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The New-Church Messenger

November 13, 1954, Vol. 174, No. 23

THE NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER

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November 13, 1954

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Essentials of Faith of The New Church

There is one God, and He is the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Word is Divine and contains a spiritual or inner meaning whereby is revealed the way of regeneration.

Saving faith is to believe in Him and keep the Commandments of His Word.

Evil is to be shunned as sin against God.

Human life is unbroken and continuous, and the world of the spirit is real and near.

"Praise the Lord for His Goodness"

A Thanksgiving Day Meditation

by Henry C. Giunta

"O that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men! Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving and declare His works with rejoicing."

—PSALM 107:21-22.

SINCE the year 1621, when Governor Bradford of the Plymouth Colony appointed a day whereon the people of that colony were to render thanks unto God for His mercy, Thanksgiving Day has become an institution in the thought and life of the American people. It is one of the red-letter days in the calendar of the year, a day to which all of us look forward with delight, joy and hope.

But why a national Thanksgiving Day? Is not the duty of rendering thanks unto God constant and perennial? Why not let every one thank God whenever he wishes and whenever he feels like it? Is not one day as good as another? Why then designate a particular day? These and similar questions that might lurk in the minds of men are by no means silly or out of place, for they reflect a certain state of rebellion aimed at any kind of formalism that might threaten the exercise of a free spirit even in the duty of personal thanksgiving. Therefore, it might not be amiss if we should say a few words in reply.

This Day Praise the Lord

In the first place we see nothing wrong in setting aside one day of the year whereon the collective thought of the people of this Nation might be focussed on one single proposition: *To Praise the Lord For His Goodness, and For His Wonderful Works to the Children of Men.* Surely, as a nation, we have much to be thankful for. Rich in natural resources, and blessed with a form of government which allows, protects and maintains the essential freedoms that give dignity to human worth, America affords an outlet for the ingenuity of men and women to rise above themselves and to labor for the fruits of the spirit as well as for the fruits of the earth. Moreover, being replete with men and women of productive genius, and a passion for free enterprise, it can produce enough of the necessities of life to feed the earth.

Disappointments and Triumphs Mixed

But lest we forget, all of those riches and blessings we enjoy as a nation have not come to us as a birthright. They have been bestowed on us by the Lord who makes use of our ingenuity, and who guides our destiny. Neither have they come to us completely devoid of human anxiety and apprehensive preoccupation. Indeed, the words of one of our late Presidents penned in proclamation of Thanksgiving Day a few years ago, are both ap-

plicable and worthy of meditation for today. Said he:

"The year which now approaches its end has been marked, in the experiences of our nation, by a complexity of trials and triumphs, of difficulties and achievements which we must regard as our inevitable portion in such an epoch as that through which all mankind is moving. As we survey the experience of the passing twelve months, we shall find that our state presents very much to justify a nation-wide and most sincere testimony of gratitude for the bounty which has been bestowed upon us. Though we have lived in the shadow of the hard consequences of great conflict, our country has been at peace and has been able to contribute toward the maintenance and perpetuation of peace in the world. We have seen the race of mankind make gratifying progress on the way to permanent peace, toward order and restored confidence in its high destiny. For the Divine guidance which has enabled us in growing fraternity with other peoples, to attain so much of progress; for the bounteous yield which has come to us from the resources of our soil and our industry, we owe a tribute of gratitude, and with it our acknowledgment of the duty and obligation to our people and to the unfortunate, the suffering, the distracted of other lands. Let us in all humility acknowledge how great is our debt to the Providence which has generously dealt with us, and give devout assurance of unselfish purpose to play a helpful and ennobling part in human advancement. It is much to be desired that in rendering homage for the blessings which have come to us, we should earnestly testify our continued and increasing aim to make our own great fortune a means of helping and serving, as best we can, the cause of all humanity."

Yes, we as a nation have much to be grateful for. To be sure, we have had our ups and downs, hardships and trials, disappointments and discouragements, but we also have had some triumphs and successes, achievements and accomplishments.

One Holy Day

Secondly, we see no reason why we as individuals and as Christians should not set aside one day in the year in which we unite in rendering thanks unto the Lord our God for the wonderful bounties we have received and enjoyed during the year, and to

(Next page please)

petition that they be continued in the year to come. True that each day is replete with the Lord's goodness and love, and that each day is pregnant with Divine promises, but the yearly custom of the American people to set aside a single day, in which to focus the attention to the duty of thanksgiving, is a noble and fitting one. On that day the call becomes universal. We are to pay tribute to the Lord of heaven and earth for "His wonderful works to the children of men." And what is man, may we ask, if he is devoid of a sense of gratitude for blessings received, or unresponsive to the benevolences of the Lord, which are merely tokens of His great love and merciful kindness toward men? The religious impulse of such a man must be weak indeed if he does not feel the need for gratitude. For gratitude is an active, strengthening and liberating religious impulse that seeks expression in word and deed. There is no baser impulse, no feebler faith, in the heart and mind of man than the impulse to stay or to diverge the sense of gratitude.

To the early settlers of this country Thanksgiving Day meant a great deal. To them it was a Holy Day, a day that offered them both the privilege and the opportunity to render individual thanks to the Lord for the Divine bounties and protection He had sent their way during the year. We sincerely hope and trust that this coming Thanksgiving Day may mean to us as much if not more; and that we will not let it pass by without lifting our hearts and minds in gratitude to Him who is the Giver of all good. We want this Thanksgiving Day to be a day of cheer and gladness, of joy and happiness; a day filled with memories of things that have been delightful. But, at the same time, we would not willingly let it pass by without giving a thought to its religious significance; or without thanking the Lord, the Author of all joy and happiness.

Count Your Blessings

Indeed, as Thanksgiving Day approaches, we have much to call to our remembrance; we have much to be grateful for. True that we have not escaped trials and vexations, hardships and disappointments, neither as a nation, as a church, nor as individuals. The past year has been in many ways trying for all of us. We have suffered and endured much: we have been unkindly and unjustly treated more times than we have deserved: we have worked relatively hard and have executed our tasks to our best knowledge and ability. In short, we have tried our best yet have little to show for our efforts. Nevertheless, in more ways than we can number, how wonderfully we have been preserved and allowed to work! How wonderfully we have been led and cared for from day to day, and how wonderfully we have been allowed to enjoy life with its many joys and satisfactions! Yes, to none of us has the past year been totally unkind or void of its days of gladness. On the whole, it has been a bright and a good year. If we have little to show as the result of our labors, let us remember that we have still to remain grateful for the opportunities we have had to share in the work of the world, and to perform uses which have called

forth in us the best we had in ingenuity and nobility of spirit.

It is high time, then, that we begin counting our blessings instead of begrudging our fate, and to become genuinely appreciative of the Lord's infinite love and goodness toward us all. To our way of thinking there is no baser trait in man than that of remaining ungrateful in the face of the many blessings that surround him.

Opportunities Abound

How true is that saying of old that we are slow and seemingly unwilling to acknowledge our common blessings! How many of us, for instance, are truly grateful for our accustomed good health, for the ability to work, for the privilege of rearing a family, for the pleasures of social life, for the opportunity to serve the Lord in His Church, for the willingness to share in the work of social agencies, and have a hand in the amelioration, betterment and improvement of mankind? Our hearts should be filled with gratitude for all the privileges and opportunities afforded to us. It is gratitude for these common things of life, for these common blessings, and the appreciation of their true worth in life, that we need to think of at this time of the year. And, in sincere acknowledgment of them, we raise our voices in the thanksgiving and praise to the Lord our God, for through them He makes life worth living.

Fear of Adversity

Strange as it may seem, most of us fear adversity. We dread struggle and lament over an occasional reversal, trial or temptation. Yet all of these are part and parcel of our life-experience. They can be taken as opportunities—not opportunities to be sought, for the Lord knows when and how to allow them to come to us—but opportunities to replace the weak foundation of character with solid religious virtues of which gratitude is one. Upon this foundation can be erected the structure of firm manhood and womanhood. Thus even in adversity, struggle and tribulation we can remain grateful, for they come to us to turn our weakness into strength. We should remember that our fears are no greater than the weakness of our faith: our trials are no heavier than our moral strength is light: our temptations are no more severe than our spirituality is faint. The darkness comes that the light to illumine it may be given—trials aggravate that strength and wisdom may be established—temptations are permitted that the soul's destitution may be seen and that we may be moved to open the door that the Lord of life and blessing may come in and gift us with the Divine power to win and to overcome.

Great then should be our gratitude for the power that we can gain through affliction. Think what it would mean for us if we could regard our trials and hardships as blessings in disguise, as great opportunities to overcome something wrong and for laying a stronger and firmer hold on the Lord and on His truth.

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"UP! FOR THIS IS THE DAY"

by Antony Regamey

(This sermon was preached in the Boston New Church, September 19 for Reunion Sunday. It seems appropriate also for Stewardship Sunday, November 21.)

"And Deborah said unto Barak, 'Up; for this is the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera into thine hand. Hath not the Lord gone out before thee?'"—JUDGES 4:14.

THESE are fighting words. They are a call to battle; a summons to the ancient tribes of Israel to strike for freedom and survival in a truly desperate situation. A century and a half after their conquest of the land, under Joshua, they were in danger of losing their identity and of being swallowed up by the peoples in the midst of whom they had settled. They had inter-married with them and adopted their customs and their gods. Each clan had been concerned mostly with its own local interests. Their sense of belonging to one another was nearly gone. So was their undivided loyalty to the Lord and, together with it, their vision of a divinely appointed destiny.

Because of this lack of unity and purpose, now for some twenty years the tribes of the North had fallen in subjection to a powerful chieftain, described in our Scripture as Jabin, King of Canaan. They were cut off from the South by a broad belt of fortresses he had erected across the country. While, for their subsistence, the newcomers, now in their third generation, depended on agriculture, Jabin had an army far superior to any Israel could muster. This included nine hundred war-chariots of iron. The oppression was such, we are told, that all trade ceased. For fear of plunder, open roads were deserted. People ran on urgent errands through secret mountain paths. Besides paying heavy tribute, they never were sure of their crops. They hid behind their town walls, or in upland valleys. They lived in constant anxiety, dispirited, helpless, cowed, paralyzed. Had nothing been done about it, more than likely Hebrew history would have come to an end, and there would be no Judæa-Christian tradition today.

But it was then that Deborah—a Jewish Joan of Arc—rallied the tribes and fanned into a living flame again their flagging spirit, inspiring them to united action. A prophetess, she is called, and rightly so. For, to her, the issue was not survival for its own sake, but for the sake of the knowledge and purpose of the true God among men. The war-call she sent forth throughout the land went straight to the heart of the matter. It was, "Come to the help of Jehovah against the mighty"! Again, with prophetic assurance, she conveyed to the people the conviction that in this dire crisis their God would not fail them.

We know the story. It is vividly told, first in prose, then in dramatic poetry in chapters four and

five of the Book of Judges. First, Deborah's challenge to Barak to lead in battle. The sudden storm of sleet and hail which turned the plain into a quagmire just as the host of the Hebrews rushed from the mountainside on the chariots of the enemy, bogging them down in the mud. The flight on foot of Sisera, the enemy captain. His death at the hand of Jael, a Kenite woman in whose tent he had sought refuge.

How transparent it all is, when we read it as a parable of the soul, a picture of the issues confronting us today on the plane of the spirit—which is the one and the only reason why it is part of the Word of God! How still riddled with fear our world is! How subjected to the tyranny and oppression of materialism! How far from actuality our land of promise, the Kingdom of God here on earth: an order of life in which peace, justice, good-will and human brotherhood such as the Lord intends, shall prevail at last, still is. Truly, the Canaanites, the ancient inhabitants of the land, all the hereditary tendencies of man's lower nature—selfishness, greed, cruelty, jealousy, possessiveness, and the spirit of pride and dominion—are still very much with us. Here, too, is man's reliance on force, on the gadgets and machines his self-intelligence has created, Jabin's chariots of iron. Indeed, how difficult it has become for us churchmen and all spiritually-minded people, to preserve our identity, to escape being swallowed up by the kind of world in which we must live. How hard, at times, not to adopt the customary ways of thinking, the practices and the false gods that the world worships. How prone we are to inter-marriage with it, to become half-pagan, half-Christian! How very much we still lack unity, as churches and in our individual lives! And what shall we say of our vision of a divinely-appointed destiny, the conviction that life and history make sense, that God is in them, that He has a purpose for us and all mankind?

Among all well-meaning people, and because they are well-meaning, many are dispirited, helpless, cowed, paralyzed and close to despair. Sisera, the aggressive spirit of the times, is in control. Sisera, the oppressor, is on the march and who shall stop him? As the tribes of the North and the tribes of the South in the holy land were cut off from one another, who does not feel torn inwardly, unable to synchronize into action will and understanding? In your mind you may be a Christian, but how frustrated you become in your will and desire to put your allegiance into practice. Or, you may have the desire but be unable to find the way to so live. Christ is "the hope of the world," we proclaim. In the light of all this, how little surprising it is that some should hold that He is so, not now in the full sense, but at the end of history and beyond history, when He shall come again and establish his kingdom,

destroying all that oppose Him! Yet, is this consistent with the Christ we know, and with his own teachings?

Now, the significant feature of our story is that, despite the pressure of the world, heart and mind, the two parts of our nature, can still find a way of working together and to overcome. Deborah in the South and Barak in the North may still win the battle if they cooperate; love in the lead, infilled with the spirit of the Lord. As all the valiant men of Israel were to be gathered on a mountain, so the heart in whom the Lord dwells knows that it is useless and futile to beat the world at its own game and to fight it with its own weapons. That way means confusion worse confounded, wars to end wars, armament races, and the substitution of one tyranny for another. No reliance on force alone, or on the powers of self-intelligence will ever make the world secure. God is spirit, and our weapons are the might of the spirit! We must derive our strength and muster it on the heights, on a higher range of realities than the world of matter; more on the levels of those ideals, forces and principles which can raise men to their divinely intended spiritual stature, close indeed to the God-Man whose Transfiguration, when on earth, is said to have taken place on that same mountain.

Our task, as Christians, and as churches, is first of all to live by those principles, by the truths the God-Man, our Lord and Savior Jesus-Christ came to reveal in his own person, in the fullest measure we can; then, it is to do our utmost, in all possible ways to create and strengthen a social conscience and so to influence mankind's way of thinking, that the evils and materialism that would enslave us shall become powerless, bog down in the mud as the chariots of Sisera.

"Up! For this is the day in which the Lord hath delivered Sisera in thine hand!" So far as the redemption of the world is concerned, that day may take a long time to come. It is up to us to hasten it. But this deliverance can and must come to each of us, individually. The battle is that of our regeneration, of our being born anew, made new creatures. Victory is possible because, as Deborah

added, "Hath not the Lord gone out before thee?" In the nature He assumed and glorified, He made that victory his own. Henceforth, his is the power, the enlightenment and the incentive. Ours is the awaiting response. See how, in the song which celebrated Israel's victory, it is not man, but the Lord who is to be praised. As for Deborah, Barak and Israel, it was a case of weakness made strong by a strength not their own. It was a case of hope and courage being born out of love stronger than that of whatever they were afraid to lose, thus overcoming fear and cowardice. True courage is always like that.

Again, that song brings us the assurance and the insight that this is a moral universe; that in the very structure of it are forces which can be our invisible allies when our deeds and thoughts and desires are in harmony with the Lord's purpose. "The stars in their courses, fought against Sisera." Spiritually speaking, this tells us too, that we are not alone. The heavens are with us. There is another world above and within this. Invisible companions and fellow-workers support and surround us while our battle lasts. Our heavenly destinies are in the hands of the Lord. "The stars in their courses fought against Sisera." We can rely on the great moral constancies of God's universe, the inward and outward one. He is in both, leading

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Despite the rightful acclaim accorded the Wayfarers' Chapel at Portuguese Bend, Calif., to one who has visited both, the New Church Center in St. Petersburg, Fla. may well receive its share of merited praise as serving the Church in a unique and most useful fashion.

As pictures in THE MESSENGER have shown, and more recently a postcard, the buildings, grounds and general utilities of the Center not only have an esthetic appeal and most harmonious sphere, but with the Southeastern Association having its headquarters there, the Mission Board's stamp department reaching to all parts of the world, the

bookroom and loan library, quite a hub of Convention activity already has been established.

The St. Petersburg Society, of which Mrs. Charles H. Kuenzli had been Leader so long, until her recent retirement, holds its Sunday morning services and Wednesday afternoon study and discussion meetings there, and recently it formed a Ladies Auxiliary. The Church's only regular radio program continues Saturday mornings at 11:30 o'clock, over WSUN, 620 on the dial.

