

The
**NEW-CHURCH
MESSENGER**

September 5, 1953

The Shining Face

Antony Regamey

A Sign Of The Times

Newspaper Report

His Thirst On The Cross

Leon C. Le Van

Our Church's Message, Work

Committee Report

The Foundation's New Program

A Century's Culmination

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PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

EDITORIALS:

We Labor With God	293
Star Spangled Banner	293

ARTICLES:

The Shining Face.....	291
A. REGAMEY	
Why Did Jesus Thirst?	294
L. C. LE VAN	
Answer To Vital Question	298
G. MACK	

FEATURES:

Church Calendar	295
Foundation's Plans	297
Our Church's Message	299
Almont Summer School	300
Letters To The Editor	301
Search The Scriptures	302
Book Review	302
Swedenborg Student	303
Children's Corner	304

Marriages	304
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whereby is revealed the way.

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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.

HIS SHINING FACE: MOSES CAME DOWN WITH POWER FROM ON HIGH

by Antony Regamey

And when he came down from the mount, Moses wist not that the skin of his face shone. . . .

IT IS said that when da Vinci had nearly completed his great painting of The Last Supper a friend came to see it.

At once the visitor began to admire and praise the delicate perfection and the brilliance of the silver chalice, near the center of the picture.

He had not finished speaking, however, when the artist took his brush and painted out the Cup. He felt that he had failed, as long as any detail in his composition drew attention away from the central figure.

Time and dampness have now damaged this wonderful work of art beyond recall. An original sketch of the face of our Savior still exists, revealing what haunting beauty, what tender grace and gallant sadness da Vinci saw in His countenance.

Yet, what painter has ever been able to represent the Lord in a manner wholly satisfactory to himself and to men, for all time?

Indeed, is it not for this reason that, through the centuries, painters have placed an aureole of light about the Master's head; or, even more formally, a circle, a halo; as they have done also above the heads of the saints?

That halo is, virtually, a confession of failure. It tells us that, despite their best efforts, most painters felt that they could not include in their portraits all that ought to be there. It stands for an inner radiance which refuses to submit to paint brush and pigment.

But that radiance is very real, for all that. The spirit always shines through the face and breaks through. There is a sphere, an aura, about everyone which all who are sensitive enough can perceive even if its meaning cannot always be set down on canvas.

Neither can it be put easily into words. One of the earliest notices of it in the Bible is in the story behind our text, sometimes called, "The Transfiguration of Moses." There we are told in rather quaint fashion that when Moses "came down from the mount" he was not aware that "the skin of his face was shining."

Moses had spent forty days on Sinai where for the second time God had directed him to write his basic laws for human life on tablets of stone. In the course of that experience he had desired to see God. Though this had not been possible, still, hidden in the cleft of a rock, he had felt "the glory of the Lord passing by" and sensed his near presence.

At the same time, as if it were a translation of what he was given to perceive, he heard a voice, proclaiming, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering and abundant in goodness

and truth; keeping mercy for thousands; forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin . . . and that will by no means clear the guilty."

No matter how legendary in detail this may be; no matter how dramatized and glamorized in the ancient records, we have no reason to believe that behind the story there was not a genuine spiritual experience.

Moreover, if divine glory is not a physical substance which, like a phosphorescent spray could leave behind itself a coating on the skin of a man, neither are the outward effects the sensing of it may induce on one's facial appearance, unknown to us even at this day.

No one to whom God is real; no one who deeply feels his presence within, and lives by it, is able to hide it from his fellow-men altogether. Just as there is a glow that lingers in the heart of a lover who thinks of his beloved, so joy, peace, serenity, kindness and understanding can also be seen on the countenance of those who live in communion with the Lord.

This, then, is the fundamental fact behind our text. As Moses returned to the camp, empowered by his experience on the craggy, forbidding summit of Horeb, the people seemed to see gleams of unwonted light about his face. What they probably did not know was that this light came from within. Even so, that holy splendor was so strong that, as the story goes, they were too awed to approach him.

Moses, therefore, "put a veil on his face." When he communed with God, "he took the veil off." But when talking to the people on God's behalf, he "put it on again." Does this not suggest that it is a part of our experience that while we live in this world the glory of the divine, and that of life's abiding realities, are hidden from us, and as it were "behind a veil"?

Yet, the saddest tragedy that can happen to anyone is to lose one's sense of God, and of those eternal values which alone make life glorious. Than this, nothing is sadder, except perhaps not to sense one's own need of God in the first place. For, what is life but darkness to those who will not trust beyond the witness of their senses, or that of their physical knowledge of nature?

"I counsel thee to buy eye salve to anoint thine eyes that thou mayest see," said our glorified Lord to those of Laodicea (*Rev. 3*). They thought that they were rich and in need of nothing, and did not know they were "wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked." "Open the eyes of the young man, that he may see," prayed Elisha to the Lord. And the eyes of his servant were opened, and he beheld the mountain "full of horses and chariots round about them."

He knew that they were not alone; that, they who

were with them were more than they who were against them. Are we not citizens of two worlds? Are we not born to transcend ourselves? Beyond all that is visible, are we not able to perceive forces and a presence still more deeply interfused?

John, in *Revelation*, saw "an angel standing in the sun." Do you see a halo on the world of nature? Are a mountain, a tree, or even the humblest flower to you, nothing more? Behind the daily loaf of bread for which you do not trouble to give thanks, do you sometimes visualize the flour and grain, the sun and rain, the labor and faith of the farmer and the heavenly Father's love and care? Do you sing with Mrs. Browning, "Earth's crammed with heaven and every common bush afire with God"?

Do you see a halo on that other revelation of God, His holy Word? Or, as Moses, whose very name is given to an essential part of it, is it veiled before you? So that in it you perceive no deeper meaning, nothing that might not be found in a purely human book?

Yet, what treasures beyond all dreams, what glories unspeakable are contained in it for those who, with the Psalmist, have learned to pray, "Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law!" What comfort when in trouble and sorrow; what enlightenment when in darkness, or doubt, or temptation; what hope, what trust in the realities that abide, what inner peace, when life's very foundations seem to crumble; what strength in the companionship of the unseen and in being able to lean on the loving support of the Lord's everlasting arms!

Do you see a halo on your employment, on the everyday routine of your daily task? Is it a mere hand-to-mouth existence to slave for, or is it suffused with the vision of service to your fellowmen, the joy of thus bringing greater comfort and happiness to others, and of expressing as fully as can be the skills and talents which are yours, and the love of God and from God which fills your heart and life?

Do you see a halo on your human relationships, on your family, on your friendships, on your community, enlarging hence till it takes in all humanity? Even on those of your fellow-men who may seem most unlovely and unloveable? Do you see the angel in them, beyond what they appear to be, even as Michael Angelo saw an angel in a rough block of marble and set forth to the task of liberating him? Do you try to love men as God Himself loves them, not only for what they are, but for what they may become?

Do you see the halo on yourself? The angel in your own better nature? Do you feel the divine spark of God's presence and love, deep down in your own heart, struggling to kindle your whole being into a living flame? To fashion your character as it is meant to become? The image and likeness of the God-Man, the Lord, our Savior, Jesus Christ?

These heavenly possibilities, even to us who know of them, are "veiled," indeed, most of the time. We stand in awe of them, so firmly and blindly do we allow ourselves to be engrossed in the cares of the body and of the senses, and the demands and entanglements of our secular pursuits.

Yet, all this, to what end? What is the meaning of it all and the purpose of our life? Are we not called to become our own Moses, every one? Should not our leading motive be to learn, under the guidance of the Lord, the laws of the true life? That, delivered from slavery to our lower nature, we may be led to our "land of promise"?

Is not the radiance of that life—a face from which the glory of the Lord, the "abundant goodness and truth" of our "long suffering, merciful and gracious" Savior are shining—the goal to which we should move, and that which should result from our cultivation of his presence?

