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NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER

THE NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER

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December 7, 1957

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.

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The 1958 Tithe

by Fitch Gibbens

ONE OF THE most perplexing questions that modern Churchmen are conscientiously asking themselves is, "How much should a Christian offer to the Lord?" Were St. Paul speaking today in terms of II Corinthians, 9:7 it is likely he would say, "Everyman according to his most conscientious thinking, so let him give." It appears that Paul would favor planned giving, even as we plan to pay our taxes by including them in our personal, family budgets.

The Biblical rule of 10% tithe certainly is worthy of consideration. However, in Biblical pre-Christ days, the Church took care of the sick, the aged, the insane, the unemployed and the orphans. Thus it was that the entire tithe was given to the Church. Today the United Fund organizations take care of most of our charitable and welfare work. Now, therefore, it is reasonable to divide our giving, two-thirds to the Church and one-third to the United Fund. It is a truism that it is ordinarily easier for people with \$50,000 income to tithe 10% than it would be for those with \$5,000. On this basis it is proper to give consideration to the idea of a graduated scale of planned giving.

The Rev. Frederick J. Eastman has worked out a formula for proportional giving to which it might be well for the New Church to give serious con-

sideration. The thought is that modern offerings should be made on an 'after taxes' basis of estimation.

Planning thus, on the basis of two-thirds to Church and one-third to United Fund, the following table is suggested:

For incomes *OVER* \$5000 a year:

6% for 1 or 2 in the family
5% for 3 in the family
4% for 4 in the family
3% for 5 in the family
2% for more than 5 in the family.

For incomes *UNDER* \$5000 a year:

5% for 1 or 2 in the family
4% for 3 in the family
3% for 4 in the family
2% for more than 4 in the family.

It would appear that of the amount offered to the Church one-fifth should go to Convention and four-fifths to the local Society.

On this basis of reasoning a family of 1 or 2 with \$5000 net income (after taxes) might well consider offering:

United Fund \$50
Convention \$60
Local Society \$140

EDITORIALS

Truly God — Truly Man

THERE IS no season of the Church year, not even Advent, that is set aside by the Church for special attention to the person of Jesus Christ. For He is central in everything of value that the church has to present. Christianity differs from other world religions in that it is not founded primarily upon a body of doctrine or a carefully selected set of rules by which life is to be regulated, but upon a Person. "No other foundation can be laid than that which is laid which is Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 3:11). In Jesus Christ the human and the divine are one, so that in Him God's love is expressed through personality and becomes the very climax of His self-revelation to His children.

In recent years there has been much effort put forth to find a formula upon which the many denominations of Christendom could unite. In this quest one fact stands out, namely, that Christian belief centers around the Person of the Lord. At the recent Oberlin Conference the formulation that was the second most agreed-upon by the clergy was the statement, "Jesus Christ is truly God and truly man." To this statement 68.16 per cent of the clergy and 45.19 per cent of the laymen gave their assent.

This declaration would be in principle acceptable to the New Churchman. Note the present tense: 'Jesus Christ *is*' . . . This implies that the Lord did not discard His manhood when He departed from the earth. (Perhaps, we should say, when He ceased to be visible to the physical eyes of man.) He is still truly man and yet truly God. For the rational mind such a claim seems self-contradictory. To man are ascribed limitations. How can the Lord be both man and the infinite God? In the early Christian Church the sect known as the Docetists contended that to make the Lord a participant in the common lot of man—referring to His life on earth—was to degrade Him. They said He only seemed to be truly human. They were ready to reject everything in the Gospel message about Him which implies limitation, such as that He did not know everything (*Mk.* 13:32); that He got tired (*Jn.* 4:6), or that He suffered pain as related in the account of the Crucifixion. However, the Church rejected this view. It had the insight to see that the struggle and the suffering of the Lord was an actual human experience; not a carefully staged drama to which no reality attached.

Although accepting the humanity of the Lord the Church has always laid the greater stress upon His divinity. At the Oberlin Conference, for example, only 2.62 per cent of the clergy and 6.02 per cent of the laity were willing to accept a statement about the nature of Christ that did not affirm His divinity. And does not

the Gospel of John clearly and unmistakably use 'God' in referring to the Logos in 1:1 and to the Risen Jesus in 20:28? But the question remains: how can the Lord be both God and man?

Sometimes the answer has been that this was a mystery which man must believe but could not understand. Others have even declared that it must be believed by virtue of its absurdity. Among modern Orthodox students of Christology the answer usually attempted is to affirm that there is a unique relationship between Jesus and God. Jesus came into the world, this view holds, as the direct result of a special act of God which had for its purpose something different from the birth of a human being in an ordinary sense. In the birth of Jesus divine love was at work, creating a means for the salvation and redemption of mankind. It is argued that such titles as the Son of God and the Logos, mean that Jesus was an agent of God who, although divine in nature, was a historical person commissioned to carry out the divine purpose.

It is hard to see how this view can do other than make of Jesus a sort of a lesser deity. The teachings of Swedenborg declare that God Himself assumed a humanity and glorified that humanity. There is no dualism in this teaching. It accords with what the Bible teaches. It is consonant with what so many in the early Christian Church believed. They prayed to Him (*Acts* 7:59). To them He was the great God and Savior (*Tit.* 2:13). There is no self-contradiction in this doctrine. To be sure, it does not solve every theological difficulty connected with the nature of Jesus Christ. But it certainly leaves fewer things to explain than does any orthodox formulation familiar to us.

The criticism has been made of the New-Church teachings that in exalting the Son these overlook the Father. Such criticism is the result of an insufficient knowledge of Swedenborg's thought. His theology takes just as much cognizance of the concept of the Father as any system of theology. But in its formulation of the relation between the Son and the Father it has escaped being led into thinking that is polytheistic.



ONCE A YEAR

By now the ANNUAL APPEAL has reached most members of the Church. Convention's expanding program calls for a substantial increase in our financial support; the amount needed from contributions to balance the budget is \$24,315.00. A greater effort has been made this year to dramatize the functions of this budget and the nature of our larger Church's program, and we are certain that all who love the New Church will support its work.

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ADVENT

By Antony Regamey

He saw that there was no man and wondered that there was no intercessor. Therefore, . . . He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and an helmet of salvation upon his head.

Isaiah 59, 16-17

WHEN THE LITTLE BAND of Jewish exiles returned from Babylon to their home-country, they met at once with sad disillusionment.

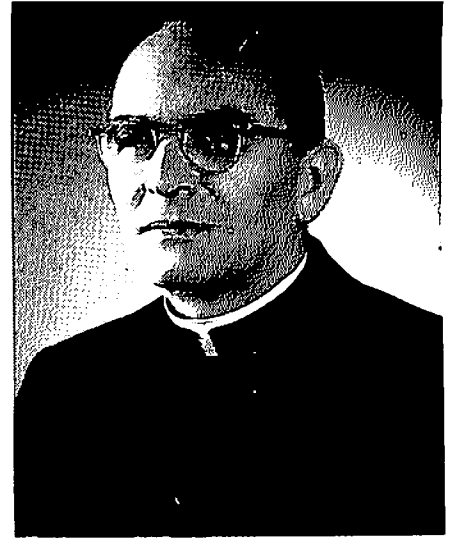
They had been led to expect great things. To be set free meant to them that God had forgiven them their sins as a nation. Had they not heard their great poet-prophet proclaim, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem. Cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned?"

Through these and other inspired pronouncements they had come back with the conviction that it would not be long before God would establish His kingdom on earth and rule the world from Jerusalem, while the nations would be made to 'lick the dust of their feet.'

Instead of this, however, they found their holy city and the Temple still in ruins and the nearby towns and villages in shambles. Their first efforts to cultivate the fields were brought to nought by lack of rain and consequent crop failure. They rebuilt the Temple and, partly, the city, but still nothing happened. Disheartened, at long last, they felt that their God had forsaken them.

It was then that another prophet pointed to, as he saw them, the obstacles that stood in the way of the fulfilment of their hope. He made it plain that they had not learned much from the exile, nor made their own the Lord's forgiveness. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save," he said, "neither is his ear heavy that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you." And he went on with that devastating picture of the disintegration of morals in his day, part of which we read as a lesson this morning, culminating in the statement that social conditions then were such that, to live right was fast becoming impossible. "Yea, truth faileth and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey."

As a matter of fact, the situation was so hopeless, as the prophet saw it, that nothing short of the intervention of God Himself could remedy it. "And He (God) saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor." There was no one able to stem the mounting tide of sin, to interpose with any chance to succeed, on behalf of truth and decency. 'Therefore,' he added—and we may paraphrase his conclusion—God would come



Himself, in judgment both on Israel and the nations. He would come as a Redeemer 'to those that turn from transgression.'

Today, of course, we read this prophecy in the light of its later fulfilment in Christ. It never was realized, nor ever will be, just as the prophet and the people to whom he spoke expected it would be. Our Lord made it clear that His kingdom was not a political empire. But its significance to us is in the insight that God Himself, the Creator of heaven and earth, would come into the world as our Redeemer. It is also in the picture it gives of the conditions which made His coming in the limitations of our nature, inevitable. For, it was to a world such as our chapter describes that our Lord came,—a world in which it was becoming more and more difficult for man to grow to his divinely intended stature, and where even the vision and knowledge of what true human life should be were fast disappearing.

There we have it. Such conditions would be, undoubtedly, God's primary concern. His original purpose in creating us, as we are told in the Book of Genesis, is to make us men. It is to fashion us as spiritual beings, as persons that may grow more and more into his image and likeness; that may freely respond to His love and express it in the world all about; that may live by his truth for human life and become instruments of His power in all their relationships, learning to live together as one human family, in true brotherhood, under His divine Fatherhood.

"He saw that there was no man," we are told, "and wondered that there was no intercessor." There were plenty of men, to be sure, but they had become so engrossed in their pursuit of material interests and self-seeking, they had become so indifferent to the truth of the spiritual life that they were not men in the real meaning of the Word. They were in danger of losing their ability to know what manhood can be at its highest and best. "There was no man," no one able to turn back the tide of selfishness and materialism.

So, He came into the world Himself, who was Man, with a capital 'M' from the beginning, if we were made in his image. He came to remind us, His wayward children, of our kinship with Him, of the true meaning of life, and of what manhood at its noblest can be. He came to make plain to us that He is not only the Creator

of the World, the source of its sustenance, the maintainer of the moral and spiritual law that pervades it, but also a God who cares, a God warm, personal and friendly to whom every individual life is precious; an indwelling spirit, yearning to be received in our minds and hearts, that He may give Himself to us in increasing measure and bless us with the life ever more abundant of His presence within.

Thus, He wrought our deliverance from the shackles that hold us back to our animal, selfish nature, by fighting the very battles we must fight. He put on 'righteousness as a coat of mail' and 'an helmet of salvation upon his head.' In other words, He took on Him our nature, such as it was, with all its native tendencies to evil. He came to live among us the very life we must live; so that, in all things tempted as we are, yet without sin, and overcoming the powers of darkness in and through that nature, we may know that His is the power to overcome them again and again in all of us, if we will receive Him.

And, from then on, a new era of spiritual experience became possible for mankind. From then on men could say, "I live, and yet not I but Christ liveth in me." From then on the true measure of a man became the measure in which "In Him we live and move and have our being." He, the Christ-God, became the Divine-Human standard of that true manhood to which we aspire. We judge ourselves by our nearness or our distance from Him, by the fact that our faces are turned toward Him or in the opposite direction. By the strength, love and enlightenment He can give us, we can thus overcome in our turn.

But, you may say that our world today, and despite His coming, is still in its outward aspects the same kind of world as that in which He came in the first place; that it is just as blood-stained by hatreds and wars, just as debased by sensuality, just as torn by selfishness, greed and prejudice, just as brutalized by oppression and cruelty, just as riddled with fears and insecurity. Granted. But with this difference, that He now is in it; available as a light in our darkness, as a ready compassion, as a healing power in our divisiveness, as our only reassurance and hope of better things, as a presence that will never leave us alone till we strive to achieve a better order of life with all our might. He is in our world, sharing and inspiring our every good effort, and as the sure prophecy of a better day through all in whom He lives.

For, his kingdom, for which we pray, is but the extension of His Incarnation. It is His reign, the image and likeness of his Divine-Humanity in the hearts and minds of all who love Him, who share His concern and who, in full commitment, strive to make our social order a truly humane world. Indeed, such is the task of His Church in the world, to become in His hand a willing instrument of social redemption, to create and nurture a social conscience, that shall at long last do away with those collective sins, such as war, for which none of us and all of us are responsible.

The President's Corner

MY TRAVEL AND VISITS

- January 10 Wayfarers' Chapel board meeting, Palos Verdes
- 11 Wayfarers' Chapel board meeting—Leave Palos Verdes, afternoon
- 11 San Diego,—afternoon or evening
- 12 Meet with San Diego Society
- 13 Leave San Diego
- January 17 Kitchener—Church of the Good Shepherd Annual Meeting
- January 19 Leave Hamilton 9:30 p.m., Arrive Philadelphia 8:45 a.m.
- 20, 21 Executive Committee of the Council of Ministers? (either or both these dates 20 and 21)
- 21, 22 or
- 22, 23 Task Force Reports—Fryeburg Conference reassemble:
(Not yet been decided which two days. Most likely the latter)
- 23 Evening—General Council meeting, Philadelphia
- 24 General Council meeting, Philadelphia
- 26 Orange Society — Preach and celebrate Communion.
- 28 Board of Missions meeting, Philadelphia
- February 1 Trustees, Urbana Jr. College, Urbana, Ohio
- February 9 Week-end—(tentative)—Workshop Cleveland-Lakewood, Ohio

Cordially,



"He saw there was no man, . . . therefore," He came—The Man, the Divine One, in and through whom alone the whole human race can find unity; the God-Man in whose love alone humanity, all the families of the earth can find integration and coherence; the God who so identified Himself with us that, henceforth, He will never let go!

This, to many, may sound fantastic and visionary. But, think it over. What else is there? To us, it is the

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This talk was given as part of a panel discussion on the subject of the title at a faculty-parent meeting at Chadwick School in Rolling Hills, California. Chadwick School is in the vicinity of the Wayfarers' Chapel, and many of the parents live in the neighborhood. The author, Mrs. Blackmer, is well known in the New Church. She was at one time associate editor of the MESSENGER, and many will remember her thoughtful editorials.