To provide the start of a guest house for visitors, Mrs. Kuenzli recently designed an addition to the right wing

of the Center, and construction will be about completed by the time this item is published. It is hoped that as time goes on there can be other residence units on the grounds, and the erection of a chapel is another object in view.

Although the cost of such buildings and grounds in possibly one of the most exclusive sections of St. Petersburg called for a large sum, the property is all paid for, as is the new addition. For information, or those desiring to send gifts of used stamps to the Board of Missions, address, Rev. Leslie Marshall, Box 386, St. Petersburg. The Center is at 1915 Fifth Street, North.

Thanksgiving—Stewardship

SOMEONE has said that gratitude is an appreciation of favors yet to come. All too often this is the case, and particularly so when giving thanks to the Lord. If a man has been blessed with good health, prosperity and other worldly values, there is a strong tendency to feel that these are the result of his own wise efforts. That Divine Providence has in any way made any contribution is too easily overlooked. Among the ancient Hebrews this was not so. In the Old Testament the sacrifice of thanksgiving was a sacrifice of something the owner valued, such as a sheep or an ox that would have brought a good price on the market. Moreover, it was a voluntary offering made not only at stated seasons of year, but at any time that a person felt disposed to make it. When an occasion for rejoicing arose such as a wedding, unlooked for prosperity, or a return to health, it was not customary to celebrate until a thank-offering had been taken to the temple.

In the Hebrew thank-offering of Old Testament days, there was much fear. The offering was frequently made in the same spirit as that in which a tenant takes to the landlord the latter's share of the harvest. But there was also in it an acknowledgment of dependence on the Lord. The Christian is asked to make his offering not from fear, but from a love that gladly recognizes an absolute dependence on the Lord. He does not resent this dependence; on the contrary he rejoices in it. His offering is a symbol of gratitude for this dependence. Some religious people assert that prayers should not be requests for blessings from God but consist wholly of giving thanks. There is something to this. On the other hand, a prayer to God of the kind called intercessory is an acknowledgment of God as the giver of all things, material and spiritual; hence, has a place in the spiritual life.

A thank-offering which expresses the worshipper's sense of dependence on God is also an expression of stewardship. When a man realizes that all he has and is, come to him as gifts from God, he should also realize that he is invested with a responsibility in the use of these possessions. They are given to him in trust, and his task is to wisely administer them.

This thought is not irrelevant to giving for the uses of the church. The Lord Himself founded the church. In one sense it is His visible kingdom upon earth. But He did not endow it financially so that at no time would it lack the material means necessary to its existence. That task he left to man, for the church cannot be an instrument to promote the spiritual life unless it calls forth enough loyalty and love in the hearts of its adherents to provide for its needs.

It is a sure sign of our gratitude to God for all that He has given us, if we make a thank-offering by our gifts to the Lord's church.

Fire

ONE of man's earliest discoveries was fire. Its existence, of course, pre-dates the life of man on this planet, so it is not correct to claim it as a human discovery. But somewhere and at some time man learned to make use of it to provide himself with heat and with light and perhaps as a protection against enemies. Some scholars think that human culture began with man's acquiring a measure of control over fire. The earliest fires gave illumination, of course, and some may have been kindled or kept burning with that objective principally in mind. But the light would be small and unsatisfactory in comparison with the heat. Who would like to read on a hot July night by the glare of a camp fire? Gradually there came refinements with less heat and more light as faggots, the first oil burning lamps, and candles came into use.

There is a similar pattern in man's spiritual development. In its highest sense fire corresponds to love of God and of the neighbor; and in the lowest sense to the emotions of hostility, destructiveness, envy and lust. The lower emotions manifest themselves early in life. It is not until these are united with truth that they can be transformed into higher affections.

As man evolved culturally, he gained increasing control over fire; similarly, as he grows spiritually, he gains increasing control over his lower emotions. And just as uncontrolled fire is a deadly natural enemy, so an uncontrolled emotion is a deadly spiritual enemy.

Have We Forgotten God?

ABRAMHAM LINCOLN gave voice to many utterances that are as valid today as when he first spoke them. Among these we would include the following:

"We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth, and power as no other nation has ever grown.

"But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these things were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own.

"Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us."

"Stewardship Sunday"

November 21

This is the new name suggested by the Council of Ministers to call our attention to the beginning of Convention's Annual Appeal Drive. It stresses our responsibility as good stewards to the Church and to the Lord, and should serve to remind us of the purpose of the Annual Appeal. Being the Sunday before Thanksgiving, it should make us realize our highest blessings and our dutiful response.

For several years now, many of our societies have observed this Sunday, and have found it very helpful. Also those who have used our suggested Order of Service have experienced a feeling of oneness with their friends in other societies as all united in a common worship at the same time. It is with the hope that still more of our societies will observe "Stewardship Sunday," that the following order of Service is offered.

ORDER OF SERVICE

Processional Hymn 842: "Faith Of Our Fathers!"

Selection: Psalm 122, page 88.

First Lesson: Exodus 35:4-29.

Responsive Service: "The Holy City, New Jerusalem," page 118.

Second Lesson: Mark 12:1-12; 41-44.

Prayers:

The Responsive Prayers, page 5.

"Our Church," page 228.

"For the Leadership of Convention," page 231.

"For Ministry and People," page 231.

"For the Missionary Spirit," page 232.

Hymn 364: "We Would Be Building."

The Sermon.

The Offertory.

Closing Hymn 816: "O Mother Dear, Jerusalem."

RICHARD H. TAFEL, Chairman,
Council of Ministers.

Song of Harvest Home

The religions of man through the ages have included expressions of his awe and wonder at the mystery of sun, soil and seed which bring forth autumn's bountiful harvest. With songs of joy and thanksgiving they have given praise for the full storehouses and the promise of security during long winter months. In the Judaeo-Christian tradition the celebration of ripening crops goes back to the great Jewish festivals.

This autumn in thousands of American country and city churches congregations will continue the centuries-old tradition by setting aside one Sunday service for the observance of the Harvest Festival. For country dwellers the service is a focal point at which those who live closest to nature can express their gratitude. For the city dweller, it is a reminder that the food in shiny tin cans and neatly wrapped frozen packages comes originally from the bounty of the earth.

Praise the Lord

(Continued from page 372)

Material and Spiritual Blessings

Therefore, we give thanks for all the material and spiritual blessings that have come to us as a people and as a nation. We give thanks for the abundant harvests, we give thanks for a way of life that makes possible human progress despite negative conditions; we give thanks for a stable government, for national security and for peace. We give thanks for a national consciousness that makes possible a more adequate and secure standard of living; for better housing and for greater protection against the hazards of accident, ill-health, unemployment and old age, for better schools and churches, for the liberty of speech and press, and for the privilege to worship in accordance with the dictates of one's conscience. Yes, as a nation we have many good reasons to be truly grateful and appreciative of our heritage.

We have equally good reasons to thank the Lord for the establishment of His New Church and for its heavenly teachings. We thank Him for the holy influences He has imparted and imparts to us and for the spread of the New Evangel in foreign lands. We thank Him for a rise of faith, felt everywhere and for the keener sense of the need of a universal brotherhood.

As Christians of the New Age, we have additional reasons for giving thanks. True, progress has been slow and has not come to us in abundance at any one time. Trials and tribulations have been our fare. Difficulties have been neither few nor easy to settle. We have not progressed as we wished. We have not done the things we hoped to do. But we have done something for which we can be thankful and for which we ought to give thanks, namely: we have remained true to our calling; we have been able to hold aloft the banner of the Lord's liberat-

ing truths. And that is something for which we can be truly grateful.

Think and Will Peace

We thank God, then, for the material and spiritual blessings He has given us. We thank Him for the peace that has come to us and to other children of men. The guns of battle are silent and the world is of now at peace again. How long this peace will last depends upon the attitudes and willingness of men to stay at peace with one another. But all of us, individually and collectively, can at least pause to render thanks unto the Lord for these days of peace. To be sure, there are many problems awaiting solution, problems that are so charged with feeling and emotion which if not understood and dealt with in time, may lead to the catastrophe of a third world war. But thanks to the Lord our God there is abroad a growing desire for peace. The signs of the times are budding with Divine promises, for more is being done today, than ever before, to think peace, to will peace and to pray for peace. The task is herculean and the workers are few, yet progress is being made. True that there are some nations, some organizations, some individuals who take delight in keeping the fires of hatred burning, but it is also true that there are other nations, organizations, and individuals who are working for peace, making the preservation of peace their delight. For this trend of events we render humble and heartfelt thanks.

Yes, we have many good reasons for thanking the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men. We can count up all our blessings so that when Thanksgiving Day comes we shall have them clearly in mind and be impelled by their great number to offer thanks unto the Lord for His merciful and loving kindness toward us all.

HOW LOVE IS LOST AND FOUND

by Harold B. Larsen

What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness and go after that which is lost, until he find it: and when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing. LUKE 15

THIS PARABLE AND THE TWO following it are in very close connection, dealing with the reaction of the Divine Love to sinners. They are told to the publicans and the sinners who needed the assurance of divine forgiveness, and who had flocked to hear Jesus.

They were told in answer to the criticism and the murmuring of the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees who sneered and said, "This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them."

In the Thanksgiving season, what can inspire more gratitude in our hearts than this, the Divine Love, a love far beyond our comprehension, reaches out to save all the children of men and to enfold them in a warm, life-giving embrace as the sun envelops the earth with its heat and light.

Yet how seldom do we think of how this love is constantly affecting us. If we look into the marvels of the physical world we can see untold examples of His tender, loving care and protection. But when we examine into the microcosm (that marvelous world within us) and see how tenderly He nourishes, protects and cares for our souls, we must have hearts of stone not to respond to His love.

The greatest expression of God's love was when He came on earth to save those who were lost in evil and sin. It has long been taught that Jesus came to save us from the wrath and vengeance of an outraged Father—God—but we in the New Christian Church know that it was the Lord God Himself who came to earth and clothed Himself with the human form of Jesus. We know that God, who is infinite love, is not capable of wrath or anger, any more than the sun is capable of sending out waves of cold or darkness. It was as a God of love and mercy that He came to earth and this beautiful parable is an illustration of the character and the quality of the Lord's love for us and of how our love is lost and found. When the scribes and Pharisees challenged Him for consorting with the publicans and sinners the Lord acknowledged it, and in doing so, He claimed us as the sheep of His pasture. "These people are My sheep—and I am come to save that which was lost."

Of course, the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees felt that they had saved themselves by their outward conduct and observance of the law. And even today, and through the ages, there are other millions who feel self-righteous in the belief that the Lord has fulfilled

the commandments and that they do not have to obey them but can claim His righteousness while they inwardly break them.

The Pharisees and scribes did not note that Jesus spoke critically of them when He said, "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." They professed to hate the publicans and sinners who knew and acknowledged their sin. They did not think of their own evil inward nature. They had expected the Messiah to come in an outward, worldly glory and to lift them up into positions of glory. They had lost their affections for spiritual things. And so they lost their ability to judge the Lord truly and to see the nature of His great love toward even the sinner. They ignored the words of the Scriptures which said, "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God. And not that he should return from his ways and live again?" (*Ezek. 18:23*)

And again, "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord and He will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon." (*Isa. 55:7*)

In our parable, the shepherd, the "certain man" who has the sheep, represents the Lord. Often the Lord is compared to a shepherd in the Word. This is because it is the Lord who is also the owner of all the good and true affections and qualities in the human race which are compared to sheep. We read the well-known words, "The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not want." And in the New Testament, "I am the good shepherd and my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life." David, also, as a type of the Lord, was a keeper of sheep.

Here we can see that the sheep represent all who are in love to the Lord and charity to the neighbor. This could have included the scribes and Pharisees, who were outwardly God-loving, if they had also been inwardly charitable to their unfortunate neighbors who had fallen into evil.

But there is another sense to which we must pay attention. This is where the sheep represent also the sheep of

our mind which in general are all of our good principles of affection—our love and charity.

Now all of these good affections of the regenerating mind are described by the term of one hundred sheep. One hundred is a round number, a multiple of ten, meaning all or whole.

And here is one of the most amazing things about the All-seeing Love of the Lord. For He sees and knows when we have lost even one of our good qualities or virtues—one sheep out of 100.

Whenever we lapse or fall into an evil, which is opposite a virtue, we lose that virtue and the Lord becomes instantly aware of it. Every thought and every desire you have is known to Him.

And yet He does not force that wayward sheep back into the flock before it has a chance to go astray. God does not force us back again into that virtue we have lost. He leaves us in freedom to regain our hatred of that evil and find the love of its opposite virtue.

Nevertheless He does know that the sheep—the good virtue—is gone and He seeks to save it. It might be thought, "Why should one quality—one virtue be so important when all the other good qualities are there?" Well, one bad apple in a barrel will soon spoil the good ones. A little leaven soon leavens the whole lump.

And this is a very important virtue that is described by the sheep itself. It is the innocent quality of good of charity. When a man loses the good of charity or love then he is in a bad way indeed. Without love all of our other virtues become tainted with self-love. Without the good of love in our hearts we become selfish and cold, and soon lose our other virtues. It is said that none of us is perfect but the trouble is that some of us are impossible. We become impossible when we lose our love of the neighbor. How seldom we examine our own minds honestly to note the kinds of qualities we have. Sometimes your wife or husband or parents or good friends will tell you of something unpleasant in you. And it may be true. But how amazing it is to think that when a man loses even a little of his love and innocence—even one-hundredth of it—the Lord knows it and tries to bring that love back. How amazing it is to think that He knows every fleeting thought, every wish, every desire that is going on in our hearts and minds this very minute! And He is constantly going forth as a good shepherd by His Word and His ministering angels and spirits to seek and to save that which is lost. Oh, what a wonderful Saviour and Shepherd He is!

We are told that the Oriental sheep is accustomed to the shepherd's daily care and is very dependent on him. If

(Next page please)

lost, the sheep doesn't wander back like a dog or a horse would by himself, but becomes frightened and runs until he becomes exhausted and dies. As it loses a principle of the good of innocent love the most gifted mind becomes more obscured in spiritual darkness. Its affections and thoughts seem to be without a shepherd and become helpless and bewildered. Such a love and such a mind would die unless it is restored. It is at this time when the Lord, the Divine Shepherd, sees that we have lost one of our mental sheep; and especially the sheep of inward innocence and love—of looking to the Lord instead of to our own strength. It is then that He goes forth in our minds to save that which is lost. "All we, like sheep, have gone astray: we have turned everyone to his own way." But, in every dense thicket and rocky path of our lost lives the Lord constantly seeks to save our lost sheep. "And when He hath found it He layeth it upon His shoulders, rejoicing." What does this mean?

Well, in our common speech we tell others to put their shoulder to the wheel or to the plough. We want them to exert their full power and strength as it is in their shoulders. And when, with the Lord's help, the sheep of our lost innocent love is found, it has to be kept close to the shoulders—to the strength and power of the Good Shepherd. We have to know that it is God who is good and give Him the glory.

God wants us to be shepherds of the sheep of our own mind. When some of our innocent love of the Lord and the neighbor goes astray and we begin to ascribe charity and love to ourselves then the Lord has to act. But this parable also shows us that it is man's duty to break away from reliance on himself as the source of innocent good and to look to the Lord as the source of all life and good. You see, God wants us to be self-dependent and to do the works of an independent individual, but back of that should always be innocent love and the knowledge that it is in Him that we live and move and have our being. It is He alone that is the I AM and The Shepherd of the fold.

As we journey through life we are often forgetful that all good, and especially the good of innocent love and charity, is from God. We then lose much of the joy of a Christian. If the loss is noticed by a sincere Christian, he cries out, like the psalmist, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me—restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit."

When we once more find our good of innocent love we rejoice greatly in our restoration to the joy of heaven. Jesus said, "These things have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you

and that your joy may be full."

And now we are told that "When he cometh home he calleth together his friends and neighbors saying unto them, rejoice with me for I have found my sheep which was lost." Now who are these friends and neighbors of our mind. Well, the friends and the neighbors of our good spiritual qualities are our good natural qualities which also rejoice. Now let us see how this works. In psychosomatics, to which a great deal of attention is being given today, we have a study of the soul-psyche and the body-somatic. In this study it is definitely known that a poor spiritual state of health affects the physical health greatly. In the same way, a good and happy state of health comes from a good and happy state of mind or soul. The Christian Science practitioner will ask the sick one, "What have you been thinking or feeling?"

The Lord describes the state of rejoicing of the spiritual mind as being communicated to the friends and the neighbors of the natural mind and thus to the body. This is a state of good health. So if you would be well, keep the soul or spirit well and the natural man will be well.

And now comes a verse that has puzzled many people, for it is said, "Jesus says, I say unto you that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance." On the face of it, and in the literal sense, this seems to offer a prize for sinning and then repenting, rather than for a pure and spotless life. But just think of it this way. You may be a very fine person and have many wonderful qualities but there is one bad trait that bothers you. You have ninety and nine just persons or qualities that don't need repentance, and just one that does.