If we have made a beginning of all this; if, in our struggle, we have been given strength to overcome, enlightenment to see our way and love to share, then we should have no difficulty in seeing the halo on Jesus.

As we recall His Transfiguration, just as His followers saw Him in the light and glory of His divine humanity; just as they saw, on the mount, the divine which dwelt in Him shining forth from His countenance, so we know that in Him God found at last His way to us.

We know it because we already live by the experience that His is the power to change and transform and transfigure our nature. As it was in the case of Moses, we know too that, now as we turn to Him, the veil has been lifted and we can talk with Him "face to face and as a friend to his friend."

Mindful of our limitations and sinfulness, still we can worship Him as a God personal, warm, close, and friendly, Who because of His kinship with us understands us and is sensitive to our needs. "We beheld his glory." Like da Vinci and his painting, therefore, we cannot allow any detail to draw away our attention from Him as the central figure of our life.

And as we go down from the mount of our high moments of life and worship, where we have felt Him very close, into the plains where our work awaits us, or the valleys of temptation, doubt, discouragement or even despair, we carry with us, precious, the luminous experience which has been ours, of his understanding, guidance and strength.

We may keep deep in our hearts the shining glory of His forgiveness and sustaining care, and the glow of our communion with Him lingers with us all our days, sustaining us and giving us patience and courage according to our needs.

(Originally preached in the church of the Boston Society, where Mr. Regamey has been pastor since 1933.)

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We Labor With God

THE lilies of the field do not toil, neither do they spin. And yet there is a sense in which labor characterizes all life, even the lilies. Scripture represents to us creation as an act of divine toil. "And on the seventh day God ended his *work* which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his *work* which he had made." Scripture further tells us that after God had created man he put him in the Garden of Eden "to dress it and keep it." This indicates that it is an error to think that man was created for a life of indolence, and work was a curse placed upon him for his disobedience. Man received the Garden as a free gift from God but his task was to "dress it and keep it." In other words, God put man upon an earth that was capable of producing everything he needed, and at the same time he was endowed with the power to cope with the earth. Man's task was to use wisely the spiritual gifts he had from God in dealing with the material gifts which he also had from Him. In so doing he lived in harmony with his Creator and with his own true nature. As John Locke put it: "We are all the workmanship of one Maker; we are sent into the world by His order and about His business."

Work is a law of creation. Every sentient creature, even the sloth, must perform labor in one form or another. But to man alone are given, in connection with his exertions, two privileges. One is that he can indefinitely increase his powers of accomplishment. By learning to harness the forces of nature, such as steam and electricity, and by the invention of tools, he not only shifts the burden of work from his muscles to his mind, but he enlarges enormously the results of his efforts. Someone has estimated that the economic output of one man today equals that of forty men in ancient Athens. Year by year man becomes more effective in controlling the externalities of his environment.

But the real dignity of labor, for the recognition of which Labor Day was instituted, lies not in the fabulous accomplishment of work that is directed by creative intelligence. Rather it remains in the second privilege that man has, namely, that by the power of imagination he can exercise foresight. He can engage in long range planning, and he can build for ends visible only to the mind's eye. He can press toward the Promised Land, well knowing that he will never live to enter it. True, birds and bees in building their nests, and beavers in constructing dams, show possession of an apparent foresight. But it is a foresight that dwells in their nerve systems: it is not the outcome of rational thinking involving many rejections and many choices.

Man's power of foresight implies two things. First, that creation as we find it today is not a finished product. Second, that in a finite and humble measure man has the high commission of sharing with God in the task of creation. God will not write "finished" upon His work in this world until man is

ready to do so. God gave to man the ability to see and to strive for far-off goals, and to enhance beyond computation his power of accomplishment, because He wanted man to share in the task of creation. God had faith in man for He knew with what potentialities he was endowed. If man, in turn, can have faith enough in God, that is, sufficient faith to do the Lord's will as this is revealed in the Scripture, then the dignity inherent in all useful work will be written upon all man's achievements.—B. J.

The Star Spangled Banner

A FAMILIAR quotation runs to the effect: "I care not who rules the nation if I may but decide who writes its songs." This statement calls attention to the influence upon people's thinking and emotional life of the music and poems which have endeared themselves to the many. David could drive the evil spirit out of Saul with the harmony of his harp. The ancient Scandinavian sagas tell the tide of battle was sometimes turned by the poet whose stirring words infused courage into failing hearts. Some scholars say that Martin Luther did more to bring about the Reformation with his hymns than with his Ninety Five Theses, and his translation of the Bible.

The influence of the composer or the poet probably does not lie in any power to alter the feelings or thinking of people. Rather, it lies in the fact that he has captured and embodied into tangible form something that is more than a passing mood, something that is really deep-rooted in the soul of man. He conserves that something for the future, and when the words or music are rendered the soul responds.

Francis Scott Key was a prisoner on an enemy warship, and it was from this vantage that he witnessed the bombardment of an American fort. Each time the light of a rocket revealed to him that the Stars and Stripes had not been hauled down in surrender, a thrill went through his every nerve and muscle. His feelings were only those of any patriot under the same circumstances. But he put those emotions into words that soon were to be sung throughout the young American republic.

Critics differ in their evaluation of the *Star Spangled Banner* as poetry. But the average person does not inquire into literary niceties when he reads or sings verses that touch a sensitive chord in his heart.

Although born in the heat of battle (Sept. 12, 1812; published Sept. 14, 1814), the *Star Spangled Banner* is more than an exultant war cry urging the soldier to fight. And it does not, with flamboyant arrogance, sing the triumph of a nation bent on the subjugation of other people. Its spirit is more that of a prayer of thanks to a Divine Providence that has given free men the courage to stand successfully "Between their loved homes and the war's desolation."—B. J.

Why Did Jesus Thirst On The Cross?

by Leon C. Le Van

WHEN after that false judgment and cruel death march our Lord at last reached Calvary, according to *Matthew*, "They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall; and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink."

Luke records the same event in the words: "And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh; but he received it not." One translator uses the words: "wine mingled with wormwood," indicating the vile nature of the proffered drink.

These different wordings do not indicate a discrepancy in the record. In each case, it is evident they gave Jesus a drink of sour wine or vinegar mixed with some other substance; but Jesus refused to accept it.

It is here that historical research comes to our aid. Such research has established that it was customary to give criminals about to be crucified sour wine or vinegar mixed with a stupefying drug to dull the nervous system, so that the horror of the cross could be endured.

A society of good women in Jerusalem is believed to have paid for the drug. Without such a potion, death might come at once, or in any event be so cruel that even the soldiers and callous spectators could not endure it.

The custom of receiving the drug would have made it possible for Jesus to be crucified in a half-stupefied condition. Had He taken the drink offered to Him, He could have dulled the stark pain of the nails rending His hands and feet and tearing His flesh as the base of the Cross was dropped into its newly-dug hole.

But when our Lord tasted the drink, He would not take it. It was not that the foul substance was too bitter, we certainly believe. There was a deeper reason—and it is the inner meaning we seek.

Jesus, you remember, was not crucified against His will. He gave Himself to the Cross with no attempt to escape it. Long ago, He knew this was to come. He had informed His disciples. He had told it to others.

No man took His life from Him. He laid it down of Himself—because only by submitting Himself to the will of men to the uttermost could He save to the uttermost those who desired salvation.

It is for our salvation that He took upon Himself the bitterness of the Cross with senses undrugged and undulled. Our Lord's physical pain had to be complete and absolute. He would not avoid any part of it. Thus men did to God in rejecting His good and truth; and thus God did for man in seeking man's salvation.

The "wine mingled with myrrh" or "vinegar mixed with gall" would have stupefied His senses. It would have dimmed His nervous system. It would have dulled His brain. The two thieves crucified with

Jesus presumably took advantage of the stupefying drink. But our Lord rejected it instantly. He accepted the Cross. He took its mortal pain. All that it involved He took upon Himself, and He sought no escape from its bitterest pangs.

