

THE MESSENGER

Official Organ of the Swedenborgian Church

APRIL 1969

In the world regeneration is represented by various things, as by the blossoming of all things on earth in spring, and by the gradual development of the blossoms even to the fruit; also by the growth of every tree, shrub and flower, from the first warm month to the last.

Regeneration is also represented by the progressive ripening of all kinds of fruit from the earliest germ to the end of the process; then again by morning and evening showers, and by dews, at the coming of which flowers open; also by the fragrance from gardens and fields; by the rainbow in the cloud; by the resplendent colors of the dawn; and in general by the continual renovation of everything in the body.

Emanuel Swedenborg, True Christian Religion, 687

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir:

In the January issue of *The Messenger* I read that many members of our church find it difficult to explain to others what Swedenborgians hold to be essential doctrines of their church. I do not agree with one writer that we should perhaps not try to define our beliefs. There is always the danger that we may be closing the door to an earnest seeker of the truth. I feel most strongly that this would be regrettable because I am convinced that without having had the privilege of hearing about and reading the revelation given to Swedenborg I would be an atheist.

I do agree that we ought to "jump into life" and work with other earnest minded people toward a better understanding of why we are here. We know that Swedenborgians are not a church apart destined for Heaven above all others. We are taught that even those whom we call pagans, if they live in simple brotherly love toward each other and are faithful to what they believe to be right, are more acceptable to the Lord than most enlightened church goers who do not practice His commandments in everyday living. This doctrine, that religion is life, is basic to our faith. It can be stated in very simple words. It offers a feeling of comradeship making it easier to accept cooperation in solving everyday problems.

Recently I read Michener's *The Source*. I believe I learned from it why Judaism is still in existence in spite of its falsities and its rejection of Christ. In this story which concerns many generations of Jews the author points up one thing that has been their strength. Through centuries of persecutions by nation after nation the dying cry of devout Jews has always been "The Lord He is One!" Skeptics say that Christians claim to worship one God, yet they teach three.

Among the many Christian denominations there seems to be a better understanding, than a few generations ago, of the meaning of the Holy Spirit. However, we know there is still misconception concerning the Father and Son. We read that a great number of the rising generations have rejected the Christian Church, sometimes to follow other faiths. It seems logical to me that an acceptable explanation of *One God that seems to be three* would be welcomed by intelligent young minds in many cases. It is simple to state that Swedenborgians believe that by the Father is meant Jehovah; and by the Son, the human nature from Mary assumed by Jehovah and progressively made Divine; and by the Holy Spirit the Divine truth emanating from this one Being with power to regenerate mankind. *The Father, Son and Holy Spirit* by Chauncey Giles is a treatise unexcelled in clear, concise terminology. A copy of it would be

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GENERATION GAP

Waves are still reverberating from the November issue of the American New Church League Journal published by the young people of the Kitchener, Ontario Church. Following are three articles from the Journal, a spirited response from the Rev. Othmar Tobisch of San Francisco, a reply by the Rev. Paul Zacharias of Kitchener, and a rebuttal by Gretchen Schneider and Ruth Ahrens of the Kitchener League.

SCHOOL OUTLOOK ON RELIGION AND RACIALISM

Religion as part of a school curriculum has already been mentioned in a previous article. I would like to take a different point of view. I have noticed that in previous years there was little or no complaint about religion as a subject in public school. Today there is an increasing outcry. You can hardly blame parents for complaining when their youngster (as my brother did) brings home a story about little Johnny who spilt ink on himself. When his mother sees it she scolds him for being bad, dirty, and black. After she has washed him, she tells him he is good, clean, and white.

These so-called religious teachings cause a child to hate or fear darkness or blackness, believing these aspects to be bad in God's sight. In later years he will discuss symbolism, which almost always compares evil to darkness. None of this is any help to the racial problem. How can anyone be sympathetic with a Negro, when it is his second nature to fear or hate black?

It is true that if one is to learn a philosophy of life it should be begun in early years, but the type of religious background one gains is more like brain-washing.

Children should be taught the basic courtesies of our society and the Golden Rule. I think that one of the reasons why the established church is losing many of its young members is that when they reach maturity, they realize that they have been forced into accepting the intricacies of Christianity before they could decide for themselves. Then

they realize that Christianity is only one of the many religions, and one that does not necessarily suit a capitalistic society.

Gretchen Schneider

WHAT IS OUR FUTURE CHURCH?

I think that in the future, the name *church* in the true sense of the word will disappear. People are tending to become more and more anti-religious, and care little if at all about the hour taken off every week for deep meditation and remission of sins. As years go by, many of the various denominations will gradually form into one grand denomination. This, to me, seems almost inevitable since many of our churches state the same beliefs, but in different ways. In the disagreements between one church and another there will be a compromise, and both will have to put up with things that it partially opposes.

In the far future the church itself will not exist. People by this time will be either total atheists, as I believe our society is slowly becoming, or else they will worship on their own. Many people, I am sure, would rather pray and learn on their own than conform with the rest of society by going to church. The offering that the people used to give to the church will be much more meaningful as it will be given to worthwhile centers in our communities, rather than to the beautification of the church.