When you have, with the help of the shoulders—the power of the Lord—repented, and have overcome that bad trait, and a good of innocent love is restored, then there will be far more rejoicing than over the other good qualities because now there is no self-love, pride, hatred or evil to stop your joy from expressing itself. Spiritually our loss of the good of innocent love—the sheep—causes us great concern. And when the sheep that was lost is found and restored to the fold, we rejoice greatly. That is why psychosomatics is so fruitful in uncovering many deep and hidden illnesses, for the punishment of a sin and evil is in the sin itself. And until that sin and the love of it is removed there is only sorrow, remorse and often physical disease and pain.

What is the practical application of this parable to our lives? What should be done when we lose our good of inno-

cent love? This love will affect all of our affections, you know. Well, let us look deeply into our affections. Let us see if there is anywhere in our minds anger, dislike of others, a love of self or self-righteousness. Do we think we are pretty good? I sometimes shudder when I think of how evil I would be—and even the sweetest angel of you would be—apart from the loving care of our wonderful Shepherd. We could sink as low as Nero, Hitler or Stalin—and yes, as low as Satan. If our innocent love is lost, all our other affections will turn to self-love. And so, if ever we feel smug or satisfied or self-righteous in any way, let us beware. We are losing an important sheep. That sheep—the good of innocence and love—must be found and raised to the shoulders of the Lord. God alone is good and has the power of goodness. Then the good of innocence and love will be restored to the fold.

Let us forget our ninety and nine good virtues and get our good of innocent love back again. This is what our Lord tells us when He says, "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness and go after that which is lost until he find it; and when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing."

MY RELIGION

By HELEN KELLER

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WASHING PETER'S FEET

by R. J. Strong

"And Peter said unto Him, Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?" JOHN 13:6

THERE ARE ONE OR TWO things in this passage from the Gospel to which attention might be drawn.

Washing hands and feet was customary in the times to which our story belongs. The people of that day did not have knives, forks and spoons as we have for use when eating, so it was necessary that the hand, which was thrust into the common dish, should be quite clean.

Also, as sandals were used for the feet, instead of shoes and boots such as we have, and as the places traveled over were hot and dusty, it was customary both as an act of kindness and courtesy to the visitor to provide him with water for his feet. This was usually done when he entered the tent or house.

In the story before us the washing took place not before, but after they had had supper. "Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that he was come from God and went to God; He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments, and took a towel, and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded." (13:3 ff.)

Apparently all the others were washed without comment. The story continues: "Then cometh He to Simon Peter; and Peter saith unto Him: 'Lord dost Thou wash my feet?'"

We seem to hear the Lord's words in other places in the gospels, such as: "But whosoever would be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever would be chief among you, let him be your servant. Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." (Matt. 20:27-28)

And in *Luke*: "I am among you and He that serveth." (*Luke* 22:27)

It is clear that Peter did not understand what the Lord was doing. He did not know what it involved or represented, for Jesus said to him: "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter."

Still seeing the matter from his own point of view, "Peter saith unto Him, 'Thou shalt never wash my feet.'"

"Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me."

Did some light now begin to dawn in the mind of the impetuous Peter? Maybe he began to understand, for now he says: "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head."

To this Jesus gave the strange reply, which proves that something deeper than appears upon the surface was meant by the apparently simple action

of washing the feet of His disciples. "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit."

And He added, "'And ye are clean but not all.' For He knew who should betray Him, therefore said He, 'Ye are not all clean.'"

Being clean is connected with the inside as well as the outside; with the soul as well as with the body. In the parable of the vine Jesus saith: "Now are ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."

So it becomes evident that "instruction" can wash us, can cleanse our minds as water cleanses our bodies.

Are we not all conscious of having had refreshment of soul from reading or hearing, just as delightful an experience as the effect of a bath when the body is weary? Why should we speak of good news (or of the gospel) unless it came like showers upon the thirsty land?

And Jesus continued: "Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done unto you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."

The disciples did become the teachers and exemplars of the Christian religion.

As the feet support the body so the things of the natural life support all that is above and within. Unless we do what is orderly and right, the desires of the heart and the thoughts of the mind have nothing in which to terminate. So we see the force of the words in the prophet Isaiah: "Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes. Cease to do evil, learn to do well."

See here again how the washing is connected with the doing, with the acts and deeds of life.

That striking teaching to cut off the offending foot has meaning when we see that it does not refer to the physical body. "And if thy foot offend thee,

cut it off. It is better for thee to enter halt into life than having two feet to be cast into hell." (*Mark* 9:43) How many habits there are that are destructive of the soul!

And we are to help each other in these matters. There is a responsibility laid upon us to live as Christians, not merely to know about and teach the things of the Christian religion, but to do them. The feet, the foundations, must be made clean.

"*Benefactor Robbed*" reads a newspaper heading. The prisoner had approached a man with a hard-luck story and had been taken in and fed and treated like a brother. Three days later he returned with another man and burgled the house, stealing £60 worth of goods. "I don't think there is any reason to show mercy to you, especially in view of the fact that you have 23 or 24 previous convictions involving dishonesty," said the judge. How filthy, how dirty, must the prisoner have appeared to the judge.

To be washed by Jesus is to be cleansed by the truth, to be made clean by His Word. If truth cleanses, error defiles.

As an example take the story of the Good Samaritan. You remember the priest and the Levite passed by on the other side and left the wounded man to perish.

It has been pointed out that the priest and the Levite would be under the belief that they would be defiled by touching a dead body and they no doubt assumed the man would be dead. This error of belief would shut them out from doing a deed of mercy commended by the Lord. "Wrong ideas may kill right feelings."

The priestly decree that anyone touching a dead body should be deemed unclean for seven days acted against and overrode humane impulse in the priest of the Good Samaritan story, but we should not fall into the error of thinking that the regulation had no spiritual significance. Indeed, it embodies a spiritual truth which those who upheld it were not able to perceive.

We have to think of dead things, including dead bodies, mentioned in the

(Continued on page 384)

NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE ASSOCIATION

This New Church Association (incorporated in 1907), is planning to develop new activities, probably in the Boston area. Our former work in Lynn has been taken over by a group in that city chartered in 1947 as Gregg Neighborhood House Association, Inc. We are contributing to this work.

EDWINA WARREN WISE, *President*
WILLIAM C. MORGAN, *Treasurer*,
27 Whitcomb St., Belmont 79, Mass.

Trends and Trails

MUSLIM LEADERS CHALLENGE CHRISTIANITY

In August of this year Premier Gamel Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Mohammed Ali of Pakistan and King Saud of Saudi Arabia met in Mecca to decide what to do about Africa. They determined to launch a missionary crusade that would drive Christianity from that continent. A dispatch in the *New York Times* quoted Premier Nasser as saying, "I hope the Western powers won't take any untoward steps against us in this missionary campaign, because the establishment of Islam in Africa will be a shield against communism." Other dispatches indicate that the Muslims intend to denounce Christian missionaries as the "vanguard of imperialism." It looks very much like these Muslim rulers intend to use the secular power of the states which they control to promote the religion of Islam. Imagine Churchill and Eisenhower announcing, after meeting together, that a crusade to Christianize Africa would be set into motion! However, it is not clear whether propaganda alone will be employed, or whether it will be propaganda backed by armed force. History teaches that Islam has never had any hesitancy about combining the sword with the crescent. It is entirely possible that the Muslim leaders mentioned have this in mind now, thinking that the West is too absorbed in its cold war with Russia to take much notice of what happens in Africa. At any rate the same news story tells us that the three rulers agreed to aid one another in a big armament program.

Those interested in Christian missions will watch with interest what steps are taken by the Muslim leaders to implement their determination to convert Africa to Mohammedanism.

CONFERENCE ON FAMILY LIVING

A National Conference on Education for Personal and Family Living will be held December 16-17 at the Hotel New Yorker, New York City. An announcement of this event states: "Education for personal and family living is a planned approach to providing the individual with appropriately graded information and experience which will give him appreciation of himself, his family, and his society. Its aim is to help the individual achieve physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual growth; live harmoniously with members of his own and of the opposite sex; and fulfill successfully his role both as a person and as a dynamic force in the family life of his time."

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

There is nothing new about religious intolerance and persecution. Christians from the very beginning have been persecuted. So when the totalitarian regimes of Hitler Germany and of Soviet Russia began their war against Christians, it was not a new experience. Nor need one be astonished when he reads that the Muslims of Lebanon assailed, harass and seek to destroy Christianity. But a persecution of one group of Christians by another group claiming adherence to the same faith, we hoped was at an end. Unfortunately, we were wrong. This is shown by a resolution which the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches felt it necessary to adopt. This resolution expressed a "grave concern" over continued reports of religious persecution in certain countries and instructed its officers and the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs "to continue to use every effort in representations to the governments concerned and, where they are involved, to the religious authorities." Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, stated clerk of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., said that the resolution alluded particularly to suppression of Protestantism in Spain and Colombia. Upon his motion the delegates amended the resolution to include a reference to "the statement on religious freedom in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights," to which Colombia had been a signatory.

TRENDS IN GIVING

American Protestants upped their giving to benevolences by 130 per cent, in terms of 1939 dollars, between 1939 and 1952, the latest year for which figures are available, according to a report made public this week by the Department of Research and Survey of the National Council of Churches. The per capita increase was 80 per cent, in 1939 dollars, during the same period.

Based on a poll of 14 major U. S. Protestant bodies, the report shows that during the same time the total amounts given for current expenses increased in 1939 dollars by 88 per cent—a per capita gain of 50 per cent. The total amount reported by the 14 bodies for benevolences in 1952 was \$192,805,000. For congregational expenses the same year it was \$928,998,000.

THE WORLD IS SMALL

William A. Kimbel, a South Carolina business man and adviser to the U. S. delegation at the recent meetings of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, said:

"Because of the speed of transportation, the world has become so small and the problems and interests of all countries have become so closely integrated

that reconciliation of these interests has to be maintained by some focal body such as the United Nations. . . . This in no sense means the creation of world government. It does mean, however, that these over-lapping interests must be reconciled in order to prevent confusions and retarding hindrances to world welfare and peace."

SUNDAY CLOSING

The question of using the power of the state to enforce certain religious observances has come up in the Province of Quebec, Canada, although not in that form. The City of Montreal enacted an ordinance calling for the closing of stores on certain religious holidays. The constitutionality of this measure was contested, but not on the grounds that this was undue interference in religious matters—Canada already has a Sunday closing law. Rather the question was whether the right to impose legislation of this kind lay within provincial or federal power. By a three-to-two decision the Quebec Court of Appeals upheld the law. If carried to the higher courts, the question will continue to be debated on the same grounds. But many Canadians will regret this law, because it uses the police power to enforce the particular wishes in religious matters of one group upon all groups. A violation of the rights of a minority, where such rights have been established by custom and tradition, never proves wise.

THE DEVIL CAN QUOTE

In an effort to counteract the increasing tendency of Czech and Slovak farmers to slow down grain deliveries to the State, the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia has called upon St. Augustine and St. Gregory to support their plans. *Katolícke Noviny*, organ of the regime-sponsored Catholic Action movement, on September 26, reminded farmers of St. Gregory's words: "The land belongs to all men, in order that food be given to all the people together." St. Augustine was also quoted: "Find out how much God gave you and take of it as much as you need. The rest, which is a surplus, is necessary to others." According to the newspaper, it is the duty of all people to fulfill State delivery quotas. "When you fulfill your duties in the spirit of the afore-said citations," the paper stated self-righteously, "you are not only fulfilling your duty as a Christian, but also as a citizen."

THE TRINITY IN HEAVEN

In a recent issue of the *Christian Herald*, a Sunday school teacher raises the question of whether in heaven the Trinity will be represented by one or by three persons. The answer given is, "Just one."

MIGRANT MEALS HIGHLIGHT THANKSGIVING

During the Thanksgiving season—the time when our Pilgrim fathers first feasted and gave thanks for the bountiful harvest—many hundreds of church and civic groups across the country will participate in the first nationwide celebration of the Migrant Meal.

The event will be marked by local dinners or luncheon meetings at which will be served foods picked or processed by the nation's migratory workers. Planned in recognition of the 2,000,000 men and their families who bring in America's crops, the occasion will highlight their many educational, spiritual and social needs. It will also give an opportunity to tell the stirring story of the Migrant Ministry carried on by local church groups in 25 states, in cooperation with state councils of churches and of church women and the National Council of Churches' Division of Home Missions.

An Ideal Christmas Gift

The Swedenborg Epic by Cyriel O. Sigstedt is now on sale for only two dollars at the New Church Press, 108 Clark Street, Brooklyn, N. Y., according to an announcement by Cecile Werben, manager. This low price for a work published to sell at \$4.50 is made possible, according to Miss Werben, because of a special purchase of 1,000 copies in anticipation of the Christmas trade.

When this book was first brought out, about two years ago, students of Swedenborg generally agreed that here was the first definitive biography of the prophet of the New Age. Authoritative and carefully documented throughout, nevertheless, the style in which it is written makes for easy reading. The human elements of the great saga of Swedenborg's life are so deftly handled that reader attention never lags. Mrs. Sigstedt enables us to see Swedenborg as a normal, hard working, friendly person, endowed with incredible energy. Firmly as the seer believed in his message as one based not only on his personal experiences but on the Scriptures and, indeed, on the true meaning of the accepted Christian creeds, he was never intolerant toward those who disagreed with him. He knew that writings such as his, containing so much that was remote from the common and the traditional way of thinking, would be received with scepticism, but he was also convinced that the Lord would open the hearts and minds of mankind so that the message he brought would be received. Mrs. Sigstedt enables us to see Swedenborg not only as the seer and revelator to whom the Lord had en-

trusted a special mission, but also as a man interested in the various things of everyday living.

In a review of this work Cornelia H. Hotson said:

"The book is an interesting one to pick up and to begin to read anywhere in it—an important point for those too easily frightened by its large number of pages. There are numerous and seldom seen pictures including those of some of the important persons mentioned." (THE MESSENGER, Jan. 24, 1953.)

The Rev. William F. Wunsch, in a comment on this book, stated:

"Drawing upon more documents about Swedenborg than any other biographer, Mrs. Sigstedt does not tell about him so much as she lets him tell about himself. . . .

"Who better can tell of his experience than the man who underwent it and who forewent so much for his mission's sake? In Mrs. Sigstedt's biography, as in no other, Swedenborg does his own testifying." (THE MESSENGER, Nov. 14, 1953.)

Swedenborg's Prayer Set To Music

Some well-known words from *Heaven and Hell*, 228, oftentimes spoken of as Swedenborg's prayer, have been set to music by Dr. Max Sinzheimer, organist of the Sheridan Road New Church, Chicago. The composition, which is adapted for mixed chorus and organ, is dedicated to the Reverend Rollo K. Billings "in friendship and gratitude."

Following the sermon by the Reverend Mr. Billings on October 8, the choir of the Sheridan Road Church rendered the composition, making a deep impression on the congregation.

Dr. Sinzheimer is described in *Who is Who in Music* as follows:

"A German-American Opera and Symphony Orchestra Conductor, Choir Director, and Music Educator, Organist and Harpsichordist. Presently a member of the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago. Born at Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany, and educated at the universities of Heidelberg and Munich, Ph.D., 1913-18. He studied with Hans Schilling at Frankfurt-am-Main (1910-13) and with Walter Braunfels at Munich (1913-18). Dr. Sinzheimer was assistant to Sir Thomas Beecham in London, 1913; was conductor at the Court Theatre in Mannheim, 1917-24; and a guest conductor at opera houses in Berlin, Munich, Frankfurt, Heidelberg, Karlsruhe, and Baden Baden. He also was accompanist to vocal and instrumental soloists, including Horowitz, Huberman, Piatigorsky, Petri and Hindemith; a harpsichord soloist over German radio stations

for several years; artistic adviser and organizer of the choir and orchestra of a radio station in Mannheim; and director of music of the Anshe Emet Synagogue in Chicago. Since 1947 Dr. Sinzheimer has been a member of the faculty of the American Conservatory of Music in Chicago, where he is in charge of opera and choruses."

The words employed by the composer are derived from Swedenborg's "... for he (who knows the doctrine of the church and the Word) prays that God may send His angels to lead him, direct his steps, teach him, and inspire in him what to think and what to say . . ." (*Heaven and Hell*, 228).

Incidentally, Dr. Sinzheimer has been reading the works of Swedenborg for some time, and recently he told his friend, the Rev. Mr. Billings, that he did not think it would be long until he fully embraced the teachings.

Words Are Never Lost

Words are never lost. They are a part of life itself. Language is a gift or way we have of understanding one another.