There was, however, a still deeper reason why Jesus refused the loathsome mixture. "Wine mingled with myrrh" or "vinegar mixed with wormwood" represents falsity mixed with evil. Those who are evil express ideas and opinions that conform with their states. They are not "thirsty" in the Scriptural sense. They do not desire truth. Even the idea of truth is repulsive to them. Their evils constitute their very life, and their opinions and beliefs are merely those persuasions that confirm such a life.

Such evil ideas and opinions are called "falsities of evil"; and since there is no innocence, nothing of God and heaven in such evil opinions and notions, they are necessarily rejected by the Lord. He cannot accept them. He must reject them as Jesus rejected the vile drink. "Vinegar and gall" or "vinegar and wormwood" is a fitting symbol for the "falsity of evil" hidden in an evil man's will.

God cannot, and man should not, call such evil good. Men often try to do so. Those who are wicked seek to justify their ways. The church, religion, God—anything and everything that opposes their evils they condemn; but whatever confirms them in their wrongs they call good.

Jesus rejected the sour wine mingled with gall to teach that all falsity of evil is rejected by the Lord. The only help for those in such states is to renounce their evils as sins against God and receive new life from Him.

Let us now turn to the incident at the end of the Crucifixion when Jesus was offered a drink on the Cross just before His death and accepted it. It is mid-afternoon. For six hours Jesus had hung on the Cross. The events of that tragic day are almost completed. The sun is blotted out. A strange darkness is settling on the earth. The crowd of spectators is intently watching the central Figure on the three crosses through the strange and premature twilight. Jesus hangs there silently.

As death approaches, the parched lips of the Savior move in two words: "I thirst." *John* adds: "Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar; and they filled a sponge with vinegar and put it to his mouth. When Jesus had therefore received the vinegar, he said: It is finished; and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." Here, the sponge filled with vinegar that was given to Jesus was not refused.

At His words, "I thirst" a Roman soldier ran to dip a sponge in a pot of cheap wine or vinegar which was there for the soldiers to drink during the long hot hours of their watch. The soldier pressed the sponge to the Savior's lips. Others protested. "Let alone! Let us see whether Elias will come and take him down from the cross!" But the nameless Roman fulfilled his mission, and Jesus received the vinegar or sour wine from that sponge.

In seeking the reason Jesus received the second drink but not the first, we must remember that He

was now only minutes from His death. Perhaps unconsciousness was already setting in. But our Lord was not to be conquered by death like a victim. He was to conquer death. Not with dimmed faculties, not in unconsciousness was our Savior to meet the boasted "Last Conquerer." He would confront death conscious to the last.

Thus, the drink of sour wine or vinegar probably refreshed Him, the better to keep from losing consciousness during the approaching last moments. As Jesus chose not to avoid any of the suffering of the Cross, and refused the stupefying drink at the beginning, so now He refused the sanctuary of unconsciousness at the end. He would know death in full. He chose to meet death. He experienced death He tasted death—and by so doing He conquered death and was not conquered by it.

There was no stupefying admixture in the vinegar now offered Him. It was probably the regular portion of wine of the Roman soldiers so sour that it was called vinegar, and which evidently even the Romans would not drink. To Jesus' parched lips it could bring but little relief. We think of it as the final cup of bitterness offered to our Savior. Yet Jesus accepted it in His thirst.

What is the "thirst" of the Lord Jesus Christ? It is the Lord's thirst for the salvation of the human race. The Lord "thirsts" for our salvation. We give Him offerings of pure water or pure wine when we receive His spiritual or celestial truths into our minds and hearts. We bring Him gifts of sour wine or vinegar when our lives are in errors and false beliefs.

The Lord is the pure "Fountain of Life." His truth corresponds to pure water or pure wine. As He changed water into wine, so also He changes the wine of truth into the blood of His own life. Truth is the instrumentality of good. But truth (and its consequent good) had come to such a pass with the Jews of that day that it could only be represented by vinegar mixed with gall. As already said, vinegar mixed with gall corresponds to falsity mixed with evil or "falsity of evil."

The reason the Lord rejected the vinegar mixed with gall but accepted and drank the vinegar or sour wine alone is that the Lord cannot accept evil and its falsities, but He can accept the simple falsities of ignorance that have no evil in them. The Gentiles were particularly in such a state. Their beliefs were false. But they were such falsities as actually desired to make life better.

Falsities of religious belief the Lord can accept. They are like "sour wine or vinegar" in the sponge held to the Savior's lips. They are not sweet. They are not pleasant. They are not the pure drink the Lord desires. Pure water, pure wine, is the symbol of pure truth such as that of the New Jerusalem. But the Lord Jesus Christ did accept and drink the sour wine or vinegar on the sponge held to His mouth before He died.

Falsities with innocence in them can be, and are, accepted by the Lord. People in such states (whether Christian or heathen) do not actually desire false beliefs any more than we suppose the

Roman soldiers desired the sour almost-undrinkable wine instead of sweet. Good people desire truth. The only reason they do not have truth is that they do not know where to find it, nor that truth actually exists at all. After death, if not before, they relinquish their false religious beliefs and are willing to accept genuine truths. Until such time, however, the false ideas they hold are like the sour wine or vinegar which (however unpleasant) still gave some measure of refreshment to Jesus.

That is why we in the New Jerusalem do not assail any person's sincere beliefs, however untrue, so long as they are held in innocence of heart and with good intentions. They do not come from the "pure river of water of life clear as crystal." They do not form a blessed cup of cold water offered to Jesus. But the Lord accepts them as far as may be, and will someday replace them with genuine water of truth to the extent He is permitted.

They who do not "thirst" are they who have no desire for the things of God. God-given thirst of the soul brings us to waters of life. "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." It is the Lord's blessed ones who thirst for the "Fountain of Life." The Lord gives the truths of His divine wisdom freely to all. They who are "thirsty" drink. They that do not "thirst" do not drink. Let us not fear to thirst for the things of God.

Even the Lord Jesus Christ did not hesitate to say: "I thirst." They did not give Him "pure water of life." They did not give Him the "royal wine of heaven." Sour wine they gave Him—vile vinegar they held to His lips. But because that evil-tasting liquid corresponded to the only truth available to men of that day, He accepted it from the hand of the Gentile soldier. Jesus "hungers" when we are self-filled. Jesus "thirsts" when we do not care. He "thirsts" for our salvation. It is He who calls us to the "fountain of water." It is He who gives us "water of life." Whoso drinks of earth's natural waters shall thirst again. But he who drinks of the truth that the Lord provides, it shall be in him a "well of water springing up into eternal life."

(Mr. Le Van is pastor of the Pittsburgh Society and founder of the Swedenborg public Bible School.)

Church Calendar

			Altar Cloths
September 27	Fourteenth Sunday, Holy City	Red	
October 4	Fifteenth Sunday, Holy City	"	
October 11	Sixteenth Sunday, Holy City	"	
October 18	The Holy City, 17th Sunday	"	
October 25	The Holy City, 18th Sunday	"	
November 1	The Holy City, 19th Sunday	"	
November 8	The Holy City, 20th Sunday	"	
November 15	The Holy City, 21st Sunday	"	
November 22	Thanksgiving Sunday	"	
November 29	First Sunday In Advent	Violet	
December 6	Second Sunday In Advent	"	
December 13	Third Sunday In Advent	"	
December 20	Christmas Sunday	Red	
December 24	Eve of the Nativity	"	
December 25	Christmas Day (Friday)	"	
December 27	First Sunday After Christmas	"	

A Sign Of The Times

While it is hardly to be supposed the two participants in this dialogue know anything of our teachings, nor perhaps even have heard of Swedenborg, such enlightened discussion readily indicates how well the revelator's "Nunc Licet" * is already at work in this New Age.

Skeptic: "How could a good God have created or allowed so much evil in the world?"

Believer: "God decided to give men freedom of choice. That necessarily means freedom to do the wrong thing."