Yes, you may say that the church has its strength now, but think what the future will bring.

Ruth Ahrens

THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH IN TOMORROW'S WORLD

I suppose all of us think about this from time to time—*What is going to happen to our beloved church in the next twenty or thirty years? What will the Swedenborgian Church be like in tomorrow's world?* Of course, no one really knows the answer to this question. There are some who say that our church will cease to exist as an organiza-

tion within the next few decades. Others believe that if we continue steadfastly in our present course, that in due time many *searching* people will discover the riches of Swedenborgian thought and come flocking into our local churches. Still others tell us that if we will use our imagination and our resources effectively, adapting our church and its program to the rapidly changing world around us, then we may still serve a very important use to mankind. Still other alternatives present themselves—with no easy answer in sight.

I like to think that the Swedenborgian Church will survive, at least for another century or so. This is what I want to believe; and by that time—by the mid-21st century—it is entirely possible that most of the essential Swedenborgian ideas will have been adopted by men and women in a wide range of the Christian churches, including those in the Roman Catholic faith. This thought is really not too far fetched! You can find evidence for this very thing happening all around you right now. Thinking people in many Protestant and Catholic circles are gradually converging toward the New Church point of view, and when this process becomes complete, then probably our little organization will dissolve because its work has been done. This may take 100 years or this may require 1000 years, but it seems to be in the long-range picture.

But what about tomorrow's world—the next twenty or thirty years? Have you ever tried to imagine what our church might be like? Probably it will be quite different in many aspects. I'd like to hear what you Leaguers have to say about this, because certainly you will have a hand in the shaping of tomorrow's church. I wonder if it will be something like the following: No doubt the worship services will be very different from what we have today services in which everyone is intensely involved through new forms of music, audio-visual aids, drama, guided meditation, and so on. These worship groups will probably be quite small in size, perhaps 15 to 20 people coming together one evening a week, and then they may be led entirely by lay people who have been trained at one of our Swedenborgian Training Centers. Then all of these various groups in a given area might want to come together once a month for a week-end of religious education and fellowship. It goes without saying that this type of programme would quickly weed out the *second-hand* Christians. Only those who intended to take their Christian service seriously and on a full-time basis would feel comfortable in

this sort of environment. Everyone would specialize in one facet of Christian life for which he was best equipped. In the coming decades there will be a desperate need for highly-skilled Christian writers, teachers, counselors, social workers, business executives, and so on, and hopefully these people will find motivation in this type of religious atmosphere. There will probably be a great deal more scholarly research into the meanings and implications of Swedenborg's writings and their applications to the contemporary scene, with perhaps our denomination sponsoring eminent philosophers and psychologists for specialized studies in the writings of Swedenborg. Many of our church buildings may be gone within thirty years, but the people and the ideas will be around, and that's the important thing. What do you think about all this?

Rev. Paul Zacharias

THE OLD AND THE NEW AND THE NOT SO NEW

The whole world is filled with struggle, the struggles of the new with the old.

I was brought up in the New Church, Die Neue Kirche, as the Swedenborgian Church is called in Europe. I always heard from my elders that all the changes, the revolutions, the social upheavals we went through, were the signs and symptoms of this struggle of a new church coming into being and the old one dying. Of course, the great World War I, the great revolution in Russia, were also considered as consequences or ultimations of vast spiritual changes having descended into political, social and economic levels.

These New Church people expected great changes in the existing churches of various denominations, not so much in their forms of worship, rituals or religious practices as *in their theology!*

The TRI-PERSONAL trinity would give way to a rational concept of a three-functional God.

Life after death would not be as fantastic as misinterpreted from the Revelation of John, but be a sensible social order in human context lived in a mental-spiritual environment.

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Marriage would reach new heights of holiness in psychological integration.

The Lord Jesus Christ Glorified would be for all new Christians the one, visible Divine Human in whom there was Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and through whom alone came salvation.

Alas, these people, including myself, were not prepared to face a call for total destruction of all churches, all theology and to be told that we have now entered a "post-Christian era."

During this last decade the furious assault against all religion has increased. It was spearheaded by the militant atheists in the Communistic Party of Russia, followed by the virtual deification of Maotse in China. This has infected with an anti-religious virus large segments of the western world as well. This is reflected by a recent publication in our own church in the American New Church League Journal of Nov. 1968, by the teen-agers themselves. I refer in particular to the articles quoted above.

This is not the New Church of which Swedenborg speaks. In what sense does Miss Ahrens use the word *church* which she calls the "true sense?" If we accept one of the various definitions which Swedenborg uses for the spiritual condition in a man which he calls the true church, we read as follows: TCR 245. "It is known that the Church is in accordance with its doctrine, and that the doctrine is from the Word; nevertheless it is not doctrine but soundness and purity of doctrine, consequently the understanding of the Word, that establishes the church. Neither is it doctrine, but a faith and life in accordance with (inspired, motivated by) doctrine that establishes and constitutes the special church in the individual man. So too it is not the Word that establishes and constitutes the church in man, but a faith according to the truths, and a life according to the good (affections), which man derives (receives) from the Word, and applies to himself."