If we were all dumb, it would be a funny world. Words are part of our souls. Our very thoughts are expressed in words; either we speak them or put them down on paper.

There are kind and gentle words, unkind words, words which uplift and words that condemn. They leave a trail behind us from which we are judged. For not one word that is ever uttered is ever lost. Into the great space of the unknown they are filed away. They are plucked from the air like ripe fruit from a tree. We hear them over television and radio.

Not one word can be recalled. Words are the record of our souls. For as the heart is, so the mouth speaketh.

NEIL KINDER

"The real service which the church can render is to understand society better than it understands itself. It is for the church to save mankind from the numerous frustrations which arise where men are bound to their own past social structures or political forms of idolatry."—DR. C. L. PATIEN

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Youth Leadership Training

To the Editor:

About three months ago, a preview appeared in *THE MESSENGER* about the Youth Leadership Training Conference that was to take place at Fryeburg, Maine, August 25-27. With the desire to keep Convention informed of this important development, the Conference Committee is making public the results of the Conference.

During the preliminary conference on problems of education under the chairmanship of the President of Convention, Rev. Franklin H. Blackmer, in the summer of 1953, an attempt was made to outline desirable long-range plans for Convention as a whole. The first point in the priority list was to establish a program for youth leadership training.

In the realization of this plan, seven adult delegates and five youth delegates attended the meeting at the Fryeburg Assembly. A number of other people at the Assembly were invited to sit in on the Conference deliberations. Among them were approximately twelve young people. The Conference was perhaps unique in New Church circles, in that the young people's opinions were given the same consideration as those of adults. The Conference began with an orientation meeting for adults and young people. From then on the adults and young people met separately, until the final meeting brought both groups together to compare their discussions, reach agreements, and work out a general plan for implementing a youth leadership training program.

The delegates to the Conference concluded that a youth leadership training program for Convention was both needed and feasible. Desirous of using facilities that already existed in the Church, the Conference asked permission to use the Fryeburg Assembly grounds and buildings, which was obtained at the Assembly meeting, August 27. The hope was expressed by the delegates that a youth leadership training program will be inaugurated soon; if possible, in 1955. Such a program has yet to be approved by the General Council. If this body assents, the training program will become a Convention project, geared to the Church's needs.

The discussions at the Conference, and conversations with the officers of the Fryeburg Assembly, brought out that the training program will have to be incorporated into the already existing camp program of the Assembly, if it is going to be implemented at Fryeburg. This has the advantage of providing a camp-framework. But there is the danger that the leadership training will

become submerged in the long-standing, traditionalized customs and arrangements of the camp program. This is a situation that the committee, which actually institutes the leadership training program, will have to work out so that the interests of both sides are harmonized. With this in mind, the Fryeburg Conference has suggested to the General Council, that if there is to be a leadership training program, the committee which brings it into being should represent both Convention interests and the wishes of the Assembly.

In the discussions at the Conference, it was concluded that candidates for leadership training should be carefully selected, that a serious search be made for a well-equipped staff to carry out the training, and that theological students be considered as possible staff members. The Fryeburg Conference Committee consisted of: chairman, Horand Gutfeldt; Mrs. Horace Briggs, and Arthur James, president of the American New Church League. The delegates to the Conference represented various societies and Young People's Leagues in the East. Comments from *MESSENGER* readers will be welcomed by the Conference Committee. The interest of Convention on the local level is vital to the development of the youth leadership training program.

DAVID GARRETT
HORAND GUTFELDT

Repetition in Prayer

To the Editor:

In the latest issue of *THE MESSENGER* just received, a letter from a correspondent severely criticizing a recent article, taken from another Christian publication, regarding Faith Healing, was most disturbing.

The article in question was based on factual experiences of various clergymen of several different denominations, and the results reported were undeniably true. Yet your correspondent objected to these healings being termed "spiritual healings," although *materia medica* was not used and the healings were the result of faith and prayer. Apparently he believed that a physical healing could be only a physical phenomenon.

Most distressing, however, was the mental confusion in regard to "vain repetitions"; and that the physician who requested the sorrowing man to repeat the Lord's Prayer, was asking him really to do something that Jesus expressly forbade. I wonder what a "vain repetition" is. Is it more than once a day, or twice or three times? There can be nothing "vain" in repeating the Lord's Prayer a million times, for the purpose of so doing is to bring a man's

spirit into harmony with the Divine. There is nothing repetitive in any prayer that keeps one near to God.

I think your correspondent, who is manifestly familiar with the writings of Swedenborg, is more concerned with theory than with factual experience, and that the actual results obtained by various clergymen in seeking healings by faith and prayer were criticized because they did not conform to your correspondent's theories of what Swedenborg said or meant in his writings. Because this article by your correspondent was so particularly dis-spiriting to me and might well be to others who are seeking by close communion with the Lord to retain, or obtain, health and vigor, I am moved to protest at the viewpoint he has given about which, also, he is himself rather confused and has stated he wishes enlightenment.

OLIVER P. HUSSEY

Capon Speaks On Evanston

Since his return from the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches, where he acted as observer for Convention, the Rev. Edwin G. Capon, vice-president of the New Church Theological School, Cambridge, Mass., has been much in demand as a speaker on this notable gathering. Recently he has addressed the New Bedford Minister's Association, the Bridge-water Council of Churches and the New Church in Philadelphia.

In Memoriam

Frank H. Mann of Rye, New York, general secretary of the American Bible Society, died, after a short illness, on October 11.

Mr. Mann was born in May, 1883, graduated from Hampden-Sidney College, Virginia, in 1903, receiving Litt. B. and M.A. degrees. For some years, following his graduation, Mr. Mann was engaged in educational work and later became assistant secretary of the YMCA in Havana, Cuba. He spent a five-year period as General Secretary of the American Bible Society, following his service in World War I as a First Lieutenant in the Field Artillery.

Subsequently he was engaged in real estate activities, returning to the American Bible Society again as general secretary in 1942, where he has been responsible for the cultivation of the Society's support by the churches. In appreciation of his work among the churches, in 1953 the honorary degree of Litt. D. was conferred upon Mr. Mann by the Board of Trustees of Moravian College, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

Book Reviews

Who Speaks For God? By Gerald Kennedy. Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tenn. 139 pp. \$2.50.

The author of this book is a well known lecturer, teacher and preacher, at present a bishop of the Los Angeles Area for the Methodist Church.

The title and theme of his work was suggested to him by the title of Norman Cousins's provocation *Who speaks for Man?* "However," says Bishop Kennedy, "much more significant than the voice of man is the voice of God, and the real question is: Who speaks for God?" (p. 12)

In four chapters the book outlines the argument that whoever speaks for persons, for the spiritual, for freedom and for hope, speaks for God.

To illustrate his point about speaking for persons, the writer relates a story of a bishop who was being told by a professor in an agricultural college about the work his school was doing. Experts visited farmers to instruct them in the care of their chickens, their cows, their hogs, etc. The bishop remarked that it would be a good thing if medical experts were employed to advise families regarding the health of their children, whereupon the professor asked critically, "What are you, Bishop—a socialist?" The writer comments: "Too many Americans would rather ignore the human problem, or pretend that it did not exist, than answer it in a manner that does not fit the pattern of their accepted political or economic theories." (pp. 14-15) Systems must not be substituted for people. Systems are good only so far as they serve persons. The American way of life is strong because it is not shackled to a rigid system but permits of experimentation. What is good for persons, is the important question; not how does it affect a system.

Similarly, a theology which becomes an end in itself ceases to be Christian.

The writer ridicules the effort to substitute an abstract *humanity* for persons. "Those who cannot see the value of a man but can comprehend only the value of men are not to be trusted, even

when they are sincere," he writes (p. 23). He points out that communism liquidates individuals without mercy, while talking about a good society in the future. No good society can be built by means which ignore the value of persons.

In the chapter on *Who Speaks for the Spiritual!* the author asserts that this hard-to-define quality called the spiritual, embracing, as it does, the "sense of wonder," "feeling for the sacred and holy," the hunger for "fellowship with the divine" is the essence of man as distinguished from a highly developed animal. Philosophies, such as communism, which deny this, are bound to fall because they are "an embarrassment to God." (p. 58)

To speak for God also means to speak for freedom. The religion that does not aim to set men free "is weighed and found wanting." The author seems to think that fear is the greatest obstacle to freedom. Especially is this true of the fear of ideas. People should be confident that Christianity is stronger than materialism, that democracy is stronger than totalitarianism. The bishop does not hesitate to acknowledge that freedom often produces weird fruits; nevertheless, he boldly declares that it cannot be partial. It must be for "opinions that we loathe" as Justice Holmes put it, as well as those we accept. "The great textbook of liberty is the Bible, for from beginning to end it is the story of God's attempt to set people free." (p. 99) God wills freedom for men, and freedom is, therefore, rooted in God.

In his chapter on hope, the writer takes pains to distinguish the Christian hope from a shallow optimism. Men must face ugly realities; not try to hide from them. It is the preacher's job to point these out and not just seek to say soothing, cheerful things. Nevertheless, to despair is to sin. Hope is the mark of a Christian, and he who speaks for God speaks for a hope that is unconquerable and everlasting.

The book is written in a simple but

persuasive style. The author is evidently widely read judging from the numerous quotations he uses. This book will help the reader to a better understanding of the practical value of the Christian message.

Modern Experiments in Telepathy. By S. G. Soal and Frederick Bateman, with an Introductory Note by G. E. Hutchinson, Sterling Professor of Zoology at Yale University. Yale University Press, 1954. 425 pp. Price \$5.00.

This volume may prove to be more epochal even than Rhine's "New World of the Mind," though dealing only with one aspect of the same subject. Considerably more than half is devoted to experiments with two remarkable subjects, Basil Shackleton and Mrs. G. Stewart; and the results of tests are expressed in mathematical terms which Dr. Soal is particularly well fitted to handle since he is Senior Lecturer in Pure Mathematics at Queen Mary College, University of London. This multitude of studies taken over several years and with utmost precaution bring out I should say without any reasonable doubt the possession of telepathic ability by the individuals in question though they are not, of course, the only ones known to have it, and references are included to the work of Dr. Rhine and others. Two chapters are devoted to adverse criticisms which bring out clearly the hostility, not to say bitterness, which many scientists display to this study. Just how any adequate refutation of the conclusions reached based on quantities of material of this kind can be made it is difficult to imagine, but when one recalls James Leuba's sampling of the religious beliefs of scientists which showed that not more than one out of any ten psychologists confessed any, the opposition would seem to be something other than scientific. The results do not indeed prove the existence of a spiritual world, but they are believed to upset the accepted foundations of modern science and to force a resetting of boundaries in "dangerous" proximity to the supernatural.—JOHN R. SWANTON

"Up! For This Is The Day!"

(Continued from page 374)

us on. Christ is the hope of the world because, spiritually, "this is the day when He has gone before us"; come again in a new disclosure of Himself as the one God of heaven and earth. Because in his Divine Humanity He now makes Himself available more powerfully than before to all men. He is

the hope of the world, not at the end of history, but here and now, as his purpose unfolds and as we give Him full allegiance and cooperation.

"Up! For this is the day!" Is this our heart speaking? "The Lord hath gone out before us." In the months to come, shall we follow his leading, overcome the world in our turn, and thus share in his victory?

In Memoriam

LEWIS.—Mrs. Arthur E. Lewis, resident of Citronelle, Ala., passed into the higher life on September 16, 1954, at the age of 97 years. The resurrection service was held in Citronelle on September 18, and interment was in the Oak Grove cemetery, where the body of her late husband was laid to rest some years ago. The undersigned officiated. Mrs. Lewis is survived by five daughters, three sons, one sister, one brother, 44 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren.

On her 90th birthday, July 4, 1947, the *Mobile Press Register*, Mobile, Ala., featured Mrs. Lewis as the County's oldest ex-teacher. At that age she was still able to read her Bible without glasses, was in good health and "very active." She was an honor graduate of Barton Academy in 1877 and the valedictorian of her class. Mrs. Lewis, then Elizabeth Cathrine Williams, took honors in English and Latin. She began teaching school in southern Alabama shortly after the Civil War—at a salary of \$15.00 a month.

Mrs. Lewis was a small child during the Civil War but still had vivid memories of those experiences. She recalled: "My family lived on the old Bates plantation near Mount Vernon, Ala., and I remember Yankee gun boats coming up the river. One day five Northern officers came to our place and one of them took me on his knee. He gave me 25 cents in paper money and cried because I looked like his little girl back home." She also remembered hiding in the woods for fear of being harmed by the Yankees.

Mrs. Frank F. Mathews, of Daytona Beach, Florida, recalls: "We became acquainted in the early twenties with Mrs. Lewis in the Round Robin group No. 10, through a mutual friend, Mrs. Nellie K. Bray, mother of the Rev. Everett K. Bray. Mrs. Bray lived in Tampa, Mrs. Lewis in Oak Grove, and I in Michigan. We never had the pleasure of meeting Mrs. Lewis personally, but I can say that her letters had an influence and were of much help to us in understanding the Writings of Swedenborg. Mrs. Lewis and I were "pen pals" from then on as long as she was able to write. We had a covenant: Mrs. Lewis could not get out to church services and neither could I for many years. It was her idea that on Easter Morn at sunrise we stand on our respective back porches, after reading the service in the Book of Worship, and as the sun came in sight, she would say, 'The Lord is risen,' and I, 'He is risen indeed.' It was our prayer that we might meet face to face in the world of

spirits. She was a wonderful person and I give thanks to our dear Lord that we were friends."

Mrs. H. Mathieu, of Biloxi, Miss., comments: "I knew Mrs. Lewis personally for many years as well as through her contributions to the Round Robin letters. We appreciated her beautiful philosophies for living which we all, of the Round Robin, looked forward to reading. Mrs. Lewis was received into the New Church by the late Rev. Frank A. Gustafson. Being isolated she had little opportunity to meet other New Church people, but made her contribution to the church as a member of the Round Robin. To tell her that she was wise, was to offend her. She openly resented being praised for any goodness; apparently feeling that she was unworthy of praise for any virtue. I am moved to say that a great soul has entered a great life and she will be very much at home in the mansions prepared for her."

Personally, I met Mrs. Lewis somewhat over a year ago when she had passed her 95th birthday. It was a pleasure and an inspiration. Although her physical frame was yielding to age, her mind was alert and active. Her optimistic outlook, her strong faith in the Lord and her fine sense of humor gave life and sparkle to her conversation. I saw her for the last time less than a week before she died. Her lips, ears and eyes could no longer serve her mind; she tried to speak, but was very difficult to understand. Her body had gradually weakened, without sickness or particular pain, until it could no longer contain her lively spirit, and she joyously and peacefully departed to her home beyond.

REV. P. PETERS,
Gulfport, Miss.

BAPTIZED

EWALD.—On Saturday, October 9, Ellen Elizabeth, infant daughter of Vincent and Elizabeth Ewald, was baptized by the Rev. Immanuel Tafel of the Kenwood Parish. Mr. Ewald is president of the parish.

Illinois Association

In its meeting October 15-17, at La Porte, Indiana, the Illinois Association elected the following officers: President and General Pastor, The Rev. Immanuel Tafel, Chicago; Vice-President, Mr. Leonard Kirven, St. Louis; Secretary, Miss Vera Gunkel, St. Louis; Treasurer, Mr. Fred Zibell, St. Louis.

For trustees the following were elected: Mr. Frank Bristow, Chicago; Mr. Lewis Small, Minneapolis-St. Paul; Mr. Harbourne Belcher, Chicago; Mr. R. Mrozinski, La Porte; Mr. Jack Spiers, Chicago; The Rev. Rollo Billings, Chicago; The Rev. Wilfred Rice, St. Paul.

Washing Peter's Feet

(Continued from page 379)

Word, as representing things which are spiritually lifeless and even worse.

A dead and decaying body is significant of religiosities in which there is no spiritual and therefore no living content, a state of corruption from which real spiritual life has departed. The saying goes that we cannot touch pitch without being defiled. It is certain that we cannot make vital contact with spiritually corrupt things without being contaminated. The sphere of evil lingers about us until it is dispelled by the sphere of good, and the seven days of uncleanness indicate the fullness of the purifying process.

Wrong ideas may kill right feelings. Under false ecclesiastical taboos we may neglect our duty to the neighbor, which is ultimately our duty to the Lord.

Have our feet been washed? Has our life been made clean by conformity to the commandments of the Lord? Are we clean through the word which He has spoken and which we claim to know?

(The author of the foregoing sermon is a New Church minister in Auckland, N. Z.)

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The
**NEW-CHURCH
MESSENGER**

November 27, 1954

Advent

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A New Churchman

Gustave J. Bischof

Terminological Tyranny

John R. Swanton

Behold, I Send My Messenger

Wm. R. Woofenden

Increasing One's Love and Wisdom

Frederick L. Kestler

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Lausanne, Rue Caroline 21
Vevey, 3 Rue du Leman

Essentials of Faith of The New Church

There is one God, and He is
the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

The Word is Divine and con-
tains a spiritual or inner meaning
whereby is revealed the way of
regeneration.

