rapidity of action, greater certainty and a penetrability much greater than that of the actinic rays."⁶⁸ Kellogg was, however, not willing to abandon Finsen's method entirely and stated that it was still "effective in cases of superficial infection,"

⁶⁷ Niels R. Finsen, *Phototherapy*, trans. James H. Sequeira (London: Edward Arnold, 1901), 66-67. See accompanying photo on page 66. To see a photo of Finsen's lens device, see page 65.

⁶⁸ Kellogg, *Light Therapeutics*, 192.

and that it left “less scar and less deformity than any other method.”⁶⁹ He also noted that X-ray therapy only destroyed the bacteria involved and that it did nothing to “improve the patient’s resisting power,” nor did it assure against a “recurrence of the same disease.”⁷⁰ With this in mind, Kellogg decided to blend Finsen’s actinotherapy method with X-ray therapy. He sought to first kill off the bacterium with X-rays, and then strengthen the patient’s “resisting power” with actinotherapy.

But if Kellogg intended to use X-rays for the initial elimination of *lupus vulgaris*, he hardly needed a large, immobile Finsen Lamp installed at the Battle Creek Sanitarium. Instead, Kellogg modified and repurposed the arc lamp to suit his needs as well as that of his patients. He described his new lamp in *Light Therapeutics*:

The first requisite is a good arc light, conveniently arranged for therapeutic use. After examining all the therapeutic arc lamps offered on the market in this country and Europe, and finding all more or less objectionable because of inconvenience in use or unreasonably high price, the author had constructed under his supervision a lamp which, after several years of service in the Battle Creek Sanitarium, in hundreds of other sanitariums and hospitals, and in the offices of private physicians, has proved to be eminently satisfactory.⁷¹

Kellogg’s arc lamp met the American values of mobility, convenience, and comfort. The device was small enough to be portable and was aided in its mobility by the addition of caster wheels to its four legs. This feature allowed for the convenient placement of the arc lamp in any position a physician might require. One more additional feature was a fan to keep patients cool during treatment. Kellogg noted that the fan was placed so that “a strong current of air falls upon the

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid., 87-88.

[skin] surface to which the application is being made.”⁷² As Kellogg’s arc lamp was used to strengthen a patient’s immune system after X-rays had already destroyed the threatening bacteria, there was no need to focus the arc lamp rays as Finsen had through his telescopic attachment. The arc light’s rays were directed, via a reflective hood, onto a general portion of the patient’s body, which was draped with white sheets to protect other areas from unnecessary exposure.

The relationship between Finsen and Kellogg fostered a remarkable occurrence of intercultural transfer, in which both individuals shared their knowledge and borrowed from each other’s techniques in a relatively short amount of time. Kellogg’s modification of Finsen’s method brought actinotherapy out of Europe and placed it in the American context of health reform to be used in tandem with Freund’s X-Ray therapy. It was a shame that Finsen died so early in 1904 from complications with his lifelong illness. With his death Kellogg lost a valued transatlantic partner in light therapy. Finsen’s methods continued not only in Denmark but in the United States as well, under Kellogg’s direction. But there was one area of light therapy where Kellogg felt his transatlantic colleagues were lacking. Indeed, he felt that they had totally, and unfairly, overlooked a vital part of the light spectrum—the healing thermic rays of infrared light.

4.5 Bringing Light to the World: Kellogg and Infrared Light Therapy

When Kellogg published *Light Therapeutics* in 1910, it was marketed as a light therapy manual for physicians and the public. But, in reality, it also served as an exposé for one of Kellogg’s more unique inventions. The subtitle of the book read *With Special Reference to the Incandescent Electric-Light Bath*, and a fairly good portion of the work focused on the new

⁷² Ibid., 70.

invention including prominent illustrations. Kellogg's light bath (also called light cabinet) was designed to be his contribution to light therapy. In his preface of *Light Therapeutics*, Kellogg left no doubts as to his goals of self-promotion:

This work does not profess to be an exhaustive treatise on the subject of light therapy. It is intended rather to serve as a practical manual for the clinical use of the electric-light bath in its various forms, and in its various applications, general and local. An effort has also been made, in a small way, to correlate the electric-light bath to those other forms of rational physiotherapy which naturally and profitably associate themselves with this newest of physical curative measures.⁷³

But the light bath went against most understanding of how to therapeutically utilize the light spectrum at the time, and it went back and forth in public estimation as a medical novelty and therapeutic device.

Kellogg's earlier criticism of Freund, and other practitioners of light therapy, was that they had completely ignored, or worse, dismissed thermic, infrared rays as having no legitimate therapeutic value. He was resolute in his belief that infrared light was just as useful for health as ultraviolet light, and stated that his work undertook "for the first time, the author believes—to present as adequate account of the therapeutic properties of the thermic as well as the actinic rays of light."⁷⁴ Kellogg's belief that thermic rays were useful for therapy was predicated on the fact that infrared light could penetrate the human body more than any other type of light in the light spectrum. While the light could not kill bacteria, it served more as a tool for overall well-being: increasing circulation, removing toxins through sweat, and stimulating deep tissue.

⁷³ Kellogg, *Light Therapeutics*, 3.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 11.

Infrared light, thermic rays, and heat rays, were all used to describe the therapeutic rays Kellogg implemented in his light bath. The utilization of this light went beyond mere applications of heat to the body, and Kellogg understood the dynamics of thermic rays quite well. He noted that thermic rays were “not heat in the ordinary sense, but a form of energy which is capable of being converted into heat, and which becomes heat when brought in contact with an opaque body,—that is, a substance which offers resistance to the passage of the rays.”⁷⁵ In other words, infrared light was invisible to the eye, but could pass through significant layers of the human body. Once the light rays came into contact and met resistance with the skin and the tissues beneath it, they generated energy in the form of heat. The process was comparable to holding one’s hand over an incandescent light bulb. As infrared light rays, projected from the bulb, passed into and sometimes through the hand, heat was generated. The same principle applied to infrared rays in sunlight, which, more than any other rays, was able to reach the earth, thus generating heat.

Utilizing the most modern technology available, Kellogg built his light bath using the incandescent light bulb. At the time of its construction in 1891, there was no way of isolating infrared light, so Kellogg theorized that the light bulb was the best way to expose his patients to thermic rays. While the light bulb produced visible white light, it gave off infrared rays as well, and Kellogg devised a rather ingenious way to efficiently use the light bulb for therapeutic purposes. In *Light Therapeutics* Kellogg provided a detailed account of how to construct his light bath, which utilized incandescent light bulbs for their infrared light production:

In floor dimensions this cabinet is 43 inches square, with a height, including base insulators, of 54 inches. The exterior form is square, while the mirrors of the interior are set in octagonal form, thus giving the strongest possible construction. The lamps are

⁷⁵ Ibid.

arranged in vertical rows between the mirrors, thus securing the very best dispersion of the light. The woodwork of the cabinet is beautifully finished from quarter-sawed oak and paneled in a very neat design. The eight mirrors of the interior finish are each 13 x 42 inches, excepting the door mirror, which is 15 inches wide, and are of genuine first quality French plate glass. As little wood as possible is used in the interior construction, and this is heavily coated with fine white enamel so as to present a good reflecting surface. The floor is of hard maple. All conducting wires are covered with double braid as well as rubber insulation, and when covered in are enclosed in conduits. Thus danger from fire is absolutely eliminated. The forty-eight lamps of the interior are arranged in eight rows of six each, the lamps themselves being mounted in nickel-plated twin sockets. Each group of lamps is controlled by its own switch. Thus the operator may instantly throw in or out of use any group or all as he may wish, or any desired combination....With each cabinet is supplied fifty incandescent lamps, fuses, and everything ready for operation as soon as the current is supplied, including an adjustable stool with oxidized metal base and oak top.⁷⁶

Kellogg also provided a horizontal version of his light bath in which a patient could lay down on a small bed on rollers and be pushed into the cabinet. Both versions inundated the patient with thermic rays and treated Bright's disease (a general term for kidney disease, in which kidney inflammation could lead to heart problems) as well as apoplexy (the nineteenth-century term for a stroke), high blood pressure, and arteriosclerosis (the hardening of artery walls).

While it was obvious that Kellogg intended to sell his manufactured light baths, he did not prohibit others from building their own versions (hence the detailed description). The light bath was meant for all to experience, regardless of whether he profited from it. This openness

⁷⁶ Ibid., 202-203.

allowed for the transfer of Kellogg's light bath into Europe. Kellogg chronicled the event in the opening of *Light Therapeutics*. He exhibited his light bath at the 1893 Chicago World Exposition, during which an unnamed "visitor from Germany saw the bath, visited Battle Creek to become familiar with the technique of its use, and on returning to Germany began its manufacture and sale in that country."⁷⁷

Kellogg did not give the name of the interested German and the other side of this story of intercultural transfer was lost until Niklaus Ingold recently published his work *Lichtduschen*, in which he illuminates the German side of the transfer of Kellogg's light bath or rather *Kelloggische Lichtbad*. Ingold identified the German agent of transfer as chemist Willibald Gebhardt (1861-1921). Gebhardt had originally immigrated to the United States to establish his legacy as an entrepreneur, but upon seeing Kellogg's light bath saw an investment opportunity for it back in Germany.⁷⁸ Gebhardt traveled to Battle Creek where Kellogg instructed him on the light bath's construction and operation, and in 1895 returned to Berlin determined to make his fortune. He sought to establish his business not only in Germany, but also the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Soon after his return, Gebhardt bought into the famous spa town of Karlsbad, where, according to Ingold, he hired an assistant and a physician, and introduced Kellogg's light bath to medical professionals and businessmen.⁷⁹ One of these businessmen, Robert Otto, purposed a plan to mass-market the light bath as a therapeutic device, and in 1899 formed the *Electricitätsgesellschaft Sanitas* (Sanitas Electricity Company), which built the *Kelloggische Lichtbad* along with X-ray machines and other equipment until the Second World War.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ Ibid., 3.

⁷⁸ Niklaus Ingold, *Lichtduschen: Geschichte einer Gesundheitstechnik, 1890-1975* (Zürich: Chronos, 2015), 37.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

Ingold noted that money was not the full motivation for Gebhardt's interest in Kellogg's light bath, and identified two main reasons for his immediate appreciation of Kellogg's work. The first was that Gebhardt had visited the spa of Arnold Rikli (a Swiss pioneer in light therapy) in 1887, and had experienced the healing power of light for himself.⁸¹ Second, while completing his doctorate, Gebhardt studied under the German physician and physicist Hermann von Helmholtz (1821-1894), who taught him the principles of thermodynamic physiology.⁸² Thermodynamic physiology taught Gebhardt that sunlight replenished the human body's life force with kinetic energy—much as a battery is recharged, so the human body was a battery recharged by the sun.⁸³

Whatever Gebhardt's motivations, Kellogg's light baths were an instant success in Germany. Kellogg recounted that, after Gebhardt returned to Germany, and an endorsement from his old professor at the University of Vienna (Wilhelm Winternitz), "Light Institutions" utilizing his light bath were formed in most of the major cities.⁸⁴ But his invention soon gained even more notoriety through royal and imperial patronage. Kellogg proudly wrote that King Edward VII of England was "cured of a distressing gout at Hamburg" using his light bath, and that soon after he "had the bath installed at Windsor and Buckingham palaces."⁸⁵ This, in turn, led Germany's Emperor Wilhelm II to install light baths in his palaces as well, and soon many "of the crowned heads and titled families of Europe" followed suit.⁸⁶

The example of Gebhardt's intercultural transfer of Kellogg's light bath back to Germany perfectly illustrates Thomas Adam's distinction of intercultural transfer from the models of

⁸¹ Ibid., 38.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Kellogg, *Light Therapeutics*, 4.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

“Europeanization, Americanization, and cultural diffusion in that it assumes that exchange processes always occur in both directions.”⁸⁷ Kellogg predominantly gained his knowledge of light therapy principles from European practitioners, but determined that their methods were not completely suited to his own. He, thus, modified both their inventions and techniques, and, in the case of the incandescent light bath, added to the practice of light therapeutics as a whole. Once brought back to Germany, Kellogg’s light bath represented the completion of a cycle of intercultural transfer that still impacts Europe and North America to this day. Modern infrared saunas, descendants of Kellogg’s light baths, have recently enjoyed resurgence in the American market, and light bathing is still practiced in solariums across Europe. But light therapy went beyond the confines of medical and therapeutic practice, and its cultural impact—specifically that of heliotherapy—changed European and American perceptions of society.

4.6 *Sol Invictus*: Heliotherapy’s Cultural Impact

Of the three sub-practices of light therapy (heliotherapy, actinotherapy, and radiotherapy) perhaps none had more cultural impact in European and American society than heliotherapy. This influence occurred predominantly in three different areas: religion, the nudist movement, and architecture. Via these three areas, heliotherapy also had some influence on the eugenic movement as well. Rollier credited Caleb Williams Saleeby, who was “well known in the eugenic field,” with providing significant appreciation to the “social importance of sunlight.”⁸⁸ Indeed, it was Saleeby who pushed for Rollier’s *La Cure de Soleil* to be translated into English.

In his 1922 preface to Rollier’s *Heliotherapy*, Saleeby wrote that when he read *La Cure de Soleil* he knew within a few minutes “that the book which taught what my eyes had just seen

⁸⁷ Adam, *Intercultural Transfers and the Making of the Modern World*, 5.

⁸⁸ Rollier, *Heliotherapy*, 1st ed., viii.

in the flesh—the whole, healed, happy flesh of hundreds—at Leysin, must appear in English, for the needs of all who speak that tongue, on both sides of the Atlantic.”⁸⁹ Saleeby lamented the dark, coal-choked air of London and other cities that blocked out the healing sunlight and suggested sending all tuberculosis infected children in Britain to Switzerland, rather than letting them die in “various dark places.”⁹⁰ But heliotherapy did not have a direct impact on the concepts of heredity and human pedigree which eugenics attempted to control (excepting Kellogg and his lifestyle reform approach to eugenics), and merely added to the continued language of perfecting the body—a trait that also propelled its influence within nudist culture. But heliotherapy must first be clarified in its religious context, for it was upon such a foundation that allowed its influence to affect both the nudist movement and architectural reform.