That's a sample of the frank give-and-take religious discussion which was completed this week in one of the summer's most unusual series of church services.

Modeled on the dialogues of the ancient Greek philosopher, Plato, the series has produced some remarkably plain talk about ordinary doubter's "roadblocks to faith."

The pro-and-con discourses have been held Sunday nights for the past five weeks in New York's Protestant Episcopal Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

The Very Rev. Dr. James A. Pike, Dean of the Cathedral, and Rev. John M. Krumm, head of Columbia University's Department of Religion, have alternately played the roles of skeptic and believer.

Here are a few abbreviated excerpts of the questions posed by the skeptic stationed with a microphone in the congregation, and the answers given by the believer standing in the pulpit:

Skeptic: Isn't religion unscientific? Since it deals with the mysterious, isn't it becoming less important as science reveals more of the unknown?

Believer: Religion deals with the meaning of things, the "know why," science only with the "know how." Science can release atomic energy, but it can't say when it's right to use it. We may do amazing things with calculating machines, but we can't ever invent one that will answer the question—why a calculating machine?

Skeptic: Take the Virgin birth. That's something a scientifically trained person would find very difficult to accept.

Believer: For 1900 years, the image of the Virgin birth has been the most effective way to preserve from distortion the truth about the divinity and humanity of Our Lord. Men's words and explanations pass with time, but this medium of communication abides. Since in the Incarnation, God was trying to say something, maybe this was the best way to do it. That's why I believe in the Virgin birth historically.

Skeptic: But science gives us pre-

cise and definite results. Religion is so vague and personal.

Believer: True, precision comes more readily at lower levels. For example, it's easier to be precise about chemistry than psychology.

Skeptic: But does it make any real difference how people behave whether they accept this dubious hypothesis of the existence of God?

Believer: For everyone, there is something that is ultimate, basic, and that is God. For some people, their God is themselves. The real question then is—what kind of God.

Skeptic: I don't like these man-like descriptions of God. Isn't God above that?

Believer: We have to speak in some form, some analogy. We have borrowed human language, personal language. Some people speak of God as "a great force." They've borrowed language from physics. Some speak of God as "a value." That's borrowing language from economics. God is something more than human, but not something less.

Skeptic: Granting I already accept Christian ethics, I can go along living just as good a life without going to church.

Believer: You remind me of a man who was heir to a great fortune who was content to live on the inherited capital, without doing anything to replenish it.

Skeptic: I can worship God just as well on the golf course or driving through the countryside as I can in church.

Believer: It isn't really a question

of whether you can, but whether you do. In a sense, you could work at golf while in church—muse on the best shot for approaching a certain hole. But most golfers would consider that a feeble substitute for the real experience.

Skeptic: Speaking of evil, couldn't an all-powerful God have arranged it so we all do the right thing?

Believer: Yes, He could have run us like a puppeteer manipulates his manikins. But God chose freedom as the most rewarding possibility for us.

Skeptic: But what about wars, in which so many innocent people are involved entirely apart from their own wills?

Believer: Just as God decided man should be free, not an automaton, He decided man was to be social, not isolated, that he was to work out his destiny in inter-relationships with other free beings. Freedom means the possibility of hurting others. If our culture is living too fast, if we are running the human machine in ways it isn't designed to run, erratic disorders—even diseases—are not surprising.

Skeptic: I don't see that Christianity has the answer to evil.

Believer: Christianity does not have a complete explanation, but it has an answer. Christianity does not avoid tragedy in life, but it takes men beyond tragedy. It affirms that despite evil men do to themselves or others, or the pain that fortuitous circumstances bring, God still reigns and His mercies are sure.

* Freely translated: Now it is permitted to enter into the things of faith with the reason.

(A dispatch to the Associated Press by G. W. Cornell, August 7.)

FIND IT HARD TO GET TO CHURCH?

For those who find it difficult to get the family up from their foam rubber beds and through a four-course breakfast and into an eight-cylinder car in time to spend an hour in church Sundays, the following may be of especial interest as a short reading course for the reluctant ones. It is from a report sent the Board of Missions by its missionary in Berlin, the Rev. Eric L. G. Reissner:

"On Sunday next the members of the East Sector will join us again in our service, as the sectorial boarder restrictions have been lifted, as I write. As soon as the restrictions were removed some of the friends came to visit us. Three of our west members were caught in the upheaval, as it came so unexpected.

"One Sunday school teacher Miss Gertraud Joachim and her mother were

detained eight days in a camp. They had visited friends in the East Sector.

"Miss Joachim was brought eight times before the Vopo tribunal, which insisted that she was a 'western agent.' Finally they were dismissed. They had to face the wall with uplifted hands, and their meals were scanty.

"Mr. Waschke, an old member, could prove that he was under the care of a physician and was not molested."

Now the food parcels are being distributed, Mr. Reissner says. Many are snatched away by the police and sometimes beatings follow, the press reports. Some packages are sent through the minister for hungry people.

The Board notes all this is taking place in the 20th century and not in some medieval age of reputed unenlightenment.

SWEDENBORG FOUNDATION'S PLANS

AN ENTIRELY NEW step in its world-wide work of publishing and distributing Swedenborg's theological works, was taken by the Swedenborg Foundation, a few months ago when it engaged the Edward L. Wertheim Associates, of New York, public relations counsellors, to assist in its work.

The goal is to further the introduction of Swedenborg's teachings into the stream of current world thought, especially in the field of education in all departments, and this will be undertaken through all mediums, formal and popular, of reaching the educator, the student and the general public.

For some years the Foundation has cast about for a means of gaining the benefit of its more than century of publishing, advertising and distribution. Whatever impact has been made needs to be linked, it sees, to a continuing growth of interest in Swedenborg, and the use of his principles in everyday affairs, particularly of course in their illumination of the Scriptures.

The Wertheim Associates already knew a little about Swedenborg and, finally, as a result of consultations with the Foundation's advertising committee, the directors decided to engage this firm to carry out the purpose it had been considering. A survey and considerable research preceded carefully laid plans now beginning to get underway.

What sort of concern is it that has the ability to undertake this new and most important project, requiring not only the skillful technique which has brought it prominence in New York, but which believes it can be successful in what is undoubtedly an exceedingly difficult assignment, especially as the financing is not unlimited?

An article which appeared in *Church Management*, Cleveland, for September, 1950, tells the colorful Wertheim story. With the permission of its editor, Dr. William H. Leach, we are able to publish the following extracts:

Many a campaign would have failed and many a great man gone unnoticed were it not for the work of the publicity person, Edward L. Wertheim, who has dedicated his life and his advertising agency to the furtherance of God's work. And many a minister or Christian layman has come a long distance to discuss his problems with Edward Wertheim and sought his help.

Never has a worthy cause been turned down if he can possibly do something to assist. More than one radio preacher, now receiving mail by the sack, owes his popularity to this sympathetic adviser who saw in him a person of sincerity and ability,

To Assure Benefit Of Many Years' Worldwide Work



Edward L. Wertheim

whose messages should be shared with the multitudes.

By knowing the right people and seeing them at the right time, this Christian publicity man has often found a channel that gave a worthy project a chance to make good.

Thus everyone who listens in is benefited by inspiring radio talks, and the speaker's usefulness and popularity are increased. The radio stations are pleased at the many letters of approval from their listeners, and Wertheim is happy to think he was useful in getting "that fellow" started.

It isn't just persons that he assists, but all sorts of good causes, and many a dignified "stunt" has he arranged to get publicity for a project in which he is interested. Just before the war, for instance, he released some 2,000 homing pigeons from the Washington monument at the Capital to get the attention of the public for a newly organized Emergency Peace Campaign.

Messages from Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, active in this movement, were inserted in aluminum containers fastened to the legs of the pigeons, giving names of speakers and dates of meetings in connection with the proposed campaign.

Newspapers gave a lot of space and the National Broadcasting Company gave time to this unique pigeon stunt. On newsreels, the event was shown in nearly all the theaters over the country.