Saving faith is to believe in
Him and keep the Commandments
of His Word.

Evil is to be shunned as sin
against God.

Human life is unbroken and
continuous, and the world of the
spirit is real and near.

"BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER"

by Wm. R. Woofenden

A SERMON FOR ADVENT

"Behold, I send my messenger to prepare the way before me, . . . lest I come and smite the land with a curse."—(MALACHI, 3:1, 4:6) RSV.

IN THE greater glory of the Coming of Christ, the birth of John the Baptist is often completely overlooked. And yet, notice how definitely and significantly the Word ties up the coming of John with that of the Savior: "Behold, I send my messenger to prepare the way before me." "He shall be like a refiner's fire." "He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

These passages clearly indicate that the coming of John was something that had to be, without which the Coming of the Lord would have brought, not a blessing to mankind, but disaster. This means, in a very practical way, that we must think of John before we can welcome Christ. It is not by chance that the Scriptures record the birth of this messenger as a miraculous one—of a lesser degree than the miracle of Christ's birth, but nevertheless miraculous. John's father, Zacharias, was a priest of Israel. It was his duty, his privilege, to go into the Holy Place of the temple and sprinkle incense on the hot coals of the altar. He was an old man, and a good man, one who looked confidently for the coming of the Messiah.

Birth of John Foretold

One day, as he was performing the duties of his office, as the fragrant smoke ascended and the people in the outer court stood repeating the evening prayers, "there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense." The angel announced to him that his wife, who was "well stricken in years," would bear him a son, who would be the long-promised "Messenger" of the Messiah. Zacharias is too astonished to believe that this could be possible, and because of his unbelief he was unable to speak until after the child was born. But, in the course of time, the child *was* born. Shortly afterward, the angels heralded the birth of Jesus.

Preparing the Way

We hear nothing more of John—except a brief notation that he grew up in a wilderness area—for almost thirty years. Then, suddenly both Jesus and John appeared, on the banks of the Jordan. John was preaching a stern message of repentance, and baptizing all who would come to him. He was unquestionably "preparing the way of the Lord," as Malachi declared he would. John performed his climactic act in baptizing Jesus Christ, and then faded into the background of the Gospel picture.

From that point on, Christ filled the whole great mental and spiritual horizon. John, "the messenger of the covenant," had fulfilled his primary mission. We have Scripture evidence that John continued to preach, that he had a band of followers, and that he met his death as a political prisoner of Herod. But his significance rests in the brief career culminating in the baptism of the Lord, his role as forerunner of the Christ. Do we as individuals attach sufficient importance to the necessity of John's coming first in time, before the Lord? Do we know why John not only *had* to from a historical viewpoint, but still *has* to come before Christ in human life? And again I mean in point of time.

Who Came?

We cannot answer that question unless we first have a clear idea of why *Christ* came. The Scriptures leave no doubt as to Who came. "Make straight in the desert a highway for our GOD." "The LORD, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple." "Behold, the LORD GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him." But He did not, yea, *could not* come in dazzling splendor as the almighty Ruler of heaven and earth, in all His Divine majesty and glory. For such a coming would have destroyed the human race. As the Lord said to Moses, "There shall no man see me, and live." (Ex. 33:20). Wonder of wonders, He came to earth in human form. "For unto us a child is born." And thus, coming as a man, He took on the same great burden of hereditary tendencies to evil which all men must carry. With the Divine Itself as His soul—"the Father that dwelleth within me," as He called it—and a full human personality to be reconciled to it, this Man of Galilee came face to face with all the hellish evils which were crowding in on mankind threatening to destroy all spiritual freedom. These, we know, He overcame without exception.

And not only did He come to free men from the power of evil inheritance, He also came to give them light: a light which would banish the darkness of ignorance and falsity and show men the way back to Him. In the words of the prophet, "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light"—have available more light on the Coming of Christ than the world has ever had before. And it is this increased knowledge which helps us understand why John must come first, to "prepare the way of the Lord."

Facing the Evils of the World

These teachings, which we of this church lay no claim to, other than that we accept them wholeheartedly with joy and gratitude as a revelation from God, tells us many important things about the coming of the Lord. We learn, for example, that

Christ by His sinless life did not, and does not, in some magical way assume for us the guilt and punishment of our misdeeds merely because we call upon His name. Nor did Christ destroy evil. He did not even take from men the desire to commit evil—we have only to look into our hearts to see the truth of that statement. What Christ did was, first, to meet and overcome the evil tendencies, the evil inheritance in His own assumed nature. He faced the full power of the hells, not as God but as man—as you and I must face them in our limited degree. And in His power He defeated the hells, breaking their power and subduing them for all time. This act of redemption, we are told, restored the equilibrium of forces persuasive of good or evil which bear down on us at all times, and between which we must choose. As Swedenborg phrased it, “Before the Lord’s Advent, the hells were not in order, wherefore neither was there equilibrium between heaven and hell, but hell on its side, prevailed over heaven. . . . In order, therefore, that the destroyed equilibrium might be restored, it pleased the Lord to come into the world. . . .” (*Apocalypse Explained* 806^b)

Second, He offers to mankind the help of His power, to enable you and me and all men to conquer evil thoughts and desires. In short, while He did not take away the desire to commit wrong—and will not so long as we live in this world—He does offer us the power to overcome that desire, or, rather, those desires as they come. He offers us the opportunity to purify, to cleanse our lives in His strength, to lift our minds and hearts up into the pure clean atmosphere of spiritual living and loving.

Beginnings of Salvation

But anyone who thinks or suggests that that is an easy matter is sadly mistaken. He gives self-incriminating evidence of the fact that he has never really tried it. Salvation, regeneration, these are not the experiences of a moment. They are the work of a lifetime. Hell is not driven out of the human heart by a single act, a single resolve. It is only little by little that it is overcome. We all would like to omit the “John phase” of salvation and rush up to the Lord with one grand gesture of consecration. There is a story which may or may not be true of a lady who responded to the atmosphere of a revival meeting and went forward to register as among the “saved.” When she knelt at the rail and loudly confessed, “Oh Lord, I know that I am the worst sinner in the world,” she was promptly rebuffed by the evangelist, who replied sternly, “Madam, that is a gross exaggeration of the fact!” This is not to suggest that there need not be a turning point. But it is to insist that that point, that conversion experience, is not the end, not the all in all. It is just the beginning, the forerunner.

Making Straight the Way

Christians, as a whole, may be placed in one of three categories: (1) those who think Christmas is strictly a children’s holiday and that therefore they have outgrown it; (2) those who feel that Christmas can be approached as a wholly carefree festivity

requiring at the most that an hour be spent in church hearing the beloved Nativity story and singing and hearing the beautiful carols; and (3) those who have taken to heart the words of our text, realizing the necessity of making straight in the desert of their lives a highway for our God, and who, as a consequence, have a steadily deepening sense of the real significance of the season.

The first group, those who feel they have outgrown Christmas, feel that way because they still think from a childish viewpoint. The second group, which includes many who should know better, comprises those who naively or foolishly think either that no preparation of heart and mind and life is necessary before the Christ Child can be received, or that they are good, decent, church-going citizens and therefore must *already be prepared!* This is the spirit of that Pharisee cropping up again: “I thank thee Lord that I am not as other men.”

In contrast to this we have the stern, uncompromising message of John—which is directed to each one of us—“Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” And to obey this injunction requires self-examination, critical, minute self-examination. Following this, as we stand appalled at what we see, must follow action. For repentance is not of the lips, it is of the life. Lest we crumple in spirit at what we see, we may take counsel in the sage advice recorded in the sermon on the mount, “Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” For the only way hell can be driven out of a human heart is little by little. We must concentrate on one evil at a time—and it’s none too soon to start if we would make an honest effort to herald our Savior’s birth—and in that way avoid discouragement. By a determined effort of the will, *with* and *in* the power of Christ, we may overcome a nagging fault here, a wrong tendency there, some meanness seen today, some unkindness, an indifference to opportunities to bring happiness to others, or any other of the multitude of little things which can make our lives and the lives of those around us a hell or a heaven on earth.

Hearken to the Call of John

This is implicit in the message of John. It points to the road to life. There is no other road. For unless He is preceded by such efforts on our part to amend our sinful ways, Christ cannot come into

(Continued on page 393)

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WHAT IT MEANS TO ME TO BE A NEW CHURCHMAN

by Gustave J. Bischof

(Delivered in the New York Society Church on
Sunday, October 17, 1954.)

THROUGHOUT America on this day, Protestant laymen are given the opportunity to conduct divine service. While Laymen's Sunday is a firmly-established custom and a growing one, it is an innovation for this Society. Protestants believe that any sincere person may seek and approach the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ directly without benefit of an intermediary. We need no intercessor in seeking the Divine, nor can any other than the Lord extend to us forgiveness. Our responsibility as laymen is in consequence exceedingly great. Religious vocation for us is not confined to the monastery or to a priesthood, but must be lived in the marriage bond, the home, and in the practice of those multitudinous tasks by which we severally serve society. In this sense too, each of us mutually ministers one to another. It is, therefore, quite fitting that the layman from time to time participate in conducting the more formal worship and bear witness to the privilege of fellowship in his church.

A Fellowship of Believers

This morning I shall briefly speak on, "What It Means to Me to Be a New Churchman," not so much because my particular views and experiences are expressive of yours, but with the hope that what is said may stimulate meditation on your part of what the privilege means to you. First, let us consider the more general, broader aspect of being a Christian Churchman and leave for later the more particular New-Church aspect. There are many definitions of a church, one of which is: a fellowship of believers in the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, organized to worship Him, walk in His way, bear witness to their faith in Him and love for Him. Such an institution has a profound influence on society, on the thinking and the molding of our social and political system; on the social conscience. Historically, every Christian denomination has contributed and continues to contribute to an evolving concept of the relation of man to man based on the common Fatherhood of God. Traced to its origins, every advance of society, be it the emancipation of the bondsman, the rightful share of labor in the fruits of labor, the stewardship of wealth, the equality of men before the law, the bill of rights ensuring civil liberties, the elimination of child labor, the protection of the underprivileged, the opportunity for education of every individual to the extent of his capacity, the integration of racial and religious minorities in economic, educational and social systems, the very concept of our democratic political philosophy as the free association of free men governed by the common consent of the governed—all these traced to their origin are the Divine Influx into the hearts and minds of men nurtured in the societies which accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as

the Living God of heaven and earth. From the church men learned of God, through the church they communed with God, in the church's fellowship they were strengthened to live in the world in the spirit in which they worshipped.

Church Did Not Just Happen

It means much to me to be associated with fellow Christian Churchmen as a recipient of God's love and wisdom and in turn as a humble servant of the Lord to carry forward into my daily work, howbeit imperfectly, the inspiration generated in the fellowship of the Christian Church.

Almost all people pay lip service to the importance of the church, yet how many actually fulfill their words with the deed! The membership in the churches of America stands at an all time high; yet even at this peak only slightly more than half our population are members and it seems certain that this membership includes those having the most tenuous connection. How many of these nominal members attend with fair regularity, how many give of their energy and treasure even a small proportion of what they and the society in which they live and rear their children receive! Churches do not just happen. They are here because people respond to the influx of the Holy Spirit, knowing that God works through them and not in some mythical vacuum. People who accept the benefits of the existence of church societies, who recognize that but for the continuance of the churches our social structure would soon disintegrate, who feel a sense of security for themselves and their loved ones because a core of love and healing power is kept active in their community, who take all these benefits without making themselves responsible for its growth are in a very real sense parasitic.

What! Learn Golf in Church!

Mr. Jones is a "good" man, a substantial citizen and a moderately successful business man. As a youngster he attended Sunday School, a young people's group and became a church member. But with the growth of his responsibilities he drifted away. Somehow his vaccination didn't take! Somehow the sense of responsibility toward the church did not develop along with that for his family and business. Mr. Jones does not feel the need of the church for himself. He confessed to his local minister that he can worship God on the golf links. To this his minister replied (Mr. Jones thought rather cuttingly) that such worship was just about as effective as perfecting his golf stroke in church! Yet Mr. Jones, if he thought about it, would realize how much he does want the church to be there when he really needs it—to attend at Easter, to have it ready for his children's religious education, to minister to his ailing mother, to have a place

(Next page please)

for his daughter's marriage. He could recall the time his brother died in the auto accident and again the times when the voice of the church spoke prophetically and tipped the balance on the side of decency. What does Mr. Jones do to keep alive the community of believers? What all does Mr. Jones miss in failing to grow in stature by not giving himself? "He who would save his life must lose it."

You and I can rejoice in being Churchmen, but let our rejoicing be tempered by the sobering thought of how far we miss the mark. And let not self-righteousness blind us to the fact that what we do seemingly of and by ourselves is an illusion. We are but poor instruments of the Lord's use. We only *lend* our hands to bear our brother's soothing cup; our feet are lent for the merciful errand. He speaks through us and we are blessed when our voices courageously and often seemingly alone are raised for justice, for compassion and for merciful kindness.

Builder of Heavenly Life

Let us now consider the church in yet another light. We look upon our earthly life as a training ground for the life eternal. Here, amid the tensions of the world, our true selves consisting of our inmost affections are developed, and, into states consonant with these affections, we inexorably gravitate on shedding the earthly body. Educators increasingly realize the importance of the area in which affections, that is, loves, are developed. One device being employed is to dramatize—actually act out—a situation which will cause the student to identify himself with constructive affectional attitudes. Now in this other light the institutional church, the body of Christ, is a microcosm of the heavenly society, imperfect and beset with the temptations of power and the self-loves of the world because it is in the world, yet having as its ideal and goal the fulfillment of the ways of its divine Head and Master. To those of us active in a church society, it offers a unique opportunity and also spiritual temptations—a unique opportunity, for we are engaged in a common selfless goal with men and women who are united in a loyalty so high, so deep, so broad, so all pervasive, so eternal as to shrink competing loyalties into chimerical infatuations. This loyalty demands that all earthly loves be tested by the touchstone of our love for God. Indeed a selective and unique company in which to function!—yet a situation beset by the severest spiritual temptations, so dangerous because of their subtlety.

False Rewards

Let me suggest a few situations. There is the church worker, and I mean *worker*, who has literally worn himself out for the church without reward. Without reward? He feeds upon the praise and commendation of his colleagues rather than the joy of serving his Lord. Then there is the one who has become personally attached to the minister, has lost all objectiveness in a loyalty to a man, and follows the lantern, forgetting the Light. The minister changes—the worker retires. Another looks upon

the church's property (for which he has assiduously cared and caused to grow for many years) as something sacred to be preserved forgetting that only through use can the purpose of the trust be fulfilled. Another considers himself the repository of true doctrine and makes it his business to stamp out dangerous thoughts by authoritative quotations. Yet another uncovers aberration of conduct. Does he seek out the erring one in a spirit of love and speak persuasively? No, he relays the succulent details into many self-righteous ears. Again, we have those impatient with the views of newcomers—vested interests must be preserved, tradition adhered to, change is dangerous, there is no room for honest differences. Still another won't play along when things go against his best and honest judgment. He is often right in his views. Patient cooperation would prove his point, but he is tempted and precipitates a crisis. But why proceed with a weary and disheartening recital?

It should mean much to me, and to you, that we are privileged to develop those heavenly virtues of patience, humility, forbearance, suspended judgment, and to give and take, respecting the positions of others with whom we may not agree, in a company of men and women of good will—for if good will does not exist in a community of believers, where on earth can it be found?

An Understanding Faith

Now, as distinct from the meaning to me of being a Christian Churchman, what does it mean to be a New-Churchman? If such a pregnant question can be answered in capsule fashion, I would choose, "It has given me an understanding faith." I learned early to consider every earthly manifestation an ultimatum of the spiritual and hence to realize the existence of a cause-effect relationship yielding earthly good only in so far as we attuned ourselves to divine influx. Evil was clearly the result of turning from the redemptive power of the Holy Spirit. The church's teaching on God's Word in the light of correspondences saved me from agonizing attempts to reconcile the literal Word with the teachings of science and in turn put science in a truer perspective as a means of understanding God's handiwork, but a barren source of life's guiding values. While the "old" church attempted tortuous explanations of the three persons in the Godhead, the New Church presented a satisfying concept of the oneness of God manifested in creation, in the Word made flesh and in the ever-present outflow of our life's source. A God who accepted the sacrifice of His Son in appeasement of our sins and who at the Last Judgment separates the sheep from the goats is rather hard to take. On the other hand, a God who assumed human form to restore to mankind one of the great distinctive differences between man and animal—freedom to choose; a God who ever draws men to Him but restrains his omnipotence so that we retain that freedom to choose and build those loves which bless to eternity or curse us in frustration—such a

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The Supreme Revelation

GOD reveals Himself to His children in many ways. He reveals Himself in the marvelous harmonies and the purposeful design of the physical universe. The heavens declare His glory and the firmament shows His handywork. He manifests Himself in human history, despite the fact that the course of mankind is not and never has been one of straight progress. Rather, it is and has been zig-zag, and, what is worse, backwards as well as forwards, with truth and good often in defeat. There have been moral and spiritual slumps no less than industrial slumps. Yet, like an army that loses many a skirmish and battle yet wins the war, so truth and good have been advancing, and this whispers in strong tones of a guiding Hand that helps man shape his destiny toward a higher end.