The heavenly announcement found in TRC 508; "NOW IT IS PERMITTED TO ENTER WITH INTELLIGENCE INTO THE MYSTERIES OF FAITH" has been truly fulfilled on earth. In our times we have seen the emergence not only of atheistic dogmas, but also of a reasonable, philosophical, fully Christian theology.

It has been reported that many Lutherans no longer insist on "FAITH ALONE SALVATION," which surely would have pleased Swedenborg! Or that some Roman Catholic theologians are returning to the supremacy of the HOLY SCRIPTURES in formulating doctrine, the very cornerstone of our own theology.

What is new is that Christians all over the world are feeling closer together, in the kind words of Pope John, "We don't like to be separated brethren." The World Council of Churches founded in Amsterdam in 1948 on the confession that the Lord Jesus Christ is God and Lord and Savior, certainly has made a future monstrously large denomination unnecessary and undesirable. Voluntary association is the spiritual and heavenly pattern for church union. We have already this pattern in the World Council of Churches, only our youth evidently does not know this.

However, the iconoclastic revolution of our times is not only directed toward theology, but toward the church as an institution. The church has been branded as part of the establishment. It is seen as the stronghold of conservatism, rigid, frozen, fossilized, formalized. Altho some of these conditions do prevail in a number of areas, yet the dissolution of the whole structure is not the answer.

I myself grew up in a church in Vienna 60 years ago, which was even then an underground church, meeting furtively in fear of police action. Am I to go back to these primitive conditions which I have overcome? Or, shall we have an underground church for the young people and an above ground lovely sanctuary for the mature?

I believe a study of the history of the Christian church would help the young people to a clearer understanding. They would learn that "alles ist schon da gewesen," meaning, "everything has occurred before."

Individual worship has existed since Cain and Abel brought their sacrifices to Jehovah. Did not Jesus go up the mountain alone to pray there?

Temples were built and torn down in order to be built again to the glory of God, because man craves to express his worship of God in edifices and sanctuaries, in a special place set aside for this very purpose.

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Study groups existed in prophetic times nearly 3000 years ago, when whole schools of prophets existed in Israel. And who dare say that the Essenes in Qumram did not practice meditation? Retreats took place in monasteries, and hermits surely claimed their way of isolation to be the only religious way of life. All these varieties of expressions of faith have existed side by side from time to time.

To predict, therefore, the disappearance of sanctuaries, churches, congregations, and worship by them, is to ignore the testimony of history and the essentials of human nature.

I have worshipped in almost any conceivable way, from solitarily kneeling in a rainstorm on a small island in an Alpine Lake, to joining the heavenstorming "gloria" of Mozart's Coronation Mass in the Salzburg Dome. Swedenborgians in Berkeley worshipped for years in a private home until they felt impelled to erect a sanctuary at great labor and sacrifice. The San Francisco Swedenborgian church also began in private homes and small rented rooms. What is so new about worshipping in all sorts of places within and without buildings?

Why dogmatize that there will be, in the near future, "only small groups coming together one evening a week, and then may be entirely led by laymen." See ANCL Journal referred to above.

Why wait for the future, they can and actually do that now in various places, like the FRIENDS and CHRISTIAN SCIENCE followers and others that are led by lay people. Why say that many of our church buildings may be gone within thirty years? Whereto?

All this does not seem to me to portend the future of the church. I rather rely on the Word of the Lord when it comes to the prediction of our future. "Blessed art thou, Simon bar-Jonah

You did not learn this from mortal man!

It was revealed to you from my heavenly Father.

You are Peter, the Rock!

On this rock I will build my church
And the forces of death shall never
n e v e r o v e r p o w e r i t."

This is my prediction for the future of the Christian church who believes in what Peter believed in: that JESUS CHRIST WAS GOD IN HUMAN FORM.

Othmar Tobisch

To the Editor:

May I respond briefly to the recent letter of my good friend Othmar Tobisch, regarding the November issue of the A.N.C.L. JOURNAL, which was prepared by the Kitchener League.

First, let me say that I wholeheartedly agree with a number of the observations raised in the letter, and I believe that the young authors involved would be quite willing to revise some of the wordings contained in their articles. They knew what they wanted to say, but as is the case with many of us, whether we be 17 or 77, we sometimes use words loosely.

It seems to me far more important to reach beyond the literal words and try to understand what these young people are saying. I hear them voicing a certain disenchantment with many of the trappings of organized religion . . . they are saying that they want a different style of religious life than that of their parents and grandparents . . . they want to confront the spiritual issues within and around them in their own way. And whether we agree or disagree with their outlook on life is quite beside the point; this is the way they are going to have it.

Thus, as the host pastor, I did not feel compelled to "blue-pencil" the November issue of the League Journal. I realized that some of the statements were not closely reasoned, and that others would raise eyebrows! But as I understand it, the League Journal is published by and principally intended for the young people of the Church, and I felt that they would understand the spirit of the articles in question. And this is the important thing.