Self-direction and Self-realization

by Carolyn A. Blackmer

I FIND THESE words 'goals' and 'values' mighty impressive words, but they are abstractions, and high-level abstractions, at that. As parents we need something more workable to help us establish goals and values in our homes. If the self-direction is to be toward the right goals, and the realization of self is to become an actualizing of a good self, we are going to need to know how to translate these abstractions into living processes. But first, we have to see what we mean when we talk about goals and values. So I am going to try to find operational definitions for them as scientists do with their abstractions. It is my hope that these definitions will suggest to us the processes through which our boys and girls,—and mothers and fathers, for that matter, reach for what they want most out of life, and the processes whereby they judge how good these things are. I am going to translate what we call 'good', therefore, into more precise terms of what it takes to live well and live freely with things as they are, in the world as it is.

Remembering what kind of a world it is that our children are growing up in, my first definition for 'good' would be finding security in the midst of almost universal insecurity. This, I am sure you will agree, is something devoutly to be sought after, and well worth the price we pay for it. Serenity in the face of disaster, peace within even when there is outer conflict.

Lest this sound too fuzzily idealistic or mystical, let me add another definition of what we should like to have our children equipped with when they are directing and realizing themselves. This is the difficult business of coming to terms with reality. It means recognizing the limits that reality sets up for us with its laws. Here are the 'thou shalt nots' that nature imposes, the laws of human relations and codes of society that young people flout at great risk in directing themselves and in expressing their desires. Within these limits our children must learn a rigorous self-discipline to create something good out of the raw stuff of their feelings. Just so an artist, knowing the limits of his materials and tools, disciplines himself to create beauty. Coming to terms with inner reality as well as outer, then, has its own reward in that young people will learn to live with integrity and without the need of escapes.

Recognizing our limits and living within them with grace does not mean imposing limitations on ourselves, so we need a fuller definition of good to help us see the processes by which self-realization can be assured for our children. And this one is becoming aware of what Kurt Goldstein calls 'the merely possible' that is within present reality. These are all the possible implications, all the potentials for good and for evil that lie within any one individual in his individual situation at any one time in his development. This is a solemn thing to contemplate in a child, the possible directions in which he might realize himself for good if he can learn how to choose the good and refuse the evil.

We know from our own adult experience that these potentials do not become sources of kinetic energy until they are released. They are not much good to us until they are put to the supreme test of how effectively they handle disorder and chaos. One of the things we certainly pray that our children find is the power to create order and harmony out of the chaos that human relations fall into. It is essentially the God-given gift of planting and cultivating the waste places and making them blossom. Failure, loss, grief, the things that might break the human spirit, instead can help to make it, and give it substance and strength. It is in this process that mistakes are redeemed and the burden of guilt taken away. And this my friends, is good.

Out of all these aspects of good we can see there could come courage, real and substantial enough to face those fears that are not imaginary but perfectly legitimate. There are fearsome things in life that we rightly fear but dare not turn away from in fear. These need to be looked at in the eye squarely and called by their right names. Otherwise, our children may get badly lost in directing themselves.

I think I can sum up all that I have said about good by equating it with love. By love I mean that primal force in life that gives us security, sets our limits, fills them with potential power, creates what is new, and gives us spiritual stature through courage. Love so defined can even turn love of self into something good. There is a way in which our egos can defend themselves and even

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UNDER THE PALMS

(The first part of selections from this historical sketch, which is being prepared by the Board of the Southeastern Association, Incorporated, appeared in the NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER for September 28th of this year. Reprints of Part I are available from the Secretary of the Board, 656 First St. N., St. Petersburg 1, Fla. Any additional material which will assist in the scope and accuracy of this project should also be sent to that address. The Board is very grateful for assistance given them earlier, and also since Part I appeared, by officers of the General Convention, individuals in the southeastern area, and other readers of the MESSENGER.)

THE NEW CHURCH IN THE SOUTHEAST

PART II

NO EXACT date has yet been established for the organization of the first New-Church Association in the Southeast, but recently discovered evidence seems to indicate that it was before 1850. Called 'The Georgia Swedenborg Association,' it was organized 'to promote a wider circulation of the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg.' In officially adopting this as its purpose, the Association set the pattern which, more than a hundred years later, resulted in the establishment of the present New-Church Center in Florida.

This first Association did not unite with the General Convention in its early years, and later the War Between the States cut off communication with northern groups. There is therefore nothing in the official records of Convention during this time to show activity in the Southeastern area, but local evidence proves that isolated members carried on serious, individual study, and that small groups met together, whenever this was possible, for study and discussion.

At some time during or immediately after the War, Mr. Louis H. Tafel was employed as a missionary by members of the Association. At their meeting in Columbus, Ga., in 1868, they requested his ordination; and he was accordingly ordained by Rev. Chauncey Giles in New York in 1869. Rev. Frank Sewall was invited to the Association meeting in Savannah in July, 1869, 'to preach, and to administer the Holy Supper.' (He wrote enthusiastically about the occasion; but no one foresaw that, some seventy years later, the hymn, 'Roll Out, O Song, to God,' composed by him for words written by Rev. Julian K. Smyth, would be used as the theme song of the Southeastern Association's New-Church Radio Service.)

At this meeting in 1869 the Association was notified that it had been received officially as a member of the General Convention. To Convention in Philadelphia in 1870 came two delegates representing what was now

called simply 'The Georgia Association'—which, Convention was told, 'consists of one Society and 69 scattered receivers in 21 different localities' of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.

Sixty-nine Receivers in twenty-one different localities spread over such a geographical area were of course impossible to 'minister to' in the usual way, yet for many years 'the usual way' was the one attempted. There were valiant efforts to finance ministers who hoped, by spending several months or several years in one locality, to build up a self-supporting Society which could erect and maintain a church, and support a minister; but the attempts failed. An agrarian economy did not provide the elements which had been present in the urban centers north and west, where churches had first been established. As the result of a ruinous war, there was not the individual wealth which had undergirded many of the northern and western Societies. Perhaps there was not even present, in the hearts of these Receivers who had studied and discussed the doctrines in their own homes, any feeling of great urgency about the erection of buildings and the establishment of formal worship. In this position they were close to the earliest Receivers of the doctrines, but it was also a position circumstances forced them to take.

Georgia and Carolina had suffered terrible destruction during, and as a result of, the War; Florida was almost wholly undeveloped. A way of life had been wiped out, and a substitute for it must be found. The doctrines opened the Word, proclaimed that 'all religion is of life,' offered an explanation of evils and disaster as well as a way of fighting against them, described the 'many mansions' with factual reality. The Receivers turned to these doctrines with renewed zeal. Congregational fellowship and a church building to represent them in the community would be pleasant, were not necessities to take precedence over more desperate needs. Even

SWEDENBORG'S WRITINGS

For introductory purposes, paper covers:

<i>Heaven and Hell</i>	25
<i>Divine Love and Wisdom</i>	25
<i>Divine Providence</i>	25
<i>The Four Doctrines</i>	25

Swedenborg Foundation Incorporated

51 East 42nd St.

New York 17, N. Y.

annual trips to an Association meeting were not always safe or feasible; and the 'tithe' of an almost non-existent 'whole' was not large enough to help support a missionary minister adequately.

In the church archives, one Convention historian summed it up from an organizational viewpoint:

The work of the Association, which was purely of a missionary character, was carried on for several years under the direction of Rev. Messrs. Day, L. H. Tafel, Chase, Pendleton, Walton, and Yulee; but after 1872 the Association declined, and about 1874 it fell into a dormant condition. Its name was stricken from the rolls of the General Convention in 1876.

As someone has suggested, the depression of the 1870's was probably an important factor in the failure of the official Association to survive as a functioning organization, but this failure was in itself another evidence of the fact that the right type of organization for the special conditions in this area had not yet been found. The account quoted above indicates further that there was no real understanding in the church at large of the need or the possibility of a 'different' kind of organization. By implication in the account, and in many of the minutes of meetings discussing this problem, it is obvious that any work 'which was purely of a missionary character' was considered elementary and preliminary. It was a first step toward a more conventional goal, but it was not thought of as a goal in itself.

Use of Doctrines Continue

In this lack of comprehension—which was, among other things, a testimony to inadequate communication between Convention and the southeastern area—is evidence of a weakness. The strength of the underlying fellowship between Receivers south and north is a happier part of the record.

With no facilities for travel and correspondence which we today would not consider at all adequate, the strong and tough-fibred acceptance and use of the doctrines continued in the South, and continued to be known, talked of, and prayed over in the North. There is frequent testimony in the *Journals* and other publications of Convention to these facts. A 'Southern New-Church Missionary Society' was actually organized in 1883, 'for the purpose of aiding and carrying on missionary work in the southern states,' and it directed and paid for activities in that particular field until 1887, when it turned over its funds to the Board of Missions, and 'ceased to exist as a separate organization.' (Until 1945 all gifts and bequests from Receivers in this field were held and administered by the Board of Missions.)

The purposes of this short-lived 'Southern New-Church Missionary Society,' however, did not 'cease to exist.' For example, we read that in 1888:

The Rev. Jabez Fox gave an account of his work in Georgia and Florida, where he had found great interest, and where he thought that the Church

could be permanently established, if the proper course was taken . . . Rev. Chauncey Giles urged the members to give their aid to the mission work in the South.

And from Convention, often sent by the Board Missions, or paid through some special fund, aided as far as possible by the groups they ministered to, have come the long list of missionary ministers named in the first part of this sketch. In some cases, retired New-Church ministers who had come to live in the South assisted in this work. (In at least one case, a retired minister of another denomination read the doctrines lent him by a neighbor, accepted them, and—after correspondence with Convention ministers—joined in New-Church missionary work!)

Group Activities

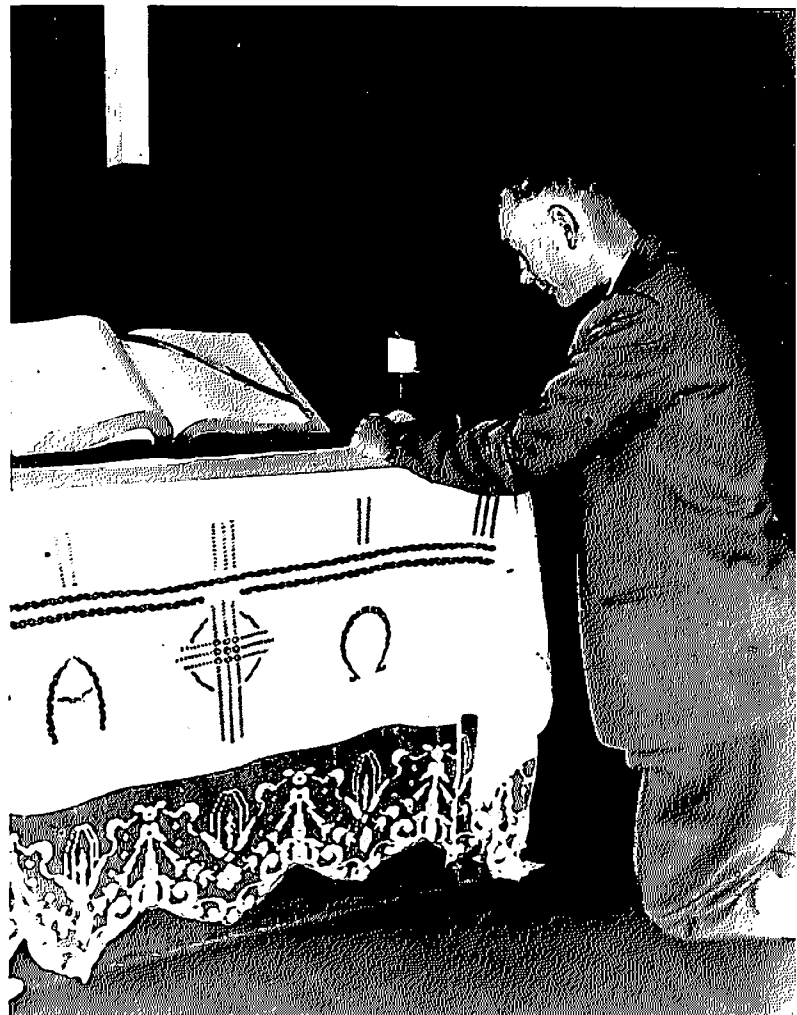
As economic conditions eased somewhat, there are again records of group activities, which seem to have been of two kinds. One was a continuation of the early 'Study Group.' In many cases, members of these groups continued to work in other organized churches in their communities, while meeting with New-Church Receivers to study the doctrines. Few records of these groups have so far been collected, since they were not formal organizations, and are known largely through family letters or traditions. It is hoped that eventually there can be a more complete list of such Study Groups, which were undoubtedly responsible for much informal distribution of Swedenborg's writings, as well as for helping with the formal placing of these books in libraries. (Any assistance in collecting this information will be most welcome.)

In other cases, the Study Group became a 'Society,' sometimes even uniting with the General Convention. The Society was interested in a formal type of organization and worship, in reporting activities to Convention, and in going to great lengths to obtain the services of an ordained New-Church minister for baptism, confirmation, and communion services. Although some of these have left records, others lost or misplaced their records in one way or another. It is not always clear why the formal organization did not survive, but in some case the reason seems obvious. For example, Charleston, S. C., organized as a Society in 1840, but was from the beginning drawn into organizational disagreements between the General, Western, and Central Conventions, etc. For some time immediately before the War the Society met as two separate groups differing on some of these questions, and it seems not to have been reassembled after 1864. A Society organized in 1887 in Merrimack, Fla., however, was lost because the 'Big Freeze' in 1894-95 wiped out the little town itself. (Two families from this Society, however, made their influence felt in other communities. Mrs. Frank Matthews, daughter of the late Mrs. Susan Morse Shields, who brought Swedenborg's writings to Merrimack from Wisconsin, did volunteer colporteur work for the Church for many years, and still distributes literature from her home in Daytona Beach. A Study Group, now directed

Please turn to page 382



EL CERRITO CARRIES ON . . . under the leadership of the Church Committee during the past year when they have been without a minister. (From left to right, Robert Acker, Joseph Pillsbury, Richard Madden (student Minister to Youth), Garrard Wyld,—chairman, Leonard Yacorzynski and William Voliva. Below left, Lloyd Wright, son of the noted architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, explains the model of his design for the future El Cerrito Hillside Church. On Cover we see a Sunday School class breakfast on the lawn, organized by Miss Crystal Eastin (wearing glasses). Other adults are Mrs. Dewayne Boblitt (R) and Mrs. Conrad Miller.



Eric Zacharias, guest preacher.