From the very beginning of his book *La Cure de Soleil*, and in its subsequent English editions, Rollier’s first chapter dealt with the history of heliotherapy. Rather than starting his account with more recent examples of heliotherapeutic practices, Rollier called readers back to the ancient (and pagan) world. In his first edition of *Heliotherapy*, he utilized the image of the Greek sun god Apollo as the dispenser of “life and health.”⁹¹ In the second edition of *Heliotherapy* Rollier expanded his ancient foundational context to correct writers who had “attempted to lay the paternity of modern heliotherapy at [his] door.”⁹² His reproofs included specific mentions of the ancient sun cults and the gods that represented them:

The history of religion has acquainted us with an early cult of the sun in the Old as well as in the New World; and throughout the ages we find the sun worshipped as the creator and supporter of the human race. The ancient Egyptians, the fathers of civilization, in

⁸⁹ Ibid., xv.

⁹⁰ Ibid., xvii.

⁹¹ Ibid., 1.

⁹² Rollier, *Heliotherapy*, 2nd ed., 1.

their religious and funeral songs, worshipped Ra, the god of the sun, as the dispenser of vital force and health....In Babylon, besides the god in heaven, Baal, Mardouk, Meryal and Givil were worshipped as gods of the sun, harvest and creation. The highest of all gods in Persia was Ormuzd, the lord of heavens, god of light and goodness; next to him was enthroned the sun deity Mithra....The proper [Greek] sun god, Helios, had temples in Corinth, Argos, and on the Taygetos. Further Sol was one of the twelve gods of Latium. Up to the present day Anatarenon has been respected by the Japanese as a sun god; equally, the Chinese observe solar cults in honour of the healing and creating deity. In India it is Mithra, who as a god cures diseases, combats death, and as personification of the sun receives homage; but the great benefits come through the brothers Açvius, the drivers of the ascending chariot of the sun. They dispense health and strength to men and women, young and old.⁹³

This extensive chronicling of the ancient sun gods from all around the globe allowed Rollier to establish healing through the sun as ubiquitous and primal, and the mentioning of revered ancient civilizations—with their inherent wisdom and achievement—further legitimized the sun’s importance to humanity.

Rollier was not alone in his observations, other practitioners and reformers followed suit in their own works. In 1926 Franz Thedering wrote that knowledge “of the healing power of sunlight goes back to prehistoric times,” and that in “the history of Egyptians, Greeks and Romans” was “evidence of attempts at healing by solar treatment.”⁹⁴ Simon Carter noted that reformers, such as Leonard Hill, followed “familiar themes of tying sunlight therapy to ancient civilizations (in this case the Pharaoh Ahknatan and Queen Nefertiti) while also establishing the

⁹³ Ibid., 3.

⁹⁴ D. F. Thedering, *Sunlight as Healer* (Slough, England: Sollux Publishing Co., 1926), 11.

scientific credentials of the therapy.”⁹⁵ But why reference these ancient civilizations at all?

Surely the permanence of heliotherapy was assured through the scientific data these authors included in the same pages as their ancient historical narratives. Rollier and his contemporaries were looking to establish something more than a medical treatment. They were establishing a lifestyle grounded in religion, and to do that they invoked the imagery of the sun cults of the ancient world to co-opt ancient religious images of power and healing to legitimize their practices within ancient foundations.

The proponents of light therapy appropriated the language and history of ancient Egypt as well as other ancient civilizations in order to contextualize their movement in the newly invented concept of Western Civilization. Their attempts coincided with an explosion of archaeological research and interest in the foundational roots of modern western societies. These modern nations attempted to trace their cultural heritage to the great ancient civilizations in order to construct a narrative of continuity between them. Thus, to invoke ancient civilizations as sun worshippers was to place light therapy at the genesis of Western Civilization.

While it does not appear that Rollier and his contemporaries set out to reestablish ancient sun cults, the inevitable result of their use of ancient cult religion and imagery was the reinvention of heliotherapy as a modern quasi-religious lifestyle. Tania Woloshyn noted that the borrowing of ancient religious sun iconography had already been well under way. Just as books of heliotherapy included images of pharaohs “and their children under the sun’s emanating, life-giving rays,” the holy “rays and halos of divine light encircling the bodies of saints, martyrs, and the Holy Trinity transformed this ancient tradition into standard Christian iconography.”⁹⁶

⁹⁵ Simon Carter, “The Medicalization of Sunlight in the Early Twentieth Century,” *Journal of Historical Sociology* 25, no. 1 (March 2012): 96-97.

⁹⁶ Tania Anne Woloshyn, *Soaking Up the Rays: Light Therapy and Visual Culture in Britain, c. 1890-1940* (Manchester, United Kingdom: Manchester University Press, 2017), 148.

Indeed, advertising posters, such as those used by Rollier, showed god-like humans basking in the glory of the sun.

This practice was not lost on commentators or acolytes of Rollier and his fellow sunlight physicians. In another preface in Rollier's *Heliotherapy* H. J. Gauvain wrote that Rollier was "the High Priest of the modern Sun-worshippers."⁹⁷ This language, and specifically the term high priest, was deeply religious, and fit perfectly into the concept of light therapy as a staple of Western Civilization. In 1925 Clarence Funk, of the Pennsylvania State Department of Health, reported the utilization of Rollier-inspired heliotherapy in two state sanatoria for treating children with tuberculosis, the title of his article was "Sun Worshipping in Pennsylvania."⁹⁸ Regardless of intent, religious belief was intermixed with heliotherapy almost naturally. Even Kellogg used religious (Christian) metaphors in his lectures on light therapy. Being a learned student of the Bible, Kellogg was certainly aware of the verse in the book of Malachi: "But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays. And you will go out and frolic like well-fed calves."⁹⁹ In one lecture Kellogg proclaimed, "The sunbeam is God's messenger or vehicle of joy to the world."¹⁰⁰ In another lecture in 1901 he compared the wearing of all-white clothing—a trait he became known for—to the white robes (of righteousness) in the Bible.¹⁰¹

The religious nature of heliotherapy, with its calls to return to ancient perceptions and primal nature, made it an ideal partner in the nudist movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The nudist movement, which was predominantly German in origin, spread

⁹⁷ Rollier, *Heliotherapy*, 1st ed., x.

⁹⁸ See, J. Clarence Funk, "Sun Worshipping in Pennsylvania," *American Journal of Public Health* 15, no. 9 (September 1, 1925): 764-766.

⁹⁹ Malachi 4:2 (New International Version).

¹⁰⁰ John Harvey Kellogg, "The Joy of Life," Natural Living, Box 10, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

¹⁰¹ J. H. Kellogg, "The Power of Nature," May 2, 1901, Lectures, Speeches, and Related Materials, Box 3, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

throughout Europe with pockets of practice in Britain and North America. In “Nacktkultur im Kaiserreich,” Uwe Schneider wrote that the nude culture of imperial Germany was divided into two main phases: a period of increased programs and literary marketing of the theme of nude culture, which followed the ideologization of nude culture in combination with the cult of beauty and racial hygiene.¹⁰² Schneider linked the sunbathing movement to calls for nudity and noted that Swiss physicist Arnold Rikli (1823-1906), a contemporary of Rollier who developed his light-air therapy around the middle of the nineteenth century, called for a “cleaning process” of the naked body in air, water, and sunlight.¹⁰³ Schneider concluded that the “cleaning” of the naked body eventually became exaggerated as a nature-religious ritual, as it was represented in nude culture as a *fidus* (faith).¹⁰⁴

Rollier, like Rikli, also called for complete nudity as the natural state of man. Nineteenth-century clothing was extremely restricting and not conducive to health and exposure to the sun. The reduction of clothing was necessary for Rollier’s sunbathing technique, but he regarded nudity as the ideal state for health and decency:

I would even go further than this, and affirm, with the conviction which my experience with large numbers of small boys and girls has given me, that the habit of living naked in the open air not only does not provoke any sensuality, but suppresses the very *raison d’être* of the unhealthy curiosity which often troubles the mind of the child. Nudity soon becomes quite a normal condition, and the child rapidly loses astonishment at it.¹⁰⁵

While Rollier used the example of children, it was clear he intended for the trait of natural nudity to be taken into their adulthood as well. The lesson of nudity as “a normal condition” would stay

¹⁰² Uwe Schneider, “Nacktkulture im Kaiserreich,” in *Handbuch zur “Völkischen Bewegung” 1871-1918* (München: K. G. Saur, 1999), 411.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 412.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ Rollier, *Heliotherapy*, 1st ed., 155.

with children the rest of their lives to be inculcated to their own children.¹⁰⁶ Rollier was certain that in such a way, the “wholesome ideas” of nudity as a natural state would “spread more and more, and in the course of time a stronger generation of people [would] grow up.”¹⁰⁷

Heliotherapy and the nudist movement were both part of a larger nature-cure movement within European society. Proponents of the nature-cure felt that dark unventilated apartments and restrictive clothing either destroyed or damaged their natural faculties, and that only a return to nature would save them. In the language of nature as a path to salvation it inevitably became a deity in and of itself—as Kellogg noted and criticized late in his life.¹⁰⁸ The nature-cure movement tended toward the extreme, and some proponents of natural living and sunbathing tried to find a middle path. In his 1927 work, *My Sun-Bathing and Fresh-Air System*, Jørgen Muller (a veteran of the Danish army from the First World War) criticized the movement, and lamented that it had served to push people to extremes:

During the last 25 years a vigorous movement has been making itself felt throughout Europe, the watchword of which is “Back to Nature.” Advocates of the Nature-cure, numbering hundreds of thousands, are working with tireless zeal towards the introduction of vegetarianism, absolute abstemiousness in the matter of stimulants, and against the use of medicine, serum, vaccine, etc. Bitter strife has been caused for many years between orthodox and Nature-cure practitioners. This conflict of opinion has been the means of doing both harm and good. Good, because many doubtful questions have been threshed

¹⁰⁶ Rollier, *Heliotherapy*, 2nd ed., 251.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁸ See, John Harvey Kellogg, *Philosophy of Life* June 5, 1940, Lectures 1939-1940, Box 7, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

out; evil, because both parties have gone to extremes and extravagances, thereby overlooking the golden mean of truth.¹⁰⁹

Muller was even less impressed with the “Naked-cult” aspect of the nature-cure movement. He observed (with a somewhat military tone) that “prophets” were roaming around with “long hair and beards, clothed only in a single garment or toga” and were “proclaiming their creed that all human sickness, all mental and bodily infirmities” came from oppressive clothing.¹¹⁰

Heliotherapy served to reinforce the concept of nudity as synonymous to health, as nudity was important in the process of healing through sunbathing. Indeed, as Muller put it: “Clothing, according to this doctrine, is the outward sign of the deterioration, ill-health and immorality of the present race.”¹¹¹ Muller referred to nudists as “fanatics” and wrote that if every one was called to be nude it “would inspire natural aversion” as they would have to “show themselves as their Creator—or, rather their own mismanagement—has made them.”¹¹²

Muller made a very important point and it seemed as if proponents of the nature-cure movement and nudity were well aware of such concerns. Posters and magazines perpetuating the nudist movement showed naked human bodies in a state of physical—sometimes god-like—fitness.¹¹³ But this seemed to have the opposite effect from Rollier’s proposed idea that nakedness would lose its astonishment. Woloshyn noted in her analysis of the British journal *Sun Bathing Review* that its imagery hedged “the boundary between art and pornography,” and that the suntanned models “held significant erotic charge.”¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ J. P. Muller, *My Sun-Bathing and Fresh-Air System* (London: Link House, 1927), 19-20.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 20.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 20-21.

¹¹³ These images were also the product of the Beauty Cult that swept through Germany and Europe. Though there is no room to discuss this topic here, for an excellent overview see, Michael Hau, *The Cult of Health and Beauty in Germany: A Social History, 1890-1930* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003).

¹¹⁴ Woloshyn, *Soaking Up the Rays*, 213, 217.

While heliotherapy impacted elements of the nudist movement, it was much more significant in the way people thought about their physical relation to the sun. Where once humans were inclined to shade themselves from its rays and heat, heliotherapy and the new sun-cult offered improved health, but only through sun exposure. Thus, the way in which humans interacted with the sun throughout the day created a need to rethink the architectural staples of civilization—homes and public spaces.

Aware of the issues of houses and buildings that limited access to the sun, Rollier felt the need to impress upon the civil authorities the importance of reforming “schools and private dwellings, where great attention should be paid to an unhindered supply of air and sunlight.”¹¹⁵ In his “Sunlight” lecture Kellogg echoed the call for housing reform: “Instead of shutting ourselves up in darkened rooms, we should let in every ray of sunshine possible. Some day, we shall build our houses of glass.”¹¹⁶ Kellogg was not very far off in his prediction.

Ken Worpole observed that, beginning in the twentieth century, “social reformers, planners and architects tried to remake the city in the image of a sunlit, ordered utopia.”¹¹⁷ He further tied this rise in city reform to the collapse of monarchy and the ascent of democracy, and observed that a “newly enfranchised citizenry and its political organizations created pressures for better housing, health, education, transport, public landscapes and even leisure facilities.”¹¹⁸ These political and social developments mixed with new building techniques to create innovative architecture to serve the needs of this new citizenry. Richard Hobday noted that with “steel and reinforced concrete beams” architects were free to “build houses, factories and offices that were

¹¹⁵ Rollier, *Heliotherapy*, 2nd ed., 256.

¹¹⁶ John Harvey Kellogg, *Sunlight: The Health Giver*, “Natural Living,” Box 10, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

¹¹⁷ Ken Worpole, *Here Comes the Sun: Architecture and Public Space in Twentieth-Century European Culture* (London: Reaktion Books, 2000), 9.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

radically different” from the dominating Victorian and Imperial style.¹¹⁹ He pointed out that much of this new architecture utilized glass and flat roofs for balconies and “coincided with the rise of the sanatorium movement and a need for highly-glazed, well-ventilated institutions with balconies and terraces” for tuberculosis patients.¹²⁰ From this utilitarian need for sunlight and fresh air in the name of health, architects developed a completely new architectural style “which embraced the latest technological advances and drew its inspiration from the sunlit dust-free ward of the sanatorium.”¹²¹

This new “modern” architecture took many forms and created new ideas of what public spaces meant. A particularly popular (British) development was the lido. Lido, from the Italian word for “beach,” was an outdoor public swimming pool where city dwellers could sun themselves and swim as if they were on vacation at the beach. Woloshyn wrote that the lido stood in “for the beach within the urban sprawl of the city,” and “provided an open space mixing genders, classes, and ages, united in their bodily exposure to the sunlight, air, and water.”¹²² Daniel Freund noted that another development, this time in the United States (specifically New York City), was the penthouse apartment that rose high above the pollution and noise of the street, and many people “were heading onto their roofs in search of health.”¹²³

Perhaps the most influential development of this new architecture was the *Bauhaus*, a German architectural school founded by Walter Gropius in Weimar that influenced modern architecture and established the famous dictum that form follows function—in other words, the

¹¹⁹ Richard Hobday, *The Light Revolution* (Scotland: Findhorn Press, 2006), 93.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Woloshyn, *Soaking Up the Rays*, 34.