Then, too, there was the American Mission to Lepers with its "pig

bank" movement shortly after its twenty-fifth anniversary at which it was reported that a million dollars had come in during that time. Wertheim planned a celebration to launch the securing of a second million dollars. Thus was reenacted the beginning of the movement when ten-year-old Wilbur Chapman of White Cloud, Kansas, raised and gave a pig to help raise money for children of lepers.

Although a sincere Christian, a Sunday school teacher of boys, superintendent of the Sunday school for many years, one of the founders of his church (the Community Church of Douglaston, New York), yet theological differences have never particularly disturbed him. People of all denominations and shades of theology turn to him and he works for them all—as long as their spirit is right and they are honest and sincere.

When the Methodist Hospital in Brooklyn felt the need of some publicity Dr. Chester C. Marshall, its superintendent, consulted Wertheim, who worked out a successful Better Baby Contest. The contest is now a frequent event with Wertheim seeing that the newspapers and magazines hear all about it. Maybe you saw it on your television set last spring.

One of the present outstanding projects of the Wertheim Advertising Associates is promotion of the *Revised Standard Version of the New Testament*, published in 1946, and the *Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, to be published about 1952.

All the attractive full-page and half-page advertisements which the reader has undoubtedly seen in many religious publications have been the result of great thought, considerable prayer and much work. Now the Wertheims are working hand in hand, not only with Thomas Nelson & Sons, the publishers, but with the International Council of Religious Education, under whose auspices the revision was brought forth.

Besides his religious publicity and advertising, Wertheim is something of a reformer—especially when it comes to smoking, swearing or drinking. He is vice-president of the National Anti-Cigarette Alliance, with headquarters at 107 Carroll Street, Washington, D. C. He not only plans and publicizes their quarterly meetings, but encourages publication of numerous magazine articles on tobacco evils which he reprints and distributes. He is the author of a little comic leaflet entitled "A Brand New Cigarette—Lucky Camfields," a take-off ridiculing cigarette advertising.

(Next page please)

(Continued from page 297)

His anti-profanity posters (sets of six humorous posters in color selling for \$1.50 per set) are placed in hundreds of Y. M. C. A.'s. Navy chaplains have sent for them to be placed on their ships to remind a would-be swearer, as one poster reads, that profanity is merely "the crutch of conversational cripples."

Edward Wertheim was not always in publicity work. For sixteen years he was educational director of the West Side Y. M. C. A., New York, where he helped organize some of the many schools and courses that are now strong and active units in the Y. M. C. A. educational program, such as the McBurney School for Boys, Motion Picture Machine Operating, Public Speaking and many other courses.

At the beginning of the Boy Scout Movement, while educational director of the "Y," Wertheim was asked by one of the founders to consider heading up the Boy Scout Movement. He didn't feel led to accept this but, realizing that the organization would succeed only with trained scoutmasters, he brought together the pioneer leaders and assisted in organizing the first course for training scoutmasters, with the late Daniel Beard as the first instructor.

Mr. Wertheim later felt that the same advertising and publicity principles that made the "Y" educational work so successful should be shared by other institutions. He finally decided to go into full time publicity and advertising work. He believes sincerely that successful advertising and publicity is based on the teachings of Jesus who had the largest project ever to get over into the minds of people—the establishing of the Kingdom of God on earth.

Mr. Wertheim has stated, "If Jesus were here today, his terminology might well be, 'You are my publicity representatives,' instead of 'Ye are my witnesses.' He would make use of all the present-day channels for disseminating ideas as newspapers, magazines, radio, television and motion pictures."

One of the interesting projects that Wertheim likes to talk about was producing the "Picture Stories of the Bible" in comic form. He wanted to take advantage of the great interest children have in comics and channel this to an interest in the dramatic Bible characters. For about a year he worked on the script and assisted in the production of four books that composed the Old Testament and then almost another year on the New Testament. He carried out the idea

for clean comics of the publisher, the late M. C. Gaines, who was one of the largest publishers of children's comic books.

Among the people that he has helped in some form of publicity are many noted names including S. Parkes Cadman, Harry Emerson Fosdick, Norman Vincent Peale, Frederick K. Stamm, J. Stanley Durkee, Daniel A. Poling, Stanley High, Greenville Kleiser, Ralph W. Sockman, Frank C. Goodman, Jessie M. Bader, E. Stanley Jones and J. Richard Sneed.

Organizations that he has helped with publicity include Presbyterian Sesquicentennial Fund, Near East Relief, John Milton Society for the Blind, Salvation Army, Bucknell University, Warner Brothers' motion picture, "One Foot in Heaven," and many others.

SUGGESTS ANSWER TO VITAL QUESTION

WE HAVE OFTEN asked what we are to say to the stranger who inquires about our religion. It is seldom that we find advice on the subject although it would tremendously strengthen our individual societies and national organization if every layman were so prepared on the subject that he could reply knowingly and cheerfully, when asked.

The subject is of such great importance it is felt that any one having a suggestion should be heard.

It would be helpful if in our first talk with the inquirer we could pique his curiosity so that he would come back for more information. But how many of us feel we can answer questions in such a way as to have the stranger really want to know more?

Perhaps we quote "all religion has relation to life and the life of religion is to do good," but do we leave with the inquirer the impression that we lead a life different from anyone else?

Does it occur to us to use the Lord's Prayer in answering inquiries? For what do we pray when we ask: "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven"?

Does the stranger think that by our repeating these words we help the Lord to bring about His kingdom on earth, and to have His will done?

Very likely it will be a new thought to him that the words have meaning only to the extent that we ourselves ask for help in finding ways to assist and do our part. Would it be a new thought to the stranger that we are brought into this world for a purpose, and that the Lord has a job for us to do?

But more importantly, does not this approach give us an opportunity to explain that we believe that only those

Wertheim modestly disclaims credit for helping advance people and causes since he feels that he is only a channel through whom God works with ideas given him for advertising, publicity and promotion.

He begins the office day with his staff in united prayer for guidance and who always finds time to help any worthy individual in distress by trying to locate a job for him, or at least counseling and when appropriate, praying with him.

You would naturally expect to find such a man happy, and of course, he is. He feels that humor is a gift of God, even as ideas are, and should be cultivated. He thinks all these talents can work together for the furtherance of the kingdom if one's gifts, no matter what kind, are dedicated to God.

that are fitted for heaven will be happy there, and that the primary purpose of our being born into the world is that while on earth we may prepare ourselves for the life of heaven?

We open the way to a most interesting discussion, and even though we say no more than a few words we may change the whole course of the stranger's life and thinking. If he has been sincere in his original inquiry there is every reason to believe that he will be back for more.

Some will object that in this approach we have said nothing about Swedenborg. We submit that the person who is first impressed by what we believe with respect to life, heaven, and other subjects that may be touched upon in our discussion, will listen to what we have to say about Swedenborg and his mission with a much more open mind than he would if he got the impression that we believe Swedenborg was a revelator and we believe the things we do because this revelator said they are so.

If you believe this suggestion has merit, look for an opportunity to put it to the test.—GORDON MACK

(Mr. Mack, a son of the late Rev. Dr. Chas. S. Mack, is a patent lawyer in Akron, Ohio.)

Money For Your Treasury

OVER 1,500,000

SUNFLOWER DISH CLOTHES

Were sold in 1952 by members of Sunday Schools, Ladies' Aids, Young People's Groups, etc. They enable you to earn money for your treasury, and make friends for your organization.

Sample FREE to an Official

SANGAMON MILLS

Established 1915

Cohoes, N. Y.

Our Church's Message, Work and Field of Labor

The Council of Ministers of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the U. S. A., at an Executive Session in 1948, appointed a committee consisting of the Reverends Paul Sperry, Washington, D. C., Leonard I. Tafel, Frankford, Pa., and William F. Wunsch, Washington, D. C., to prepare a statement defining the message, work, and field of labor of the General Convention, particularly its position on the relationship between the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg and Sacred Scripture.