BOOK REVIEWS

UNDERSTANDING HUMAN NATURE. *By Alfred Adler. A Premier Book. Fawcett World Library. 224 pages. 50¢*

On the cover of this volume we read: "To be happy you must first understand yourself. Here a great psychologist explains the intimate, emotional forces which shape your personality and points the way to a better, more vigorous, more successful life."

Yes; but the 'life' is a life aimed at personal comfort in the present state of existence. This is a handbook of the errors into which men and women are all the time falling in order to promote comfortable adjustments and the devices they use to conceal their failures in the enterprise. We learn how common it is for people to deceive themselves and strive to deceive the world about them into thinking that their failures are the fault of other people, to circumstances beyond their control, or to physical or mental inhibitions for which they are in no way responsible; and how often in doing so they enslave members of their families or their friends. Altogether it is an ugly story, alleviated at times by an exaltation of the happiness of social 'adjustment' in which some of the finer thoughts of the world such as Christ's "Give and it shall be given unto you" are made to serve the ends of personal ambition. For there is a personal ambition lauded and held up as an aim for one in search of happiness. Adler's hereafter has its heaven and its hell, but its heaven is a state of personal adjustment to the world, and its hell failure to so adjust. He condemns without stint that type of selfishness which wishes to dominate by measures hostile to others and also measures injurious to oneself, but it seems as if the adjustment and the consequent happiness were not really the products of true altruism but of selfishness of another kind, the professional unselfishness of the politician. No doubt some evils are met and overcome, some good done, some happiness enjoyed in this way. Like the hypocrites of whom Christ speaks, practitioners doubtless 'have their reward' and we may hope that that kind of adjustment will lead to something more internal but Adler does not give us that impression. Indeed, it is by no means certain that he believes in a life after death. One is led to this thought when one reads (p. 64) that

"hypnosis and telepathy are only the manifestations of servile obedience." Strivings for God-likeness are condemned because these amount to a desire to project oneself 'beyond the boundaries of his personality.' So it seems that, "that large group of people that interests itself in spiritualism, psychic research, telepathy and similar movements, is composed . . . of people who are anxious to grow beyond the boundaries of mere humanity, who are desirous of possessing powers which human beings do not possess, who wish to remove themselves beyond time and space, as in the intercourse with ghosts and the spirits of the dead." And, "if we investigate still further, we shall find that a large portion of humanity has the tendency to secure for itself a little place in the vicinity of God" (p. 172).

Of course there are many people who waste their time over spiritualism, and so do many over horse racing and bingo, but most of those who concern themselves with psychic research and telepathy pay an awful toll for it in time and patience. Adler himself seems to claim some of the Godlike knowledge of which he complains when he speaks of 'powers which human beings do not possess.' Does he know how much they do possess? And as a matter of fact he is either not aware of the latest developments in his own specialty or else he has placed himself beyond the reach of rational argument. I am able to speak myself from a professional point of view when (p. 108) I find him assuming a 'matriarchal stage' in human development, which few anthropologists still hold to, though I sympathize with him wholeheartedly in his defense of womankind on this and the following page. Perhaps I am speaking for the degenerates when I say that the ambition to secure 'a little place in the vicinity of God' is not an unworthy one, and lack of any apparent desire of that kind I regard as an underlying defect of Adler's work.

—JOHN R. SWANTON

PICTORIAL HISTORY OF PROTESTANTISM. *By Vergilius Ferm. Philosophical Library, New York 16, 368 pp. \$10.00.*

Lovers of beautiful books, especially those who like pictures and good typography, will want to own this

work. Its pages are about the size of an ordinary letterhead and contain an average of more than three illustrations, always clear and attractive, and it is bound in gilded cloth. The description of this volume on the dust jacket reads:

"The most complete collection ever assembled of the etchings, drawings, lithographs, paintings, maps and photographs depicting the 500 year history of Protestantism and related denominations."

As far as the present reviewer can see, the text is accurate and unbiased. But it is somewhat sketchy since the intention is to tell the story largely by pictures. Some readers will miss the drama of the great events of the Reformation, although it may be said that the many striking pictures, such as that of Wycliffe sending out his 'Poor Preachers'; Luther publicly burning the Papal Bull; Calvin in St. Peter's Cathedral Geneva refusing to give communion to those he deemed unworthy, amply compensate for any lack of drama in the text.

The importance of ecclesiastical leaders in bringing about the Reformation receives an undue importance. A little more space could have been devoted to the conflict between the temporal rulers and the authorities of that 'state within the state', which the church became in the Middle Ages. Also we would have liked to see a little more about the economic forces that were at work and the ferment that a rising desire for freedom was causing. Over 200 pages are devoted to historical outlines of many of the denominations and sects of the past and the present. There is no sketch of the New Church, although several little known sects are included. But there is a picture of Swedenborg together with a biographical notice (p. 104), and in connection with a painting of the Upsala Cathedral, Sweden, a mention of his burial there.

ALBERT SCHWEITZER: THE STORY OF HIS LIFE. *By Jean Pierhal. Philosophical Library, 15 E. 40th St., New York. 160 pp. \$3.00.*

In Dr. Albert Schweitzer is combined a superb intellect and a heart of angelic love. Few human beings in their personal being illustrate better the power of good when it is united to truth. The doctor has won an international reputation as a musician, a theologian, a philosopher and a physician. He is a recognized authority on Bach and on Goethe. The Nobel peace prize has been awarded to him.

It has been the fate of this lover of peace, who is so strongly imbued with a passion for alleviating suffering, to live in an age of violence which has devoted far more energy to destruction than to making the world a fit home for mankind. During this period many of life's most coveted prizes have gone to the men of blood and deceit; to those who were or are devoid of humanitarian motives. It has also been an age in which there has been a strong tendency to exalt material success above other values. All too often realism and practicality have been and are identified with the ability to make bigger and speedier cars, weapons of war that become ever more and more lethal, and being the first to launch earth satellites.

But throughout this time Schweitzer has stood out as a Titanic witness of the moral and spiritual values. This he has done by living the principle embodied in the words, "Inasmuch as you have done it unto the least of these my brethren you have done it unto me." For this He has won the respect, admiration and affection of millions. The honors that have been awarded to him and the esteem in which he is held testify to a strong yearning in the human breast for a way of life based not on selfishness but on love for man. They show that there is at least a partial understanding and acceptance of the idea that love of humanity when put into action has eternal significance. Dr. Marcus Bach quotes someone as saying, "Albert Schweitzer is great because he has had the courage to do what others of us would do if we had the courage." There is much truth in this. Looking at Dr. Schweitzer perhaps many wish that they could follow his way of life.

The story of this many-sided genius, as told in this book is as fascinating as the best in fiction.

Schweitzer was born January 14, 1875, in Upper Alsace. His father was a minister in the Evangelical Church. Rooted in the family tradition, Mr. Piernal informs us, was 'toleration, the spirit of self-sacrifice, and also hatred of war' (p. 13). In his childhood Albert's pity was aroused by the statue of a negro bent before an admiral famous for his colonial conquests. Early Albert made the resolve not to kill any living creature if he could avoid doing so. Also, he came to the decision to have the courage of his personal convictions. This last he was to carry out while still a young theological student for he reached the conclusion as a result of his own independent studies that orthodox theology out of respect for theological tradition did not allow the

MEET YOUR GENERAL COUNCIL

The MESSENGER continues its series on members of the General Council of Convention with this brief sketch of Vincent H. Bergmann.

Recently elected a member of the General Council, Vincent H. Bergmann is presently serving as chairman of the Public Relations Bureau. In addition, he is a member of the board of trustees of the Detroit Society, trustee of the Almont Summer Assembly and president of the Michigan Association.

Formerly a president of the Detroit Society, he has also served in committee work and on the board in both the Lakewood and the Cleveland societies in Ohio during the years the Bergmanns lived in Cleveland.

Commenting on his recent efforts in Public Relations, Mr. Bergmann credited the able cooperation of

radio, the press and in printed literature, the Applesseed saga reached many millions. Reviewing his initial efforts in church publicity, Mr. Bergmann mentioned early newspaper advertising at a time when the New Church in the Midwest was quite active. It was found that showmanship in print and a liberal budget could fill a building but not build a church.

Other early publicity work extended to the use of radio before that medium's eclipse by TV. Serving on a radio advertising committee when Rev. Everitt K. Bray was president of Convention, Mr. Bergmann was able to arrange for network broadcasting under the leadership of Rev. William H. Beales in Detroit.

By profession Mr. Bergmann has been associated with advertising for many years. He holds the position of Director of Research and Marketing for one of the leading advertising agencies of the country having major automotive and allied industry clients. A period shortly after the war, was spent in management consultant work with a leading consulting engineering firm. Prior to this, he served the Government as an economist and later as regional administrator for one of the war agencies.

Mr. Bergmann is active in the associations of his profession. He is a trustee of the Detroit chapter of the American Marketing Association, a member of the National Industrial Advertisers, a member of the Advertising Research Foundation of the AAAA, and active in the local Detroit Adcraft Club and also the Industrial Marketers of Detroit.

He married into a New-Church family and through the fine influence of the late Dr. Thomas A. King of Ohio, became interested in the Writings. He and his wife, Charity, now reside in Pleasant Ridge, a suburb north of Detroit. They have two married daughters and three grandchildren.



Vincent H. Bergmann

Committee members and the Wertheim firm as consultants for the very successful Johnny Applesseed celebrations of the past two years. Using the anniversary as a vehicle, public attention and interest was focused on this historical missionary's spread of the Writings. In television,

historical facts to tell their own story. He could not follow, for example, traditional teachings on the subject of the Second Coming.

As a student he came to worry about the poverty of the working class. The church, he felt, should

labor to abolish this. And he resolved that he himself should actively serve, not just reflect and talk. His phenomenal capacity for work is shown by his ability to study simultaneously theology, philosophy and music, and later to study medicine while engaged

as a minister and as a lecturer at the university.

Recognition as a musician, a critical theologian and a teacher came to him early. But he had inner anxieties. Was he not just a merchant of words? And so he made the great decision. He renounced the brilliant career that lay before him, began the study of medicine, and then went to Africa as a missionary doctor. He writes about this, as quoted by Mr. Pierhal:

"At last it became clear to me that the meaning of my life does not consist in knowledge or art but simply in being human and doing some little thing in the spirit of Jesus . . . 'What you have done to the least of these my brethren you have done to me'. Just as the wind is driven to spend its force in the big empty spaces so must the men who know the laws of the spirit go where men are most needed."

Dr. Schweitzer was thirty-eight years old when he commenced his work in Africa. From here on his story is that of a hard-working, practical, patient saint, intensely dedicated to help those in need. He once wrote: "There are no heroes of action, only heroes of renunciation and suffering." Such he now himself became.

In September, 1915, Dr. Schweitzer was on a river voyage to attend the sick wife of a missionary. His heart was heavy over the carnage in Europe and the decay of culture. As the boat crawled slowly upstream there came to him with the force of a revelation that key-phrase 'Reverence for Life.' He writes, "Now I had penetrated to the idea which embraced both world—and life—affirmation and the moral consciousness". (Quoted by Mr. Pierhal on p. 103.) It would be impossible in this short review to deal with the philosophy that Dr. Schweitzer has built on this phrase, but it is a philosophy that is well worth the deepest consideration.

One of the character traits that makes Schweitzer unique is his indomitable faith in man. In spite of heart-rending difficulties in helping the Africans because of their superstitions, ignorance, uncleanness, and lack of morals as these are known in the West, he has never lost faith in the goodness of these people.

Mr. Pierhal's book about this truly great man deserves wide circulation.

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AN INTERNATIONAL ECONOMY—PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS. By Gunnar Myrdal. Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York.

The author of this scholarly and well documented volume, Gunnar Myrdal, was formerly Lars Hierta Professor in Political Economy and Public Finance at Stockholm University, a former Minister of Commerce in the Swedish Cabinet, and now Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. In addition, he has traveled widely, and knows from first-hand experience what the problems and prospects of the many countries of which he writes, are. His candor, thoroughness, and competent treatment inspire confidence.

He is an ardent internationalist and so he is rightly disturbed by what he frequently describes as the "international disintegration" which he sees going on in the world of the present. The national integration of the industrially advanced countries is in marked contrast with the poverty and backwardness of the underdeveloped countries in which live the very much larger portion of the world's population.

The closing chapter of this informative book bears the significant title, "The World Adrift". In this concluding and summarizing chapter the author deplores the moral and ethical weakness of the industrially advanced countries where he notes a lack of really great leadership and vision for the future. He writes, "The concept of 'mankind' is bleak, abstract, and empty of concrete emotions to most people, compared with the concept of the national state" (p. 324).

This important volume should be read in the light of the New Christianity, and especially in the light of the important doctrine of the "Grand Man".

WARREN GODDARD

In Vancouver, B. C., the children are already at work practicing for the Xmas program under the direction of Mrs. E. L. Fairburn.

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FIRST SONGS FOR LITTLE CHILDREN. Published by the General Church of the New Jerusalem, Bryn Athyn, Pa., 1957. 49 pp.

This is the first book published by the General Church especially for the use of young children. It should be of particular interest to the Convention group who are revising Convention's Sunday school hymnal, *The Hosanna*. Of course *The Hosanna* is not used exclusively for young children, and so the two hymnals cannot be compared exactly. However, I should like to point out that the use of illustrations, as in *First Songs*, is very helpful not only to youngsters who cannot read—in helping them to identify the songs—but would also serve the same purpose in foreign mission work. The pen and ink drawings in *First Songs* are by S. E. Odhner and are appealing as well as descriptive; (although, should the revised *Hosanna* be illustrated, I personally would like to see a more modern and simplified style, but this is a matter of personal preference, and I suppose that the majority of people in Convention would go along with a style like Mr. Odhner's.) The woolly lamb tripping across the cover of *First Songs* symbolizes the spirit of joyful praise which should be found within any song book. All in all, the format is pleasing and the music and words easy to read, although it would have been more attractive if the large type of the music and words such as used on pages 4, 6, 10, 17 etc., could have been used entirely. It is hard for the amateur pianist as well as the child just learning to read, to use the tiny notes and type on pages like 14, 15, 16, etc. But naturally we all know that practical necessities and techniques usually prevent the ideal format from ever becoming accomplished.

The content seems quite complete. In it I found almost all of the favorite hymns of my childhood as well as quite a few which were unfamiliar but very enjoyable. The book was prepared under the direction of the Rev. George de Charms by Mrs. Warren F. David.

—C. L.

NEW OFFICE FOR CAPON

The president of the New-Church Theological School, Cambridge, Mass., has been elected vice president of the Massachusetts Council of Churches. There are three vice presidents with equal status. Mr. Capon has served for five years on the board of directors of the council.