¹²³ Daniel Freund, *American Sunshine: Diseases of Darkness and the Quest for Natural Light* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), 108.

functionality of a building dictated its design.¹²⁴ Hobday pointed to architect Le Corbusier's 1929 creation, the Villa Savoye, as an example of heliotherapy's impact on modern architecture. The design featured full ceiling to floor windows along its sides, an inner courtyard, and ramps leading up to a sunbathing area on the roof. But perhaps most important, it was painted entirely white and thus the walls reflected the sun into every available opening, lighting the interior of the home. Hobday noted that the Villa Savoye had "much in common with Dr. Rollier's clinic Le Chalet with its open-plan interior, large windows and solarium."¹²⁵ The modern architectural movement was by no means accepted wholesale, but its emphasis on natural light, fresh air, and open space was a hallmark of the reform movements that influenced its functionality. The quest to bring the sun into the home and public space still defines modern designs, and the sun continues to shine on a culture that takes access to its rays for granted.

For all its impact on society heliotherapy is often relegated to a health fad, and is often underappreciated for the various modes in which it impacted society. More than just a cure for tuberculosis, it was a lifestyle that combined the ancient religious sun cult with modern medical practices, a call to be free from the restraints and burdens of civilization, and a method of changing humanity by taking in the sun. Heliotherapy is perhaps the most forgotten of the three areas of light therapy; radiotherapy and actinotherapy are known for their impacts on science and medicine, but heliotherapy was by far the most important culturally. The light from the sun healed, but it also inspired humanity to pursue its rays.

¹²⁴ There is little room here to fully examine the impacts and styles of the Bauhaus movement and its influence upon modern architecture. For a more in-depth review see, Jeannine Fiedler, ed., *Bauhaus* (Germany: Könemann, 2006); and, Olivier Gabet and Anne Monier, eds., *The Spirit of Bauhaus* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2018).

¹²⁵ Richard Hobday, *The Light Revolution*, 98.

4.7 Conclusion: The Light Shines into Darkness

In his “Sunlight” lecture Kellogg observed that in “excluding ourselves from the light, we are depriving ourselves of the benefit of the most powerful of all known vital stimulants.”¹²⁶ The intercultural transfer of light therapy practices between Europe and the United States shaped our relationship to the sun, artificial lighting, and medicine. A central theme of the “diseases of darkness” runs throughout Kellogg and his contemporaries’ utilization of light therapy as a mode of health reform, and the various technologies and practices used to combat these diseases brought people into the light. For Kellogg, this was both a physical realization as well as spiritual—the good, pure light shown into the body and triumphed over the evil, diseased darkness. In the wider cultural context, the imagery of a dark world juxtaposed with the light of progressivism.

Light therapy, much like anything else Kellogg did, had an undertone of salvation. The language of changing the body and communing with the divine combined into the practice of natural healing through God’s creation. While Kellogg was against the idea of Nature as a God, he more than embraced the notion that God could touch humanity through nature. This was not pantheism in that God was nature, but rather that God utilized nature to reach out to humanity. In this case—as in the context of the ancient Egyptians—the sun’s rays were once again envisioned as divine life-giving hands outstretched to soothe and heal humanity both physically and spiritually. God could touch humanity through sunlight. This emphasis separated heliotherapy from the other light therapy methods in Kellogg’s repertoire. But this does not mean that Kellogg did not heavily utilize radiotherapy, actinotherapy, and his own infrared therapy.

¹²⁶ John Harvey Kellogg, Sunlight: The Health Giver, “Natural Living,” Box 10, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

Kellogg employed all forms of light therapy into a program that cured disease as much as it aided in overall wellness. While severe cases of tuberculosis and other diseases were treated with X-rays and actinic rays, patients were still taught and encouraged to sunbathe for the benefit of their physical stamina. Thus, Kellogg synthesized the European methods of Freund, Rollier, and Finsen into a new form of light therapy in the United States, and added to the light therapy milieu with his incandescent light baths. The utilization of this full range of the light spectrum allowed him to approach the conditions of his patients individually, and prescribe unique light therapy courses as needed.

To some it may seem strange that light therapy still enjoys a healthy existence in Europe while it diminished in the United States. But this is perhaps due to the same cultural values that required Kellogg to modify Finsen's arc lamp. Americans still value mobility, convenience, and comfort, and in a culture dominated with antibiotics, it is much easier to take a pill than to alter one's lifestyle to accommodate light therapy—especially heliotherapy. In many cases the acts of tanning and frequenting light spas are seen as leisurely activities more than a matter of health. Added to this, American health insurance companies generally stopped recognizing light therapy (excepting X-ray therapy and radiation therapy) as a legitimate source of treatment in the late 1970s. Remnants of the nature-cure movement still linger in society, but unfortunately their influence has revived anti-vaccination extremes just as much as they have promoted infrared saunas and heliotherapy. However, as Rollier and his contemporaries noted, using light for healing was ancient in its foundations and ingrained in the concept of Western Civilization, which created continuity between ancient cultures and late nineteenth-century Europe and North America. We are unlikely to stop seeking out the sun and basking in its rays anytime soon.

Chapter 5

Saving the Race

5.1 The Problem of Degeneracy

In 1897, Dr. John Harvey Kellogg published the first of a three-part series of articles in his journal *Good Health*. But unlike previous articles he published, Kellogg's latest writings did not concern the topics that constituted his normal milieu of health reform (hydrotherapy, light therapy, diet, exercise, etc.). Kellogg was more interested in answering the question that comprised the title of his series: Are we a dying race? His answer was direct and immediate: "The practical question to which I wish to call attention is this: While we are evidently growing wealthier and wiser, are we growing stronger or weaker? 'Weaker and wiser' the adage runs, and unfortunately the facts sustain the popular impression. Notwithstanding our marvelous accumulations of wealth and wisdom, we are certainly going down physically toward race extinction."¹

This startling claim of the extinction of humanity seemed at odds with evidence of increasing life expectancies. The average life expectancy from birth in the United States in 1800 rose from about 42 years for men and women to about 49 years for men and 51 years for women in 1900.² Kellogg was prepared for such arguments, noting that an increase of the average lifespan from twenty to forty years over a 200-year span (in his example city of Geneva) did not indicate an increase in "the vigor of the race," but that it was rather evidence that enough people

¹ J. H. Kellogg, "Are We a Dying Race?," *Good Health: A Journal of Hygiene* 32, no. 12 (December 1897): 723.

² See, J. David Hacker, "Decennial Life Tables for the White Population of the United States, 1790–1900," *Hist Methods* 43, no. 2 (April 2010): 45-79. Available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2885717/>.

had “been kept alive to double the average.”³ In other words, people were not living longer because they were healthier, but rather because medical advances had cured fatal diseases and kept people from dying. But Kellogg had meant that medicine kept the “wrong” people from dying. He expanded on this issue and pointed out that the public had become too accustomed to the assumed successes of medical advancement to see that there was still an underlying problem in humanity:

Public sanitation, quarantine laws, and general hygienic regulations serve a most useful purpose in the prevention of epidemic and endemic diseases; but the result of this protection is the keeping alive of a great number of poorly organized, constitutionally weak, hereditarily feeble, individuals who would otherwise die, and so the death rate is diminished and the average length of life is increased; but the race is not thereby benefited, but is, instead, weakened, for these defective individuals are kept alive only to intermarry with the well, and by the inexorable law of heredity their weaknesses and deficiencies are transmitted, and thus the actual constitutional vigor of the race is diminished. It thus appears that our modern boasted sanitation is not an altogether unmixed good; it is, indeed, a source of racial deterioration, since it negatives [sic] the operation of the natural law of selection.⁴

Modern “sanitary” science had, for the most part, eradicated the great culling plagues, but Kellogg was concerned that with their absence the human race would decline in health over generations. Plagues and disease had indeed served a purpose. As Kellogg put it, they had “acted

³ Kellogg, “Are We a Dying Race?,” 723.

⁴ Ibid., 726.

as a measure of securing the ‘survival of the fittest,’” and with that purpose now gone, a new danger of racial deterioration faced the human race.⁵

But this theory betrayed a deep flaw in Kellogg’s thinking and in the theory of heredity to which he ascribed. Such plagues as smallpox, cholera, and the bubonic plague had killed, without prejudice, the weak and strong, rich and poor, intelligent and feeble-minded alike. Kellogg’s notion that the law of natural selection was somehow negated through medical achievement was also incorrect. While he no doubt picked up the term from the “father” of eugenic heredity, Francis Galton, Kellogg severely misunderstood Darwin’s explanation for the variety of species. But Kellogg’s ideas came from the work of Galton, who failed to realize that Darwin’s natural selection was a thesis to explain past evolutions—Darwin had never intended to use natural selection within the context of human society. In theory, natural selection failed the minute humans became social animals. The human propensity to protect and help others in need completely negated natural selection, as nature no longer determined who lived and who died.

However extreme Kellogg’s views seemed, he was not alone in his fears, nor were his ideas of humanity’s degeneracy new to the world. Michel Foucault noted in *Madness & Civilization* that fears of degenerate humanity began in the mid-eighteenth century with the confinement of the insane: “Suddenly, in a few years in the middle of the eighteenth century, a fear arose—a fear formulated in medical terms but animated, basically, by a moral myth. People were in dread of a mysterious disease that spread, it was said, from the houses of confinement and would soon threaten the cities.”⁶ The concept of madness, or insanity, as a disease had not fallen by the wayside in Kellogg’s day a century later, nor had the fear of its spread among the public. By the late nineteenth century, according to Gerald Grob, the 1880 census indicated

⁵ Ibid., 724.

⁶ Michel Foucault, *Madness & Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (New York: Vintage Books, 1988), 202.

“there were 91,997 insane persons out of a total American population of 50,000,000.”⁷ Grob noted that three decades earlier “the comparable statistics were 15,610 out of 21,000,000, suggesting to some contemporaries that the rate of insanity had more than doubled.”⁸ But this was perhaps less about an actual increase of insane persons (as there is no data to support this), and due more to an expansion of categories of the insane, combined with an increased visibility of insane individuals and the heightened awareness of the public.

Kellogg was certainly aware of the rising malady of insanity when he wrote in his 1911 pamphlet *Tendencies Toward Race Degeneracy* that the “increase of insanity has become so marked in recent years that a note of alarm is frequently heard from alienists on both sides of the Atlantic.”⁹ He further stoked fears of humanity’s degeneracy into insanity when he stated that, in a certain London doctor’s opinion, the entirety of humanity was “destined to become insane.”¹⁰ In an example that was closer to home, Kellogg recounted a report of the superintendent of an asylum in Austin, Texas, in which the superintendent warned that very soon “the insane will outnumber the sane,” and that these defectives would soon “break out of the asylums and put us in.”¹¹

Besides the fears of insanity, Kellogg also warned of a physically decrepit future for humanity. In a lecture given in the parlor of his Battle Creek Sanitarium in 1897, Kellogg asked his audience: “Can you imagine why we are nearly all of us cripples?... Why is it that nearly all human beings are plugs, hacks, poor miserable crippled creatures? Why are we all not strong? Why do many drag themselves along in a very wretched sort of way, hardly knowing what it is

⁷ Gerald N. Grob, *Mental Illness and American Society, 1875-1940* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 8.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ J. H. Kellogg, *Tendencies Toward Race Degeneracy* (Battle Creek, Michigan: September 9, 1911), 10.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

to be full of animation and activity and vim?”¹² Kellogg laid the blame for this troubling trend at the feet of civilization. Indeed, it was the “artificial conditions of life,” such as overcrowding populations and the filth of industrialization, found in towns and cities that caused humanity to “become consumptive and miserable.”¹³ Kellogg gave the example of the Native Americans who “were strong and hardy and as a deer” before civilization ravaged them, and noted that they were at the present time “a dying race.”¹⁴ He failed to mention, however, that Native American death rates might more accurately be attributed to the Indian Wars from the previous decades of the United States’ westward expansion or the foreign diseases settlers introduced, but he was correct in saying that civilization was leading to the deaths of Native Americans—one way or another.

Kellogg’s contemporaries shared his suspicions of civilization and perceived progress. By the late-nineteenth century, rapid industrialization and a burgeoning immigrant population had overburdened the infrastructure of cities and heavily contaminated the air, water, and food. Chicago, for example, had a semi-functional sewage system and water pumping stations by the mid 1800s.¹⁵ But while these were modern marvels in the United States at the time of their construction, the city had a population of about 30,000 in 1850, which grew exponentially to just over 1 million in 1890, and in the next two decades swelled to over 2.1 million in 1910.¹⁶ Russell Lopez noted that cities reported high mortality rates “because of sanitation and housing problems,” and that besides the great cholera outbreaks in London and New York from the 1830s

¹² J. H. Kellogg, “Sanitarium Parlor Lecture, Jan. 7, 1897, Why are We Cripples,” Lectures, Speeches, and Related Materials, Box 3, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ See, Louis P. Cain, “Sanitation in Chicago: A Strategy for a Lakefront Metropolis,” *Encyclopedia of Chicago*, available at <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/300017.html>; and, Ann Durkin Keating, “Water and Urban Life,” *Encyclopedia of Chicago*, available at <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/300020.html>.