This committee's report, as adopted by the Council of Ministers, was published in "The Messenger" shortly afterwards, and as now it is being distributed in booklet form it seems appropriate to reprint it in this, Convention's official organ. It is not a statement of doctrine, but of the positions which the General Convention has taken historically on its message, work, and field of labor. Should copies be desired, inquire of the local minister.

A NUMBER of organizations in America and abroad bear the name of The Church of the New Jerusalem, or it may be said that The Church of the New Jerusalem is distributed over the world in The General Convention and The General Church in America, The General Conference of the New Church in the United Kingdom, The New Church in Australia, The Church of Jesus Christ, "New Jerusalem," in the Philippines, and still other bodies. All these organizations have the same message to speak and the same cause to serve. They have in common the Word of God in Old and New Testament, and consequently the Christian Gospel, and of course they share the particular teachings of the New Church set forth in the Theological Works of Emanuel Swedenborg.

Very naturally, in such different parts of the world and with different antecedents and backgrounds, the organizations of the New Church have developed each some characteristics of its own. They may differ in the way in which they conceive of the especial teachings of the New Church, or in the way in which they relate those teachings to the Word in Scripture; they may differ in the way in which they regard and do their work; they may differ also in the way in which they look out on the world around them, especially the religious world. Each may have an approach of its own to its field of work. Less importantly, they differ, naturally, in the way in which they are organized.

We are speaking in this article only of the General Convention of the New Jerusalem, of which we are members, and of which The New Church MESSENGER is the official organ. The General Convention during its history has taken definable positions on such points as have just been mentioned. What are these positions, or at least the chief among them? This pamphlet is an attempt to state them for clarity in our collective thought, and for fuller cooperation in our work and the direction of it with strength to our aims.

Like all bodies of the New Church,

the General Convention is convinced that a revelation, presenting the Christian Gospel afresh, has been made to the world by the Lord in the Theological Works of Swedenborg, who subscribed himself as a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. There is revelation of the teaching of the Scriptures—of the unity and comprehensiveness of it when it is gathered from the Scriptures as a whole and in the light of their deeper meaning. Secondly, there is revelation of this inner meaning of the Word of God, a meaning of which Scripture is basis and support, and to which it is means of access. Thirdly, there is disclosure of the reality, nature and life of the immortal world. All organizations of the New Church agree that what the world has by way of the Theological Work of Swedenborg is not his personal construction of Christian teaching, but a revelation given by the Lord in His second coming—a revelation of further light on the Christian Gospel, of a profounder meaning in the Word of God than has been attributed to it, and of the reality and nature of the other world. This conception of the Theological Works of Swedenborg, which marks all our sister bodies, is no less markedly characteristic of the General Convention.

How has the Convention been in the habit of relating the Theological Works and the Word? The relations between the two are indicated in those Works themselves. They are not discussed so much as they are in evidence there. In general, it is apparent that those Works are dependent on the Word; they never would have been written did not the Word exist. More specific relationships between the Theological Works and the Word appear. The religious doctrines which those Works advance are drawn from the Scriptures or from the sense of the letter of the Word; all the doctrine of the church is to be drawn thence, they declare, and they go on to say (*Apocalypse Revealed*, nn. 898e, 902) that "the Word in the sense of the letter contains all things of the doctrine of the New Church." Similarly, the inner meaning of the

Word which the Theological Works expound exists in the Word and indeed is its full self only in the Word. Those Works disclose such a level of meaning in the Word and set forth in large volumes like the *Arcana Coelestia* not merely much of that meaning, but long sustained sequences of it. The divinely commissioned expositor nevertheless confessed that he can present, especially in our mundane language, only a fraction of the meaning. The third body of revealed content in the Theological Works—what is disclosed about the spiritual world—is related to the Word in a different way. This content is based, as the full title of the book *Heaven and Hell* says, on "things heard and seen," that is, on Swedenborg's other-world experience, an experience granted him on a scale far beyond anything he could have had privately or personally, and for the pursuit rather of his mission and for the enlightenment of the immortal hope of Christianity. Immortality was brought into light (I *Timothy* 1.10) long ago by the Christ; He spoke of eternal life, of its character in the Beatitudes, of other-world judgment, and of a blessed life and a life in outer darkness. While what is further disclosed now is based on a servant's other-world experience or on "things heard and seen," it is in consonance with what the Scriptures have to say. To Convention's mind, then, these are the relations which the several bodies of revealed content in the Theological Works bear to the Word in the Scriptures. These are the relationships in which those Works stand, and which they themselves exhibit, to the Bible. It is characteristic of the General Convention that it has so conceived the relationship between the two.

More briefly said, the Bible or the Word which we have in the Old and New Testaments is "the crown of revelations" (*True Christian Religion*, n. 11). The Theological Works thus exalt the Word. The Scriptures are the source of the doctrine which they formulate so fully; the Scriptures contain inexhaustibly the spiritual sense of the Word which those Works set forth in part, however amply; and in the Gospel is the basis of the immortal hope and of the faith in a spiritual world of which the Theological Works give an organized and illuminating picture.

The thought of Convention, like the thinking in sister bodies of the New Church, has occupied itself with the perennial question where the authority for our religious thinking and reasoning resides. The Convention, congregational in mode of organization, and prizing freedom of inquiry in religious

(Next page please)

thought, takes a position characteristic of it. It thinks that ultimate religious authority resides not in an ecclesiastical body or a ministry, not in ways of stating things or in texts, but in truth, and in Him who is the Truth. The Lord's mind, and His Spirit guiding into all truth, are to govern our thought and life. Whether in the Bible or in the Theological Works, the mind of Convention finds authority in the truth described. To acknowledge this authority of truth, the human understanding must be able to move freely; freedom of inquiry is the path to such acknowledgment. A supreme motto of the teachings of the New Church is that it is now the privilege of mankind to enter with the understanding into the mysteries of faith.

While somewhat varying views are held in the several bodies of the New Church about the Theological Works as a whole, difference has been marked on one book, *Conjugal Love*. The General Convention holds that Part I of that comprehensive discussion presents the positive teaching on marriage and the ideal which the Christian must pursue. Part II, on sexual relationships other than marriage, describes the whole range of possible departures from Christian marriage, from missteps to such grievous departures as utterly destroy the very capacity for true marriage. The Convention has consistently taken the position that Part II of the volume reinforces Part I and by sorry contrasts makes still plainer what true marriage love is, realizable by the Christian here, and existing as a basic reality in the life to come. In either part the book exalts true marriage and spiritual union, and the whole thought of it revolves about the purpose to place the marriage tie high, in keeping with the Mosaic commandment and with the words of the Lord.

As Convention has considered what its work and aims should be, it has taken another characteristic position. It is convinced that what has been given to the world in the teachings of the New Church is meant to serve for the renewal of the Christian experience, or the spiritual life in Christendom and the world. To this end the Lord Jesus Christ has come again. To this end the Church is to labor under His leadership. Truths have been given to inspire this renewal and also to interpret it as it comes to pass. For the Lord's Spirit is also silently and steadily at work to bring about the renewal of the Christian life. Unless this activity of His Spirit is added to the giving of truths, the correction of any inadequacy, failure or disease in Christendom would, we are told, be superficial.

In the small treatise called *Invitation to the New Church*, the subject of which is the appeal of the Lord's Spirit to men, it is asserted, "Unless the present little work is added to the preceding work, the Church cannot be healed. For it would be a mere palliative cure, and the corrupting matter in the wound would remain and continue to vitiate the neighboring parts. The doctrine of the New Church indeed provides medicine, but only externally" (n. 25). The General Convention therefore labors, not only in the hope of Christian renewal, but with that early Christian confidence when the apostles "went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them" (*Mark* xvi 20). The world is the scene not only of judgment and of the correction of much that has been traditional, but, under the activity of the Spirit of the Lord, the scene also of new Christian stirrings, of challenging reinterpretation of doctrine, and of fresh and

wholesome insights. No more than the first time has the Lord come this time to condemn; He has come to save. This hopeful and constructive outlook on its work and field of work characterizes Convention. It enables it also to cooperate with other Christian bodies, for all share the responsibility toward the renewal of the life of Christian charity.