However, few would find God or be much concerned about knowing Him as a personal Being with whom they can have fellowship, were they compelled to seek knowledge of Him by a study of the physical universe and its laws; or by struggling to understand the often weird and seemingly meaningless perambulations of human history. So God reveals Himself in a more intimate and personal way. First, He revealed to man what His purpose was in creation, what His relation to man was, and how man should live so as to attain the highest blessedness. This He did through prophets who had the power to receive visions that were vouchsafed to them. But more intimately, more personally, God revealed Himself by assuming a human nature and showing by a life in this world what human nature at its highest and best can be. This revelation was "the word made flesh," the embodiment of all that God meant human life to be. It was also a manifestation in a form that man could understand of what God Himself is in His relationship to man.

Jesus Christ is, therefore, the God's ideal of a human life. But he is much more, for He is God manifesting Himself upon the earth plane and visible in a personal form to the children of men. Jesus is God showing forth the Father as the God of love, ceaselessly battling against evil and for the salvation of man.

The worshipper who sees God in Jesus, and recalls that the earthly life of the Lord was a pure and holy expression of love for man, knows that he is not bowing before an abstraction but before one with whom he can have fellowship.

Just as the season of Advent begins a new ecclesiastical year, so the coming of God in a human form into history began a new spiritual era. That Coming marked an unparalleled turning-point in the religious history of mankind, for a moral force beyond anything that man had hitherto conceived of began to operate. The reign of God in the hearts of men commenced.

At this time of year when we prepare for the commemoration of our Savior's birth the thoughts of all Christians should turn to this event as the supreme revelation of God. It is supreme because nearly all we know about God we know through the Lord. That is why He is the way. That is why no man cometh to the Father except by Jesus Christ. No man can establish himself in the right relation to the Father except he be led and inspired by the Divine Humanity.

Here Is God

The other day we heard a learned minister of a church of ultra-modern persuasions give a lecture entitled "Prayer for Heretics." The speaker's thesis was that God was an impersonal force who neither heard nor cared anything about man's efforts to commune with Him. If his premise of God as an impersonal force is accepted, then the rest of his argument logically follows. And it also follows that religion is one of the grossest deceptions that man has ever practised upon himself. By its very nature, religion is personal for it cannot exist outside of persons. Nor can the believer conceive of Deity as other than a personal Being if he is to rule and regulate his life by the consciousness of God. In any form of the Christian religion there must be the relation of two persons, God and the worshipper. Who would ever dream of centering his life in, or of praying to, a blind purposeless force that is heedless of man?

The conception of Deity that has given strength, confidence, and courage to man is that of a God who cares. He is the Shepherd who goes out to seek the one lost sheep; the Father who welcomes with open arms the penitent son.

In Christianity, the idea of a personal God, and of a fellowship between God and man, is bound up with Deity of Jesus Christ. It is not improbable that far more persons today recognize Jesus as God, than who subscribe whole-heartedly to some formulation of Christological doctrine. Faith in operation among Christians is probably always the result of thinking of God in terms of Christ. To the question, "What do you know about God, and what do you think He is like?" the Christian can, without hesitation, point to Christ and say, "Here is God."

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ADVENT [Latin: "THE COMING"]

by Clyde Broomell

THIS ARTICLE IS WRITTEN with a pleasurable response to a request from the Editor of the NEW CHURCH MESSENGER for something particularly adaptable to the Advent Season. Instead of the conventional form it will be like sitting before my fireplace and exchanging ideas with a group of friends. There will be a few themes for meditation, strung together like the beads of a Rosary. The uniting cord will be the love which desires that the good and its joys shall be another's, and the greater bond of feeling the goods and joys of another as one's own.

Advent, as you will perceive from the following historic references, calls for quiet but intense meditation. The writer through the years studied and experimented with most of the adepts and lesser systems of metaphysical developments, searching for their common basic principles and achievements. Of the countless numbers and varieties all emphasized the values of devout concentration and meditation held throughout long and sustained thought. Swedenborg reveals his experiences of the inner breath and following the influx of thought for hours at a time. Two supreme sources for help, other than Swedenborg, to which I am indebted were first an ancient book called *Etidorpha* (Aphrodite in reverse). The theme of the book runs in many branches, but all sprang from the ancient adage, "Never less alone than when alone." The second, was personal conferences with the first American real experimental psychologist, Elmer Gates, who unfolded his process of attaining what he termed "The Awaredness."

The two citations, above, can be beads on a Rosary. Returning to the conventional concepts and practices of Advent: originally, Advent meant the time of the Lord's arrival as having come, rather than His coming, or to His coming to one at death, or judgment over Jerusalem or His final judgment when the conditions were ripe to begin the New Jerusalem age. But the organized churches, cognizant of the, as yet, limitations of the masses set Advent to a fixed date in relation to St. Andrew's Day, November 30th. Andrew's name means "manly". He was first a disciple of John the Baptist, whom he left and joined Simon Peter to follow the Lord, but neither became disciples for some time. Advent Sunday is the one nearest before or after St. Andrew's Day. But the Day introduces a *season* of four weeks ending on Christmas Eve. Appropriate services are established for spiritual preparation. Reliable history, rather than tradition, takes us back to the fifth century with the Day introduced to the Church Calendar by Gregory the Great.

Values of Church Seasons are relative; they tend to lose force by the limitations of time and rigid forms. They are intended to create inspiration and continuous application, because inspiration can come only to the states of mind engendered by the kind of work and zeal for its uses. Inspiration comes by the Holy Spirit or indirectly by our higher, spiritual associates; it comes unforeseen and unannounced; it is a "coming" by the same principles as what we, in limitation call the first creation and is the Advent in the powers of the sustaining life.

The theme of Life, as the gift of the Lord in perpetuity is strung through the entire Word; and He so summarizes the purpose of His earthly Advent in these memorable words: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Be still! all senses in abeyance; though He tarry, wait for Him; and expect what the mystics call the "silent sound" presenting ideas above the material objective forms.

It is written of the Word (Logos): "As many as received Him believing on His Name, to them gave He power to become the sons of God. Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh (senses) nor of the will of man." Good blood lines, good cultivated senses, good intentions are necessary accessories and the serpents cannot charm nor harm those who understand from worked-out experience what is implied for the sons of God by the Lord's words, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the son of man be lifted up." Meditate on this: Ask and answer your own question—"Am I, through perfected ideas, transformed into a better man for manifesting heavenly ways for life's uses?"

The Lord's Name: how significant! As given to Moses, I Am that I Am. Translated Jehovah, which is vocalized in breathing sounds of O, it means Being of all Being—being, that which is. The Greek had no single word for the concept so it was given "Who was, who is and who is to come, the Almighty." When is the Advent? It is the everlasting NOW. In Genesis, according to the picture-word of the head turning in all directions should be "in heading . . ." God said from his first ideations, and forms appeared. In

John's Gospel the Word is Logos, taken from the eastern philosophy as the first principle of ideation. In needed adaptation to our needs, as observed in shady discussions over perception and reasoning, we need to understand that perceptive thought is from a higher plane of insight which, Godlike, sees ends from their beginning, and then reason can act guidedly to ultimate uses. Take note in application to relations of husbands and wives in mutual efforts to draw wise conclusions: The man usually says to the woman, "How do you feel about it?" and she will say to him, "What do you think about it?" Both can feel and think, perceive and think, but the approach is different but become a married oneness in complementary actions. Meditate on this.

I have before me a book to which I make frequent reference. It was published as a letter from a printer's apprentice to a clergyman, in the year 1889. I received it one year after my ordination, 1904. It is entitled "Tubs with Bottoms and Tubs without Bottoms." An almost exhaustive treatise on the knowledge of ultimate uses. The theme is based on an extract from Swedenborg's *Divine Love and Wisdom*, no. 189; a similar thought is given in the conclusions of Swedenborg's "Rational Psychology," in which he out-distances all philosophers on the question of pure reason, and shows the blank wall between the natural degree of the mind and the spiritual degree. Passing from the lower to the higher is an Advent, a new-birth. Let him that readeth understand! To be merely aware of these truths and yet fail to see them in application to the things which stand out bodily before the eye, is to be aware of them only as abstract entities; and these things abide with man no longer than he is thinking about them. They are matters of analysis derived from the science of metaphysics. . . . For acquaintance with matters that are merely abstract are like some airy thing that wings itself away; but abstract things when they are applied to things of this world become like a thing espied by the physical eye, which sticks in the memory.

We hear and read much that indicates some folks confuse abstract thought with the spiritual sense of the Word; but the Word always refers to ultimate action. Swedenborg makes a startling statement to all who rely on substitutional thinking and are in the limiting life of conformity—"The Divine is the same in least things as in greatest."

This is an outgrowth of his teaching concerning a true idea of God, which is that the Divine of the Lord is Omnipotent, Omniscient and Omnipresent. To be Omnipresent this must be true of the least things. Yet God is not the thing but is present by the operation of His life-spirit on or in the thing. Paul had the conception and voiced it: "I live, nevertheless not I, but Christ liveth in me." The Advent was a constant living experience according to another admonition of Paul's: "Be ye not conformed, brethren, but be ye transformed."

Swedenborg, in conformity to his warnings about persuasive faith, says no one has the truth until he doubts it, meaning until he ponders over it, until he has that desire which must know or die, thus the truth may be as his own. We can apply the principle to the good as well as to the evil in the question the Lord put to Pilate: "Sayest thou this thing of thyself or did some one tell it thee of me?" (Jn. 18:24). Kipling's penetrating satire in his poem "Tomlinson" is worth reading with meditation: In short, Tomlinson was denied entrance to both heaven and hell because his good deeds and bad ones were not of his own intent but induced by others. The Lord treats of an aspect of this error when He said, "In that day many will say unto me: 'Lord, Lord have we not prophesied in thy name and in thy name done many works, but I will say I never knew you, depart from me.' . . ." (Mt. 7:22).

But we can take consolation in that "the unclean bird brought clean meat

to the prophet." There are preachments given by those temporarily in a lifted intellect and empowered by the self-zeal of preaching, which by reason of the use of the Scriptures, are the occasion, but not the cause of conversions and edifications as to the good life. There are dramatic performances which do good by the same principle.

The intent of the everlasting Advent is that of the universal end of all creation which is: "That there shall be beings in whom the Divine may dwell as in Himself, and that these beings shall lift themselves up as divine. . . ." Yet these are saved from the falsified cults which misunderstand the affirmation of the I Am, because the more they receive of the Divine the more clearly do they perceive they are not life but recipients of life. Herein is the solution of the paradox of the pure humility of those most exalted and glowing with their joy in the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Personal contact and communication, in all their forms, is the order of our times accompanied by performed uses in every degree of soul, mind and body. An incident may illustrate ways of stimulating other minds to open for inspiration: While in Texas years ago, I had classes in the Art of Living with directions for understanding one's self as an individual. Every lesson required the affirmation: "I will do my lesson." About to leave Texas, working late one night to finish freight packing, I had a phone call from a woman who thought she had understood the course. I asked what

was her trouble . . . her reply was vague. I said: "You have missed the whole point, you have not made contact with God and so missed the communication of guidance." "But how can I contact the infinite God?" she asked. I replied, "Take a flashlight, go out to a vacant lot, find a rusty tin can, pick it up and ask it: 'How come; why, when, where, etc.' Follow through and you will contact God." Suddenly she burst out with a cry of delight.

We did not hear the Angelic Song at the historic moment of the Lord's Advent bringing life and understanding of His revealing His universal life on the plane of the particular individual. But His promises are never failing and He is with us eternally,—in fact His presence is life eternal.

But we can sing our own familiar adaptation of the Advent joy:

"How glorious is the hour
When first our souls awake,
And through Thy Spirit's quick'ning
power
Of the new life partake!
With richer beauty glows
The world, before so fair;
Her holy light religion throws,
Reflected everywhere.
Amid repentant tears,
We feel sweet peace within;
We know the God of mercy hears,
And pardons every sin.
Born of Thy Spirit, Lord,
Thy Spirit may we share!
Deep in our hearts inscribe Thy Word,
And place Thine image there."

"Behold, I Send My Messenger" *Concluded from page 388*

the human heart. The teaching is perennially true: if, long ago, the Lord had come to men with His teaching of love and purity and unselfishness before the way had been prepared by John with his teaching of repentance, then Christ would have been powerless to touch men's hearts. For men had so perverted the great truths of the Word that their hearts were hardened, their lives shallow and callous. It was the stern warning of John which planted the fear of the Lord—which is the beginning of wisdom—in the hearts of men, plowing through the hard outer crust (if I may change the figure) producing mental soil capable of receiving the seeds of love and goodness which the Lord broadcast.

The same is true of every human soul today. It is only the man or woman who has hearkened to the call of John who can really receive the Lord, with His gifts of love. We may learn of Him, talk of Him, sing the Christmas hymns of praise to His name; but unless there is a searching of the heart and life, and a genuine repentance of the evils we are permitted to see there, there is no true Coming of the Christ Child for us.

If our observance of His birth year after year is nothing but a mechanical thing, an observance of

tradition, in time there will be a cry from the multitude of evils within us, the multitude which has increased strength during the years of our blindness and apathy, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" And the sham of our outward piety will be exposed as nothing but an ugly, empty shell.

It is not too late; the mercy of the Lord exceeds our comprehension. Let us wake up and obey the summons of the clarion call! "Behold, I send my messenger to prepare the way before me, . . . lest I come and smite the land with a curse."

What It Means To Me To Be A New Churchman

(Continued from page 390)

God appeals to understanding and elicits our deepest devotions.

How can I express adequately all that these priceless teachings mean to me? How express the associations within the New Church which helped to mold my ways? Each of you, I am sure, can list the many things that being a New Churchman means to you individually. It is good to recount our blessings, good to bear verbal witness. Yet, how much more complete and significant to be a living witness in deed. There is but one worthy offering on the altar of the Lord—our loving hearts.

TERMINOLOGICAL TYRANNY

by John R. Swanton

The writer has recently been going over several standard works dealing with the nature of Christ. They have been composed by leaders in the great Protestant bodies and reflect their historic attitude. Not being a professional theologian the comments I have to make have significance only as the reactions of one New Churchman to what I have found, and a wider knowledge might change them considerably although the features criticized seem to be widely spread in popular trinitarian literature. Typical among the works cited is that of Prof. H. R. Mackintosh, *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ*, printed in 1912. This has been quoted often and reflects in every part profound scholarship and the results of long continued meditation on the life of the Founder of Christianity and its meaning. No one could place Jesus upon a higher level or assert His Deity in more absolute terms.

"If the Church's mind is to retain a luminous and defensible faith in our Lord's divinity, that faith must present itself as so wonderful in intensity and range, in triumphant redeeming power, as to admit of no rival or surrogate. Let men perceive that in Christ there stands before them One who in spiritual being—that is, in will and character—is identical with God Himself, that in Him we have to do with nothing less than the Eternal, and at once it becomes plain that revelation can go no further." (p. 424)

At the same time Prof. Mackintosh is aware that many historical expressions regarding the relations between Christ and the Father, and regarding the trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit endanger monotheism, and strive manfully to show that they do not lead to either ditheism or tritheism. Sincere as is his attitude in this matter, he does not see that the idea of monotheism is in fact defeated by the admission of certain names hallowed by constant church usage but nonetheless confusing to the ordinary mind. One of these is application of the word "Person" to the three aspects of Deity. This does not come from the apostolic age proper but was introduced at least two centuries later. Continued employment of it is defended by the fact that when adopted it did not signify an independent human organism but a mask or the part taken by an actor in a play. Thus it is not to be understood in the modern sense of the word but has merely theological ap-

plication. Prof. Mackintosh admits its defects but tolerates it for want, as he thinks, of anything better. However, it should be a rule in using terms to employ only those which have specific application to the objects or principles designated and cannot be confused with others. Now, the use of "Person" in this connection is particularly subject to confusion because no one today outside of very limited theological circles employs it in the ancient sense and undoubtedly it has served to destroy the monotheistic ideal in the minds of numberless people. I frequently see copies of the *Christian Herald*, and I remember that one of the queries which appeared on his page of answers to questions was, "Shall I pray to the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit?" Another is from the member of a Sunday School class who says that half of its personnel believed that after death they would find there are three Persons in heaven while the other half thought there would be only one. It would be interesting to know how many of those who use this word regularly in church understand it purely in the theological sense. I believe it would be found that the vast majority are influenced by the current usage of the term, that their conceptions conform to this, and that the result is not monotheism.