¹⁶ See, “Historical population of Chicago city for period 1840-2014,” available at <https://population.us/il/chicago/>.

to 1860s, Boston had “problems with diphtheria, measles, smallpox, and other diseases.”¹⁷ The west coast cities such as Los Angeles and San Francisco were little better with outbreaks of bubonic plague well into the early twentieth century.¹⁸ Of all the problems urbanization created, perhaps none generated more fear than the dark and cramped tenement housing. Urban historian Robert Fairbanks observed that tenement housing “traumatized” reformers amongst the city’s middle and upper class, who feared that “tenement districts destroyed family life and promoted an assortment of social, political, and medical pathologies.”¹⁹ Indeed, many saw tenement housing as ground zero for race degeneracy as their “rental policies indiscriminately mixed good and bad people together,” and “their dark halls and shared toilets promoted sexual promiscuity.”²⁰

To Kellogg, the question of racial degeneracy was no longer speculative, and the human race was on the brink of self-destruction. Humanity had a new apocalyptic problem—what it needed was a solution. But the solution would rely on the pseudo-science of eugenics that did not even fully understand the complexity of the hereditary “traits” it sought to control. In his work, *The Gene*, Siddhartha Mukherjee observed the lack of scientific scholarship within Galton’s theory of heredity and the eugenics movement. The concepts of genes and DNA were unknown to Galton, who “must have realized the inherent limits of his pedigree project.”²¹ Galton and his contemporaries drove headlong into an abyss of human selection that was devoid of knowledge in the complexity of the human genome, and their efforts would culminate in one of the most reprehensible events of the twentieth century.

¹⁷ Russell Lopez, *Building American Public Health: Urban Planning, Architecture, and the Quest for Better Health in the United States* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 17.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Robert B. Fairbanks, *Making Better Citizens: Housing Reform and the Community Development Strategy in Cincinnati, 1890-1960* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 9.

²⁰ Ibid., 10.

²¹ Siddhartha Mukherjee, *The Gene: An Intimate History* (New York: Scribner, 2016), 68.

5.2 The Solution

In 1869, Francis Galton, an eminent English statistician (among other things), published his work on human heredity, in which he presented his pseudoscientific theory of the inheritance of traits. Using the work of his cousin Charles Darwin as a foundation, Galton theorized that Darwin's theory of *Pangenesis*, in which “the marvellous [sic] structure of the living form is built up under the influence of innumerable blind affinities, and not under that of a central controlling power,” was “of enormous service to those who inquire into heredity.”²² Galton noted that utilizing Darwin's theory of Pangenesis brought “all the influences that bear on heredity into a form, that is appropriate for the grasp of mathematical analysis,” and concluded that scientists could understand and predict the outcome of hereditary traits in humans—their “gemmules,” the sex cells which contained traits, could be calculated.²³ This further demonstrated Galton's lack of understanding of the complex structures involved in the human production of traits. But this was not surprising as scientific knowledge of heredity was in its infancy at the time. However, this does not excuse Galton, who knowingly operated without the safety net of a solid scientific method.

Almost two decades later, Galton expanded on his earlier work and theorized that if scientists could map out human traits, then they could selectively breed humans much like pedigreed horses, dogs, and plants. He termed his new theory *eugenics*, and wrote that he derived it from the Greek *eugenes*, meaning “good in stock” and “hereditarily endowed with noble

²² Francis Galton, *Hereditary Genius: An Inquiry Into its Laws and Consequences* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1869), 364.

²³ *Ibid.*, 373.

qualities.”²⁴ Galton stated that he wanted “a brief word to express the science of improving stock,” which focused on “all influences that tend in however remote a degree to give to the more suitable races or strains of blood a better chance of prevailing speedily over the less suitable than they otherwise would have had.”²⁵ While Galton’s theory about heredity and traits may have started with Darwin’s theories, he moved away from his cousin’s work in one very important aspect.

There was nothing “natural” about the contemplation of traits and then forced selective breeding. Even Galton admitted that eugenics was meant to speed up the process of reproducing more desirable races to give them a better chance of overtaking lesser ones. In other words, Galton determined that natural selection had recently ended and needed to be reinvented into human selection, as he asserted in 1904: “What Nature does blindly, slowly, and ruthlessly, man may do providently, quickly, and kindly.”²⁶ Thomas Leonard observed the same when he wrote that Galton’s “eugenics proposed to replace natural selection with purposeful social selection.”²⁷ Jonathan Spiro also noted Galton’s supplanting of Darwinian natural selection, but explained that Galton justified his actions by citing the interruptions of civilization upon the theory—modern health care and charitable enterprises had allowed “those weaklings who would otherwise perish to survive.”²⁸ Due to the diseases and plagues of the previous centuries, Galton and others were under the impression that natural selection was still functioning. They missed the obvious flaw in their reasoning in that diseases and plagues affected both the weak and the strong.

²⁴ Francis Galton, *Inquiries Into Human Faculty and its Development* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1883), 24.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 25.

²⁶ Francis Galton, *Essays in Eugenics* (London: The Eugenics Education Society, 1909), 42.

²⁷ Thomas C. Leonard, *Illiberal Reformers: Race, Eugenics & American Economics in the Progressive Era* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 109.

²⁸ Spiro, *Defending the Master Race*, 121.

Eugenics operated on a foundational principle that hereditary traits were immutable. Eugenicists believed traits were scientific fact, and that they could not be altered by means of environmental factors or through time and evolution. This meant that any attempt at a eugenic program of human selection would necessarily require the excision of the “unfit” rather than reform. Social human conditions such as poverty and crime were erroneously incorporated into these permanent traits, and those who possessed them or descended from them were afforded no sympathy. Galton had not only co-opted Darwin’s natural selection, he twisted it into a cold, hard system of human selection that demanded the sacrifice of those who—in a eugenic context—were unable to do anything to save themselves.

Unknown to Galton at the time, another researcher was studying and confirming the theory of immutable traits. At the same time Galton was working out his theories of heredity and eugenics, a Moravian monk named Gregor Mendel was experimenting with inherited traits in pea plants at his monastery in Brunn (then, part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire). Through his experiments, Mendel demonstrated the existence of “dominant” and “recessive” traits, and noted that the same traits were passed along in pea plants no matter how much outside forces might affect the parent plant. While Mendel’s work was of obvious importance to the field of biology and Galton’s eugenic theory, it fell into obscurity. Mukherjee noted that during the formative years of eugenics, “even as questions and concerns about human heredity and its manipulation became central to policy makers in America and Europe, Mendel’s name and his work were lost to the world.”²⁹ European scientists may have accepted Galton’s theories, but eugenics would not find its full fruition until it came to the United States.

Accounts of the intercultural transfer of eugenics from England to the United States usually focused on biologist Charles Benedict Davenport (1866-1944) as the main agent of

²⁹ Mukherjee, *The Gene*, 54.

transfer. This was perhaps due to the fact that Davenport, amongst all his contemporaries, did more for the spread and acceptance of eugenic theory than any other scientist in the United States. If Galton was the father of eugenics, then Davenport was its influential uncle. In 1902, Davenport visited London to meet with Galton, and upon his return founded a eugenic laboratory at Cold Spring Harbor, New York. Davenport, fully convinced of eugenic theory, became obsessed with trying to quantify and formulate hereditary traits into a functioning model that could be implemented in society. With funding from the Carnegie Institution of Washington, Davenport's laboratory began experimenting on the hereditary traits of various animals such as ducks, cats, dogs, and chickens.

By 1910, Davenport, having revived Mendel's work on hereditary ratios, was ready to apply his findings to humanity. In his work *Eugenics: The Science of Human Improvement by Better Breeding* Davenport laid out his master plan to implement eugenics in American society: "As precise knowledge is acquired it [Eugenics] must be set forth in popular magazine articles, in public lectures, in addresses to workers in social fields: in circular letters to physicians, teachers, the clergy and legislators. The nature and the dangers of unfit matings, the way to secure sound progeny, must ever be set forth."³⁰ Davenport's strategy was to utilize both positive and negative eugenics to improve the human race. Eugenics, being a theory centered on breeding, was often simplified into positive and negative models of being allowed or prohibited to procreate. Thus, positive eugenic methods included making sure "fit" individuals were correctly matched in marriage and encouraged (often through rewards) to produce as many offspring as possible. By contrast, negative eugenics sought to keep "unfit" individuals from procreating through segregation, confinement, and, eventually, sterilization.

³⁰ C. B. Davenport, *Eugenics: The Science of Human Improvement by Better Breeding* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1910), 33.

To gather information on and determine the pedigrees of American citizens Davenport founded the Eugenics Record Office at Cold Spring Harbor in 1910, along with the Committee on Eugenics. Originally a branch of the American Breeder's Association, the Committee on Eugenics included members such as Alexander Graham Bell and Luther Burbank, and sought to propagate eugenics through "investigation, education, [and] legislation."³¹ Via investigation, the committee was to collect the pedigrees of thousands of families throughout the United States and store the data in the Eugenics Record Office. Davenport noted that this was done primarily to learn "the method of heredity of human characteristics," and to "identify those lines which supply our families of great men."³² In other words, the committee was to take its background in determining the pedigrees for animals such as horses and dogs and apply such methods to humans. Davenport assured his readers that such a project was not without its benefits, as the American taxpayer would be saved the annual sum of \$100,000,000 used for the care of imbeciles and other unfit members of society, if they could learn how "bad germ-plasm" was "being reproduced and the best way to diminish its further spread."³³

The Committee on Eugenics was also to educate the public on its findings via magazine articles, lectures, and circular letters, and eventually convince the public of the necessity of legislation. For, as Davenport put it, any implementation of eugenic programs required a legal recourse:

Since the weak and the criminal will not be guided in their matings by patriotism or family pride, more powerful influence or restraints must be exerted as the case requires. And as for the idiots, low imbeciles, incurable and dangerous criminals they may under appropriate restrictions be prevented from procreation—either by segregation during the

³¹ Ibid., 26.

³² Ibid., 31.

³³ Ibid., 32.

reproductive period or even by sterilization. Society must protect itself...Here is where appropriate legislation will aid in eugenics and in creating a healthier, saner society in the future.³⁴

The path towards state-forced sterilization thus laid, Davenport's eugenic vision was ready to be implemented, but what he lacked was an adequate system for defining those who should not be allowed to procreate.

Such a system was the invention of Dr. Henry Herbert Goddard (1866-1957), the director of the Vineland Training School for Feeble-minded Girls and Boys in New Jersey. Goddard was instrumental in the classification of "unfit" individuals, starting with his intelligence testing. Adam Cohen observed that Goddard, having seen the success of the Binet-Simon intelligence test in France, "brought it back to America" and hoped it would "instantly assess and categorize students in the same way Vineland staff did after getting to know them over time."³⁵ But the Binet-Simon test was never meant to give a concrete definition of intelligence as Goddard claimed. It was, in fact, originally designed to identify children who needed more assistance in their education within the Parisian school system. In true intercultural transfer fashion, Goddard modified the Binet-Simon test to fit the American context of wanting a fast and sure-fire way of identifying feeble-minded individuals. As Cohen noted: "Goddard championed the Binet-Simon and presented it as what it was not intended to be: a tool for measuring inherent intelligence."³⁶

A request from Davenport's Eugenic Records Office for the hereditary records of his feeble-minded students spurred Goddard to use such intelligence testing to define terms for the eugenic cause. Goddard presented his findings in the widely popular *The Kallikak Family* in

³⁴ Ibid., 33-34.

³⁵ Adam Cohen, *Imbeciles: The Supreme Court, American Eugenics, and the Sterilization of Carrie Buck* (New York: Penguin Books, 2016), 31.

³⁶ Ibid.

1913, in which he provided a hereditary case study of the Kallikak family (a fake family name created from blending the Greek words for “good” *Kalos* and “bad” *Kakos*) for the purposes of showing that intelligence was an inherited trait. Goddard developed two separate family trees in which the founding patriarch, Martin Kallikak, who was of “good English blood,” had sullied himself “in an unguarded moment” and produced offspring with a feeble-minded woman.³⁷ After this dalliance, he then married a “normal” woman and proceeded to have children by her as well. Goddard traced the line of feeble-minded descendants as solely the offspring of Martin and the tavern wench who was portrayed as feeble-minded.³⁸ But this result was hardly scientific; Goddard determined the woman’s mental capacity based on a moral-religious standard, not genetics, and the “bad” family was defined so because they came from a morally bankrupt woman. Goddard concluded that when it came to feeble-mindedness humanity was “dealing with a problem of true heredity,” and that “no amount of education or good environment” could cure feeble-minded individuals.³⁹

Goddard’s work on the Kallikak family added one more important definition to the eugenic vocabulary—the “high-grade moron.” The term was immediately incorporated into the Binet-Simon test so that he could begin examining for such “defectives.” To Goddard, the high-grade moron posed an enormous risk to humanity because they seemed to function “normally” within society and did not “plainly show in their countenances the extent of their mental defect.”⁴⁰ High-grade, or high-functioning morons could live in society undetected. The danger was that in allowing such “unfit” individuals to procreate, eventually undesirable traits such as sexual promiscuity, alcoholism, and idiocy would spread widely to “infect” the national body.

³⁷ Henry Herbert Goddard, *The Kallikak Family: A Study in the Heredity of Feeble-Mindedness* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1913), 50.

³⁸ To follow Goddard’s study, see the charts in *The Kallikak Family*, pages 37-49.

³⁹ Goddard, *The Kallikak Family*, 51, 53.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 104.

Goddard noted that Deborah Kallikak, the girl at his institution that provided the basis for his study, was “a typical illustration of the mentality of a high-grade feeble-minded person, the moron, the delinquent, the kind of girl or woman that fills our reformatories.”⁴¹ Goddard wrote of the dangers of such girls and society’s excusing of their behavior: “They are wayward, they get into all sorts of trouble and difficulties, sexually and otherwise, and yet we have been accustomed to account for their defects on the basis of viciousness, environment, or ignorance.”⁴² Goddard continued to warn of the presence of such moronic girls in public schools, and that any hopes as to their improvement were folly: “Rather good-looking, bright in appearance, with many attractive ways, the teacher clings to the hope, indeed insists, that such a girl will come out all right. Our work with Deborah convinces us that such hopes are delusions.”⁴³

Goddard’s arguments were clear and concise, and solely blamed women for the spread of feeble-mindedness—as in the case of Carrie Buck who was blamed for her own rape. Goddard’s conclusions suggested that feeble-minded women presented a strong sexual temptation for men of “good stock” since they tended to be attractive yet were loose in their sexual morals. Indeed, Goddard seemed to firmly lay the blame on women when he wrote, “let the sermons be preached” and “let it be impressed upon our young men of good family that they dare not step aside for even a moment.”⁴⁴ These statements by no means meant that Goddard had determined feeble-mindedness to be a female trait, merely that the seduction of “good family” men was often an instigator of feeble-minded pedigrees.