Kansas Association Meets

The Kansas Association held its annual meeting in Pretty Prairie, Oct. 27, 1957. Rev. Edwin G. Capon, President of Theological School, was present and delivered the Sunday Morning sermon and conducted the communion service which was attended by 81 participants. He was assisted by Rev. Eric Zacharias. Mrs. Fern Annabelle Bailey of Denver, Colorado was received into the faith of our Church. This meeting also commemorated the 50th anniversary of the Kansas Association. Leather bound copies of various of Swedenborg's books were presented to all those present who were also present at the first meeting in 1907. During the business meeting many interesting reports and plans of Association and Church activities of the past year were heard. The President of our Association was delegated to appoint a committee to work on the project of establishing an endowment fund to be used for the work of the Association. The Secretary was also instructed to write to the various publishing agencies of Convention urging the printing of a periodical specifically designed along missionary lines. Election results were as follows: President, Rev. Eric J. Zacharias, Pretty Prairie; Vice President, Alvin Friesen, Montezuma; Secretary, Al Kroeker, Great Bend; Treasurer, Galen Unruh, Pawnee Rock. Those attending were especially pleased to hear Rev. Mr. Capon speak concerning various phases of the Theological School in Cambridge. It was a pleasure to have him with us on this occasion.

Al Kroeker, Secretary

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

SPUTNIK

To the Editor:

Action is called for. Who does the calling, and for what? The state of our nation, and all other nations, now in the grip of confusion over the spectacular scientific stunt accomplished by the Russians. Scientific stunts are not to be deplored. Neither do they deserve to be exalted or extolled. As a rule scientific stunts are the forerunner of useful scientific operations yet to come. Therefore, let us not condemn Russia's scientific stunt. Neither let us glorify it.

What shall we do?

What else but exalt the science of correspondence, the science of all sciences, the holy science revealed by our Lord through His chosen servant, Emanuel Swedenborg. It has been making subtle headway throughout the past two hundred years. May it be suggested that every minister of the New Church take as the subject of his sermon the science of correspondence on the Jan. 26, 1958, the Sabbath preceding the annual celebration of the birth of Swedenborg.

If such one mighty act of concentration on one single and all important subject be made, can it fail in bringing to our aid the Divine Scientist who holds all other scientists in the hollow of His Hand?

Lelia M. Tinsley
Newton, N. J.

Presbyterian Guide Backs Public School

Instead of blaming the public schools for the crime wave and damning them as "godless," the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. has decided to do something to help and encourage the schools. A study guide has been published by the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education which has the purpose of stimulating helpful relations between church members and the public schools. The guide will be used among many adult groups of the Presbyterian Church.

The new educational emphasis of this denomination was inspired by the report of the Board of Education to the 169th General Assembly meeting in Omaha last May. The report, entitled *The Church and the Public Schools*, was a ringing defense of public education in the United States. (Copies are available at 15¢ from Presbyterian Distribution Service 156 Fifth Ave., New York 10.)

Our Unfilled Pulpits

The following news item, important enough to make the first page of the *Boston Herald*, recently caught my eye:

CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED TO FILL PULPITS

A \$1,500,000 development program to aid in filling 15,000 vacant Protestant pulpits throughout the country was announced last night at the 150th annual convocation of the Andover Newton Theological School at Newton Center. The Rev. Dr. Herbert Gezork, president of the school, expressed a need for \$600,000 of the amount in pledges before the end of 1958. Of this, \$150,000 would be for faculty support, \$100,000 for scholarship aid, and \$350,000 for a building program.

My immediate reaction was to ask, "What are we doing to fill *our* vacant pulpits?" And when I think of 'vacant pulpits' I have in mind not just churches and groups which have no minister at present, but those churches which are now filled through the unselfish sacrifice of men who are holding on only because no replacements are in sight—to say nothing of the many new centers which we should be establishing. "What are we doing?" Are we concerned as individuals? Would we be willing to back with our means a program fitted to our needs?

Fifteen thousand needed ministers seems a great deficiency; a million and a half dollars a staggering amount. But has it ever occurred to you that, percentage wise, our own needs may be still greater? Can we rest satisfied with just making our usual contribution to Convention's Annual Appeal? What about those haunting vacant pulpits?

—RICHARD H. TAFEL

School Invites Inquiries

Never have the opportunities for the New Church been greater. Never has its message been more needed. Yet there have been too few preparing for its ministry.

We earnestly invite inquiries from those who have considered the ministry as their possible vocation. Twelve is not too young to contact us. Depending upon circumstances, sixty may not be too old.

EDWIN G. CAPON, President
NEW-CHURCH THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL
48 Quincy Street
Cambridge 38, Mass.

UNDER THE PALMS

Continued from page 376

by Rev. Ernest Frederick, meets regularly in that city. The late Mr. and Mrs. Bray moved from Merrimack to Tampa, where their home continued for many years to be 'headquarters' for missionary ministers and for other New-Church activities in that area. Their son, Rev. Everett K. Bray, has been active in Convention since his ordination.)

Buildings for Worship

Several of these Societies accepted whole-heartedly as a goal the aim of becoming financially able to build a church and support a minister. In the 1890's, the Society in Jacksonville, Fla., made definite plans to buy the hall in which they were holding services, after their admission to Convention in 1891. This proved impossible, probably because they were at the same time supporting a full-time New-Church minister and his family. The Society in Savannah, Ga., which was formally organized in 1845, worked diligently during the 1880's to pay for a lot costing \$1200—a rather high price to pay at that time. The Board of Missions had voted to build a chapel in Savannah, if the lot was provided, and the chapel (built at a total cost of \$2700.) was dedicated in December, 1889. The Society was not able, however, to support a full-time minister, and the chapel was eventually rented to another church group. Rev. Frank Gustafson revived the use of it by the Savannah Society in 1931 but since his assignment by the Board of Missions was missionary work for the whole southeastern area, he could not give enough time to one Society to make such a use practicable. (It is perhaps fair to point out that during these years when the small groups in this field were finding it impossible to support a minister and build a church, the record shows the closing of Societies which had been firmly established in other parts of the country; even though many of these had a building which was completely paid for, and—in some cases—supplementary funds.)

Working with Rev. Leslie Marshall, then Secretary of the Board of Missions, Mr. Gustafson had taken an important forward step in 1931, in setting up a regular 'pastoral letter' and 'Sermon Service' which went out to isolated members. When Rev. Charles Kuenzli was sent to the Southeastern Association by the Board of Missions in 1939, after three years of no missionary activity in the area, he continued this Sermon Service. While its usefulness extended to many people outside this field, its importance for this historical record is that it built up a communication between the isolated members in the Association, and drew representatives of the various Societies together in an effort to solve the common problem of their relationship with the organized New Church.

The active Societies then in the Association were Savannah, Ga.; East Palatka, Jacksonville, and Tampa-St. Petersburg, Fla. The late Mr. William L. Gignilliat

had by his support and leadership held the Savannah group together for many years. After his death, first his wife and then his son, Dr. Arthur Gignilliat, had taken his place as president of the Society.

In Jacksonville, the Society had been organized through the united efforts of the Warriner family, headed by Mr. Daniel Charles Warriner, who brought his wife and their son and three daughters to Jacksonville in 1876. Mr. Warriner had accepted the doctrines when he was a young man living in Boston; he and his family had been associated with the Brooklyn New-Church Society during their years in New York. When the Jacksonville Society was organized in 1890, Mr. and Mrs. Warriner, their four children, and their son-in-law, Mr. George Hughes, made up seven of the twenty charter members of the group. Except for the years when the Society met in Library Hall, services and study group meetings have been held regularly, as they are at present, at the home of some member of this family.

In East Palatka, a more recently organized group, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Benedict and their family are charter members. Although two uncles of Mr. Benedict (Mr. Nathan Roberts, Jacksonville, Fla., and Dr. James Benedict, of the staff of the Smithsonian in Washington) had read Swedenborg's writings, the Benedicts themselves did not become students of the doctrines until 1929, when they replied to a small advertisement offering 'a book called *Heaven and Hell*.'

The Tampa-St. Petersburg Society had centered first in Tampa at the home of the Brays, who had moved to Tampa in 1902. Later Dr. Edward B. Hineckley, who joined the faculty of the University of Tampa in 1933, became Lay Leader of the group. When it met in St. Petersburg, the meetings were held in the home of the late Mr. and Mrs. Willard Root, who were the first contributors to the New-Church Radio Service over WSUN, begun by Mr. Kuenzli in 1942.

A New Center

It was with the leaders of these Societies that Mr. Kuenzli discussed the possibility of a new kind of 'Center' for the activities in the Southeastern Field; a 'Center' which could combine the resources of the small groups and isolated members efficiently, could serve the uses of a 'missionary' field, and yet could somehow be made to support itself and at least some part of the Church program in the area. Thought and prayer were given to the idea. Those looking back at the traditions of the Church in the Southeast remembered that the earliest Association had been organized 'to promote a wider circulation of the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg,' and that the Resolutions adopted in the reorganization meeting of 1868 had reaffirmed and implemented this purpose. Those more familiar with organized New-Church Societies in other parts of the country realized that growth did not seem to be in the direction of large congregations and an expanding building program. All of them—isolated members who for the most part must carry on their religious study on their own

responsibility—knew from their own experience that such study was fruitful.

From the severe disappointment of failing to receive a property offered for such a Center came the realization that they must be legally organized, to prevent such a thing happening again. And it was finally decided that the simplest way to protect and develop their small resources was to invest them in a property which would offer a room for worship and study meetings, and additional rooms which could be rented to provide income. St. Petersburg was a suitable location for such a project, and the fact that the radio program was established there made it a desirable choice.

Before his death in 1944, Mr. Kuenzli opened the 'Fund for the Center' with a \$100.00 Savings Bond. He and his wife had found and studied the Writings together for several years before they learned that there was a church organization founded on these doctrines. They had come into that organization as a 'working team' when Rev. William L. Worcester invited Mrs. Kuenzli to attend the New-Church Theological School with her husband; and Mr. Kuenzli had had pastorates in Mansfield and Bridgewater, Mass., before coming to the Southeast. When he discussed with his wife the possibility of his not surviving an operation, he reiterated his feeling of the importance of establishing a 'New-Church Center,' and asked her, if she should be allowed to do so by the Board of Missions, to continue their work in the Southeast until such a Center could be established.

A Dream Realized

Shortly after his death the State Charter, which he and representative New Churchmen in Georgia and Florida had applied for, was granted; and the original Incorporators confirmed in office the first Board of Trustees. This Board requested the Board of Missions to allow Mrs. Kuenzli to continue the work in this field as Lay Leader; and they later requested the ordination of Dr. Edward B. Hinckley, who had completed his work in the New-Church Theological School some years earlier, to assist her. During the years between 1944 and 1954, after these arrangements had been made, Dr. Hinckley made an annual trip to the field to administer the Sacraments; and Mrs. Kuenzli continued to make eight or ten 'Circuit trips' through the area annually, to handle the large correspondence, to send out the weekly Sermon Service and make the weekly radio broadcasts throughout the year—and to work toward the 'New Church Center,' while opening her home for the meetings of the Tampa-St. Petersburg Society.

The story of the way the project of the 'Center' seemed miraculously blessed and prospered has been told in detail elsewhere. There were individual contributions from one dollar to one thousand dollars, all sacrificially given. The Savannah Society voted to sell their chapel to the denomination then renting it, and to apply the proceeds toward the 'Fund for the Center.' There were two bequests from listeners who had become converted

to the doctrines through hearing the New-Church Radio Service—and the larger of these, which amounted to nearly \$12,000, came in just as the beautiful lake-front property which is now 'The New-Church Center' was brought to the attention of the Board. Its purchase, and its remodeling to the present uses of Chapel Room, Book Room, and three rental units, represent an investment of about \$35,000., made possible by the original Fund, a later bequest, and contributions; and its present value is appraised at \$50,000. Further rental units are planned, so that the income can be built up to the original purpose of financing missionary activities in this field: and a Chapel Building Fund, to provide a beautiful and adequate building for worship at the Center, has been established and now amounts to a little more than \$10,000.

More important than descriptions of the Center, in this brief historical sketch of how that Center came to be, is the emphasis on the continuing purpose, through more than a hundred and forty years, of the 'Receivers' in this field—the purpose of promoting 'a wider circulation of the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg,' in order to share the doctrines with others. The Center is only the latest manifestation of this missionary spirit which established private libraries, circulated books and tracts from Maryland to Texas, and saw to it that the Writings were given, lent, distributed; and placed on ships, in bookstores, and in public libraries. The Center is a remarkable manifestation, also, because it combines the unselfish 'giving' of individuals who in some cases may never see, and in most cases will never personally benefit from, the Center, with a practical and far-sighted plan for making that Center self-supporting. The Board of Trustees and the New-Church men and women they represent feel great gratitude for the encouragement and support given this field by the Board of Missions, but they are understandably happy to have made a beginning toward a future where a permanent 'Center' will always be a literal 'center' of activities here, regardless of changing plans and policies; and they hope for support of this project.

When the Center was dedicated and its additions provided and paid for, Mrs. Kuenzli resigned as Missionary Lay Leader, and continued only the New-Church Radio Service. The Southeastern Association requested the Board of Missions to send Rev. Leslie Marshall to have charge of the missionary activities in the field, and he and Mrs. Marshall took up residence in St. Petersburg, at the Center, in the fall of 1954. Later, the Board of Missions sent Rev. Ernest Frederick to the East Coast of Florida, to assist Mr. Marshall in the work; and an organized Society in Miami was added to the Association this spring.

The Board of Trustees of the Incorporated Association hope that they have been instrumental in setting up something which will not be of local value only but which may be useful to the church organization, nationally. Such self-supporting 'centers', preferably

in charge of active and intelligent missionary ministers but also highly useful if active and intelligent laymen are in charge, might be a solution to problems in other areas. (In a sense, the Chapel at Palos Verdes is such a 'center,' even though its income is derived from contributions of visitors.) Such centers offer an opportunity to build an integrated program to support isolated members—who, with proper training, could each be a 'church' in the Swedenborgian sense of the word, whether or not they were ever members of congregations. They offer support to study groups who may want to organize into local Societies. To such groups all over the general area, they could offer training and fellowship, similar to that at Almont and Fryeburg; to groups in the immediate local area they offer a meeting place. (For example, the St. Petersburg Society pays a nominal rent, and can use the facilities at the Center for its activities.) These possibilities, the Board feels, are worthy of wider understanding and consideration by New Churchmen everywhere.