If this were all involved in the problem it could, and should, be settled by modernizing theological language and dropping the word "Person" in the connections indicated. But toleration of it, besides the reason given by Mackintosh, is probably due to a seeming differentiation in the Deity brought about by the words "Father", "Son", and "Holy Spirit." Tendency to personalize "Holy Spirit," owing to the very general significance of the word "spirit" would not probably be so strong were it not for certain passages in the Gospel of John and its association with the two others in the baptismal formula in Matthew. But the distinction between "Father" and "Son" suggests a difference of a more fundamental nature, because of the separation, or seeming separation, of the two while Christ was upon earth. He accepted the term "Son" for Himself and speaks of His invisible source of power and activity as the "Father". Thus it is natural to identify the "Father" with God and think of the "Son" as an independent being, whether human or divine. If Christ was simply another human being then the "Father" is God in His fullness and monotheism is preserved,

though it would then seem necessary to discard or rewrite a very large part of the New Testament, but if Christ continues His existence beyond the grave and is something more than man, a form of polytheism would seem to result.

If the decision of the Council of Nicaea is accepted we would have a ditheism. Indeed, this will happen conceptually as long as we continue to use the words "Father" and "Son". We conceive of a father and a son only as independent individualities. If this is to be avoided and a genuine monotheism is to be preserved whenever we are dealing with the post-resurrection situation, the dual distinction should be dropped. Only the term "Father" has continuing validity, as in the Lord's prayer. Moreover, if Christ is now the sole God in His Divine-Human and we have a true monotheism, we shall also be compelled to a new nomenclature by the fact that man has been created in the Divine image. Father and son are not names applied to parts of one organic human being. If we would be consistent we must substitute such terms as soul, mind, body—or subconscious and subliminal perhaps—and Swedenborg does this by identifying the "Father" with the soul of God, and the "Son" with His body, meaning, of course, the spiritual body, the immortal expression of the soul. Much to his credit, Dr. Sanday took a step in this direction in a work which Prof. Mackintosh discusses at some length. "He is convinced," Prof. Mackintosh says, "that we understand the incarnation better by using the analogy of the meeting of Divine and human in ourselves. Now 'the proper seat or locus of all divine indwelling, or divine action upon the human soul, is the subliminal consciousness'" (p. 487). The professor urges

(Next page please)

MY RELIGION

By HELEN KELLER

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several objections to this but there seems to derive strength merely from the relatively limited nature of the subliminal as we know it. However, it is not to be supposed that that represents all there is of the interior mind of man.

In any case, if Prof. Mackintosh really wished to think of Christ as deified and to have monotheism preserved at the same time, he should have dropped the terms "Father" and "Son" as being no longer applicable to the relations between the distinctions formerly indicated by those names. Just as plurality of individuality is preserved in our thoughts by keeping the name

"Person", so preserving the names "Father" and "Son" in the same sense as before after Christ's resurrection is ditheism. The word "Father" as applied to our Father in Heaven has, of course, an eternal significance but reason for the distinction represented by the word "Son" no longer exists.

All of this shows the importance of an accurate terminology and illustrates the tyranny that an inaccurate terminology may exercise over minds. "Person" is inaccurate because its supposed theological meaning is constantly defeated by the common significance of the word and it is in fact repeatedly

interpreted in the current sense. The words "Father" and "Son" indicate a natural, if not absolute, distinction between God in His essence and God as revealed on earth, but continued employment of them after the resurrection and ascension of Christ involves conceptual polytheism no matter what words the lips may frame. This would seem to make inevitable either a complete reduction of Christ to the human level or his absolute Deification in the manner which Swedenborg sets forth in his doctrine of the Divine-Human. To me unless the latter is true the heart is gone out of Christianity.

Increasing One's Love and Wisdom

by Frederick L. Kestler

To increase one's love and wisdom, is, basically, to increase one's love, because as one's love is increased, wisdom follows along and is increased in an equal degree—for to increase one's love, is wisdom.

Just how does one increase his love? What is "perfecting" one's love? Perfecting one's love, is implanting in one's self "an affection *not* to do" things that are against the divine laws. From birth, and up to the time that men reach the age of understanding, (repentance, reformation, and regeneration, which some never reach), we implant in ourselves "an affection to do" things that are contrary to the divine precepts—by birth and by inheritance we receive these inclinations. Every man is sometimes tempted to lie, steal, hate, not forgive, covet the goods of others, and blasphemy. And once an affection is implanted and inrooted in ourselves, it can never be obliterated from our memories, since all the purposes and intentions of all our acts are photographed spiritually on our subconscious or spiritual memory. This is our Book of Life.

How can we cast away from ourselves this inclination to evil which we inherit by birth, this affection to hate, not to forgive, to covet the goods of others? Is it possible to get rid of these inclinations implanted so thoroughly in the memory?

Yes—there is a way. Implant in yourself an opposing affection—an affection "*not* to do" things contrary to the Commandments. Replace the old affection with a new affection. Unless it is an affection, or love, the effort will not be permanent. An affection for evil will melt away with power, since love is the most powerful thing there is. A love to rule, and to possess the goods of others, was the cause of the hydrogen bomb being created in another country. A love of freedom was the *cause* of its

being created in this country.

Implanting a new and contrary affection for the old one, takes a long time. It will take years to become ingrown and permanent. We will fall back time and again, as a bug imprisoned in a glass jar, who attempts hundreds of times to escape by climbing up the smooth side, and after having almost reached the top, slips, and falls to the bottom again, and has to begin all over. The main thing is to get the new affection started and going. We must *love not* to do things contrary to the laws laid down for our living here in the natural world. We must make the change now, and remain that way forever, since we never die. Correspondence of your natural heart with your spiritual heart may cease sooner than you think, and repentance on your death bed is of no avail if it is the result of a state of compulsion from the fear of imminent death. Repentance and regeneration must take place while we are in a state of freedom—freedom from the fear of imminent death, freedom from sorrow or misfortune. We must live a life of regeneration when things are going well for us, the more years the better, and regeneration under a state of freedom like this, is of avail after death.

Affection means nearness to, in the spiritual world. Change of affection means separation or distance from the original thing for which we had an affection, to something else for which we receive a new affection. If we have an affection for something else, we are there instantly, because change of affection is change of state, and change of state is change of place, in the spiritual world. Thus even in the natural world, if you have an affection for evil, you are near to the real hell, and your mind is a hell in the least form, and after death you will automatically come

among those who are in the real hell. The same may be said about heaven. If you have an affection for good, and your thinking and acting corresponded to those in heaven, you will automatically come among those who are there, after death.

We are given the power to think and act like those who are in the real heaven, if we wish, the only difference being since we are still in the natural state, we think and act naturally, while those in the spiritual life think and act spiritually, but fundamentally, it is the same. The capacity to do this is called freedom, and does not belong to us, but to the Lord. The ability to understand what the Lord's Truths are, and therefore the opposite of that as being evil, is also another capacity of the Lord within us, and also does not belong to us, but to Him. We are merely the stewards of the Lord's goods, and should see that we treat those capacities well.

When we begin to think and act like those who are in heaven, it must be from *love*—we must have an *affection* for this—for to fight evil with will power will be a losing battle, and he will be like the elephant, tied with a thin, small thread of wool, who tries with all his strength to break it and escape, yet cannot. An evil love—a love to hate others, to take revenge, a love not to forgive others, a love to covet the goods of others—will melt away with power swiftly. An evil love must be fought with a heavenly love—fire must be fought with fire. Therefore, touch the match to that backfire *now*—get that new affection for good started and going *now*. If we *love not* to do things contrary to the laws laid down for our living here in the natural world, we will not have to do any fighting, any battling or struggling within ourselves. No hard work will be necessary to destroy a love for evil within us. It will be easy—very easy. And then remain that way until your life ends here in the world of nature, and you will be like that to eternity, in Eternal Life and happiness.

Children's Corner

SUSIE'S BOOK

By Lois Gustafson Miller

Once upon a time, a long time ago, there was a little girl by the name of Susan. She had blue blue eyes, long yellow hair, and a Daddy and Mommie who loved her very, very much.

Susie just loved to go to Sunday School, but her Daddy had to work on Sunday, and her Mommie wasn't able to take the long walk and bus ride to Susie's Church, and so Susie had to stay home on Sundays for quite a long time. Instead, she and her Mommie sat together in a big soft chair and here is one of the Bible stories her Mommie, who used to be a Sunday School teacher, told her.

BABY JESUS

Many years ago, there lived a sweet girl whose name was Mary. One day, much to Mary's surprise, a shining golden Angel came to her and told her that she was going to have a little baby, a boy. The angel told Mary to name the baby "Jesus". Mary was very happy at the thought of having a little baby, but she asked the Angel how that could be, for she wasn't even married yet. The Angel said, "This little baby will be born because God wants to come to the people to show them how to be good. The only way God can come to live with people, is for him to be born as a tiny little boy to a gentle young lady. God has chosen you, Mary, to be the mother of this special baby, Jesus, who will grow up to be a man, like your Daddy and will be like a boy, too." The Angel went away, and Mary continued to live as a good, sweet young girl.

Bye and bye she married a man whose name was Joseph. Now Joseph was a carpenter. A carpenter makes things—houses, tables, chairs, and beds, out of wood and nails with a hammer and saw, just as your Daddy makes things for us sometimes.

Days and days later, Joseph and Mary had to take a trip to another city called Bethlehem. Joseph used to live in Bethlehem before he was married. Do you suppose they drove there in a car, or took a train? No, for way back when Joseph and Mary lived, there were no automobiles or trains. Instead, Joseph got a donkey for Mary to ride, and away they went on their long trip with Mary riding slowly, because she was going to have the special baby very soon, and Joseph walking, because he was big and strong.

Do you remember Daddy and Mommie sitting down with a piece of paper, called a tax form, which they wrote on and gave to the mailman? Well, the

reason for the trip to Bethlehem was because there wasn't any way to mail a letter in the days of Mary and Joseph, and Joseph had to pay his taxes in the city where he was born. He had to tell the tax man who he was, where he lived, who his wife was, and what he did for work.

Mary and Joseph rode and walked, and rode and walked some more, until at long last they came to the city of Bethlehem. My, such a time as they had there! All of Joseph's relatives—his brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, his cousins—all had come to see the tax man too.

Joseph and Mary were so happy to see all the people whom Joseph knew, but there was one thing wrong. There just didn't seem to be any place to sleep! All the inns or hotels were already full of people. Joseph went to one inn and asked politely for a room to sleep in, but the innkeeper said, "Oh, Joseph, I'm so sorry. My inn is already full of people." Joseph went to another inn and the innkeeper said, "Oh dear me! Joseph, my inn is so full I have no room for you at all." Joseph tried another inn, but the unhappy innkeeper told him, "There is no room in the inn." However, the innkeeper was a very kind man and he felt so sorry for Mary, who had ridden such a long, long way and was so very tired, that he said, "I have an idea, Joseph. There is no room in my inn, but your wife is so very tired from the long trip, why don't you take her to the barn for the night. I'm sorry. It isn't must to offer, but it is warm and dry, and there is soft sweet-smelling hay in the stable to sleep on." So Joseph took Mary to the stable, which is like a barn, where horses, cows, sheep and chickens live.

Can you guess what happened that night in the stable? The baby boy was born! Mary didn't have any cradle or crib to put the baby in, so where could she put little Baby Jesus? She put him in a manger. A manger is a box which usually holds nice tender hay for the animals to eat, but the cows had kindly offered their manger for Baby Jesus to sleep in, and so Mary wrapped up Baby Jesus in a nice clean white blanket, and she put him to bed in the sweet smelling hay in the manger, where he fell sound asleep to the music of beautiful angel voices singing, "Glory to God in the highest."

Now that was the baby's birthday, and do you know what we call it? His birthday has a special name because he

was Jesus. His birthday is called Christmas. When we want to sing Happy Birthday to Jesus we sing all the special Christmas songs like the one about his first crib, "Away in the Manger."

(Very soon we will have another story in this newspaper from Susie's Book.—Ed.)

The Corncob Club

On page 38 of a book on Edwin Arlington Robinson, the author, Prof. Emery Negg of Columbia University, speaks of a small clique to which Robinson belonged when at Harvard called the "Corncob Club," of which our minister, the Rev. Chauncey Hubbell was a member. We are told that he and a man named Tryon, "who was to enter the Episcopal ministry," defended Christianity against the attacks of two others. Hubbell is here called "Walter", but a recent note from the Rev. John R. Swanton to the editor says that he spoke with the Rev. Hubbell about this, so that he can vouch for the fact that by "Walter" is intended Hubbell as one of Christianity's defenders.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sponsor A Baby in Need

To the EDITOR:

Our family is having a most heart-warming experience: sponsoring a child in the post-war shambles of Greece. This little girl lives in a town which was set afire by the Nazis while all the men and boys were led away and machine-gunned. Her father was one of five who survived, although he was left crippled and is now a paralytic. Once a prosperous merchant, he now owns nothing but half a house which was left standing after the fire. Part of this half-house he rents, while he and his wife and six children occupy the rest. His rent-money plus allowances from welfare agencies are his total income—\$28 a month! (It is estimated that \$64 is the minimum necessary just for sufficient food for a family this size.)

Our sponsorship consists of sending, through the Save The Children Federation (U.N. Plaza at 46th St., New York 17, N. Y.), clothing, blankets, and food for the youngest child, now seven. Through letters we have come to know the family, who write to us most affectionately and gratefully. The mother is a gallant and wonderful person, caring for her invalid husband and determined that all the children must have educations. The girls, as they finish high school, are entering nurse's training under the Red Cross. Every letter from this family speaks of thanking God for His goodness to them and for our friendship. Yet we are doing so little, by American standards. It costs only \$60 a year to provide for a baby, and \$120 for an older child. In Vietnam, a family of five can be fed for three days on five of our dollars!

It occurs to me that if every New-Church society in the United States would sponsor a destitute child in some underprivileged part of the world, how quickly the New Church would become identified with *doing* the Lord's work on earth! Sometimes it seems as if the purpose of our church-organization consists of little more than conducting worship and raising money to keep our worship going. Public worship is not the goal of religion, and especially not of the New Church. Swedenborg tells us: "Worship does not consist in prayers, but in the life of charity." Nor is preaching doctrine, even, the goal of our church; for, as our own doctrine says: "Knowledge does not make an angel, but the life itself which is obtained by knowledge." As long as our church is evident only through its preaching and distribution of literature, it will not gain much attention. But the minute it becomes associated with the

practice of what it preaches, it will become not only known but loved. "Love is the life of man"; it is also the life of a church.

May I then make a motion that in 1955 each New-Church society in this country become the sponsor of one baby or child in a war-devastated area; so that in various far places of the world there will grow up eighty human beings whose families and friends will know and love the New Church because they have *seen* its good works?

A READER

Wanted: More Arcana Students

To the EDITOR:

Do we all hear the call from heaven imploring us, with love as only angels feel, to read the Opened Word, read it with them, read it together, read it every day of our lives? It is not in vain we use the expression "day of our lives"—for we are called to live with the angels on their bread and drink their wine as they converge on the earth—yes, in the atomic age.

Strange and wonderful, this is the age He comes to us, "See, My Word is opened. Come into My school, and I will teach you what it means. You will see that it means Me, and I will teach you to feel and see that it means you, too. You will be reading about My thoughts when I was on the earth with you and you will see what My thoughts mean to you. It was your enemies I was fighting every day of My life on this earth with you. I came to let you, and the angels, know Me better so that you could love Me more."

How indelibly that thought is written on the heart of His Church. We are all called, from the least to the greatest, to go forth and try to understand the spiritual meaning of His Word. He is the Teacher. The angels are surely present. If we cannot see them, we can feel them near. All of His New Church, He is instaurating, are present with each other in these school days that have come back to us. High school, too—though we feel that we belong in the kindergarten class when the angels are learning, too, from the same page, using the same text that we have. This school, indeed, will fit us for life. We will find our work.

We know how to lead the hungering and thirsting to the Lord. We know how He is coming—in His Word. He is teaching us. If Billy Graham is called, how much more we!

We do not have to go around teaching everybody, whether they are ready for it or not, we just have to come ourselves to school and get taught. He is here. He is doing it all. When we all know Him, from the least to the greatest, then

He and the angels can take possession of His earth, His very own earth.