⁴¹ Ibid., 11.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., 11-12.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 103.

With the terminology and identification techniques thus defined, eugenicists moved to the next phase of implementation, legislation. But before they could lobby politicians and lawmakers to implement their eugenic beliefs, they had to decide what measures were needed to stop the propagation of the “unfit.” Three plausible solutions presented themselves: segregation, confinement, and sterilization. Goddard championed segregation via colonization, and noted that such a tactic could ease the burden placed upon the American taxpayer, whose hard-earned money was already paying to support the feeble-minded wards of the state.⁴⁵ But placing such individuals together in a colony would not stop their reproduction, and a colony of feeble-minded individuals could surely multiply exponentially. Confinement, in asylums or hospitals only presented the same issues, and the state still had to monetarily support such patients. Clearly, neither segregation nor confinement could guarantee a halt to the procreation of feeble-minded individuals. The more permanent solution to break the cycle and pedigrees of feeble-minded individuals was sterilization.

Sterilization was perhaps the most recognized outcome of the eugenic movement (not including euthanasia). The operation to remove sexual organs or block the tubes through which the sperm and the egg travelled through (the vas deferens and the fallopian tubes respectively) was relatively cheap and simple as opposed to massive programs of segregation and confinement. Sterilization offered the perfect solution for those individuals who ignored the principles of eugenics and continued to propagate their “defective” traits. Humanity was at war with itself, and, as Davenport proclaimed: “Society must protect itself.”⁴⁶

State-coerced sterilization was not an easy issue for lawmakers to consider, and divided public opinion only deepened the issue. Randall Hanson and Desmond King aptly observed that

⁴⁵ See Goddard, *The Kallikak Family*, pages 105-106.

⁴⁶ Davenport, *Eugenics*, 34.

the fact eugenic creed was well defined was “a poor predictor of its implementation,” and that in order to “understand eugenic ideas’ importance, one must reflect on how they intersected with individual interests.”⁴⁷ In other words, a well-established eugenic program on paper did not necessarily mean that its chances for becoming law were improved, nor was it easy for eugenic language to be transcribed into legal text. What the eugenic movement needed were individuals who could translate the language of eugenics into a legal format. Fortunately for Davenport and other eugenicists, eugenics had spread from a scientific interest to one that concerned a litany of professionals including lawyers.

One such lawyer was Madison Grant (1865-1937), an avid conservationist and new convert to the eugenic movement. Grant spent his early years as a zoologist and explored the vast wildernesses of the United States, and observed, as had many others, that civilization (with its rapid expansion and industrialization) was destroying North America’s pristine wildlife. In particular, Grant lamented the loss of the great herds of American bison that had covered the Great Plains in the nineteenth century. In his own lifetime he bore witness to their decimation at the hands of game hunters, meat packers, railroad expansion, and the United States Army in its attempt to wipe out the food source of the plains tribes in the Indian Wars of the late nineteenth century. Grant was horrified that the mighty buffalo—once the symbol of the American West—had all but disappeared. Of an estimated thirty million in the 1870s, there were only 85 specimens in the wild by 1886.⁴⁸ Through his efforts, along with personal friends such as President Theodore Roosevelt, Grant succeeded in lobbying Congress to allow the President to create game reserves in 1905, which protected the last wild American bison.

⁴⁷ Randall Hansen and Desmond King, *Sterilized by the State: Eugenics, Race, and the Population Scare in Twentieth-Century North America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 17.

⁴⁸ Spiro, *Defending the Master Race*, 62-63.

Grant's conservation efforts were not limited to endangered species, as his trepidation of extinction soon spread to the human race. If in only a few decades the millions of American buffalo could go almost extinct, Grant reasoned, surely the same could happen to humanity. His fears and anxiety were eventually encapsulated in his 1916 work, *The Passing of the Great Race*. Wasting no time, Grant prefaced his work by equating race to heredity: "European history has been written in terms of nationality and of language, but never before in terms of race; yet race has played a far larger part than either language or nationality in moulding [sic] the destinies of men; race implies heredity, and heredity implies all the moral, social, and intellectual characteristics and traits which are the springs of politics and government."⁴⁹ In these few lines Grant not only racialized the eugenics movement, he also established precedence for government involvement in eugenics.⁵⁰ If race (or heredity) implied desired or undesired traits in politics and government, then, to protect its institutions, it was instrumental that the American government be involved in eugenic work. Grant declared that the "moral tendency of the heredity interpretation of history" was "in strong accord with the true spirit of the modern eugenics movement in relation to patriotism," and that only through the "conservation" of "the best spiritual, moral, intellectual, and physical forces of heredity" would "the integrity of our institutions be maintained in the future."⁵¹

⁴⁹ Madison Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race: Or the Racial Basis of European History* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1916), vii.

⁵⁰ Historians and other writers have published much on the inherent racism in Grant's work, and there is little room here to cover the immense subject of racism in eugenics. Nor is it the main focus of my study. For excellent accounts regarding racism and eugenics see the aforementioned Spiro, *Defending the Master Race*; Harry Bruinius, *Better for All the World: The Secret History of Forced Sterilization and America's Quest for Racial Purity* (New York: Vintage Books, 2006); and Wendy Kline, *Building a Better Race: Gender, Sexuality, and Eugenics from the Turn of the Century to the Baby Boom* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005). Also, a well-timed article in *The Atlantic* explores modern white supremacy's roots in Grant's work; see Adam Serwer, "White Nationalism's Deep American Roots," *The Atlantic*, April 2019.

⁵¹ Grant, *The Passing of the Great Race*, viii.

Grant's work enjoyed an enormous following both at home and abroad—particularly in Germany, where Adolf Hitler remarked that *The Passing of the Great Race* had become his “Bible.”⁵² Thus, the eugenic movement completed all it had set out to do in Davenport's original planning: Galton invented the “theory,” Davenport provided the “scientific” evidence, Goddard provided the “cure,” and Grant translated it into law.

The culmination of Grant's efforts (combined with Davenport and countless congressmen, lawyers, and politicians) was The Immigration Act of 1924, which limited foreign immigration to a quota system of two percent admission per nationality. This nativist regulation specifically limited Eastern and Southern Europeans (dark-skinned, Catholic, Orthodox, Jewish) and was designed to keep the United States white, Protestant Christian, and predominantly Anglo-Saxon. Three years later in 1927, Davenport and Grant saw their sterilization goals realized with the legal case of Carrie Buck. Although the first state-compulsory sterilization laws in the world were passed in 1907 in Indiana, eugenicists knew that such laws needed to be tested for their constitutionality, and Carrie Buck's case provided the perfect test case as she, her mother, and her unborn child were categorized as feeble-minded. Buck, an inmate of the Virginia State Colony for Epileptics and the Feeble-minded, was slated to undergo compulsory sterilization under the Virginia Sterilization Act of 1924.

The law itself was modeled on the work of Harry H. Laughlin, a passionate eugenic lawyer who also happened to be Davenport's chief of staff at the Eugenic Records Office. In 1922, Laughlin published *Eugenical Sterilization in the United States*, in which he laid out specific requirements needed in eugenic sterilization laws. In his fifteenth chapter Laughlin wrote a “Full Text for a Model Eugenic Law,” a sterilization law in its entirety, so that states

⁵² Spiro, *Defending the Master Race*, 357.

could simply plug-in the correct names and dates to pass it.⁵³ Laughlin noted that a sterilization law could “meet all of the requirements of constitutional law and...still be a failure,” due to lack of implementation and proper administration.⁵⁴ To avoid such failures, Laughlin wrote his model law after “a careful study of the motives, the sterilization standards, the executive and legal processes, the legislative histories, the practical working out, general objections, and the litigation resulting from the twenty-three sterilization laws” previously passed in the United States.⁵⁵ The Virginia law was to be the test of Laughlin’s work, and the intent of the state was obvious when it was the institution that challenged its own law to set it before the United States Supreme Court. This was done to make sure the law was constitutional under the Fourteenth Amendment; Virginia had to prove that its statute provided Buck due process and equal protection under the law.

Carrie Buck’s case was an almost perfect setup for a eugenic victory (but was also disturbing in its lack of empathy for her circumstances). Carrie was committed to the Virginia State Colony for Epileptics and the Feeble-minded in 1924, under the direction of Dr. John Bell. Her mother, Emma Buck, had been committed to the same institution four years earlier in 1920 for promiscuity, which was categorized as a sign of feeble-mindedness. Cohen noted that upon her arrival to the colony Emma was found to be suffering from syphilis (which reinforced accusations of prostitution), and after an administration of the Binet-Simon test was found to be a “moron,” resulting in her being “locked up for the rest of her life.”⁵⁶

Carrie’s case was far more tragic in its circumstances. At the age of seventeen, a nephew of her then foster family (the Dobbs) raped and impregnated her. As a result, more perhaps to

⁵³ Harry Hamilton Laughlin, *Eugenical Sterilization in the United States* (Chicago: Psychopathic Laboratory of the Municipal Court of Chicago, 1922), 446-451.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 443.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 444.

⁵⁶ Cohen, *Imbeciles*, 22-23.

hide the crime, the Dobbsses petitioned to have Carrie committed to the same colony as her mother, citing feeble-mindedness and promiscuity. This was evidenced by her pregnancy out of wedlock, which the family failed to mention was due to rape, however, it would not have mattered to the authorities as her mother was already determined to be feeble-minded. The commission deciding Carrie's fate agreed with the family's assessment, and ruled that she was to be institutionalized. Upon arriving at the colony, Dr. Bell put her through a series of tests, including the Binet-Simon test, and determined her to be a "middle-grade moron."⁵⁷ After birth, Buck's baby was taken into the care of the state, and Bell moved to have her sterilized under Virginia's new law. Virginia appointed a guardian (who was paid by the institution and was in favor of sterilization) to Buck who sued the state on her behalf, with the intention of appealing to the Supreme Court. When the case reached the United States Supreme Court in 1927, the court ruled eight to one that the 1924 Virginia Sterilization Act was constitutional, and that Bell could proceed with his sterilization of Buck. Perhaps one of the foremost minds in United States' legal history, Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr., wrote in the majority opinion a line that was destined to be quoted by almost all historians of eugenics: "Three generations of imbeciles is enough."⁵⁸

In an astonishing correlation, Justice Holmes suggested that compulsory sterilization was legally no different than enforced vaccination:

We have seen more than once that the public welfare may call upon the best citizens for their lives. It would be strange if it could not call upon those who already sap the strength of the State for these lesser sacrifices, often not felt to be such by those concerned, in order to prevent our being swamped with incompetence. It is better for all the world if, instead of waiting to execute degenerate offspring for crime or to let them starve for their

⁵⁷ Ibid., 30.

⁵⁸ Buck v. Bell, 274 U.S. 200 (1927); Available at U.S. Supreme Court Records, 1927, p. 207. Available at, <https://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/274/200>.

imbecility, society can prevent those who are manifestly unfit from continuing their kind.

The principle that sustains compulsory vaccination is broad enough to cover cutting the Fallopian tubes.⁵⁹

Thomas Adam observed that the Court's ruling not only "accepted the pseudo-scientific notion that sterilization would create a better society," but also encouraged states to create new sterilization laws or to enforce those already on their books.⁶⁰ The end result was the state-compulsory sterilization of over 60,000 citizens by the 1960s. Adam also noted that interest in the legal results of Buck's case was not limited to the United States, and that the Supreme Court's ruling "encouraged legislatures in other countries to adopt similar laws."⁶¹

Until recently, most scholars disregarded or ignored the blatant connections between the eugenic programs of the United States and the Third Reich. In his work, *In the Name of Eugenics*, historian Daniel Kevles argued that the 1933 German Eugenic Sterilization Law went "far beyond American statutes."⁶² This assessment was inaccurate, since the German law did not include provisions for the sterilization of criminals and the economically dependent. Even though the German law was thus more moderate than American laws, it still led to the sterilization of many more individuals. While Kevles did note that Nazi eugenicists "said that they owed a great debt to American precedent," he did not expand on the issue nor explain the scope of the connection.⁶³ In, *The Nazi Connection*, Stefan Kühl was the first to focus on the connections between the United States and Nazi eugenic programs. He concluded that in contrast to the Germans, "American scientists did not participate in the selection of tens of thousands of

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Adam, *Intercultural Transfers and the Making of the Modern World*, 71.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Daniel J. Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 116, 118.

⁶³ Ibid., 118.

handicapped people for the Nazi gas chambers,” yet, American eugenicists were directly involved in the “ideology of race improvement that was at the root of the massacres.”⁶⁴ More recently, in *Hitler’s American Model*, Yale law professor and historian James Whitman documented the “neglected history of Nazi efforts to mine American race law for inspiration during the making of the Nuremberg Laws.”⁶⁵ Whitman determined that “when it came to race law, numerous Nazi lawyers regarded America as the prime exemplar” and that it was “not outlandish for them to think of their program of the early 1930s as a more thoroughgoing and rigorous realization of American approaches.”⁶⁶

Such extreme measures as segregation and sterilization, along with the horrific actions of the Nazi eugenic movement, seem a far cry from the sectarian and wholesome health reforms of Kellogg. But the reality was that Kellogg was steeped in the eugenics movement. His usage of the term “Race Betterment” was perhaps due to the sensitivities of his usual audiences, but it was eugenics nonetheless, and Kellogg dedicated an immense amount of time and effort in his later life to bring eugenic principles into his health reform practices. But Kellogg did not fully agree with the cold, calculating science of Davenport and others who espoused that traits were an unchangeable fact, and instead opted for his own definition on eugenics.

5.3 “How to Make Our Country Great”

Kellogg’s 1911 pamphlet, *Tendencies Toward Race Degeneracy*, enjoyed wide circulation as both a stand-alone publication and an article in the *New York Medical Journal*—it was also read

⁶⁴ Stefan Kühl, *The Nazi Connection: Eugenics, American Racism, and German National Socialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 106.

⁶⁵ James Q. Whitman, *Hitler’s American Model: The United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017), 2.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 161.

and cited at various conferences (such as the Connecticut State Conference of Charities and Correction) and in the United States Senate.⁶⁷ But the copy in the possession of the Bentley Historical Library at the University of Michigan (one of the repositories for Kellogg's papers) holds particular interest. Inscribed upon the cover of the pamphlet is the phrase: "How to make our country great."⁶⁸ While the note is anonymous the sentiment is clear, the writer thought following the contents of the pamphlet would bestow greatness upon the United States.