Rev. Tobisch goes on to say, in reference to my own article in this same Journal: "Why dogmatize that there will be, in the near future, "only small groups coming together one evening a week, and then may be entirely led by laymen." Inasmuch as this sentence was taken out of context and ab-

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breviated, I would suggest that anyone who might be interested read the entire article and obtain an over-all view of what I was trying to say. There is not one dogmatic statement in the entire article; I do not see how anyone can be dogmatic about the unknown future. I cautiously observed that this is one direction the future church might take, among many others, including traditional worship services in public houses of worship. Why is it *that* we so often seem to fall into the pitfall of an "either-or" dilemma? Is there not room for a wide diversity of responses to the one truth that binds us all together—that Jesus Christ was God in human form!

Paul Zacharias

THE NOT-SO NEW

In your response, you mentioned a few key words, such as, "60 years ago . . ." *Then* you had underground churches. *Now* you want "a lovely sanctuary for the mature." I would interpret this as a plea from an aging citizen for somewhere he could find refuge from the supposedly harsh and rushing world.

As you say, "Alles ist shon da gewesen." Study groups may have existed nearly 3000 years ago, but I and young people like me are not interested in the past which is unchangeable. I will again predict that there will be, in the near future, "only small groups coming together one evening a week and they may be led entirely by laymen."

This is what is needed right now. If the Church is satisfying anyone, it is only because it is acting as a sanctuary to shield those who cannot face the pace of life today.

You say, "Why wait for the future?" and give examples of various churches which use lay-led discussions. Why have we not changed our church to meet the demands of today? We are the youth, the decision-makers of tomorrow—why don't you help us? We want challenge, not security. If the Church is to survive with any influence over the lives of people it should endeavor to become a "proving-ground," not a sanctuary. The real sanctuary of any person is "within." It is *not* a building, a book, a pipe organ, a stained-glass window or any one person outside. Ministers have no monopoly on God.

Our church seems to be geared to the older generations. If it accomplishes anything it only gives the older people a (false) sense of security . . . that of a heavenly rest. This is apparently won by memorizing Scripture, quoting doctrine of Swedenborg, giving money, singing dull hymns and attending regular services. Does the church tend to avoid real life situations?

This idea is best stated in the Nietzsche philosophy: "Rejection of religion was based on the belief that religion leads man's thoughts away from this world and into the next, thus making him less capable of coping with earthly life; it teaches man how to die but not how to live."

Can the church not relate to the living? Or is it because we young people are not the wage-earners, that it caters to those people from whom it receives its financial backing; the well-established senior citizen?

One might think that Rev. Tobisch, who was himself a dissenting youth many years ago, would appreciate the dissatisfaction expressed by youth today. He, of all people, should know that new concepts and creative thinking do not stem from those who accept dogma. Unconvinced, however, we still respect his point of view.

Gretchen Schneider

To the Editor:

I am replying to the letter that was sent to me from Rev. Tobisch.

What I meant by "the church in the true sense of the word" is the dictionary meaning, "a building for public worship."

I would like to make clear what I mean when I state that the Church will not exist in the future. This is partly false as we will still have the Church as a building in the future because the Church is slowly becoming a status symbol which society will always want to retain for security. The Church has been in the world for years and I think that people are pulling more and more away from the Church and seeking to worship where they please and whenever they please.

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CAMP BLAIRHAVEN

The government and operation of Blairhaven has been given into the hands of a committee whose responsibility it is to oversee the operation of Camp Blairhaven for children, finding a director and staff, and planning the program.

The usual two two-week sessions are planned for this year, starting Sunday, June 29th and ending Saturday, July 26th. As in the past, the first session is for children 9 to 12 years of age, and the second for children 12 to 16 years old. Applications for campers will be ready soon and available from your minister or from this office.

Please write to: Blairhaven Committee
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New Church families wishing to use Blairhaven for a week's vacation should place their reservations as soon as possible. Camp facilities are available after the close of the children's camp session.

The Committee will be glad to receive inquiries from people interested in staff personnel positions.

URBANA COLLEGE

Dr. Ronald D. Jones, President of Urbana College since 1965, has resigned with the intention of returning to teaching. A selection committee made up of members of the Board of Trustees, along with a faculty representative, is presently interviewing prospective candidates for the presidency. It is expected that the new president will be named within the next few weeks.

Under the administration of Dr. Jones, Urbana College has made tremendous progress. The student enrollment has more than quadrupled. The college has become a four-year institution. A beautiful new library has been built through the generous support of church members. Nearly \$400,000 has been pledged for the building of a new college community center. Air conditioned dormitories have come into being almost overnight.

Although these accomplishments seem miraculous, President Jones urges us to look toward the future. In a letter to the faculty and administration, he wrote: "In order to preserve the growth and achievements you and your colleagues have worked so hard to bring to pass, it is essential that we continue to focus on the future and remain united and dedicated to what Urbana College is yet to become. I feel that we are at the threshold of an era of growth and enrichment which will cause the accomplishments of the past few years to appear much less significant."

The first four year degrees will be granted in June, with more than one-half the class eligible for elementary and secondary level teaching certificates, having completed a program approved by the State Board of Education. It is anticipated that by 1975 the enrollment will be over 1100 and that the college will have gained accreditation status.