In the meantime, the New-Church Center in St. Petersburg has been established. It is the symbol of a long heritage of study and interest in the doctrines, and it is also a developing opportunity to interest and welcome newcomers to the Church and to the Southeast. The souvenirs of its background are a part of its present charm. For example, visitors are interested in the large bookcase, more than a hundred years old, which displays the painted inscription 'The Georgia Swedenborg Library.' In the Chapel Room, a wrought iron chancel-rail is a loving tribute in memory of Miss Laura Warriner, of the Jacksonville Society. Among the varied plantings of the grounds there are rare lilies from the garden of Mrs. Bray, in Tampa; a young magnolia tree from the banks of the St. Johns River in East Palatka; and a scion of the spikenard tree brought by Dr. Robert Nunn from Palestine to the lawn of the chapel in Savannah.

"A center, finally arrived at from the surrounding past; a center, from which to advance in the oncoming future."

The legal title of the chartered organization is 'The Southeastern Association of the Church of the New Jerusalem, Incorporated.' Its Board of Trustees includes the following members: Mr. Louis K. Benedict, Dr. Arthur Gignilliat, Dr. Edward Hinckley, Mrs. Charles H. Kuenzli, Mrs. T. C. (Adelaide Hughes) Parker, and Mrs. Walter Thornton. Mr. Arthur Alden has also served on this Board.)

ADVENT

Continued from page 373

only faith that is sane and reassuring. Without Him we revert to the beast. Without Him we cannot even know ourselves. Without Him we have failed, time and again, to make this a world fit to live in for ourselves and our children.

At the cross-roads of Destiny and Chaos, Christian met Worldly-wise. As they entered into conversation the chimes of a near-by church began to fill the air with the glad music of the Nativity. "Joy to the World! The Lord is come!"

"I have no use for Christmas," said Worldly-wise, worn out and grimy with the dust of the road that leads nowhere, his garments stained and torn by futile battles. "Christianity has been with us now for nearly two thousand years. And yet, look at the world!"

"Water has been with us for longer than that," said Christian. "And yet, look at your hands!"

ONCE A YEAR

Continued from page 371

After a careful studying of the budget and each Society's record of giving, the Appeal Committee recommends a goal for each Society.

Donors may make their contributions directly to the treasurer of Convention, Albert P. Carter, 511 Barristers Hall, Boston 8, Mass. Or they may make it to the collector, if one has been appointed, or to the treasurer of the local Society, to be forwarded to the treasurer of Convention.

It is gratifying to note that last year the Appeal reached its goal. We hope we will do as well this year. We are counting on your support.

THE APPEAL COMMITTEE
Robert Hoover Kirven, Chairman
Rev. Calvin Turley
Miss Vera Gunkel

SELF REALIZATION

Continued from page 374

enhance themselves innocently, that is, without harm to others and not at their expense. We can learn how to live well with ourselves, honoring, respecting, yes, even loving ourselves without conceit and without injury to the egos of other people. This is the only kind of self-assurance worth having. But there are times, critical times, when it is necessary to know that we must lay down our egos for the sake of others to keep from injuring and even exploiting them. This is love, indeed, and I need not tell you how often parents are called upon to love in this way.

I need not tell you either how we as parents go about establishing goals and values in our homes. The 'how' is in this very process of translating the abstractions of what we know to be good into the living substance of our lives. It is in giving our children myriad cues not so much from what we say or even do, but from what we love and are. From the time they are born children look for these cues, the things that seem to them warm and satisfying, reassuring and encouraging, strong and good. These are the things in parents that they identify with and appropriate or make part of their proprium or self. Does it not seem to you that we can trust this dynamic of love—love between parents and love between parents and children, to establish goals and values? If this is true, then we can say confidently that what is good for our children must be caught before it can be taught.



he Night of Nights

LIKE SANDS WITHIN the hour glass,
The Night of nights that slowly pass,
Recording time, circling still
Above the lonely shepherd's hill,
With no new secret to foretell
But voicing still the old Noel.
Here bend the knee and still the voice
And let the humble heart rejoice.
O, Night of nights, so dear to God,
The heart can wend where shepherds trod,
To lay each gift of simple prayer,
In adoration humbly there.

—NEIL KINDER

DECEMBER 21, 1957

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NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER

THE NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER

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December 21, 1957

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.

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*THE MESSENGER wishes all of its readers
a very Merry Christmas!*

THE CHRIST SPIRIT

by Bjorn Johannson

COMMERCIALISM, unseemly gayety, wild celebrations are not in accord with true spirit of Christmas, but kindness, good will and a concern for others are. This is the spirit which were it to prevail throughout the world would really convey the meaning of Christmas, of God's coming into the world in the person of the Lord Jesus. We recall the words of the angel to Mary, "He shall be called the Son of the Highest"; "Of his kingdom there shall be no end;" and to the shepherds come "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people. For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Plainly here is a blessing promised not just to a few in a far-distant age but to the unnumbered centuries.

Certainly, some portion of this blessing was manifested as the Lord, clothed in the human nature He assumed, walked about the earth doing good, resisting the temptations that assailed Him, feeding the hungry multitude, healing the sick, and otherwise demonstrating what a life of sacrificial love was like. But the fullness of the blessing was yet to come. The task of breaking the power of evil was accomplished, a highway to God was constructed, but it still remained for man to reach for the blessing and make it his. What might not life on earth have been if man always had been true to the spirit of the Son of the Highest!

The birth of the Lord was the dawn of a new day but its possible brightness has never unfolded. Some hopefully declare that there are now signs of a willingness to turn humbly to the Lord and make an effort to serve Him loyally. Maybe this is true. But the unfortunate fact is that at this moment the Christmas ideal of peace on earth and good will toward all men is not a reality.

Throughout the centuries many have wishfully dreamed of the realization of this ideal. In the last two decades the hope for a supernatural intervention—this time in some spectacular manner—to consummate the meaning of Christmas has flared up anew. Of late we

have even heard wistful voices declaring that beings from civilizations far more advanced than ours have been coming to us from outer space, and that the purpose of their visits is to save man from destroying himself. But why does man look afield? Should he not rather find his hope in his ability to respond to the blessing God by His coming to earth has put within his reach?

A Living Influence

Christmas each year should be a reminder to us of the blessing promised by the Lord's coming. Regardless of what the state of the world may be, Christmas should arouse our desire for more of the spirit of the Lord. Each of us should apprehend it as the influence of the living Christ, not as some theological doctrine. Did He not say, "Lo, I am with you alway"? And did He not give the assurance, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them!" Of himself man can do nothing, but in cooperation with the Lord he has the power to move mountains. Spiritual progress is slow today because the individual has failed fully to appraise the strength to affect the destiny of the world that can be his. Christmas is a time for a soul-searching reexamination of this power.

There is nothing novel about exhortations calling for unselfishness, enlightenment, and a sense of responsibility. In fact, such pleas have been made for centuries in every community in Christendom. And yet quarrels take place inside as well as outside the Church. Individuals suffer injustice from those who can exercise power over them. Ill will, even between neighbors, is all too common. Wars and the menace of war stain the pages of history, leaving no era untouched by its terrors. The most civilized nations seem always to have found it necessary to be ready to meet the armed onslaught of an enemy, real or imaginary.

What is wrong with man? Why is that the race can give birth to many a genius whose intellect is almost

godlike when put to inventing machines, including those used for destruction, yet fails to bring forth leaders who can build a peaceful world? Is it because man has lost faith in the spiritual power that is his if he will work with the Lord? Has man fallen victim to the delusion that physical power is the only way to meet the tyrant's brandished steel? Is there no message that the peace-loving people of the earth have that can reach the hearts of millions of their fellowmen including those now thought of as foes? Perhaps even the peace-lover does not trust the Christmas ideal. Perhaps he does not really accept the idea that his faith, if strong enough, can move mountains of resentment, distrust and hatred. Maybe he does not even have that faith.

We come back to the Christmas message. The Lord promised a fuller experience of His power. "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" (Jn. 14:12).

To Know and Obey

But how is it possible to have more of the Christ spirit in this world? How can more of the blessings He promised and longs to give be ours? Oftentimes the first answer to this question which we think of is that we must know more about Him. Some books have easily attained to the best-seller lists by promising to teach what the Christ-power is and how it can be utilized. It is to be feared that too frequently the quest for this power arises more from worldly and materialistic motives than from a desire to obey God.

Yet it will not be gainsaid that it is of value to know more about the Lord as the Gospels reveal Him to us. The purpose for seeking such knowledge should be both to learn the facts about his life and also to sense the inner spirit of the Gospel message. Reading about Him may give rise to a religious experience if His words or an event in His life bears directly on our own experience or problems.

But knowledge is not enough. Conceivably a man might win \$64,000 on a quiz program about the Gospels, yet have very little of their spirit in his heart.

Bringing the Christ spirit into the life of the world must be an act of will on the part of man. The latter must open his heart to receive it. The shepherds on the plain heard the song of the angels because their hearts were attuned to heaven. The record mentions no others as listening to it—certainly proud Herod did not, nor did his courtiers. Also let us note that these simple men on the plain were not content just to listen to the celestial music; they set out for Bethlehem in order to enter fully into the presence of the Lord. The Wise Men did not merely study the star they saw afar off—they used it to guide them to the Lord.

Of course, we cannot go to the Lord after the manner of the shepherds or the wise men. But we can go to Him by striving to understand our lives in terms of service and sacrifice. For example, how much could not

each of us do in bringing the Christ spirit into the home! Could we not think of Him as abiding there? One person told me that the first thing he did on waking up in the morning was to address a prayer to the Lord. Starting out the day with the thought that he had spent a few minutes in His presence, this man felt the Lord was with him throughout the day—with him in all his handling of problems that were coming up. Surely, the Lord will be with all who inwardly battle against hate, anger, impatience and who try to fashion their attitude to others after His teachings.

Too Sure of Ourselves

Of course, we may be so sure of ourselves that we feel little dependence on the Lord. If so, His promised blessings can never be ours. What we may really need is to see ourselves in Christ. A popular preacher once said, "Christ is a mirror which we should look into often if we want to get wise to ourselves and see just what kind of folks we are." If we look at ourselves in that mirror we may be appalled by what we see. Maybe when Paul on the road to Damascus met the Lord he saw himself in Christ, and what he saw was too much for him so he was blinded for several days. At any rate Paul came out of that experience a different man. He had not only seen himself in that mirror, he had seen his Savior.

In observing Christmas, we must not look upon it as a past event which tradition and custom require us to commemorate. We cannot speak in the past tense of the Lord as our Savior. He *is* our Savior. The only salvation that can have value for today is one that takes place today. Every soul whether just beginning to be born anew or far along in that process depends—each moment—on the Lord's inflowing life.

In the wider relationships of life it is only the Christ spirit that can bring about peace where now there is strife. It can change the attitude of the individual about his occupation, enabling him to see in this an opportunity for service, not merely a means of livelihood or of making money. We hear much about the conflict between labor and capital. How little of this would there be if both parties saw the meaning of their lives in terms of service. In fact, experience has more than once demonstrated that where the vision of industrial relations as an expression of the Golden Rule prevails there is a minimum of strife. The wider relationships of life include the international field. It is here where the greatest concern is felt today about what may happen as the result of fear, suspicion, envy, hatred, and the lust for dominion. Diplomatic and other measures for lessening tensions have hitherto accomplished little. Maybe it is the Christ spirit that is lacking. Would it not be well if millions of believers over the world would kneel before their God and pray for peace—pray for peace in their own hearts, in their homes, in their churches, in their communities, and between nations? Pray for the Christ spirit to manifest itself in the hearts of men!

Once upon a time, about two generations ago, many New-Church societies were, even then, vigorous and bursting with originality. Among other assets, they had talented creative writers. In one society a new play was written and produced every Christmas for many Christmases—plays which often called for 24 or more characters. This little boy, Hollyberry, was one such character. Where is he today? His costume has been packed away all too long.



Christmas is a time to enjoy the innocence of childhood, and so we publish here a little play written recently by a New-Church group of children. Christmas is a time also of re-birth and we print this playlet with the hope that it is the harbinger of new Christmas Candles to come, a renascence of fresh ways to bring our religious beliefs into our contemporary lives.

THE EL CERRITO HILLSIDE CHURCH SCHOOL PRESENTS

WREATH DAY

a one-act play for children at Christmas-time

[Enter family, stage R, returning from church. Table back C]

Mother Wasn't that a wonderful sermon?

Father Larry Beggs always preaches a good sermon.

Margaret I liked what he said about family worship.

Bob Even I can understand him.

Father And what he says is wise enough for any grown-up, too.

Tom He's OK, and I like Dick and Sharon Madden. I can hardly wait till I'm old enough to join their Young People's group.

Carolyn Don't forget Jim Schneider,—I think he's nice.

Susie Me too!

Billy Me too! me too- me too-

Mother [Noticing table] Good, Margaret and Carolyn! You got the table set before Sunday school.

Tom I got the fire ready to light. [Lighting fire]

Bob I put the chairs around.

Father And Mother popped the lunch all in the oven before church, and she's ready for helpers.

Children [Crowding around Father] What did you do? What did you do?

Mother Hang up your coats and hats and—

Father Wait a minute; wait a minute; I did something before church, too.

Children [Returning to Father] What?

Father Something special.

Children What, Dad? What?

Father Can't you guess what day this is?

Susie Is it Christmas?

Father Not quite.

Carolyn [Dancing] I know, I know; its the Sunday-before-Christmas.

Tom Really? **Bob** Of course it is. **Susie** Goody, **Carolyn** That's my favorite day.

Mother [Entering] Everything is ready to carry on.

Children [Exit and enter, carrying food onto table, sit back of table, facing audience. Father and Mother at each end]

Mother Whose turn is it to say the blessing?

Carolyn Can we all say it together today?

Susie I know; can we sing the Camp Blessing?

Father Good idea.

Children [Sing] Noontime is here; the board is spread.
Thanks be to God who gives us bread.
We praise Thee Lord!

Bob I know what you did, Dad; you brought the wreath up from the basement.

Carolyn Did you, Dad?

Bob Of course he did; This is Sunday-before-Christmas-Wreath-Day.

Susie Does everyone in the world have Sunday-Before-Christmas-Wreath-Day?

Tom 'Fraid not, Susie.

Susie Everyone in America?

Father Not even everyone in America, honey.

Susie Why don't they?

Father Well, they haven't even heard of it yet.

Susie Can we tell them?

Mother I think we could.