Kellogg's work deviated from the path of "pure" eugenics that Davenport and others had laid out in a very pronounced and important way. His pamphlet was filled with a host of reasons for race degeneracy, but the language of the finality of traits was missing. Kellogg instead observed outside factors and influences that were causing degeneracy, such as poor diet and unhygienic living. One such example was a list of "poisons" Kellogg had determined were prolific in society. Citing information from the United States Census Bureau, Kellogg lamented that the United States as a whole annually consumed over 1.9 billion gallons of "alcoholic liquors," 400 million pounds of tobacco, 7.5 billion cigars, 5.5 billion cigarettes, 111 million pounds of cocoa, 1 billion pounds of coffee, 100 million pounds of tea, "400,000 pounds of opium, and 30,000 ounces of that most subtle of all enslaving drugs, cocaine."⁶⁹ Kellogg concluded that much of humanity's degeneracy came from "poison habits" and that "through heredity" conditions of degeneracy were "sending their baneful results down to posterity."⁷⁰ In other words, humanity (through unhealthy living) could poison itself into bad hereditary traits, which could then be passed on to offspring. In 1929, Kellogg furthered such ideas when he wrote

⁶⁷ Kellogg first published "Tendencies Toward Race Degeneracy" as a two-part article in the *New York Medical Journal*. See J. H. Kellogg, "Tendencies Toward Race Degeneracy," *New York Medical Journal* 94, no. 10 (September 2, 1911): 461-467; and *New York Medical Journal* 94, no. 11 (September 9, 1911): 526-529.

⁶⁸ The specific pamphlet of *Tendencies Toward Race Degeneracy* in the possession of the Bentley Library at the University of Michigan contains the cited inscription. A digitized version of this copy can be found in the holdings of the HathiTrust digital library. See <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015071556784>.

⁶⁹ J. H. Kellogg, *Tendencies Towards Race Degeneracy*, 27-28.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 27.

that the “Race Betterment perspective differs from that of eugenicists” in the belief that “while eugenics is undoubtedly the chief hope for race improvement contributions from the environment or so-called acquired characters must also from generation to generation add something of importance to the family tree.”⁷¹ With this statement Kellogg entrenched himself in the famous nature vs. nurture debate, but he was not the first to raise such points.

When Galton’s eugenic theory spread beyond the borders of England it met a mixed reception, especially in Germany, with scientist Ernst Haeckel (1834-1919), who had already met with Darwin and accepted his theories. Haeckel was instrumental in popularizing Darwin’s theory of evolution in Germany with his 1899 publication of *Die Welträtsel* (The Mysteries of the World), in which he wrote that science, then called the theory of evolution, was a child of the nineteenth century and one of its most important and brilliant products.⁷² He went on to write that even though evolution was almost unknown in the 1800s, it had already become a solid cornerstone of the whole worldview.⁷³

Haeckel, along with many other scientists, pointed out a significant flaw in Galton’s theory. If parents could pass on acquired traits to their children, a position many believed at the time, then eugenics was a moot theory as generations could be made better with reforms such as housing, medicine, and education. This belief in the positive impact of environmental factors on heredity would later be termed *Euthenics*. But the Germans were more interested in debating the value of a eugenic program. Spiro noted that it was a zoologist at the University of Freiburg in the 1880s, August Weismann—who resurrected Mendel’s forgotten work—who distinguished the difference between the normal cells of the body “soma plasm” and the sex cells, which

⁷¹ John Harvey Kellogg, “Race Betterment Aims,” Race Betterment and Eugenics Folder, Box 10, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

⁷² Ernst Haeckel, *Die Welträtsel: Gemeinverständliche Studien über Monistische Philosophie* (Leipzig: Alfred Kröner Verlag, 1909), 144.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

passed on traits, “germ plasm.”⁷⁴ By observing that cutting the tails off of several generations of mice had no effect on new generations being born with tails, Weismann concluded that new generations of offspring did not inherit acquired traits from their parents.⁷⁵ Kellogg’s theory not only disregarded Weismann’s mice-tail experiment, it fundamentally challenged Davenport and other eugenicists’ theory that traits were hard scientific fact.

Regardless of this major deviation, Kellogg seemed to consider himself a eugenicist, and spent much of his time and efforts to include Davenport and other eugenicists in his work. When he organized and hosted national conferences on race betterment in 1914, 1915, and 1928, eugenicists such as Davenport and Laughlin not only attended but were also speakers. But it was clear that Kellogg was developing his own representations of eugenic theory, and he used one model in particular to his advantage. The concerns of race degeneracy were spreading throughout the world and spawning their own eugenic movements, but Kellogg focused his attention on the United States and applied the metaphor of the “body” of the nation to further his eugenic cause.

Kellogg’s main concern was to bring the plight of race betterment to the forefront of national thought. In doing so he employed a metaphor of the American people as one body, which was not uncommon to the reformers of his day.⁷⁶ Many scholars have written on the *body politic* and the nation as a political body, but the nation as a body in health or disease is much more subtle.⁷⁷ Michel Foucault defined “biopolitics” as a “governmental practice” derived from “a set of living beings forming a population.”⁷⁸ For Foucault, the governing of a nation from the eighteenth century forward had to be viewed as a collective body—an idea, a presence that

⁷⁴ Spiro, *Defending the Master Race*, 124.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ See Irving Fisher, *Report on National Vitality* (Washington D.C.: Washington Government Printing Office, 1909).

⁷⁷ For texts on the Nation as Body see Emily S. Rosenberg and Shanon Fitzpatrick, eds., *Body and Nation: The Global Realm of U.S. Body Politics in the Twentieth Century* (London: Duke University Press, 2014).

⁷⁸ Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics*, ed. Michel Senellart, trans. Graham Burchell (New York: Picador, 2008), 317.

transcended the liberal individual in government—for the needs of the collective national body outweighed the individual. This was the same principle Justice Holmes cited in his opinion of the Carrie Buck case: just as enforced vaccination served the good of the national body as a whole over the individual, so did compulsory sterilization prioritize the need of the nation above Buck’s individual liberty.

Kellogg shared this sentiment in 1915 in a lecture given at the Second National Conference on Race Betterment in San Francisco. Held as part of The Panama-Pacific International Exposition, in front of thousands Kellogg declared that no real progress could be made in eugenics until Americans divested themselves of “a lot of unwholesome sentiment in relation to personal liberty.”⁷⁹ He strengthened these arguments in a 1919 article in *Good Health*, when he wrote:

False ideas about personal liberty have been the greatest obstacle in the way of sanitary progress and community health....Community health and national unity are only possible where men and women are willing to surrender such of their personal interests as are not consonant with the interests of the larger unit....We are coming more and more to recognize that the rights of the individual are comparatively small consequence compared with the good of the whole, and nothing is really right for anybody that is not for the well being not only of his family and community but of the human race at large.⁸⁰

Kellogg’s focus on the nation as a unit, and communal health, bolstered the image of a national body of health. Just as in healing the human bodies of his patients, he demanded lifestyle reform in order to secure the survival of the national body.

⁷⁹ John Harvey Kellogg, “The Eugenics Registry,” *Official Proceedings of the Second National Conference on Race Betterment* (Battle Creek: The Race Betterment Foundation, 1915), 80.

⁸⁰ John Harvey Kellogg, “The Perils of Personal Liberty,” *Good Health* 54, no. 4 (April 1919): 191.

In his work, *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson grappled with the term nation and suggested that nations are “imagined political communities,” in which the “members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.”⁸¹ Kellogg shared this idea of a collective national image when he wrote that human traits constituted communal vitality, and were “a sacred endowment” held “in trust...for the community, the nation, the race,” and those who came after them.⁸²

Kellogg imagined an American citizenry as a homogenous body of health. He demonstrated this by treating people who did not fall into the “white, Anglo-Saxon” category; Russians, Indians, Jews, and people of color were allowed into and treated at his Battle Creek Sanitarium. On top of everything else, his favorite Seventh-day Adventist preacher was a black man—Lewis C. Sheafe. Howard Markel argued that Kellogg’s version of eugenics was as inherently racist as that of Grant. In his work, Markel presumed that when Kellogg spoke of the “human race” he was really speaking of the “white race.”⁸³ While Kellogg knew of Grant’s work and his racialization of the eugenics movement—Markel rightly pointed out that Kellogg was Grant’s physician—such a relationship did not mean that Kellogg accepted Grant’s position. Markel’s continued reference to Kellogg’s desire to save specifically the “white race” is perhaps attributed to guilt by association.⁸⁴ In his numerous eugenic writings Kellogg neither qualified nor quantified his discussion of the human race as pertaining to only the white race, and Markel offered no documentation to the contrary except for one letter from November 1943 (a month

⁸¹ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 2016), 6.

⁸² John Harvey Kellogg, “Why Are We Less Sturdy Than Our Ancestors?,” Race Betterment and Eugenics Folder, Box 10, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

⁸³ Markel, *The Kelloggs*, 298.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 302.

before Kellogg died), in which Kellogg mentioned the “white portion” of the human race.⁸⁵ But Kellogg referred to saving the “human race” as a whole before he made that distinction.

This does not mean that Kellogg did not see the world through a racist lens. Markel correctly noted that Kellogg’s “attitudes and relations with African Americans were complicated,” with the doctor many times using pejorative statements regarding African Americans (as well as Asians) in his publications and advising against interracial marriage.⁸⁶ But in the context of eugenics and saving the human race from degeneracy, it does not appear Kellogg differentiated between those of color and whites. Had Markel looked not a few lines before in Kellogg’s *The Living Temple* when he cited, “Heredity is God’s method of book-keeping,” he would have seen a statement affirming that Kellogg’s use of “human race” embodied the whole of humanity: “Adam, though as an individual dead, still lives in the race—the race is Adam. The whole human race is simply an extension of the first pair.”⁸⁷

Kellogg envisioned the United States as a communal body of Americans from various backgrounds including people of all colors, sex, and ethnicity.⁸⁸ To do this, he utilized the term “aristocracy of health” to differentiate Americans according to their positions on a scale of health. The idea of an “aristocracy of health” originally came from the wife of United States Senator John B. Henderson (who introduced the thirteenth amendment to abolish slavery), Mary Foote Henderson (1842-1931). In 1904, she published *The Aristocracy of Health*, in which she called for reforming society and its health practices. Much in the same vein as Kellogg—indeed she cited him throughout her work—Henderson declared that right living and lifestyle reform

⁸⁵ Ibid., 321.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 312-314.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 310; Kellogg, *The Living Temple*, 449.

⁸⁸ John Harvey Kellogg, “The Aristocracy of Health,” Race Betterment and Eugenics Folder, Box 10, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

could “reclaim” humanity from its downfall.⁸⁹ She, further, envisioned that the “men and women of the future” would not need “the bolstering aid of poison to irritate or to paralyze, in order to live presentably or happily.”⁹⁰ In other words, those who followed good health habits would free themselves from dependence on drugs, alcohol, and other various societal poisons, and would live happy and healthy lives.

It was a very standard vision of health reform for its time, but Kellogg was quite taken with the idea of an aristocratic class of healthy citizens. In his speech during the Second National Conference on Race Betterment Kellogg spoke of his desire to “create an aristocracy of health, to form a selected group of human beings possessed of superior characteristics of mind and body.”⁹¹ To accomplish this he proposed (in tandem with Davenport’s Eugenic Records Office) that a Eugenics Registry be created to better breed humans. This was positive eugenics at its best with Kellogg stating that the registry was “to accomplish for human beings, the same marvelous transformations and, to evolve the same betterments that have been and are still being accomplished for pigs and cattle.”⁹² The result of the registry, Kellogg assured his audience, would be “a new aristocracy; not an artificial blue blooded aristocracy created by wealth or official authority, but a real aristocracy made up of Apollos and Venuses and their fortunate progeny.”⁹³ Kellogg seemed content with this idea for improving the race, but even he understood that not everyone was going to be convicted to reform their lives.

Kellogg’s foray into eugenics was aided, mainly, by his friendship with renowned economist and Yale professor Irving Fisher (1867-1947). Fisher—who happened to be the

⁸⁹ Mary Foote Henderson, *The Aristocracy of Health* (Washington, D. C.: The Colton Publishing Company, 1904), 14.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

⁹¹ Kellogg, “The Eugenics Registry,” 76.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 79.

founding president of the American Eugenics Society—was a close associate of Kellogg’s, and the two worked in tandem to bring health reform to national attention. On July 31, 1913 Fisher was invited to give an evening lecture in the parlor of the Battle Creek Sanitarium. His lecture “Human Health as a National Asset” left no doubt about the centrality of health reform for the nation. In his introduction of Fisher, Kellogg extolled the professor’s organization of the Committee of One Hundred “which finally resulted in the effort to secure a national department of health.”⁹⁴ Fisher recounted his struggles to the sanitarium guests and told of his realization that health of the public was a “great national problem,” and that there was “not very much interest in public health.”⁹⁵ He utilized the motto “health is wealth,” and contended that the capital of a nation was not physical holdings of land and buildings et cetera, but rather “the total assets of a country are always chiefly in the men, women, and children in that country.”⁹⁶

The value of a healthy national body of citizens was, according to Fisher, “worth untold millions, untold billions of dollars, and any estimate of the worth must be [a] minimum estimate.”⁹⁷ The translation of human health into a monetary amount may seem a crass concept, but Fisher was first and foremost an economist, and this cost of health analysis served Kellogg well in his future lectures regarding eugenics and the state of the nation. After hearing Fisher’s lecture Kellogg decided to make his own call for national health care, and on September 14, 1913 he delivered a lecture at his sanitarium in Colorado Springs, in which he detailed the need for public as well as private health reform. Kellogg warned that while “the service which has been rendered [to] the human race by the public health movement of the last half century is the

⁹⁴ Irving Fisher, “Human Health as a National Asset,” July-December 1913 Folder, Box 6, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

noblest example afforded in human history,” that there was “at the same time a remarkable depreciation in racial vitality and stamina.”⁹⁸

Kellogg argued that the magnanimity shown to various degenerates such as the insane or chronically ill by “friendly societies” or benevolent associations—while done with the best of intentions—was in fact dangerous to the overall well being of the nation. He further indicated the seriousness of his cause when he warned that unless action was taken “the whole race would become insane, idiotic or imbecile within less than three centuries.”⁹⁹ However, Kellogg did not believe in the fulfillment of his prediction as long as the nation came to its senses long before such “calamity” happened, as the government’s reaction to such a crisis would be to enact eugenic and euthenic programs to restore the “mental soundness of the race.”¹⁰⁰

This lecture was critical to Kellogg’s work as it established a new foundation in his quest for race betterment. Among the many ideas proffered in his paper were national health campaigns to educate citizens on health principles, in-school health inspections of children, and, a truly novel idea, a national healthcare system so that “the whole population should be brought under Government medical supervision.”¹⁰¹ The national body, as Kellogg saw it, was diseased and in danger of falling into a degenerate spiral of death. To combat this immediate threat, Kellogg had to change a few sentiments of his own. Where once the body was to be healed holistically and diseased parts treated with all effort, Kellogg now advocated for surgical dissection—infected tissue had to be separated and removed if the whole body was to survive. Those individuals within the national body with undesirable traits, if found incurable, were to be removed for the good of the whole national body.