The church can be justly proud of its sponsorship and continued support of Urbana College. The memorial library was made possible through our contributions. Scholarships for our young people have been established, and the church has pledged \$15,000 a year toward the general expenses of the college.

Church support has not been limited to money, important as that is. Three members of the church, all with doctorates, have joined the college faculty.

They are Dr. Dorothea Harvey, chairman of the Department of Philosophy and Religion, Dr. John Peters, and the Reverend Dr. Horand Gutfeldt. Philip Alden from the Philadelphia Church serves as chairman of the Board of Trustees, and Wickham Skinner of Weston, Mass., is treasurer. Other church representatives on the Board of Trustees include Carolyn Blackmer, William E. Boker, Edwin G. Capon, Benjamin R. Frost, David P. Johnson, Wilfred C. Locke, Earl P. Marshall, Ernest O. Martin, Earl Richard Parker, and Stewart E. Poole.

Roger Dean Paulson, stalwart layman from the St. Paul Church, renders yeoman service as business manager of the college, and a growing number of our young people are enrolling as students.

During the last few years the college facilities have been made available for a number of church gatherings. In 1966 our annual church convention was held on the college campus. Last August ministers and laymen met at the college for a conference on the future of the church. In September churches from the Great Lakes region sponsored an inspirational gathering at the college.

We trust that in the coming years the policy of close church-college cooperation, emphasized so strongly by Ronald Jones, will be continued and strengthened.

Ernest O. Martin

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THE THREE NEW CHURCH LIVES OF E.J.E. SCHRECK

by Richard R. Gladish

The Rev. E.J.E. Schreck served in three bodies of the New Church in succession — The Academy, The General Convention, and the General Conference. In the Academy, where he had received his higher education, he became a top administrator before becoming almost an outcast in the troubled days of Bishop W.H. Benade's decline, a year before the Academy's reorganization and removal to Bryn Athyn in 1897. In the Convention, he served as pastor in Detroit, Chicago, and other places, founded the Convention Summer School at Almont, and promoted New Church education wherever he went. In the British Conference, Schreck served as pastor in Glasgow and Birmingham, and as chaplain to the New Church College. He also served as President of Conference in 1925 and president of the New Church College in 1928. He died beloved of his Conference associates and parishioners, and admired by General Church people who knew him in his latter days.

A sincere, scholarly minister, an able administrator, and a life-long promoter of New Church education both from the pulpit and among the young in school room and summer camps, he lived a troubled life, and he was long finding a place among the bodies of the New Church. But find it he did, and those who knew him in his later years describe him in terms of affection and homage with which one might portray a regenerating man, if not a saint.

ACADEMY CAREER

Eugene's mother wanted her son to be a minister, but his father favored the law. Following graduation from Hoboken Academy, Eugene was placed with a law firm, eventually working his way into a position as a secretary and office manager in a small New York business firm. Through his mother's influence, he began to study Hebrew, Greek, and Latin under Dr. Leonard Tafel in New York, rising at 4:30 a.m. to get in an hour or so of study before going to the office. After a year or two of this, Schreck and two other students went with Dr. Tafel to Philadelphia in October, 1877, where they

all joined the new theological school and college of the Academy on Cherry Street. Dr. Tafel and his son Louis H. Tafel were important members of the faculty. Schreck received the bachelor of arts degree in 1881, and the bachelor of theology degree in 1883. Upon graduation and ordination as a minister of Convention (The Academy was at this time still within Convention), Schreck removed to Allentown, Pa., where he ministered to the society there, and to a circle meeting in nearby Bethlehem.

In 1884 Schreck married Miss Frances M. Aitken of Philadelphia. In the autumn of that year he was appointed to the staff of the Academy Boys' School in Philadelphia, continuing weekend pastoral work. He was ordained into the second degree of the ministry in 1886 and made headmaster of the Boys' School.

Schreck was always interested in books and libraries. In Europe in 1889 and 1890, he caused a leaflet to be printed and circulated seeking information regarding Swedenborg's missing manuscripts, particularly that of the original work on Conjugal Love. Considerable interest was aroused and Schreck received responses from many large libraries and publishing houses. Not only were a number of Swedenborg manuscripts thus brought to light, but also fruitful and continuing contacts with various libraries were established.

Along with the rest of the Academy group, Schreck resigned from Convention in 1890, the occasion being Benade's removal of the Rev. Louis H. Tafel from his Cherry Street church pastorate, and Convention's censure of Benade's consecration of the Rev. William F. Pendleton as bishop. It seems fair to say that these were surface signs of more deep-seated differences between the older body and its offspring. In 1893, having been awarded the Academy's honorary degree as master of arts, Schreck was appointed Dean of the Faculty of the Academy Schools.

In any event, Schreck's power in the Academy had vanished (as a result of a series of unfortunate experiences). Benade reported that his services were no longer desirable to the principals of the several departments after the spring term of 1896, and wrote to the Rev. R.J. Tilson in London that Schreck "had been assuming unwarranted authority and had introduced disorders into the School." Even a year later, after Benade had been deposed by mass resignation and some one suggested that

Schreck be invited to the first assembly of the newly-organized General Church in Bryn Athyn, the suggestion was not supported.