Carolyn Wouldn't it be wonderful if it got to be a special day—all over the world?

Tom And it could be called 'Wreath Day'.

Father 'Wreath Day', so it could; 'Wreath Day'.

Margaret I like that; 'Wreath Day'.

Tom It could be every Sunday before Christmas, just the way Thanksgiving is every fourth Thursday in November.

Susie To-day is the Sunday before Christmas; is today named 'Wreath Day'?

Mother Yes, Susie, to-day is the very first 'Wreath Day' in the whole world.

Margaret Hurry up, everybody. Let's start asking people to come to it.

Bob Can Jim come?

Margaret Of course.

Carolyn Shirley lives sort of far; can she come?

Susie Can everyone come?

Margaret We always invite everyone in the neighborhood.

Bob Can we invite them now?

Mother Yes, just as soon as we finish lunch.

Margaret I'll phone everyone.

Tom [*Walking toward Carolyn*] We'll go around to all the houses in our block, and invite them, won't we, Carolyn?

Carolyn Yes, we'll ask all the children.

Margaret I'll make star cookies and bell cookies and Christmas tree cookies and wreath cookies for everyone.

Mother I'll do dishes for everyone today.

Children Thank you, Mother; thanks, Mom, etc. [*Susie hugs Mother*]

Bob Maggie, you can't make cookies and phone people, too.

Margaret Guess that leaves *you* to phone.

Bob I asked for that one.

Carolyn Who will cut branches for the wreath?

Children [*Scrambling from the table*] Daddy will! Daddy will!

Mother Carry something out with you when you go. [*Exit all but Bob*]

Bob [*Dials phone*] Hello, Jim? . . . Can you come over? . . . Hey, what time, Mom?

Mother [*Peeking in*] Five o'clock.

Bob Five o'clock, for our Sunday-before-Wreath-Day? . . . Yes, just like last year . . . swell; be seeing you. [*Hangs up receiver*]

[*Dials*] Hello, Helen? . . . Can you and Ted and Mary come to our Sunday-before-Wreath-Day? . . . No presents . . . No; if you bring any presents, bring them for the welfare box . . . No, it's not that kind of a day; no presents for us on Wreath Day . . . Bye now; see you later.

[*Dials*] Hello Harry; Can you and Diane come over for Sunday-before-Christmas-Wreath-Day? . . . Swell . . . Hold on a minute; [*Calling toward kitchen*] Hey Mom, Harry wants to know if they have Sunday-before-Christmas-Wreath-Day all over the world.

Mother [*Peeking in*] How interesting! just what we were talking about.

Bob Not yet, Harry. It's just beginning. A tradition has to start somewhere, and who knows? Say, Harry, maybe you started something when you asked me that. See you at five. [*Hangs up*]

Susie [*Entering*] Does Harry want it all over the world, too?

Tom [*Entering*] All the kids do. By 1958 it will be all over El Cerrito.

Margaret [*Entering*] Cindy knows about Wreath Day. She and Horand are our missionaries in Germany. Maybe they will start the tradition already this year.

Mother We could write all about it to the *NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER*, and it goes places all over the United States.

Father Do you remember Bill Holladay? He preached about our wreath at churches in two little towns in the Sierras, so maybe there are some families there who are celebrating Wreath Day.

Tom Where is Bill now?

Father He is in Holland; we could write to him and maybe he could help get it started there.

Margaret El Cerrito—the whole United States—Germany—Holland—

Carolyn What about the Dois? Why can't we write to the Dois?

Father We could.

Margaret They'd have Japanese dolls.

Mother Everyone always makes the Nativity scene look like their own race of people.

Margaret I know, isn't it wonderful to make it their own?

Tom Sure, it *is* their own; The Lord is everyone's.

Father Who'll help carry the wreath in?
[*Exit Father followed by Tom, Bob, Carolyn, Susie.*]

Margaret Oh, my cookies will burn!

Mother [*Entering*] I took them out for you.
[*Enter boys carrying wreath; girls carrying step ladders.*]

Tom Hold it steady! [*Climbing ladder*]

Bob [*Climbing a ladder on other side of wreath*] How does it look? Which side should be up? Is it O.K. this way, Mom?

Mother [*Tipping head on one side and scrutinizing*] It looks fine just the way you have it; you've made it very even, this year.

Margaret Is it time to bring the dolls in?

Mother Yes, carry them carefully.
[*Children bring dolls to table*]

Margaret Put them all in the right order, just the way they go on the wreath, with the star at this end.

Neighbor Children [*Sing off stage, 'Deck the Halls'*]

Carolyn [*Runs to open the door. Children enter stage R, still singing and placing small twigs of holly or greenery on stage properties. Children in family join singing and help them off with coats*]

Father Is everyone here? The star comes first, and angels next. [*Hands star and angels to Children*]

Children [*sing*] "Hark the Herald Angels Sing"; [*first verse*]

Father The shepherds go on the left side of the wreath. [*Hands shepherds to Children*]

Children [*Sing 'Noel', first verse*] [*Hang shepherds on wreath*]

Father Here are the Wisemen for the right side of the wreath. [*Hands Wisemen to children*]

Children [*Sing 'We three Kings', first verse*] [*Hang Wisemen on wreath*]

Father Then comes the manger, Mary, Joseph, and last of all the Babe lying in the manger. [*Hands them to children*]

Children [*Sing 'Away in a Manger'*] [*Hang them on wreath*]

Children [*walk and stand front stage, smallest children in front, arms stretched toward audience, singing*]

Children [*Sing 'O Come, All Ye Faithful'*] [*At end of first verse Children turn with inside arms stretched toward manger. Children step back, maintaining lines, and five heralds step in front, facing audience, singing*]

First Child [*Holding star-shaped cooky*] We have made cookies into Christmas stars to remind you of the

wise men who found the Christ Child by following a star.

Second Child [*Holding a cooky bell*] We have made cookies into Christmas bells to call you to come to church to join our search for the Lord.

Third Child [*Holding Christmas-tree cooky*] We have made cookies into Christmas trees, to give the promise that we, too, can grow straight and tall through all kinds of weather, and at last shine out with joy on the birthday of the Lord.

Fourth Child And we have made cookies into Christmas wreaths, to bring our story of Wreath Day into your home. As each of you goes to your home to-night, plan together with your family how you can have a special Christmas wreath.

Fifth Child Perhaps you have some tiny dolls which you can dress; or perhaps someone in your family can cut angels and shepherds, wise men and a manger out of colored paper, and you can hang them on your very first 'Wreath Day' Christmas wreath.

All HAPPY WREATH DAY!

Margaret [*Bringing basket full of bags of cookies, stands front R and hands cookies to children as they file past her. Children pass them out to audience*]



"How Shall I Keep My Christmas?"

by Edward B. Hinckley

ONE HUNDRED and ten years ago there was considerable doubt as to whether or not New Churchmen should celebrate Christmas, and a Committee was appointed by Convention to inquire into the matter and bring in recommendations. The Committee reported to the 1847 Convention (and their report may be read in the *New Jerusalem Magazine* for July, 1847) that where Societies can, in freedom, hold religious services on that day, it would be highly proper and useful to do so. And where this should, from local or other considerations, be deemed inexpedient, they think the day might be turned to profitable account, by all the receivers, old and young, meeting and feasting together, in the

afternoon or evening,—by concerts of sacred music, or singing some Chants or Glorifications from the Book of Worship,—by communicating to each other such intelligence as may have been obtained respecting the state and progress of the Church in other places,—by devising plans for the relief of the indigent and distressed, or by doing anything calculated to call into active exercise the benevolent feelings, to strengthen the kindly affections of the heart, and thereby promote the great cause of peace on earth, and good will among men.

The first part of this quotation serves to remind us that in most of the 19th century there was no "national"

custom of observing Christmas. While in the Middle West and the South combined customs from many countries made 'the feast of Christmas' a merry one, colonial New England had left this celebration, which was considered wholly pagan, out of its laws and customs. In the middle of the nineteenth century this early Puritan attitude was only beginning to be changed, and the specific suggestions in the last half of the quotation were obviously designed to help the New Church Societies in New England.

It is interesting to notice how closely the last stanza of the hymn from which I have borrowed my title follows the recommendation of the Convention Committee. John Westall, who wrote it, was thirty-one years old in 1847. He was already using his great talents and personal charm in working for the New Church, with which he had affiliated himself in 1839, and it is certain that he was aware of this discussion of 'Christmas keeping' which was a part of the official business at two Conventions. Centering his life and work around the Fall River (Mass.) Society as he did, he was a witness to the gradual change in the outward observance of Christmas in New England; and from his writings we know that he could never have failed, himself, to remember the true purpose of this observance.

At sometime during the last years of his life he wrote the poem familiar to all New Church men and women. Rev. John Worcester composed a musical setting for the words, and it was first sung in public at the Fall River Society some time before Rev. John Westall's death in 1890. The last stanza, as I have said, effectively 'sums up' the unofficial recommendations of the 1847 Committee on 'the propriety of observing, in the New Church, the day called Christmas.' I can think of no better way of answering the question 'How shall I keep my Christmas?' in its simplest and most obvious aspect than to quote Mr. Westall's own words:

... As they keep it in heaven above;
O keep it with peace and thanksgiving,
And kindest deeds of love;
And share with the poor and needy
The joys which the Lord gives thee;
And thy heart shall keep with the angels
The Lord's Nativity.

Certainly this is an effective answer to the question 'How shall I keep my Christmas?' But there is another implication in this little word 'How' which should cause us to look more deeply into the question. Our gratitude for Christmas itself is the mainspring of our intention to express that gratitude, and to show it by worship of the Lord and love of the neighbor. But what is it we are grateful for? Certainly, for His Coming! Let us think a little of the manner of that Coming, and when it really happened.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God." The fact is, then, that the Lord has been coming to us, speaking to us, living with us, from the beginning. His first words to

us are, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." He was speaking to us on Mt. Sinai—he called us 'Moses' then—when He said, "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me . . ." The Lord stood beside Joshua, following the death of Moses, and spoke to him—to us—when He said, "I will be with thee: I will not fail thee nor forsake thee . . . Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

God with Us

The Lord listened to us when the servant of Elisha, appalled by the enemy troops which had surrounded the city in the night, cried out in terror: "Alas, my master, how shall we do?" It was to us He listened when Elisha prayed, and His answer to us was to open 'the eyes of the young man and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.' The Lord was with David when he felled Goliath, He was with Solomon when he built his temple at Jerusalem, and He is present with us to give aid and counsel when in our lives we repeat these experiences, common to all mankind. It was the Lord who spoke to us, through the ears of Isaiah, when He promised, "And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." It was the Lord who counselled us, through the open vision of Micah, so that we could be told, "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

These are the signs of the Lord's perpetual Advent: of His coming to our lives and to our hearts, His answers to our prayers at night, His word of inspiration for our days. The Lord has been with His people from the beginning, as He will remain with them to the end of eternity. Something of this knowledge must be consciously with us in this decision as to how we shall keep Christmas, not only to remind us of the perpetual Advent, but also to bring us logically to an understanding of what is most usually meant by the term 'Advent.' Rev. J. K. Smyth referred to this when he wrote, in the late 19th century, God, as the Word, has ever been coming to man in a form accommodated to his need, keeping step with his steps, until, in the completeness of this desire to bring Himself to man where he is, He

SWEDENBORG'S WRITINGS

For introductory purposes, paper covers:

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<i>Divine Love and Wisdom</i>	25
<i>Divine Providence</i>	25
<i>The Four Doctrines</i>	25

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appears to the natural senses and in a form suitable to our natural life. In the Christian conception of God, as One Who seeks to reveal Himself to man, it simply is inevitable that the Word should manifest Himself on the very lowest plane of man's life . . . It is not extraordinary in the sense of its being a hard or an unnatural thing for God to do. He has always been approaching man, always adapting His revelations to human conditions and needs.

As we keep our Christmas, then, we turn from conscious gratitude for the presence of God from 'the beginning' to gratitude for His birth into our world, by which He "took our nature upon Him. He endured temptation, even to the passion of the cross. He overcame the hells and so delivered man. He glorified His Humanity, uniting it with the Divinity of which it was begotten . . ." In preparing ourselves for the celebration of His birth, it is well to review His whole life on earth, to remind ourselves of the full meaning of this Christmas we are keeping. In ourselves we should look for the response to His coming which is recorded in the Bible. We should pass from the simple fervor of the shepherd's wondering worship to the more learned intimations that prompted the deephearted adoration of the Magi, and on to the beginnings of discipleship at those magic words, "Follow Me." We should examine with reverent inquiry the miracles—at Cana in Galilee; in the wilderness the feeding of the multitudes; in the city the healing of the man born blind, and the later raising of Lazarus; and finally the entry into Jerusalem with its lessons of victory over natural desires and reasonings.

But here let us pause for a moment, on the road leading into the city, to take stock of where we are in our spiritual progress. As we prepare once more to keep Christmas, are we perhaps like the multitude, clothed in their selfish thinking, who on one day could hail him, with palms, as their King, and could shout no less loudly a few days later for His death on a cross between two thieves? How well do we understand His coming to earth? What purpose was served by His living out an earthly life, fraught with misunderstanding, scorn, ridicule, suffering and persecution, and culminating in a painful death?

Forever Insured

There were two reasons, Swedenborg tells us. First, to restore the equilibrium between the forces and influences of heaven and hell upon mankind; and second, to glorify His Human, since only by making that Human Divine could the Lord 'keep the hells subjugated to eternity, for He thus acts to eternity from first principles by means of ultimates . . . *The very might of the Divine power rests in things ultimate; so the Lord's might rests in His Human because that is in the ultimate.*" (*Apocalypse Explained*, n. 806. Italics mine.) Only by grappling on man's own level with the temptations that beset man, can the Lord forever insure that the freedom of man's will to choose between good and evil shall be permanently



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was written

by a New-Church
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and eternally preserved. His coming might be called a revelation of His power translated into terms of God's ultimate, and man's natural, level. It was a revelation of a love and a power such as the world had never before seen, and was never to see again in that particular form. The purpose was achieved and fulfilled; there would be no need of a duplication by another coming to earth in the flesh, as though the first one had been ineffectual.

Yet at the heart of our question, 'How shall I keep my Christmas?' there can be implicit the additional inquiry '—only as a memorial of something accomplished and finished!' The teachings of our church answer, 'No.' As our knowledge of the particular Advent nearly two thousand years ago is enriched by the understanding of the continual presence of the Lord with men, it is also deepened by a knowledge of the continuing Advent promised by the Lord when He spoke of His Second Coming.