We feel confident that in keener appreciation of these positions and outlooks of the General Convention, and in clearer taking of them, we members of Convention will find our strength and find it in Him in whom we can do all things. Aims will be plain and impelling. The Word of God and our teachings in due relation to the Word will be endless and commanding resources. Cooperation will be solidified. And we shall be following and joining the Savior in His work in the world in His second coming.

Almont Summer School

Another successful two weeks' session has been held at the Almont Summer School, Almont, Mich., where New Church people and their families have for many years vacationed and enjoyed a program of religious instruction, and recreation and entertainment.

Opening Saturday, July 25, the first Sunday service was conducted by the Rev. Louis A. Dole of Bath, Me., who with Mrs. Dole vacations at Port Clinton, Ohio. Mr. Dole also gave the lectures in that week and, with the Rev. Leon C. Le Van, Pittsburgh minister, led the service on the second Sunday. An interested visitor was George Dole, now attending Oxford University, and here for the summer.

Irving Malawsky, Lay Leader at La Porte, Ind., had charge of the third Sunday service and in the preceding week the lectures were presented by Mr. Le Van, a feature also being a panel discussion led by him, with Mr. Malawsky and Robert L. Hallowell of Philadelphia, participating.

The annual picnic, stunt night, swimming parties and hikes were among other features which, under the direction of Superintendent Dorothea Pfister of Cleveland, ably assisted by a devoted staff, once more brought happiness and refreshment to a large and enthusiastic assembly.

For Prayer, Meditation

The House of Representatives has unanimously voted to set aside a room in the Capitol Building, midway between the House and Senate, to be used for "prayer and meditation" by the Congress.

Theory Gaining Ground

According to an Associated Press dispatch from New York dated August 13, leaders in the religious and scientific field, recently interviewed, all believe that the once religiously outlawed conception of evolution as mainly presented by Darwin and Wallace now is considered as "at least a method whereby the Creator carries out His purposes."

Wayfarers' Chapel Reports

According to the June-July report to its board of directors there were an estimated 49,750 visitors at the Wayfarers' Chapel, Palos Verdes, Calif., during those months, nearly 50 foreign countries being represented. Average Sunday worship, about all the Chapel will hold, was nearly 200. There were 24 weddings. The Rev. Kenneth W. Knox is the minister.

Arcana Class Revived

The nation-wide class for study of the *Arcana Coelestia*, founded by the late Rev. John Whitehead, Cambridge, Mass., and Miss Serena Dandridge, of Shepherdstown, W. Va., has been revived now under the leadership of the Rev. Louis and Mrs. A. Dole of Bath, Me., with Miss Dandridge as business manager. Enrollments, free, should be addressed to her.

On the Way to Brussels

The Rev. Dionisio DeLara, missionary in Cuba, passed through New York Aug. 19 enroute by air, with a delegation representing the Philosophical Society of that country, to Brussels, Belgium, for an international congress. Mr. DeLara is to present a paper entitled "Swedenborg's Idea Concerning Man."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Approves The Decision

To the Editor:

In your August 8 issue the Rev. L. C. Le Van writes disapproving the decision made at Convention to apply for membership in the National Council of Churches.

He fears we shall compromise our teachings, and asks, "Is not the New Church the Second Coming of the Lord?" He repudiates all association with the "Old Church" as "spiritually dead, since it adopted at Nicea the faith that God exists in three Persons."

Since 1757, when Swedenborg wrote, the New Christian heavens formed then have been operating mightily throughout the world. The Ecumenical Movement, which has led to such inter-Church cooperation as we now have in the National Council and in the World Council of Churches, is one conspicuous result of this influx.

To illustrate this compare two quotations: (1) the well-known statement by Swedenborg in the *Arcana* that "It is doctrine alone that divides Churches, which would never be if men made love to the Lord and charity towards the neighbor the chief items of faith"; (2) the following, written by Archbishop I. Koman, Professor at Bucharest University, made at the *Conference of the Orthodox Churches*, held just before the August 1948 Amsterdam Meeting which formed the World Council of Churches. Here is a literal translation of what Dr. Koman said in the course of a lengthy address:

"The spiritual experience of being conscious by grace of the aims of the reunion of the Churches, must first include within itself humility, the greatest of all blessings in our common ecumenical action. Unity cannot be fulfilled unless it becomes an act of obedience to Jesus Christ, . . . an act of repentance . . . As the sins of men were the cause of division, so true unity will be caused by the repentance of the Churches, united on a basis of equal rights and recognizing the spiritual experience of one another. Although the Orthodox Church has not sinned in the realm of dogma, . . . we cannot imagine the Orthodox Church . . . drawing to herself all the other Churches, but only through her repentance helping others to repent in deep sorrow, and so arriving at ecumenical unity with the One Shepherd at the head of the one flock. Love is the fulfilling of unity. Only the excellence of love can be victorious. The Orthodox Church must rise to the

heights of a love which would include the toleration of (differences in) faith and even condescension, without the alteration of anything in the sphere of her dogmatic truth . . . she admits her sins at the human level . . . she demands from Christian schismatics or heretics that they should correct in their teaching and in their practice all that is incompatible with the truth which she holds. On her part she also values the riches of Church life which even the schismatics and heretics possess." *Proceedings Of The Conference of Orthodox Churches*; July, 1948; YMCA Press, Paris, France; pp. 106f.

Notice that this priest and university professor is just as insistent on the absolute truth of his doctrines as Mr. Le Van. He speaks frankly. I have myself talked just as frankly to an Orthodox scholar about the three Persons in the Trinity. He took it in good part. For the ecumenical spirit is one of loving enquiry and witness to the truth as each one sees it.

That is the spirit of Swedenborg. It is the Holy Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ in His Second Coming. How well I learned to know that Spirit at the Ecumenical Institute in Geneva, Switzerland! "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes!"

JOHN W. SPIERS

Chicago, Ill.

Our Church Services

To the Editor:

I cannot agree with what seem to me the queer and erratic views of Hermanis Mierins [MESSENGER July 25] in condemning all liturgies, loud reading of the faith and responsive services. Surely this is mutually helpful and uplifting and gives us new strength, encouragement and inspiration.

Mr. Mierins seems to know nothing of the power of thought and the power of suggestion through the spoken word. A burning coal will cease glowing if it is not in touch with other burning coals. Thought is a living force and the spoken word is thought expressed. When we listen to the radio and hear a man from Yokohama or Seoul give us the news, thousands of miles away, in a few seconds we realize that spoken words have given potency to the thought of the announcer.

In the Psalms we find many places where we are urged to worship the Lord loudly with various musical instruments. "Let the faithful exult in glory, let the high praises of God be in their throats." (149, *RSV*.) "Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! Praise Him with timbrel

and dance; praise Him with strings and pipe! Praise Him with sounding cymbals; praise Him with loud clashing cymbals!" (150, *RSV*.)

Our public worship in this life cannot be like that in the other life, for here conditions are so different. When we leave this world our character and ruling love are fixed, and regeneration in the other life is impossible, unless begun here.

O. G. DEGNER

Bourbon, Mo.

A Spiritual Heritage

To the Editor:

Having read the series of sermons by the late Rev. Isaac G. Ens, which appeared in your helpful and valued publication [4/14, 5/16, 8/8], may I express my sincere appreciation for the truly "spiritual heritage" that this man of God has left to posterity.

This writer knew nothing whatever about our departed friend while he was in this world, yet I was fully conscious of a presence in the great spiritual world all about us, as I read and re-read his thoughts.

For as Swedenborg tells us, time and space have no control over the spirit, as also indicated by Mr. Ens in the opening paragraph of his concluding sermon, "Our Spiritual Kinfolk." Of course, the natural man or woman who lives entirely in the senses, never can understand this.