⁹⁸ Kellogg, “Relation of Public Health Work to Race Degeneracy,” July-December 1913 Folder, Box 6, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

The most striking example of this was his statement towards children: “It is evident that there is a growing blight on the baby crop. If the same fact existed in relation to the corn crop or the pig crop federal and state authorities would give themselves no rest until the cause was found and removed.”¹⁰² Kellogg went on to state that these “defective babies” had grown into an “army of defective children,” and according to his calculations fifteen million children had defects “sufficiently grave to...threaten” their “usefulness and even life in later years.”¹⁰³ He ended his example with another livestock analogy asking: “What would a farmer think...of a herd of cattle three-fourths of which showed deformities?”¹⁰⁴

While this position seems extreme in its rhetoric, Kellogg’s position was nothing new to the eugenic world—in this instance Kellogg was late to the party. No one really thought of his statements as extreme; for at this point the extreme had become mainstream. Even the former President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, stated in 1914: “I wish very much that the wrong people could be prevented entirely from breeding...criminals should be sterilized, and feeble minded persons forbidden to leave offspring behind them.”¹⁰⁵ Roosevelt lamented that “as yet there is no way possible to devise which could prevent all undesirable people from breeding.”¹⁰⁶

Kellogg offered a solution to Roosevelt’s dilemma the very next year at the Second National Conference on Race Betterment, where he laid out his “Proposed Scheme for Race Betterment.”¹⁰⁷ Citing inflating numbers of a “mighty host of mental and moral cripples” Kellogg argued that it was “the duty of the state to institute measures which will effectually

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Theodore Roosevelt, “Twisted Eugenics,” *The Outlook* 106, (January 3, 1914): 32.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Kellogg, “The Eugenics Registry,” 79.

control this stream of unfit persons at the fountain head.”¹⁰⁸ He had doubts, however, that the method of sterilization would “ever be used to an extent sufficient to accomplish tangible results.”¹⁰⁹ Kellogg seemed to be wary of sterilization—though it is unclear why—perhaps his sectarian roots would not permit him to lend his full approval. In any case, sterilization and even segregation were a last-resort measure for Kellogg. Public posters and displays for his Race Betterment Exhibit downplayed heredity as a cause of race degeneracy by placing it beneath environmental causes.¹¹⁰ Under “Methods of Race Betterment,” he placed “sterilization or isolation of defectives” last, and listed “simple and natural habits of life” at the top and “eugenic marriages” fourth.¹¹¹ If anything, Kellogg preferred segregation of the unfit “to be the only solution” (over sterilization) as the “restriction of their liberty” was “manifest and necessary for the common good.”¹¹² Segregation for Kellogg meant confinement in institutions, but this was not enough, by his reckoning, to save the national body from degeneracy.

In the same lecture, Kellogg offered what he thought would be a better solution to the problem of the unfit: “Improved marriage laws may possibly accomplish even more than segregation and sterilization.” Kellogg advocated restrictive marriage laws for the unfit, but did not offer any parameters for such laws.¹¹³ He was far more concerned with the proper breeding of healthy individuals to one another in an attempt to create his dream of a national aristocracy of health. In a question and answer session after his lecture Kellogg stated that it was the goal of eugenicists to “impress upon intelligent men and women everywhere the importance of

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 79, 85.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 85.

¹¹⁰ Race Betterment Foundation, “Race Betterment Exhibit,” Race Betterment, Box 13, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Kellogg, “The Eugenics Registry,” 85.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 86.

pedigree” and “the importance of blood” and “the importance of inherited traits” so as to encourage marriages that would produce the best offspring.¹¹⁴

Here Kellogg disclosed his true position on race betterment and turned towards positive eugenics. Positive eugenics is usually less studied in the scholarship of eugenics as a whole. The lack of discussion of Kellogg’s involvement in the eugenics movement (Kühl, for instance, does not mention Kellogg in his text) is likely due to his leanings towards positive eugenics. For example, Kellogg proposed, as did many others, physical fitness contests with prizes and medals for winners.¹¹⁵ Others took these ideas further and held contests for the most “perfect” families at county and state fairs. These concepts eventually led to tax incentives for marriage and deductions for the number of children in a family; all in an attempt to get the “right” people to breed more. While Kellogg did not deny the uses of sterilization and segregation as legitimate forms of control for the unfit, he preferred a more positive expression of eugenics, asking: “Must we believe that...there is no possible chance for the intervention of any modifying factors in the operation of heredity?”¹¹⁶

Kellogg expressed this same sentiment in closing his speech on “The Eugenics Registry,” stating that if citizens would follow the precepts he had laid out before them, then “a new species of man may be created in not more than six generations.”¹¹⁷ Within about a century Kellogg envisioned that the buildup of this new people would bring about a “golden age,” in which “hospitals and prisons” would be eliminated and natural health “will have been restored as the

¹¹⁴ J. H. Kellogg, “Questions on Eugenics,” *Official Proceedings of the Second National Conference on Race Betterment* (Battle Creek: The Race Betterment Foundation, 1915), 88.

¹¹⁵ See, J. H. Kellogg, “The Eugenics Registry,” *Official Proceedings of the Second National Conference on Race Betterment* (Battle Creek: The Race Betterment Foundation, 1915), 82.

¹¹⁶ John Harvey Kellogg, “Race Betterment Aims,” Race Betterment and Eugenics Folder, Box 10, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

¹¹⁷ Kellogg, “The Eugenics Registry,” 87.

crowning result of human achievement and obedience to biologic law.”¹¹⁸ The national body would, thus, be restored to health, man returned to paradise, and Kellogg’s work would be finished. But this sentiment betrayed an underlying agenda in his eugenic approach. Kellogg was a relic of nineteenth-century sectarian movements, and religion had found its way into his eugenic principles. Kellogg managed to integrate—to infuse—religion into lifestyle reform. For him, religion was the basis for vegetarianism, light therapy, and eugenics. Kellogg successfully turned these into religious movements that were not centered so much around a particular doctrine, but rather the ideology provided by the movements themselves. This was evident in the fervor with which believers dedicated themselves to these movements and tried to convert others. Kellogg may have indeed been a relic of the religious movements of the nineteenth century, but he moved forward to carve a new niche for religion in the progressive world.

5.4 God Wills It: Kellogg and Theistic Eugenics

Eugenics was a cultural movement involving professors, lawyers, politicians, and social and health reformers such as Kellogg. Perhaps it was the scientific veneer of the eugenic movement, or, even more so, the hard rejection of religious sentimentalism in favor of the scientific determinism of heredity, but in any case, eugenics was usually seen outside the religious context. There are plenty who have noted its religious nature in the fervor of its followers, but it was rarely seen as compatible with Christianity. Interestingly, religious terms such as convert, initiate, disciple, and believer have all been used to describe advocates of eugenics.

Religious undertones were present from the very beginning of the eugenic movement starting with its progenitor. In his 1909 work *Essays in Eugenics*, Galton wrote that eugenics had

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

to be “introduced into the national conscience, like a new religion” in order for it to be nationally accepted.¹¹⁹ If there was any doubt as to his meaning, Galton’s next line demonstrated his belief that eugenics was to be religious in nature: “It [eugenics] has, indeed, strong claims to become an orthodox religious tenet of the future.”¹²⁰ Galton encouraged the spiritualization of eugenics and opined that he saw “no impossibility in Eugenics becoming a religious dogma among mankind.” As if anticipating Kellogg’s speech of a eugenic induced “golden age,” Galton warned his readers not to be overzealous in “holding out expectations of a near golden age, which will certainly be falsified and cause the science to be discredited.”¹²¹ But Galton never expected his eugenic principles to pertain to a country other than Britain, and he certainly never anticipated what would happen when eugenics transferred to the United States. Stefan Kühl noted that Galton originally did not imagine his “theories would find a great reception outside of Great Britain,” but that it was precisely because of Galton’s attempt to create a “national eugenics” that “an ideology conceived originally in national bounds could at the beginning of the twentieth century become an international movement.”¹²² If “national eugenics” allowed for its transference and acceptance within other nations, then the religious nature entailed in Galton’s theory made it readily accessible to the sectarian portions of the United States.

In *Preaching Eugenics* Christine Rosen stated that religion provided “a crucial analytical vantage point for assessing” the broad appeal of eugenics in the United States, as practicing eugenics “was, in some sense, to play God.”¹²³ This was the first time humans tried, without any knowledge of genetics, to take control of human creation and evolution. By deciding who could

¹¹⁹ Galton, *Essays in Eugenics*, 42.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Kellogg, “The Eugenics Registry,” 87; Galton, *Essays in Eugenics*, 43.

¹²² Stefan Kühl, *For the Betterment of the Race: The Rise and Fall of the International Movement for Eugenics and Racial Hygiene*, trans. Lawrence Schofer (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 11, 12.

¹²³ Christine Rosen, *Preaching Eugenics: Religious Leaders and the American Eugenics Movement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 22.

and could not procreate eugenicists took over the traditional role of God—in that Christ was the one who perfected the human body. To change the human body was to change the image of God. Religious support for the eugenic movement in the United States was divided into two groups: those who believed Christ would return to establish his kingdom (premillennialists), and those who desired to create God’s kingdom on earth to hasten Christ’s return (postmillennialists). Rosen noted that postmillennialists utilized reform as a “vital part of their Christianity,” and thus saw eugenics as a method for establishing the Kingdom of Heaven on earth, while premillennialists perceived “the world as merely a temporary lodging-place for Christians” and thus saw no need to reach the perfection eugenics promised.¹²⁴

Kellogg’s involvement in eugenics was unique, then, given Rosen’s distinction between premillennial and postmillennial views. Being raised a Seventh-day Adventist; Kellogg would have been a staunch premillennialist; meaning he either contradicted Rosen’s conclusion that “supporters of eugenics were postmillennialist” and “their opponents were usually premillennialists” or was the exception to the rule. But Rosen argued that even “self-identified liberal and modernist religious men abandoned bedrock principles to seek relevance in modern debates” on eugenics.¹²⁵ In June 1898, Kellogg declared in an editorial in his *Good Health* journal that because of the weakness of the “gospel as it is preached,” meaning a gospel without eugenic principles, the “millennium is not just dawning, as we would fain believe.”¹²⁶ Kellogg never declared himself to be a postmillennialist, but such a statement, along with his theory of a eugenic golden age, certainly gave the impression to his audiences that he was. But Kellogg’s true position was muddled in his language, he may very well have changed his outlook to a

¹²⁴ Ibid., 17.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 5.

¹²⁶ Kellogg, “The Greater Gospel,” 378.

postmillennial view to suit eugenic teachings, but he could also have incorporated the language of eugenicists without thought for its impact on his premillennial theology.

Regardless of Kellogg's premillennial or postmillennial viewpoint, his vision for the future of eugenics as a religion was clear. Indeed, he seemed to fully embrace Galton's sentiment that the study of eugenics "ought to find a welcome home in every tolerant religion."¹²⁷ In the same June 1898 editorial Kellogg laid out his intention to create a "greater gospel" to bring "a lost race back to the fold of happy obedience," and "restore in man the divine image."¹²⁸ The need for this greater gospel was paramount as Kellogg lamented that "as usually preached, the gospel of Christ is a one-sided, one-legged gospel,—no wonder that it limps."¹²⁹ Even though he never once used the term "eugenics" throughout the article—betraying perhaps his recognition that his own denomination would not stand for an outright call to eugenics—Kellogg produced a text that was an exquisite blend of the language of eugenics with Seventh-day Adventist terms. His beliefs culminated in his attempt to redefine the nature of sin and repentance into new terms of health and disease:

The greater gospel, which defines sin as the transgression of any law which relates to man's well-being, gives sin a broader meaning than the simple transgression of the so-called moral law....If the church is to rescue the world, it must give the gospel trumpet another and a different tone. It must teach physical righteousness, as well as moral rectitude. It must teach a gospel of diet, of baths, of exercise, of cleanliness, of domestic sanitation. It must recognize Christ in man as well as Christ on the cross....Our race deterioration can not cease until we...recognize as a solemn reality that religion includes

¹²⁷ Galton, *Essays in Eugenics*, 68.

¹²⁸ Kellogg, "The Greater Gospel," 379.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 377.

the body, and that the laws which govern the healthful performance of the bodily functions are as much the laws of God as those of the decalogue.¹³⁰

With these lines Kellogg defined a new theology: if the preaching of the gospel brought moral righteousness and the preaching of health brought physical righteousness, then the “greater gospel” combined both into a single unit of salvific health reform.

Brian Wilson observed the same shift in Kellogg’s theology and concluded that Kellogg’s much touted “biologic living” was the new religion Kellogg sought to create as the “greater gospel,” and that it was the result of the “long evolution from the Christian physiology of Seventh-day Adventism to the eugenic religion.”¹³¹ Wilson correctly stated that “the body as sacred” was the “core idea” of biologic living, and that Kellogg’s life-long goal was the “theological project of reconciling science and religion.”¹³² But biologic living was perhaps less a new religion unto itself, and more of a repackaging of Seventh-day Adventist health reform principles into a more acceptable eugenic terminology—biologic living was a much more scientific term than the greater gospel. So if biologic living was not Kellogg’s new religion of eugenic principles mixed with Seventh-day Adventist health reform doctrine, what was the place of eugenics in his religious theology?