This time His coming is again through the Word, but in a different way. For "in order that the Lord might be continuously with me (Swedenborg), He has unfolded to me the spiritual sense of His Word, wherein is Divine Truth in its very light, and it is in this light that He is continually present. For His presence in the Word is by means of the spiritual sense and in no other way." (*True Christian Religion*, n. 780.) And elsewhere in the

True Christian Religion Swedenborg states God's presence in the Word most clearly and suggestively when he writes,

... In the New Church... it is permitted to enter with the understanding and penetrate into all her secrets, and to confirm them by the Word, *because her doctrines are continuous truths laid open by the Lord by means of the Word*, and confirmations of these truths by rational means cause the understanding to be opened above more and more, and thus to be raised into the light in which the angels of heaven are. That light in its essence is truth, and in that light acknowledgment of the Lord as the God of heaven and earth shines in its glory. (n. 508. Italics mine.)

And we remember the message handed to Swedenborg by the celestial angel, which read, "Enter hereafter into the mysteries of the Word, which has been heretofore shut up; *for the particular truths therein are so many mirrors of the Lord.*" (n. 508. Italics mine.)

The Second Coming therefore confirms and strengthens our realization of the full implications of the Lord's continuing presence with us, promised in *Isaiah* and reiterated in *Matthew*. "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." "God with us." It is a wonderful promise, a frightening responsibility, a golden opportunity! In all of these aspects, it affects our decision as to how we shall keep our Christmas. Inevitably it forces us to realize that to 'keep Christmas' in the full meaning of the phrase will demand the rededication of our lives to Jesus Christ, Whose feast it is, and Who is Lord of heaven and earth.

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." (*Isaiah* 9:6) Like the blast of a silver trumpet the words should stir us to action, for we have also the direct words of the Lord to underline our personal responsibility: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

What does this further answer to our question demand of us? It demands not a holiday briefly observed as something set apart from daily living, not a five year plan or a ten year plan, but a life. It demands that each one of us order his whole life so that it shall reflect the presence of God; that it shall testify of His mercy, love and wisdom; and that it shall be a sign and a seal that He has chosen us to be among His disciples. Upon our shoulders, as upon the shoulders of those first chosen ones, rests the responsibility to make His life and His teachings known. It is to us, today, that He says: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy

Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

"How shall I keep my Christmas?" Each of us can keep it adequately only if we keep it as a disciple of the Lord; and in thinking of this, three characteristics of a disciple come to mind at once. First, a disciple has had a 'soul-shaking experience' of, and with, the Lord, Jesus Christ. As a result, he has a burning enthusiasm which cannot be hidden or diverted; which impels him to speak 'that we do know and testify that we have seen.' Second, a disciple has within his soul a constant meditative, searching prayer; an absorbed quest for guidance, insight, direction, inspiration—call it what you will. Third, a disciple must make an intensive and daily study of the Lord's Word; and in our church that study is enriched with new meaning because we have the interpretation given by His Second Coming.

Finally, to 'keep Christmas' in its fullest extent, as a true principle, we must implement our zeal, our prayer, and our study with *action*. "Doing is of the will," says Swedenborg.

As the laws of life, or worship, and of the civil states are not anything with a man so long as they are in his understanding only, but become something with him when they are in the will, therefore it is said in the Word throughout that they must be 'done'; for *doing is of the will*; but knowing, understanding, acknowledging, and believing are of the understanding. (*Arcana Coelestia*, n. 9282. Italics mine.)

How shall we keep our Christmas? Not one day, but every day in the year; as disciples conscious of the unbounded joy and the unbounded responsibility of the perpetual Advent. Let us take as our prayer for the New Year the words of another hymn in our *Book of Worship*; this one written by John Drinkwater:

We know the paths wherein our feet should press,
Across our hearts are written Thy decrees,
Yet, now, O Lord, be merciful to bless
With more than these.
Grant us the will to fashion as we feel,
Grant us the strength to labor as we know,
Grant us the purpose, ribbed and edged with steel,
To strike the blow.
Knowledge we ask not—knowledge Thou has lent—
But, Lord, the will—there lies our bitter need;
Give us to build above the deep intent
The deed, the deed!



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Detroit Dedication

"Behold I built an house to the name of the Lord, my God, to dedicate it to him."—II Chronicles, 2:4.

On this scriptural theme the new sanctuary of the Church of the Holy City (Swedenborgian), Meyers and Curtis, Detroit, Mich. was dedicated before a large congregation Sunday, Dec. 1.



—Detroit Free Press photo

KEYS to the new sanctuary of The Church of the Holy City are delivered to officials prior to dedication rites, Sunday. Left to right are Architect William E. Knapp giving keys to Wilfred C. Locke, church president, and the Rev. William R. Woofenden, the minister.

Also present were some young American New-Church Leaguers, guests of the Detroit League, who had invited the ANCL to come to a houseparty for this very important week-end.

The Convention president and general pastor, the Rev. David P. Johnson, of Kitchener, Ont., preached the dedicatory sermon.

He and the Rev. William R. Woofenden, the minister, officiated at the worship service.

Architect William E. Knapp presented the keys to the new edifice to Wilfred C. Locke, president of the congregation, and Mr. Woofenden.

The congregation has worshiped in the basement portion of the building since 1941. The superstructure started in 1956 is of modified Gothic design.

The sanctuary is a study in simple beauty. Masonry walls are of plum and woodwork of warm gray—with accents of yellow in the altar dossal. Pew and chancel furnishings are cream color with yellow in the chancel and aisle runners. The building cost \$105,000.

The Detroit group had its beginnings more than 100 years ago. The Church of the Holy City is the only Swedenborgian church in that city.

Religious Census Issue Divides Church Leaders

One of the most widely discussed church-state questions, of 1957 relates to the proposed religious question in the forthcoming U. S. census. Church leaders themselves have been sharply divided as to whether a question about a citizen's religion should be asked by census takers.

There is actually some precedent for the religious question since the Census Bureau has been previously authorized to take a census of religious bodies. The data in this census are obtained by queries directed to the various denominational headquarters. They have received rather indifferent attention and the data so derived have been of doubtful accuracy and value.

The Census Bureau decided to stage a trial run on the religious question and selected four counties in the neighborhood of Milwaukee, Wis., for this purpose. The basic question asked was: "What is your religion?" The bureau reports that only 8/10 of one percent refused to answer the question on religion and that some of these refused to answer any questions at all. Noting no significant recalcitrance on the religious question the bureau began to discuss including it in the census.

Serious misgivings were soon being expressed. The American Civil Liberties Union, after expressing initial approval, reversed its field and took a strong negative stand. One objection was directed at the compulsion involved in the question. Actually, failure to answer any question in the census is a crime punishable by fine or prison or both. The president of the American Jewish Congress opposed the religious question for the same reason and also because it would make the federal government "an agent of religious groups." *Commonweal*, prominent lay Roman Catholic publication, editorialized against the religious question, though the position of the denomination was generally favorable to it. Christian Scientist leaders sharply protested that basic law of their denomination forbade participation in any such religious census.

Paul Blanshard

Some interesting proposals in regard to the religious question were submitted by Paul Blanshard in a letter published in *The New York Times* of August 6. The Blanshard letter pointed out certain values in

Please turn to page 396

BOOK REVIEW

BILLY GRAHAM: THE PERSONAL STORY OF THE MAN, HIS MESSAGE, AND HIS MISSION. By Stanley High. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 330 W. 42nd St., New York, 274 pp. \$3.95.

What makes Billy Graham, the evangelist, click? Many have asked that question, and some have come up with an answer which may have been satisfying to them. Graham's sermons are no better than those heard in an average parish church. His syndicated column, *My Answer*, often verges on the platitudinous. True, his rapid fire style of speaking, his quick pacing of the floor and his sweeping gestures have impressed millions. Still, as an orator, he can hardly be called great. Nevertheless, the fact remains that Graham has preached to over twenty million people, and maybe a larger number have heard him on the radio. His organization claims that he has more than a million 'converts' to his credit. And millions of dollars have been contributed to his work. His evangelistic activities have for years been 'big business.' And the response to his preaching has been just as remarkable, so far as statistics can show, in metropolitan New York as in backward rural communities.

The writer of the book under review makes no claim to being objective and unbiased. Plainly he is a great admirer of Billy. Some of what he writes has the flavor of a press agent's outpourings. Nevertheless, this work contains much factual material as well as vivid pictures of Graham in action, and a reading of it will help in an understanding of the evangelist's success.

In trying to explain that success we must take into account three things:

(1) Organization and publicity. To quote Mr. High: "Billy Graham says that almost every organization, business, agency, almost every person with something good or not so good to sell uses the miracle of modern machinery and modern communication to sell it: 'Why not the churches?'" (p. 152). So Graham has built an efficient organization which collects and spends some \$3,000,000 annually. Two skilled advertising executives, Walter Bennett and Fred Dienert, have aided him in this, especially in the promotion of his radio ministry. As an example of organizational efficiency consider the

handling of the hundreds of letters that come to the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association asking for help with various problems. The questions asked have been found to fall into forty categories. An answer for each of the latter has been prepared. The letters received are classified according to these categories and then an answer is had by simply pressing a button.

(2) Mr. Graham's personality. He is young, tall, handsome, athletic and charming—a glamour boy in the good sense of the word.

(3) Sincerity. Mr. High seems to rank this quality above all others. He quotes a number of newspapers, clergymen and others to the effect: Billy Graham is genuine.

There may, of course, be something about our fear-ridden times and the longing for security which lends special appeal to the Christian message given in simple but authoritative terms.

Graham himself says that it is God to whom all the thanks should be given for the success of his preaching. He may be right.

RELIGIOUS CENSUS

(Continued from page 395)

the data which the religious inquiry might be expected to yield—values of a sociological nature quite apart from any religious significance. He then made two suggestions designed to make the religious question palatable to church leaders.

The question as presently phrased is wrong, Blanshard contends. It should be changed to something like: "Do you belong to a church, and if so, which one?" Second, the element of compulsion should be eliminated by making the reply to the religious question optional. Such an amendment to the present law could be passed promptly when Congress reconvenes.

The Blanshard proposals have stirred wide comment among church leaders. The idea of making the reply voluntary has been attacked as rendering the data incomplete and therefore of little value.

Stewart S. Perry, director of the Boston Church's Sunday School has announced that a professional baby sitter is now on hand Sunday mornings to take care of very young children.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CAN YOU ANSWER?

To the Editor:

Having been born and reared in the Presbyterian faith, it is obvious that a tendency to acquire spiritual knowledge by means of the catechismic way still clings to me, and here comes into action with a question aroused by months of study of the Arcana covering the part from *Genesis* 25 through 49, the most intricate, the most complex, the most profound, and the most perplexing of all pages of the Arcana; yet withal the most vital to a proper understanding of the revelation concerning our Lord's second coming.

The question is—

What character in the Word representative of some phase of our Lord's life should arouse the keenest interest of the student of New-Church doctrine?

My answer is half-formed. I wonder if some more enriched mind will come forth with a well-formed answer.

Lelia M. Tinsley
Newton, N. J.

OPINION CHANGED

To the Editor:

The article by the Rev. Martin in the issue of Nov. 16, as to whether the New Church is a denomination is most timely and helpful. It has changed my opinion in regard to calling our Church a denomination, largely by giving us the accepted definition of the term which clarifies the issue, and so has rendered a real service.

In my colporteur work I explain to prospects that the Church of the New Jerusalem is a new dispensation, a universal church in God's sight, containing people of all Faiths who are trying to put their beliefs into practice and who are open-mindedly willing to examine the revelation given to Swedenborg and find that they can accept it as true and embody it in living, whatever nominal church they may be members of.

At the same time I can see that our limited organization is practically a denomination according to the definition, striving, along with other denominations to bring God's Kingdom into this disordered world, in the form of the New Jerusalem described symbolically by John.

H. Mildred Herrick
Denver, Colo.

The Nativity Morn

THE LORD of creation—the Savior of man
Looked down from His dwelling on a cold winter morn
Not a star in the heavens, the earth pale and wan—
So this is the day that His Christ should be born.

Still was the earth with the rapture of night
In the hills of Judea, the shepherds, near by.
When aglow in the east, they saw the great light,
Heard the angelus sung—of Glory on high.

Every angel in heaven had been given a trumpet,
To sound when the new star appeared in the sky,
To herald the knowledge that God was incarnate
And dwelt in the Soul of the Child from on high.

Though thou but be a little Judean town
Yet thou shalt be greatest and filled with renown,
For where else on earth, could the Savior-Creator
Be born among men than in Bethlehem town?

Then sang all the heavens, the earth felt the echo
The Bethlehem star came ablaze in the sky,
Then sounded the trumpets in a great halleluia
As God the Redeemer bowed low from on high.

This was the first Christmas, this was the amen
This was the Redeemer—from bondage and sin.
The morning dawned new, with an atoning glow
Fulfilling the Story for all men to know.

—LEONARD COLE



Satellites and Stars



Oh, He who set the stars afire
And flung them into space,
What does He think of mankind now,
And its satellitic race?

“Behold,” He says, “my universe,
Too vast for man to see.
Even the mightiest telescopes
Are tiny toys to me.

“The earth is but one planet,
The sun but one bright star
Can you count the stars in the milky way
Or the satellites afar?”

“Go up in a plane and look at the earth —
The mountains, the valleys, the streams.
Could man create a similar world,
Just fashion it from his dreams?”

God thought of man, and man was made —
So women and children, and love.
He only needed to say the word,
To make a sheep, a dog, a dove.

Then when mankind turned away,
And darkness covered the earth,
God came down in human form,
To bring mankind new birth.

If you're startled by the Sputniks,
Fear a missile from the sky,
Remember God still rules the world;
He's not just standing by.

Ponder awhile the Christmas star,
Shining down through the years
And thrill anew to the angels' song
Calming the shepherds' fears.

“Peace on earth,” is what they sang,
Peace, good-will to men.”
And if you listen with loving hearts,
You'll hear that song again.

—MADELINE GEORGE
Christmas, 1957

The Swedenborg Student

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ARCANA CLASS I—Jan., 1958

Volume III, 2217-2316

January	1—7	2217—2236
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OUR READING for this month begins with the story of Sodom. In it is pictured the state of the human race at the time, and a new revealing to men as to their nature and the possibility of their salvation.