This must have been a bitter period for Schreck, rejected both by his former students and associates and the father-figure of Benade. Even the gentle, firm W.F. Pendleton failed to come to his rescue. Writing that fall to Tilson, Benade's English confidant, Schreck mentioned "the condemning and unjust criticism" of the ministers, and added, "I am sick of the spirit of envy . . . and prefer isolation to that." Evidently the uprising in the Alumni Association still rankled. Twelve years later he had arrived at a juster estimate. Discussing the question of whether the Writings, being a revelation, should, as the Academy felt, be called the Lord's Word, he suggested that insistence on such terms might do more harm than good "as a deterrent to otherwise friendly disposed people." To Charles G. Merrell of Ohio he wrote in 1909: "I believe in standing up for my convictions. But I also believe in being considerate of the states of others, and leading them . . . I really believe that it is here that we meet the real test of Newchurchmanship . . . I find it the very hardest task in my life."

In this same letter Schreck remarked on the necessity of being considerate of others even when they are not considerate of us. These were not the words of a martinet. Mr. Schreck at thirty-seven started to make a new life with Convention. First he must eat crow by re-applying for admission, having resigned in 1890.

SERVICE IN CONVENTION

In 1896 Schreck removed to Detroit, and busied himself in reviving the Toledo society, where he taught and conducted Sunday school. He was soon invited by the Detroit society to preach for them. In 1897 he was re-admitted to the General Convention and also became president of the Michigan Association. In addition to his labors for the Detroit and Toledo societies he visited isolated New Churchmen and circles throughout the state of Michigan. In 1901 Schreck accepted a call to Chicago, but continued for several years to spend his summers at Almont, Michigan.

In 1900 he began a summer school in Almont which continues there each summer to this day. Almont, about 30 miles north of Detroit, is in an

area settled by immigrants from Paisley, Scotland. An old New Church woman, "Grandma Allen," grieving because the young people were receiving no religious instruction, evidently inspired Mr. Schreck, visiting the area on summer holiday, to do something about it. Starting in tents with meals in common, about a country church building, a week-long session launched it in 1900. By the second year, a desire for a permanent camp caused a house to be added for dormitory purposes. Although Schreck threw himself into his work in Convention with enthusiasm and no little success, there is evidence that the change was not easy. Some parishioners were suspicious of a man fresh from the Academy.

Among the most suspicious must have been old Colonel Rudolph Williams, who wrote to Convention's General Council urging that Schreck be dropped from the ministry. The immediate occasion of Col. Williams' ire was that Schreck had, at the 89th Convention (1909) attempted to block passage of the so-called Brockton Declaration by moving to lay it on the table. Although ten other Convention delegates joined in this motion, including leaders such as Rev. John Faulkner Potts of Concordance fame, Rev. Louis H. Tafel, scholarly teacher of the early Academy, and Rev. Frank Sewall, former president of Urbana College, a wave of feeling caused 84 to vote the other way. The vote came in a period of disturbance just a week before the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania reversed the decision of the lower court in the Kramph Will Case with this dictum: "While there are writings of Emanuel Swedenborg which may be susceptible of a construction which would make them obnoxious to certain of our common standards of morality, yet it does not appear that such writings constitute any part of the religious doctrines of the New Jerusalem Church, at least not with that interpretation put upon them which would make them offend."

SERVICE IN THE BRITISH CONFERENCE

In 1910 Schreck attended the International Swedenborg Congress in London, and at its close, went to study Swedenborg's manuscript of *Arcana Coelestia* in Stockholm. Having become acquainted with the Woodlands Road Society in Glasgow, he accepted an invitation to pay a year's ministerial visit there in 1912, leaving his pastoral work in Chicago at that time.

From 1914 to 1929, Schreck served as pastor of the Wretham Road Society, Birmingham, relinquishing the post at the age of seventy. It was also during this period that he served Conference as its president (1925) and also as president of the New Church College, Conference theological school (1928). Ever alert to opportunities to promote education with the young, Schreck also during this period began the practice of holding summer camps and training sessions at the mansion house and grounds known as Purley Chase. This property was later given to Conference for such purposes by Thomas Slack in memory of Mr. Schreck. The property is in frequent use, as the pages of the *New-Church Herald*, Conference organ, make clear.

Older members of the Wretham Road Church in Birmingham recall with affection to this day the ministrations of kindly Pastor Schreck. One parishioner remembers "his wonderful way with children, explaining most difficult doctrine in a simple way; his forty-minute (or longer) sermons, so fascinating they seemed like ten minutes or so; the wonderful atmosphere of his doctrinal classes, especially at his home, so that one came out of them as out of a trance—we remarked 'like being in heaven for a while'—his celestial sphere; the trouble he took to get apparatus—a scale model of the Tabernacle, set up with a paper tent for each 1000 men in tribes."