Kellogg had obviously read Galton’s *Essay in Eugenics*, as he noted that if one was to ask “the father of eugenics, the great Galton...if there was any hope for the human race” that he would say “yes” and that hope laid with eugenics and making “a religion of genetics” and “a cult of pedigree.”¹³³ Kellogg endorsed the religious nature of eugenics and stated that in order to enact eugenic goals, all of the religions of his era needed “to be supplemented by a new religion

¹³⁰ Ibid., 379, 380.

¹³¹ Wilson, *Dr. John Harvey Kellogg and the Religion of Biologic Living*, 173-175.

¹³² Ibid., 175.

¹³³ John Harvey Kellogg, Untitled Text Concerning the State of the World, Race Betterment and Eugenics Folder, Box 10, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

or at least” the “new code” of biologic living, which would “set forth the sacred claim of our physical being, the religion of the body.”¹³⁴ He had no doubt that the aims of his “health culture” would implement “soundness of body and mind,” and determined that it was to be “the basis of all culture.”¹³⁵ But, Kellogg differentiated between biologic living and eugenics when he wrote that civilization could be saved “through eugenics and biologic living,” and “a new and better and greater human race” could be created.¹³⁶ In this context, redemption and salvation came from the eugenic renewal of the body, and biologic living, as a repackaging of Kellogg’s Seventh-day Adventist health reforms, was a tool to be used in the sanctification of the body through eugenics. But rather than abandoning his faith for the “new faith” of scientific eugenics—as Galton had intended—Kellogg sought to bring eugenics into the realm of his religion. Eugenics, therefore, needed to convert from the altar of atheistic science to the throne of God.

Towards the end of his life—most likely in the 1930s—Kellogg wrote: “The great creative intelligence....Him that made the universe and keeps it in order and created man, working through eugenics and the marvelous germ plasm, may save the race and even improve it.”¹³⁷ Kellogg continued, and stated that there was surely “enough left in man of the qualities planted in him by his Maker to make his salvation possible.”¹³⁸ This was Kellogg’s unique perspective of eugenics—God was working through humanity to correct the devastation of sin. This belief stemmed from the “Great Controversy” doctrine of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which taught that sin and suffering was the direct result of Satan’s challenge of God’s

¹³⁴ John Harvey Kellogg, “Why are We Less Sturdy than Our Ancestors?” Race Betterment and Eugenics Folder, Box 10, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ John Harvey Kellogg, Untitled Text Concerning the State of the World, Race Betterment and Eugenics Folder, Box 10, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

¹³⁷ Ibid. In the same document, Kellogg refers to the dictatorships in Italy and Germany but does not mention a World War. Thus, the document is most likely dated to the 1930s as Hitler and Mussolini had come to power but not yet gone to war.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

perfect character. This “great controversy” was universal, and had spread to earth through Adam and Eve’s disobedience in the Garden of Eden. Therefore, Satan was to blame for man’s imperfection and degeneracy, and eugenics was God’s way of correcting the devastation sin had wrought upon the world through the perfection and sanctification of the human body.

It must be remembered that Kellogg’s Seventh-day Adventist roots made him highly cognizant of an apocalyptic end to earth’s history. In the same document he mentioned that “lunatics” had “seized the reins of government” in Europe, specifically in Italy and Germany (Mussolini and Hitler), and, perhaps sensing the conflict that was yet to come, saw his last chance to save humanity through his health principles before the travesty of world war brought about the end of the world.¹³⁹ However, Kellogg failed to recognize that he and these “lunatics” believed in the same cause of the necessity for eugenics. Tristram Stuart noted that the Seventh-day Adventists in Nazi Germany “rejoiced in 1933 that the nation was now being run by Hitler,” whom they saw as God-ordained and a partaker in their health reform doctrine as he shared in their abstention from alcohol and tobacco, and practiced vegetarianism.¹⁴⁰

Kellogg’s blending of eugenics and his religious theology is perhaps better termed as *theistic eugenics*. Kellogg was trying to redefine—reshape—eugenics to his own mindset. This is why, as Rosen notes, Kellogg tried so hard to cultivate “cooperative relationships with leading eugenicists,” such as Davenport, Laughlin, and Fisher, and “regarded his health crusades as complementary measures” in their work.¹⁴¹ But this endeavor was perhaps doomed to fail, for eugenicists saw traits as unchangeable and thus employed strategies such as sterilization to stop the spread of “unfit” heredity, whereas Kellogg refused to let go of the offered mercy and hope of his Seventh-day Adventist foundations. For the idea that man could not change defeated the

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Stuart, *The Bloodless Revolution*, 439.

¹⁴¹ Rosen, *Preaching Eugenics*, 90.

entire purpose of the gospel of Christ and Kellogg's greater gospel. This is an important distinction between him and the eugenicists he unsuccessfully courted. Kellogg's refusal to accept the principle of unchanging hereditary traits in favor of changing individuals through lifestyle reform, caused eugenicists such as Davenport to marginalize him. Kellogg was not trying to create a new religion by "fitting" his reforms into eugenic principles, he was trying to convince eugenicists that eugenics was simply the scientific classification of God's plan of salvation; thereby reorienting the eugenic movement from a foundation of science to religion—where, in his mind, it belonged.

5.5 Conclusion: Kellogg's Greater Gospel

Kellogg's participation in the eugenic movement (albeit mostly in positive eugenics), while regarded by some as shameful and delegitimizing, was perhaps unavoidable. By the time eugenics was conceived of, Kellogg had already proven himself a worthy example of an agent of transfer through the multiple intercultural transfers exhibited in his health reform movements. Thus, Kellogg's intercultural transfer of Galton's eugenic theory resulted in him modifying it to fit his context of religious health reform. As a result of this modification, the health reforms of the Seventh-day Adventists became "biologic living" to aid in the acceptance of Kellogg's theistic eugenics to those less likely to accept a sectarian movement in place of science.

For Kellogg, eugenics was the culmination of everything he had worked for in his health reform career, it encompassed the "truth" he had learned from Seventh-day Adventism and combined it with the context of a new world of science and progressivism. But it also touched upon the apocalyptic nature of his denominational belief. Just as the *Barfüßige Propheten* (barefooted prophets), or the "inflationary saints" of Germany who were the expression of its

millenarian current—such as Louis Haeusser (1881-1927)—foretold of the apocalyptic end of German society and truly believed that their coming made all things new in preparation for the advent, so did Kellogg see himself as the prophet of theistic eugenics, and believed that his purpose was to perfect the human body for translation to heaven.¹⁴² The principle of eugenics—trying to change the human body for the better (ergo the perfection of the human body)—was what Kellogg had been seeking from the very beginning of his health reform movements with the Seventh-day Adventists.

Eugenics, for Kellogg, became about communing with the divine: it was how one perfected the body through communion with the divine, and a person communed with the divine by following “biologic living” (the Seventh-day Adventist health principles) established as the foundation of Kellogg’s work. All of Kellogg’s health reform movements—vegetarianism, sex, light therapy, etc.—were implemented to perfect the body and came together almost organically into the eugenic movement. But the eugenic movement was not what Kellogg wanted it to be; Galton and other eugenicists had invented eugenics to be a representation of the cold, unforgiving facts of scientific heredity, and Kellogg was desperately trying to create a theistic eugenics that was understood in religious and theological terms. Kellogg was trying to pull eugenics towards the Seventh-day Adventist religion he had known all his life.

Eugenics, for good reason, is not remembered fondly in history. But it is indeed truly remarkable in its resilience. Howard Markel ended his chapter on Kellogg and eugenics noting that “the spurious cause of Race Betterment [eugenics], to which Dr. Kellogg devoted so much of his time, reputation, talent, and fortune are dead, gone, and, hopefully, never to be resurrected.”¹⁴³ Such sentiments are perhaps naïve wishful thinking since eugenics and its aims

¹⁴² Ulrich Linse, *Bafüßige Propheten: Erlöser der zwanziger Jahre* (Berlin: Siedler Verlag, 1983), 34.

¹⁴³ Markel, *The Kelloggs*, 321.

are far from dead and gone in our society. Khl noted that even with the taint of Nazism in eugenics, eugenicists simply sought to remove the term “eugenics” from their organizations and vocabularies. For example, in 1969 the *Eugenics Quarterly* was retitled the *Journal of Social Biology*, and eugenicists began using terms such as human geneticist, psychiatrist, and sociologist to describe themselves “in an attempt to avoid eugenics terminology.”¹⁴⁴ Nazi connections to sterilization certainly did not affect sterilization programs in the United States, with some states, such as California, sterilizing individuals up to 1983.¹⁴⁵ Even after learning of the sickening and reprehensible actions of Nazi eugenics in the Second World War, eugenic sterilization not only continued in the United States, it took up speed. Hansen and King observed that post-war proponents of sterilization “were still overwhelmingly eugenicists,” and institutions of sterilization “carried on much as before, except that, in many cases, their level of activity expanded.”¹⁴⁶

More recently, reports of the secret sterilization of 146 female inmates in California prisons, between 2006 and 2010, confirm that eugenic practices are still alive, and Adam Serwer notes that the racial eugenics of Madison Grant are being revived in the current United States immigration debate.¹⁴⁷ In *The Case Against Perfection* Michael Sandel observes that we are entering the age of genetic engineering, writing that in “the age of the genome, the language of

¹⁴⁴ Khl, *The Nazi Connection*, 105.

¹⁴⁵ See Lutz Kaelber’s (University of Vermont) sterilization database available at <https://www.uvm.edu/~lkaelber/eugenics/>; particularly the file on California, <https://www.uvm.edu/~lkaelber/eugenics/CA/CA.html>.

¹⁴⁶ Hansen and King, *Sterilized by the State*, 163.

¹⁴⁷ See Alex Stern, “Sterilization Abuse in State Prisons: Time to Break With California’s Long Eugenic Patterns” The Huffpost Blog, entry posted July 23, 2013, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/alex-stern/sterilization-california-prisons_b_3631287.html; and Adam Serwer, “White Nationalism’s Deep American Roots,” *The Atlantic*, April 2019.

eugenics is making a comeback.”¹⁴⁸ We are now facing a second eugenic wave, but this time we have the knowledge of genetics—this time people know what they are doing.

Rosen notes “the zeal” of eugenic beliefs can “appeal even if the movement itself sustained serious criticism of its methods and aims,” and that eugenic ideas continue to “excite the human imagination.”¹⁴⁹ Unfortunately eugenics, not unlike religious fanaticism, has found permanence in American society, and it is yet to be determined if we can truly overcome our need to attain perfection, and indeed establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

¹⁴⁸ Michael J. Sandel, *The Case against Perfection: Ethics in the Age of Genetic Engineering* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 75.

¹⁴⁹ Rosen, *Preaching Eugenics*, 181.

Conclusion: Fit for Translation

When I first started this study I was determined to let the sources guide my path and conclusions. As I continued studying and writing I observed a common theme within topics that, at least on the surface, seemed unconnected other than their inclusion in Kellogg's health reform movement. This theme was central to Kellogg's conception of health reform and it drove his every move within it. The perfection of the body—making it fit for translation—was the focal point of Kellogg's work: every speech, every lecture, every article and book, whether God was mentioned or not, sought to bring humanity into a state of physical perfection, and, thus, spiritual perfection. To Kellogg the physical and spiritual had become inseparable: "We may sometime cease to say physical and moral, for man is one in all his attributes. To be one with God, to be in absolute harmony with the power that works for good in all the universe, to be in accord with all the principles that govern man's relations to the things and beings about him—this is happiness."¹

In this study, I explored the health reform movements of vegetarianism, sex, light therapy, and eugenics. Each one revealed that religious language and doctrine lay beneath a veneer of medicine and reform. In some cases these religious ideas were subtle, and in others they were blatant. But for Kellogg, each one held a key to a mystic path, in that they helped an individual commune with God. Vegetarianism physically purified the body, and, according to Kellogg's salvific vegetarian beliefs, pure food was the transmitter of God's life and energy into the human body to change it, sanctify it, and make it fit for translation into heaven. While Kellogg allowed for the possibility of permissible sex for procreation, he was certainly worried

¹ John Harvey Kellogg, "The Joy of Life," *Natural Living*, Box 10, John Harvey Kellogg Papers.

about too much marital sex and illicit sex. Sex, more than the other topics of health reform, was less obscured with a façade of medicine; after all, religious beliefs and sex had long been intertwined, and sexual sin certainly impacted salvation. Light therapy was religious from its inception, but this was certainly due more to its presentation as a continuation of ancient sun cults. Yet, Kellogg saw God's healing hand in sunlight as much as the ancient Egyptians saw life and health in the rays of Rā. Eugenics embodied everything Kellogg had worked for in his career. To him, eugenic improvement of the body was the perfect way to translate his salvific health reforms into progressivism.

This overarching theme of perfecting the body through salvific health reform challenges the notion that religion has no place in modern society. Kellogg was not looking to the past and trying to resurrect outdated ideas. Instead, he utilized modern technology and concepts available to him in his quest for making people healthy and fit for translation. Religion is often sequestered to the pre-modern world and does not seem to have a place in a world that is driven by rationality and science. Yet, my work on Kellogg's involvement in health reform demonstrates that religion influenced and shaped modern society and created quasi-religious movements such as vegetarianism. One *converted* to vegetarianism, one *prayed* for chastity, one *worshipped* the sun, and one *preached* eugenics. These religious undertones developed and continued regardless of Kellogg's involvement, but his religious background and conviction made him acutely sensitive to the undercurrents of faith in his work and enabled him to amplify their centrality.

The image of Kellogg in today's society is hazy at best, and many associate him only with cornflakes. Few understand the tremendous impact he had on health reforms in the United States and Europe. Kellogg is often ridiculed and his eccentricity emphasized, even by scholars

writing on him. His contributions to transatlantic health reform are thus overlooked in favor of a narrative of drama, peculiar practices, and personal flaws.

Once Kellogg is studied within a transatlantic framework his network of intercultural health reform becomes readily apparent. This network was always present but ignored by traditional history that limited itself to studying individuals and phenomena within the framework of American history. His religious motivations and aspirations were also just beneath the surface, but an historical convention that has banished religion from the modern historical context excluded such perspectives. My work demonstrates the significance of the transatlantic context as well as the integration of religion in writing modern history. My work will also hopefully ensure that we remember Kellogg for more than just the cornflakes.

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