The story of Sodom and Gomorrah is an impressive one. Abraham's entreaty that the cities might be saved if there were fifty righteous in them, forty-five, forty, thirty, twenty, or even ten tells of the Lord's tender solicitude for men and the hope that He might find some good in them by which they might be saved. Abraham's prayer is the answer to the question "Who then can be saved?" It applies to all of us, for each one of us dwells in Sodom and Gomorrah, amid evil and falsity.

"Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city . . ." Numbers in the Word have particular meanings. Fifty stands for fullness. The fiftieth year was the year of jubilee. Some have advanced in regeneration, have acquired an abundance of truths and applied them to life. These come first and attain the highest salvation. "Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty . . ." The number five stands for *little*. If there is a little short of an abundance of good works, if he falls short of what he knows he ought to be but is in the desire and effort to do what he knows is right, the Lord will save him. "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." Those who reach the state represented by the fifty or forty-five are far fewer than they should be. They are those who have won the victory or who fall only a little short of it.

"If there be forty righteous . . ." Forty represents temptation. This we well know from the forty days of rain in the story of the flood, the forty years wandering in the wilderness, and the Lord's forty days of temptation before entering upon His ministry. Here we reach a larger group of men. Everyone desiring to lead a good life comes into temptation. We may never pass beyond this state. Yet if we are steadfast, the Lord will give us the

victory. "These are they which have continued with me in my temptations." It is good to know that even if life here is a continual struggle, the Lord will give us the victory if we persevere to the end.

"Peradventure there shall thirty be found there . . ." Thirty signifies somewhat of combat—it is five (little) times six (temptation). The Levites of thirty years old taken to do the service of the tent represent those who are being instructed and can perform some little service. In the parable of the Sower some seed brought forth thirty fold. Some do not go very far but they have renounced living for the world alone.

"If there be twenty righteous within the city . . ." Those of twenty years and under were not condemned to die in the wilderness when the people refused to follow the advice of Joshua and Caleb. They were not old enough to vote and were not responsible. They picture those who have not reached the point when rationality takes full control. They act from knowledges which they have been taught rather than from their own judgment and so evil cannot be imputed to them. This means that all who die in youth are saved. It also refers to adults who from some cause do not know what the truth of faith is but who believe in a God and think kindly of the neighbor; they are not spiritually adult. Those of twenty years old spiritually are brought into the heavenly Canaan.

"Peradventure ten shall be found there . . ." Ten stands for remains, those states of innocence, trust, and obedience which are implanted by the Lord in everyone during infancy and childhood. It is by means of these that the Lord operates in men, and if they have not been destroyed, there is the possibility of salvation. Remains are a means by which the Lord has access to men. If the way is open—if ten remain—the will can still be reached.

It must be noted that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed. Only Lot and his family were saved by being led out. We must desire salvation, for no one can be saved against his will.



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THE STORY UNDER consideration—the crossing of the Red Sea—is a striking one in the letter as well as in its spiritual meaning. For the Israelites it meant that they were forever delivered from bondage to Egypt, not by their own power—for they were helpless—but by the Lord. Spiritually it is a prophecy concerning the Redemption. The Redemption did not take place all at once, but was a continued process. The crossing of the Red Sea marks deliverance from a particular hell which threatens us early in our progress toward regeneration. It represents the first temptation which is encountered after we have renounced living for this world alone. "All temptation is effected by influx from the hells, for the spirits who are thence excite and draw forth all things in a man that have been evilly done and thought, and thereby accuse and condemn him." This Red Sea temptation is very familiar to us. Sometimes it seems that our weaknesses and sins are too great and too many for us to overcome. But we should remember that the purpose of life is to search out evils in ourselves and to overcome them, and that it is the Lord alone who can give us the victory, as we look to Him. In their journey the Israelites were not allowed to go around the Red Sea where there was a passage by land; they had to cross the sea. Evil cannot be overcome by dodging it.

The Israelites were told to "fear not" and to "stand still and see the salvation of Jehovah." Those who depend upon their own strength cut themselves off from the Lord. They attribute strength and merit to themselves. It is the Lord alone who is the Redeemer and Savior. Then they were told to go forward. We must not sit back waiting for Divine influx. We must act as of ourselves, but trusting wholly in the Lord.

We are told that the pillar of cloud and fire was a protecting company of angels about them. This protection of angels is always about us, as the angels were round about Elisha. They are about armies in battle. In World War I we read about the "angel of Mons." Sometimes their presence may even be felt, giving us assurance and strength. "And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them."

This represents the complete protection from falsity in the understanding and evil in the will.

This pillar of cloud and fire, while it gave light and protection to the Israelites, was thick darkness to the Egyptians. To those in evil and falsity goodness and truth are thick darkness. "And the one came not near the other all the night."

And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. "All Divine power is through the truth which proceeds from the Lord." Here the writings teach us that truth from the Divine is not a "mere affair of thought, but is the veriest essentiality from which are all the essences of things in both worlds, the spiritual and the natural." John says that all things were made by means of the Word and that "without him was not anything made that was made." Thus is described the nature of truth.

The destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea is an expression of the law of retaliation—the operation of the Golden Rule "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them." We do not often think of the Golden Rule in its obverse application.

Notes

8164¹. Natural temptations are the anxieties which arise from misfortunes which affect the natural life; and have to do with the body, honors, and wealth.

2. Spiritual temptations are anxieties on account of the loss of faith and charity and consequently salvation.

8179. "The prayers of those who are in temptations are little heard." A man must fight as of himself.

8192^c. Archangels—Michael, Raphael, and others—are not one angel who is supreme among his associates, but a society of angels.

8209. Regeneration is the formation of a new will.

8250. This gives a good reason why the evil cannot be reformed after death.

8259. This tells us the difference between a spiritual and a moral life.

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Births, Baptisms, Memorials

BIRTHS

SIMPSON—Born July 21 to Mr. and Mrs. Brian Simpson, Vancouver, B. C., (nee Laura Zacharias) a daughter, Valerie Jayne.

DECKER, WYLIE—Laurie Ellen born to Lorraine and Philip Decker; Beth Erlene to Roland and Elaine Wylie; both from Fryeburg, Me.

BAPTISMS

ALLEN, FARRIS—Mildred Allen and Jane Farris, Fryeburg, Me., were baptized, not confirmed, as noted in a recent issue.

HERSEY—David Wayne, son of Mr. and Mrs. George Hersey, Gulfport, Miss., was baptized in the Swedenborg Memorial church, Gulfport, on June 30, the Rev. P. Peters officiating.

KIRKENDALL, WIENS—Valerie Lynn, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Charles M. Kirkendall, Vancouver, B. C. was baptized Oct. 17 at the home of the parents. Janice Dianne, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Wiens was baptized Oct. 23 at the home of the parents; the Rev. John E. Zacharias officiating.

COPELAND, EDSON, STINCHFIELD—Cynthia Mildred and Douglas Scott, children of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Copeland; Kathy Lynn, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Edson, and William Arthur, son of Mr. and Mrs. William Stinchfield, Jr., baptized Oct. 27 at the Elmwood New Church, Elmwood, Mass.; the Rev. Paul B. Zacharias officiating.

CONFIRMATIONS

HOWARD—James Howard, Ft. Lauderdale, was confirmed into the Miami-Ft. Lauderdale Society on Sunday, Nov. 3; the Rev. E. L. Frederick officiating.

WEDDINGS

DESJARDINS-HARMS—Howard Francis Desjardins and Gertrude Eileen Harms were united in marriage at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Harms, Mission, B. C., Sept. 6; the Rev. John E. Zacharias officiating.

HOECK-ZACHARIAS—Kaare Hoeck and Marion Louise Zacharias, Vancouver, B. C., were married Sept. 14 at the Church of the New Jerusalem, father of the bride, Rev. John E. Zacharias officiating.

FLAGG-ALDRICH—Sally Flagg and John Aldrich were married Nov. 29, at the Elmwood New Church, Elmwood, Mass.; the Rev. Paul B. Zacharias officiating.

MEMORIALS

COBB—On September 30, Caleb Jesper Cobb, Chicago, passed into the spiritual world. Mr. Cobb was born in Abington, Mass., in 1865, the son of Edward and Elmina Howard Cobb. He was one of ten children, and the family was raised in the faith of the New Church. He came to Chicago at the age of 19 and joined the Chicago Society of the New Jerusalem in 1887. In 1894 he married Alice Benson, who preceded him into the spiritual world in 1954.

Mr. Cobb was one of the elder statesmen of the New Church in Chicago. He was active in the organization of the North Division Parish in Lincoln Park which later moved and became the Sheridan Road Parish. Here he devoted his leadership, and many years of hard work were contributed to every aspect of the life of the Parish. He served as parish president, treasurer, superintendent of the Sunday School, and as a member of the Executive Committee.

The Chicago Society of the New Jerusalem was fortunate to have Mr. Cobb as its president from 1934 to 1941. He served as vice president from 1941 to 1948, taking over the presidency again temporarily in 1944-45 to fill out the unexpired term of the late Herman Kitzelman. It was in 1948 that Mr. Cobb resigned from the Executive Committee of the Society but he continued to serve as a financial adviser.

In addition to being an active churchman, Mr. Cobb was one of Chicago's leading hardware merchants. He organized and served as president of Cobb, Whyte and Laemmer and Company and he continued to be active in business until his final illness. He was well known in civic affairs and was active in the Hamilton and City Clubs. He was an accomplished pianist and shared his musical gift with all who visited in his home.

The Chicago Society has suffered a great loss in Mr. Cobb's passing. His wise counsel, astute judgment, his fairness and his devotion to his church shall long be remembered.

Services for Mr. Cobb were conducted by the Rev. John Spiers of La Porte, Ind., Oct. 3. Surviving are a daughter, Jessamine, and a sister, Annie W. Cobb, Arlington, Mass.

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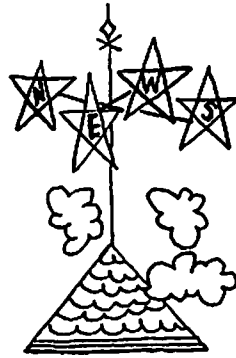
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Natural Notes

By Carol Lawson



The Reverend Franklin H. Blackmer preached at our church in New York City on Dec. 1, attended a meeting at the Creelmans' Cleveland home on Dec. 4, then paid a friendly visit to a midwest New-Church Society and preached at the Cincinnati Church on Dec. 8. We should like to nominate Mr. Blackmer as the closest runner-up to Mr. Richard Tafel, for the title of 'busiest man of the year'. Mr. Blackmer represented his Task Force (the one working on Publications) at the Cleveland meeting.

Carol singing to shut-ins is on the December program for the Senior League and the Pilgrim Fellowship at Fryeburg, Maine. . . . Incidentally, although we mentioned in another issue that the Fryeburg church had held an auction of Miss Bradley's paintings, we should also mention that the very prolific artist willed enough paintings to the Fryeburg Church for at least two more exhibitions and sales. Watch our pages next summer for advance notice of the sale.

In Elmwood, Mass., the Carl R. Edson Memorial Organ was dedicated with a program of music in the late afternoon of Dec. 8. Dr. Lawrence R. Capon, the organist, gave those present a marvelous example of the powers of the new organ in a skillful recital, and the Elmwood Church Choir sang Haydn's anthem, 'The Heavens are Telling'.

The president of the Theological School (the Rev. Edwin G. Capon) has made two trips this fall on behalf of the school. The first trip took him to Orange, N. J. where he gave an illustrated talk on the School, and to New Haven, where he met with the Connecticut Association.

More recently, Mr. Capon attended the Kansas Association at Pretty Prairie, and visited the New-Church society at Pawnee Rock. . . . The new Theological School Bulletin has just been published and will be distributed to the mailing list of Convention. The bulletin was out in time for Mr. Capon to take copies to Kansas so copies will not be mailed to them this year. . . . Mr. Capon visited

the Pittsburgh Society on Dec. 1. In addition to preaching in the morning, he showed slides of the School following a dinner served by the ladies of the Church.

Stewart S. Perry has arranged a public address system so that those members of the Boston Church who cannot climb stairs may sit in the vestry on Sunday mornings to hear the Swedenborg Fellowship class and the Worship Service.

St. Louisans had an opportunity to get a close look at the ecumenical movement when the General Assembly of the National Council of Churches met there early this month. As part of the St. Louis New Church's participation in the General Assembly, they invited one of the delegates to the Assembly, the Rev. Joseph Kirkland, a Baptist minister of Philadelphia, to preach at their New Church service on Dec. 1. The St. Louis pastor, David Garrett, said "What is happening in the field of church relations, drawing Christians closer together, should be an important concern to the New Church in St. Louis." . . . On Dec. 15 that Society reviewed the latest improvements in the architect's plans for their new building. Now the plans are to be sent out for bids from contractors.

And speaking of relocation—this has become a fact for the Good Shepherd—Community Church. Formerly the northside parish of the Chicago Society, the congregation is now holding services at the location of their new Church home—9046 Home Ave., Des Plaines, Ill. Although their church edifice, to be designed by Lloyd Wright, Jr., is still in the planning stage, a large parsonage has been completed on the site. Temporary worship, Sunday School and social facilities have been arranged in the new parsonage, so that the church was able to begin an active program in their new community on Oct. 15.

We are indebted to Adrian Fuller, the *Free Press* Religion Writer, for sending us the glossy photo of the Detroit dedication in time to have a cut made for this issue.

Has anybody seen the Rev. Erwin D. Reddekopp's copies of *The Wedding Garment* and *The Invisible Police*? Please return them soon to 11408 Seventy-first St., Edmonton, Alta., Canada.

Attention Florida Visitors—If you are planning a trip to Florida this winter, the St. Petersburg and Miami-Ft. Lauderdale Societies cordially invite you to drop in and become acquainted with New-Church people in these areas. At St. Petersburg the address is 1915 N. Fifth St. In Miami services are held at 2791 Bird Rd., on Sundays at 11 A.M. In Ft. Lauderdale the address of the minister is 2409 E. Las Olas Blvd. You will get a hearty welcome at any of these cities, the Rev. Ernest L. Frederick promises.

Guess it's not quite as golden around Wilmington, Del., as we thought. In fact we're quite disillusioned to find that it was *only* Leonore's fare to California and back a few times that the Pooles paid for themselves. But all kidding aside, the traveling Mrs. Poole has done a terrific job for the Women's Alliances this year in drawing the members closer together, and she certainly deserves a warm 'thank you' for this generous gesture.

Although THE MESSENGER may only be printed in Cincinnati for a brief time (depending on the whereabouts of the Editor), it should feel at home here, for it was in this same city that *THE MESSENGER* was first published, in 1853, edited by The Rev. David Powell and the Rev. J. P. Stewart.

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