CONCLUDING YEARS

Not only a forceful preacher, but a man of forceful personality and character was Mr. Schreck in his American Convention days, as Rev. William F. Wunsch, his one-time Convention associate points out. "While he made many strong friends, as always happens (with a strong personality), he made some determined enemies." John Pitcairn, industrialist and early Academy supporter, wrote Rev. R. J. Tilson of London some four years after Schreck left the Academy that in his opinion Bishop Benade had not done Schreck justice in making him unwelcome, but that Schreck possessed "a natural disposition to domineer which had estranged all the younger priests." Moreover, Pitcairn implied that this characteristic had also been remarked aforetime by his correspondent, Mr. Tilson.

In a revealing letter of 1909, Schreck remarked on the "condemnatory and prejudiced attitude of the spokesmen of the Academy" and added, "I shared

that spirit at one time. I think the Lord led to the breaking of Academy ties, principally to get me out of it. We cannot teach people by dealing the truth to them in blows. Perhaps I have a natural tendency to do this very thing, and therefore I needed the terrible trials I have had to undergo."

Sometimes in the years immediately following the writing of this letter Schreck must have had sore need for the faith it expressed, as he was hounded for his former association with the Academy and subjected to an official investigation of his beliefs by Convention.

The refining fire must have done its work. When Miss Margit Boyesen in 1927, just out of her Swedish high school, went to stay with the Schrecks in Birmingham for a year while she practiced English and music, she found him the kindest and best man she had ever known. During a year's stay, in which she heard him speak to many persons on many matters, including vexing problems of the society, she never heard him say an unkind word about anyone, including Academy or General Church people. Although his heart was ailing, he was constantly busy, rising early and retiring very late, attending most conscientiously to all duties. He visited everyone who was sick; he also visited everyone out of work in his society and spent time trying to find them jobs. He preached both morning and evening, and held Sunday school and an afternoon doctrinal class every Sunday. He supervised the New Church College and visited London at intervals during the week. Schreck once confided to Miss Boyesen that in his youth he had had a very hot temper, his besetting sin. However, she found this hard to believe, so sweet, so mature, so judicious had he become in all the relationships of life.

He built up, wherever he ministered, a strong and sincere love for the main doctrines of the New Church. And wherever he went he founded libraries, being ever the scholar in his use of original editions, doing much translating from manuscript. A man of very great courage, yet he was a diplomat. He *won*, wherever he went, the hard core opponents to genuine teachings. He received more persecution, Mrs. Diem stated, than anyone she has known personally. He was patient to a high degree, full of forbearance toward those who would injure him, and ready to soothe the bitter feelings which sometimes arose in his wife on such occasions. He aroused in people of his congregation, Mrs. Diem

observed, men as well as women—an unusually strong personal loyalty and love.

The same source also notes that her uncle Eugene once held a series of public debates with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle concerning the nature of spirits. Mr. Schreck, she notes, believed in haunted houses and had worked out a New Church service designed to exorcise spirits.

Perhaps we can see in the life of E.J.E. Schreck more than just one person who served three different bodies of the New Church in succession. Perhaps in him we have a viable example for our times, of one who managed, despite harsh personal attacks and great suffering, to see that he was really placed on earth to serve the Lord in His Second Coming, and that it is possible to serve that great use in more than one way, and in more than one organization.

This biographical sketch is made up of excerpts from a longer article prepared by Mr. Richard R. Gladish of the General Church in Bryn Athyn. The complete article is being published in the April-June issue of the New Church Magazine by the British Conference and in the April or May issue of New Church Life, published by the General Church. In his long and illustrious career the Rev. E.J.E. Schreck faithfully served three branches of the Swedenborgian Church, and we are happy to join in this tribute to him.

SSR SECRETARY DIES AFTER FIRE

Mrs. Margaret Toman, secretary of the Swedenborgian School of Religion for over ten years, died March 25 as a result of burns on over ninety percent of her body after her clothing caught fire in an accident. Well known to all who have attended classes or committee meetings at the school over the past decade, Mrs. Toman was a special friend of the students, for whom she served as a kind of mother-away-from-home.

NEW STUDENT AT SSR

Dr. Peter Francuch, a clinical psychologist from Czechoslovakia, was admitted last month as a student at the Swedenborg School of Religion, doing his initial work at the Field Education Center in Bellevue, Washington. His brother, Dr. Ivan Franklin (now that he has Americanized his name), whose admission to SSR was reported in an earlier *Messenger*, will complete his work in May, coming to the school's Newton Campus in June.

"THY KINGDOM COME, THY WILL BE DONE"

When someone asks you in what respects your church is different from other churches, do you ever reply that for one thing, we have an appreciation of the Lord's Prayer that others cannot attain? You believe that, don't you?

To many, praying, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done," brings a sense of humiliation. We experience this. But the prayer is more than that; it is a prayer for daily guidance and help.

Let us preface the further remarks by recalling that although we refer to the Lord as The Almighty, we realize that he does not violate anyone's free will. That is the reason that life here is a life of conflict; it is what all of us make it.

There are many dual expressions in the Word which many accept as a mere repetition, but Swedenborg teaches that one relates to the mind, and the other to the heart. One such expression is "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done." "Kingdom" refers to the mind; "will" refers to the heart.