SERENA K. DANDRIDGE

Shepherdstown, W. Va.

God As Agape

To the EDITOR:

I have been reading a compilation of "Contemporary Thinking about Jesus," under that title, edited by Thomas S. Kepler. Besides revealing to me my intense ignorance of the subject, my attention has been called to certain contributions which might interest you if you are not already familiar with the authorities mentioned. I have in mind particularly a contribution by Nels F. S. Ferré entitled "God as Agape," in which he, himself a Swede, quotes from the writings of two others, Aulén and Nygren. The fact that they are from Swedenborg's country is of immediate interest but I think there is evidence of some approximation in thought in the substance of the article. Thus (p. 299) Ferré quotes the words from John xv:16, "Ye did not choose Me, but I chose you," and comments: "Here lies the deep truth of predestination. Man is to love God, not because he finds fuller and completer satisfaction of his need in God than in any other object of desire, but because God's 'uncaused' love has overpowered him and constrained him, so that he can do nothing else than love God." That suggests what Swedenborg says about predestination to heaven. Ferré contrasts this agape with love of mere human origin which he calls eros and which is really self-love. The contrast of the two here is interesting. It would be interesting to know whether these men know anything about Swedenborg. I should think they must.

JOHN R. SWANTON

Newton, Mass.

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Arcana Class I—December, 1954 Volume XI, 9407 - 9467

December	1 - 7	9407 — 9410
	8 - 14	9411 — 9421
	15 - 21	9422 — 9434
	22 - 31	9435 — 9467

The reading for this month continues to be concerning the Word. The second Sunday in this month is set apart as "Bible Sunday." The Church gets its teachings from the Bible, and setting aside one Sunday in the year for consideration of the Bible has the advantage of focusing the thought of the Christian world on the source of its light and power. Those who have no belief in the Word as a Divine revelation look to themselves and to others for light. So they have no steady guide. They change from one view to another and follow this or that prevalent opinion. Without the Word "we wait for light but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness." Interest in the Bible seems to be increasing; a new translation, the Revised Standard Version, has resulted in the largest single printing of the Bible in history.

Religion is based upon the fact of God's existence, and for the Christian world the Bible is our source of this knowledge. And we must know that the Bible is not the work of men. The Lord gave the Word, though men were used in transcribing it.

And we need to know that the Bible is the record of the Divine life. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God . . . and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." The Lord came into the world, taking on a human nature like ours with the hereditary evils of the human race handed down through the ages. In this humanity God Himself met the powers of evil and overcame them. No mortal could have done this. No mortal of the past or of today could of himself for a moment withstand the power of the hells. It is as true now as with the disciples: they could not watch one hour.

It is this revelation of the Lord in the Word which is the light of men. The Bible tells us of the creation of the world and of men upon it, of the purpose of life, of the nature of God, and of how we should live. Men have always been given a revelation, for truths concerning God and heaven cannot be made up by the human mind.

There are in the world "especially among the learned" those who think

that there is no other meaning to the Bible than that which stands forth in the letter. Yet without the internal sense the Bible cannot be understood and can be used to confirm whatever one pleases. In the explanation of the words "And unto the sons of Israel who were set apart" we are told that these words refer to those "who draw from the Word no doctrine of charity and faith, but remain solely in the sense of the letter of the Word," and further that such are in external worship apart from internal. No. 9409² tells of the character of this external worship and modern forms of it. To those sons of Israel who were set apart "He sent not His hand." The hand signifies power, and so the Word is not in its power with those who are in the external sense apart from the internal, because there is then no communication with the heavens.

"And they saw God." Seeing God is to be endowed with intelligence and faith. In this number, 9411, we are told why Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders saw the Lord, namely, because Moses and Aaron represent the Word as to its internal and external senses, Nadab and Abihu doctrine drawn therefrom, and the seventy elders those in good from the truths thence derived.

The history of the Israelites, their idolatry and lack of interest in spiritual things, gives testimony to the barrenness of external worship alone.

Notes

9416². The two tables of stone on which the Commandments were written "were divided the one from the other; they were joined together by attachment, and the writing was continued from one table onto the other, as though it was upon one table; but not accord-

ing to the common opinion some commandments upon one table and some upon the other."

9424. Hur is mentioned in the Word only twice, once in Exodus xvii when with Aaron he upheld the hands of Moses during the battle with Amalek, and in this present instance. Hur represents the truths of doctrine from the Word which support the Word.

Arcana Class II—December, 1954 Volume VI, 4282 - 4331

December	1 - 7	4282 — 4288
	8 - 14	4289 — 4299
	15 - 21	4300 — 4314
	22 - 31	4315 — 4331

In reading the Old Testament it is helpful to keep in mind the fact that its historicals, while literally true except for a few notable instances, are representative. The history of the Jews was directed by the Lord so that when recorded it would "serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things." In the text covered by this month's reading this is brought out clearly. The Jews were a very external people who could be led to serve the Lord for their own gain and honor but had no desire even to know about God and spiritual things. In 4289² we are told why the posterity of Jacob were kept so long in Egypt in bondage, namely "That they might be reduced to this ignorance they were kept some hundreds of years in Egypt; and when they were called out thence, they did not know even the name of Jehovah." Spiritual knowledge had to be kept from them lest their representative worship become profaned. They could not be led by any internal means, but only by external, and so they were kept in their external worship.

Our reading continues the interpretation of Jacob's wrestling with the angel. This, as before noted, describes temptations, which today are often thought of as coming from the Lord. We pray, "Lead us not into temptation." This is the way it appears to the natural man, though in reality the Lord tempts no one. The life of the world is not under the control of individuals, though each one of us has some influence on it. Often we find ourselves in situations not of our own will or making. So it seems that at times we are led into temptations. This statement in the Lord's Prayer means that we should not seek temptation, for we do not know our strength. The Lord alone knows our power to resist.

The explanation of the words "For as a prince, thou hast contended with God and with men, and hast prevailed" help us to understand this: "That it was not God with whom Jacob contended must be evident to everyone . . . for it cannot be predicated of any man that he

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contends with God and prevails." 4287⁴ In the inmost sense these words refer to the Lord who by His own power fought against and overcame the hells, and it is His power in us, not our own power, that overcomes our evils. When the Lord is present with us, our evils are roused to resist Him, and it is this resistance that is the cause of temptations.

Change of Name

After Jacob's struggle with the angel his name was changed to Israel. This pictures an advance to a new state after victory in temptation. Names signify qualities and states and so the change of name denotes a change of mind and heart. We recall that the names of Abram and Sarai were changed to Abraham and Sarah. When Simon confessed to the Lord to be the Messiah his name was changed to Peter. In the change from Jacob to Israel is noted the change which comes when we pass from doing right from the hope of reward—mediate good—and begin to do what is good from the love of good. It pictures an orderly step in our regeneration. In reference to the Lord Jacob represents the Lord as the Divine natural, Israel as the Divine spiritual. In reference to us Jacob represents the external Church but an external without a corresponding internal is not sufficient and so the internal quality of the Church is represented by Israel.

Notes

4295. No one is admitted into heaven who thinks that he has intelligence and wisdom from himself.

4299⁵. The Lord appeared to the Jews as an old man with a long and snowy beard.

4310. The different meanings of Jacob: (1) In the sense of the letter, Jacob himself. (2) In the internal historical sense, his posterity. (3) In the internal spiritual sense, the natural man in him who is regenerate. (4) In the supreme sense, the Lord as to His Divine natural.

Mid-Week Services in Brooklyn

Having no regular minister, the Brooklyn Society began in November to hold worship services on Thursday evenings with the Rev. William R. Woofenden, minister of the New York Society. These additional New Church services in the New York Metropolitan area are intended to provide added congregational worship opportunities for church members and seekers alike. In the same area, the Westchester, Conn. New Church group have been holding vesper services at the homes of members with preaching by the Rev. Mr. Woofenden.

101st Annual Meeting

It was the 101st Annual Meeting of the Ohio Association, and the 113th Anniversary of the founding of the Pittsburgh Society, that brought both organizations together under sunny skies for the two-day business session of the Ohio Association, November 5-7 in the Big Steel capitol of America.

The theme of the Association Meeting was "The New Church in Christendom."

Delegates and ministers came to Pittsburgh from as far away as Cincinnati, Ohio, and the president of the General Convention, the Rev. Franklin H. Blackmer, arrived from Boston, Mass.

It was the first meeting under the chairmanship of the Rev. Bjorn Johannson, who was elected to the Ohio Association post in 1953. It was also the first for the new General Pastor, the Rev. Henry C. Giunta, and the first time a president of Convention had attended a meeting of the Ohio Association in Pittsburgh in many years. Elected to office for 1954-55 were the following:

President.....Rev. Bjorn Johannson
V. President.....Rev. Henry C. Giunta
Secretary.....Rev. Leon C. Le Van
Treasurer.....H. Brown McGill
Field Secretary....Rev. Leon C. Le Van
Trustees.....Robert G. Lawson
 Edward F. Memmott
 Anton C. Pfister

The Ohio Woman's Alliance, the Auxiliary arm of the Association, opened its annual business meeting Friday, Nov. 5, at 3:00 p.m., at which time reports were read, business transacted, and funds provided for uses of the church at large. A social hour in the Pittsburgh Society's newly decorated Ladies parlor followed the business session, permitting renewal of friendships and happy associations among the members. Officers of the Alliance for the ensuing year are: *President*, Miss Dorothea Pfister; *V. President*, Mrs. Norman Bestor; *Secretary*, Mrs. Loraine Scott; *Treasurer*, Mrs. Leon C. Le Van. Also there was a dedication of the Mite Box offerings.

"The New Church in Christendom" as a subject for examination and discussion was introduced Friday evening by the pastor of the host society, the Rev. Leon C. Le Van, whose remarks were followed by prepared addresses by Robert G. Lawson of Cincinnati and Miss Dorothea Pfister of Cleveland. Saturday evening the introduction came in the form of an address by the president of Convention, which was followed by a symposium of thoughts and observations offered from the floor. Both evenings the summarizing remarks were made by the Rev. Bjorn Johannson, president of Association.

CHURCH CONFRONTS RESPONSIBILITY

While no consensus of opinion was attempted, it was apparent the New Church does not consider itself a militant body commissioned to sweep the earlier ecclesiastical forms into paths of genuine spiritual truth. On the other hand, there was no evidence that the New Church views its mission for the descent of the Holy City as in any way lessened by the events of the changing world. The Saturday afternoon address by the Rev. Henry C. Giunta brought additional thought to bear on the subject. All present felt the difficulty of treating so large a subject exhaustively in only two meetings, but it proved helpful to bring opposing viewpoints together in such congenial surroundings.

In addition to the election of officers, reading of reports, and necessary transaction of essential business, the Association voted the expenses of delegates this year and next during their attendance at Association meetings. It is believed such a step will markedly relieve the burden of future host societies and expedite the sending of delegates from home societies to future Association meetings.

The sum of \$200.00 was voted for the forthcoming Convention Appeal, and \$75.00 was voted for the gratifying work of the Almont Summer School. It was voted to accept with thanks the invitation of the Lakewood delegation to hold the next meeting of Association in the edifice of the Lakewood Society.

The outstanding social event of the two-day session was the banquet Saturday evening in the redecorated Social Hall, adjacent to the newly modernized Pittsburgh church kitchen. Gilbert T. Heddaeus, superintendent of the Pittsburgh Sunday School, filled the role of spirited and efficient toastmaster. Expressions of felicitation mingled with the usual banter appropriate to such an occasion. Ray Heddaeus, president of the Pittsburgh Society, noted that the Ohio State football team overpowered the University of Pittsburgh 26-0. The president of the Pittsburgh Ladies Aid presented Mrs. Jane Le Van with a lovely corsage in honor of the fifth wedding anniversary of the Pittsburgh pastoral pair.

Sunday morning saw Sunday School services and Divine Worship held in the church parlors and church auditorium with music for the latter service coming from the historical Andrew Carnegie pipe organ played by Mrs. Beatrice Robinson. The Service of Holy Communion was conducted by the Revs. Le Van, Johannson, and Blackmer, with Rev. Mr. Blackmer delivering the sermon and administering the elements. Following the benediction and *nunc dimittis*, all present repaired to the dining room, where they were served a deli-

Birth, Baptisms, Memorials

BIRTH

KRITSCHER.—Born to Eunice and Al Kritscher of the San Francisco Society, a son, Stephen Wayne, on October 3.

BAPTISMS

REDDEKOPP.—Baptized on Sunday, October 10, 1954, Brian Frederick, infant son of Rev. and Mrs. Erwin D. Reddekopp, the father officiating.

SULLIVAN.—Baptized, on Sunday, October 31, 1954, Winthrop Edward Sullivan III, infant son of Winthrop E. and Caroline (Hotson) Sullivan of New York City, N. Y.

HOUSTON.—Frederick Wesley, infant son of Fred and Carol Houston of San Diego, was baptized on October 24, Rev. Othmar Tobisch officiating.

PEEBLES.—Douglas Carter Peebles, infant son of Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Chalmers Peebles, was baptized, October 17 in the Boston Church of the New Jerusalem, the Rev. Antony Regamey officiating.

GARTHWAITE.—On Sunday, November 7, Cathy Marie Garthwaite, infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John S. Garthwaite, was baptized into the faith and life of the church by the Rev. William Woofenden of the New York Society.

In Memoriam

LEONARD.—Mrs. Grace Perry Leonard passed away into the spiritual world, on October 27, 1954, in San Luis Obispo, Calif. Services were held in Alhambra on October 30, the Rev. Andre Diaconoff officiating.

BORGMAN.—On October 23, Miss Anna C. Borgman passed to the Higher Life. Miss Borgman was a sister of Fred L. Borgman, who for many years was treasurer of the Detroit Society. Miss Borgman was 96 years of age.

In Memoriam

WILLIAM R. SPRIGG—1871-1954

November 8, 1954, marked the passing into the spiritual life of another member of one of the most loyal and devoted New-Church families, William R. Sprigg of the well-known Chapman family. Mr. Sprigg, who was a member of the Cincinnati Society, came to Cincinnati at the age of 10 from Baltimore. Through their mutual interest in opera and music, he met Miss Naomi Chapman, and in 1905 they were married. Mrs. Sprigg preceded her husband into the spiritual world five years ago.

Many will remember the sparkle behind Mr. Sprigg's large spectacles as he regarded the passing scene in his quiet, yet humorous, fashion. He left his mark on the business life of his city as President of the Norwood Transfer Co. from 1915 until 1948 and as treasurer for many years of the Norwood Kiwanis Club. Mr. Sprigg was held in great esteem and affection by his business associates and friends. His cheerful disposition, some said, seemed to brighten the atmosphere when he entered. A man of high intelligence, he was strongly interested in the welfare of the community and ever ready to lend a helping hand to a neighbor. His interest in music and in the field of sports brought him a wide circle of friends. Mr. Sprigg leaves a son, William C. Sprigg, of Cincinnati, and a daughter Mrs. Frank Tracy of El Cajon, Calif., and three grandchildren. Last services were held for him November 11, in Cincinnati's Church of the New Jerusalem, with the Rev. Bjorn Johansson officiating.

101st Annual Meeting

(Continued from previous page)

cious buffet luncheon arranged by Mrs. Le Van's "Association Committee."

It is the obvious consensus of ministers and delegates that the 101st Annual Meeting despatched its business effectively and well, and that the Association looks to the future with humility, spirit, and resurgent faith.

IN MEMORIAM

PRESCOTT.—Standish Prescott passed from this life on October 12 after a long illness. Mr. Prescott was for many years secretary of the Orange, N. J. Society. He was 79 years of age. Harold B. Larsen, acting pastor of the church in Orange, conducted resurrection services on October 14 in the church.

Mr. Prescott was born in Orange, son of Charles J. and Clara Ropes Prescott. His maternal grandfather, David N. Ropes, was the first mayor of Orange after its incorporation as a city. Ropes Playground, Orange, is named after his grandfather.

Mr. Prescott attended Orange schools and was a graduate of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He had been associated with the New York Central Railroad in its maintenance of way department 30 years when ill health forced his retirement in 1936. He served in the Navy during the Spanish-American War. He was a member of New Church, Orange.

Mr. Prescott was not married. His only survivors are two first cousins, Bradford Ropes of Boston and Mrs. Charles Frazier of San Francisco.

Dr. Spoerl Is Speaker

Fifty members of the Men's Club of the Boston Church were present at the dinner meeting on October 18. Dr. Howard D. Spoerl spoke on "The Living Philosophy of Swedenborg."

Building Projects

The weather vane is pointing East and West and by the way the wind is blowing, we see that two building projects are in the making. In Detroit, the building committee has held two meetings recently with their architect to consider how best to complete their church structure. In San Francisco, their Parish Hall Building Fund in September reached 10% of their goal.

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