We ask that His kingdom come and His will be done "on earth as it is in heaven." We wonder what this may mean to those of other beliefs. We have a very definite belief concerning heaven, that all there cooperate in performing uses. Thus, the Lord's Prayer becomes a prayer for help and guidance. We ask the Lord that with His help our entire thought and planning, our entire thinking be the thought of a useful life; we ask that our doing and willing constitute a useful life. Of course, no human leads a perfect life, but it can be our goal and we daily recite the prayer and have it in mind as we go about our daily living.

We do not ask that we accomplish this of ourselves. In the next breath, we recognize that only with His help can we begin such a life: "Give us this day our daily bread." We recognize the continual struggle, the continual striving, but we recognize that it is the life that leads to heaven—the accomplishment of the Lord's purpose in bringing us into this world.

Gordon C. Mack

LETTERS TO EDITOR cont'd. from p. 50

of help to either an enquiring stranger or a confused Swedenborgian.

The story of Genesis is often chosen by atheists as an example of unscientific nonsense. Bright young students are influenced, often regretfully, by this criticism. Might it not be a simple stepping stone to correspondence to ask of them in what sort of garden they might expect a Tree of Knowledge to grow?

Yes, we have to prove our religion by our way of life, but we are not celestial people as were the most ancients. We, first, must learn truth, then bend our wills to obey it, trying prayerfully to at last reach the goal of responding from unselfish love in all our thoughts and deeds. Why then should we neglect the appeal to the intellect that is found in the writings of Swedenborg?

I felt impelled to express my thoughts.

Zelma Evans

GENERATION GAP cont'd. from p. 55

I can see little benefit in studying the history of the Christian Church as many people would find it boring. I agree that Christians are feeling closer together and this is why I think that some day a universal Church will exist.

Man does not have to express his worship of God by building beautiful Churches which sit unoccupied for the greater part of the week. It would be much more beneficial if man would give his money to the poor or else worthy organizations where it would be constantly in use. Through this, man would show just how much he loved God.

Sure people do get together for individual worship and prayer meetings and still go to Church but wait a little longer and one will see less and less people attending Church. Just because we don't attend Church doesn't say that we aren't Christians for those who don't attend are sometimes much better Christians than those who do attend.

We all are free to do and think whatever we want and therefore should not have to conform to what existed for centuries before us, just because we feel it is our duty. "Conformity is one of the world's worst problems that keeps it from being a worthwhile place to live on."

Ruth Ahrens

1969 CONVENTION

**HARVEY MUDD COLLEGE
CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA**

Schedule of Events:

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| July 22-25 | Institute for ministers and wives on theme of "Marriage Counseling" |
| July 29-30 | Council of Ministers' sessions |
| July 30-Aug 3 | American New-Church League |
| July 31 | National Alliance of New-Church Women |
| July 31 | General Council |
| Aug 1-2 | Convention business sessions and program |
| Aug 3 | Convention worship service |
| Aug 4 | Outing at Disneyland |

Other Highlights:

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| July 31 at 8 P.M. | Mexican Theater and Fiesta at the Padua Hills Theater |
| Aug 1 1:30-4:30 P.M. | Discussion on Convention theme |
| Aug 1 at 7:30 P.M. | League Laugh-In and Folk singing |
| Aug 2 at 5:30 P.M. | Buffet supper at the Wayfarers' Chapel and presentation of "Family Portrait," a three-act play at the Wayfarers' Chapel Amphitheater |
| Aug 3 at 3 P.M. | Tea and reception at the Riverside Church |

* * * *

See the May issue of *The Messenger* for the complete program and schedule of activities.

REGISTRATION FORMS

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1. I expect to arrive for Convention on July _____ at _____ m
2. I am coming by private auto _____ bus _____ train _____ or plane _____
3. I will need transportation to Harvey Mudd College from Claremont Bus Station _____ Pomona Santa Fe Station _____ Ontario Int'l Airport _____
4. Names of members of my party are:
 Myself _____
 My wife _____
 Others _____ Sex _____ Age if under 21 _____

5. These people need rooms from _____ to _____
6. Circle preferences: single/double; upstairs/downstairs (no elevators).

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1. Name _____
2. Address _____
3. City _____ State _____ Zip _____
4. _____ I will participate in the ANCL program.
5. _____ I am 13-20 but do not desire to participate in the ANCL program.
6. _____ I will be responsible to: parents _____ Convention guardian _____
7. _____ Young marrieds: My wife and I wish to be housed with the young marrieds. (one spouse 30 or under).
8. _____ Single - 21 or over will be housed with adults.
9. _____ I plan to attend Disneyland on Monday, August 4th. (Group rate is a possibility.)

SIGNATURES: (both required) Leaguer _____
 Parent/Guardian who will be at Convention _____

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Please indicate needs for tickets & bus:

Tickets

Bus

1. For Padua Hills Theater on Thursday evening at \$2.25 each
2. Wayfarers' Chapel on Saturday ---
 Vesper, Banquet and 3-act Drama
 \$3.50 per adult
 \$3.00 for those under 12
3. Disneyland on Monday, August 4th

Registration forms must be received before
 July 1st so plans can be completed. Please
 mail them to:

Mrs. Alice Van Boven
 446 Chestnut Avenue
 Redlands, California 92373

THE MESSENGER

APRIL 1969

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