However it is evident that Mr. Ens in the closing days of his life brought from his storehouse of knowledge, treasures both old and new from the Lord's Holy Word, concerning the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven: the New Church and the heavenly doctrine, refreshing our souls, invigorating our minds and renewing our spirits.

Mr. Ens has left an imperishable memorial in his thoughts, his words, his logic, doctrinal affirmations, theological concepts and spiritual truths which he expounded so well.

FRANK WOOD

Burnham, Pa.

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Search The Scriptures . . .

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night. . . .

—GENESIS 1:14

IN HIS EXPLANATION of these words Swedenborg observes (*Arcana* 30²) that the verb in the phrase, "Let there be lights," is in the singular form and not as one would expect in the plural form, agreeing with the plural subject "lights."

Another case of a similiar grammatical construction is found in *Genesis* 35:26. The reason for these unusual departures from the rules of syntax is to be found, as Swedenborg states, in the requirements of the spiritual sense within the Hebrew.

In the case of the verse quoted, the singular, jussive form of the verb "to be" is used, because in the spiritual state being described, faith and love "make one." In this number of the *Arcana*, and in paragraph 34 of that same work, n. 34, Swedenborg lists, in general, three different types of "faith": 1. "Faith in the memory," "faith of knowledge," "knowledge of the doctrinals of faith without love." 2. "Faith in the understanding" or "intellectual faith." 3. "Faith in the heart," the "faith of love" or "saving faith."

Because the third type of faith is what is spiritually referred to by the word "lights" in the text above, and because as Swedenborg further observes in *A.*, as last quoted, that "Love and faith can never be separated, because they constitute one and the same thing," the verb in the phrase, "Let there be lights" is put in the singular form of the imperfect tense.

This doctrine of the oneness of "saving faith" and its essential love recalls some important statements made in the work *Divine Love and Wisdom*.

Thus we find in n. 39 of this important book, the following, "In man love and wisdom appear as two separate things, yet in themselves they are one distinctly, because with man wisdom is such as the love is, and love is such as the wisdom is. The wisdom which does not make one with its love appears to be wisdom, but it is not; and the love which does not make one with its wisdom appears to be the love of wisdom, but it is not; for the one must derive its essence and its life reciprocally from the other."

These statements by Swedenborg about the distinct oneness of "saving faith" or "faith in the heart" and love, are impressive, and they are important underlying principles of our Church's spiritual philosophy.

But add to these statements the heading to n. 40 in *D. L. W.* which reads, "Divine love and wisdom are substance and form" we have a fundamentally new and revolutionary concept added to our thought about the relationship of love and faith.

In states of reflection, and through our reading and conversation, we experience frequently enough what Swedenborg has characterized as natural faith or "faith of knowledge," "faith in the memory," or, as "faith in the understanding," and we see that these types may not be at all "a one" with the love of others that the Lord alone gives to the regenerating man.

In other words, only in the experience of the regenerating man or woman does love and its wisdom or faith become such a "distinct one" as a substance and its form are.

At *A. C.* 9550, it is declared that "love is the soul of truth." This means that love is the only formative and creative energy in the universe. Spirit-

ual love, as "soul," consciously reveals its quality and fulfills its purposes through the truth or wisdom or "form" that constitutes its body—a body that the love itself has alone created.

This soul and body, in the case of the spiritual love of others and its embodying faith or wisdom, are always a one, an active, living unity.

Because of our natural inheritance from the immediate and from the distant past, because of Aristotelian emphasis on thought and logical relations for centuries after his day, because of the very nature of the uncontrolled self, we are ever prone to substitute "faith in the memory" or "intellectual faith" for that "faith in the heart" that is essentially a living love, a love that comes from the Lord's divine love and wisdom as a "distinct one."

"What God hath joined together let not man put asunder."

"And God said, let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens."—WARREN GODDARD

Book Review

A BUCKEYE TITAN. By W. E. and Ophia D. Smith. Published by the Historical and Philosophical Society of Ohio, Cincinnati, 1953. \$5.00.

New Churchmen will open *A Buckeye Titan* with a favorable bias. Some have heard both Dr. and Mrs. Smith lecture, and most have read Mrs. Smith's excellent articles on Francis Bailey, Johnny Appleseed, "The Sixty Foot Smiths," and the New Church in Ohio. Also, the titan of the title is Colonel John H. James—son-in-law of Francis Bailey, husband of Abby Bailey James, an early New Churchman, a founder of Urbana University, the builder of the James home in Urbana, and the scholar who began and preserved the James private library. Ohio New Churchmen especially will be drawn to *A Buckeye Titan* in Ohio's sesquicentennial year. In the book they have set before them Ohio history between 1813 and 1870 as that history was lived by Colonel James, his family, and his friends. Wider history is seen too through the eyes of John H. James and his family, since they knew important people in the nation and conducted a wide correspondence. Source material for *A Buckeye Titan*, and possibly for much more excellent historical research, is in the James library—Colonel James' diary from 1821-1881 and letters accumulated by the James family through much of the Colonel's life and arranged chronologically in 1863 by Colonel James in 114 volumes of correspondence and in boxes of unbound letters. The papers of an important man who knew prominent peo-

ple and recorded sixty years of history in his diary shed much light on that period. At heart Colonel James was a scholar, one who regretted that the years he inwardly longed to spend in study and writing were spent in "the toils of pecuniary business." In his own phrase "the toils of pecuniary business," Colonel James was unjust to himself. In his profession of law he became a legal scholar, wise and professional even in Civil War days when the pressure to follow expedience was almost overburdening. In banking he showed scholarly insight in his "pecuniary toils." His theories of banking could not save his bank and his reputation as a banker in the 1840's, but some of his theories were incorporated in the Federal Reserve Act of 1913. The scholar at heart becoming a man of action is revealed also in Colonel James as railroad builder for Ohio's future, as legislator, as newspaper editor, and as lecturer. Men of such stature were essential, but few in Ohio from 1821-1881. As a man of thought and a man of action Colonel James influenced Ohio history, and at the same time he kept the records of that history. *A Buckeye Titan* is much broader than biography; it depicts the history of the period 1813-1870 as that history is revealed by the James manuscripts from the time Johnny James, thirteen years old in 1813, climbed the bank of the Ohio River to view Cincinnati to 1870, when Colonel James wrote: "It is now pretty well known that the old Whig Party has its headquarters in Urbana and may be seen daily driving about in an old buggy, drawn by an old horse, that goes his old ways and will stand only at his post."—EDWARD F. MEMMOTT

The Swedenborg Student

CONDUCTED BY THE REV. LOUIS A. DOLE FOR THE SWEDENBORG FOUNDATION

Arcana Class I—September, 1953
Vol. X, 8141—8251

In the internal sense Israel represents the spiritual church, and *Exodus 14*, the chapter covered in this month's reading, treats of the first temptations as Israel sets forth from Egypt after the celebration of the first Passover. In the exposition of this chapter Egypt stands for a persuasive but not a saving faith, and the horses and chariots of Egypt are the doctrines and the understanding of them by those in persuasive faith.

Swedenborg defines persuasive faith as follows: "Persuasive faith exists together with evil of life, but not saving faith; for persuasive faith is a persuasion that all things that belong to the doctrine of the church are true, not for the sake of truth, nor for the sake of life, nor even for the sake of salvation, for in this they scarcely believe; but for the sake of self-advantage, that is, for the sake of getting honors and wealth, and for the sake of reputation with a view to these." (8148)

This faith, since it has not regard for the Lord nor for the good of the neighbor, but looks only to self and the world, is not a saving faith. It is dissipated in the other life; indeed it is dissipated in this world if nothing is gained by it. This faith is not from the Lord but is from man himself. N. 8152 is an important statement of what true faith is and also regarding the Lord's universal Church, which consists of all those throughout the world who live according to the precepts of charity.

Notes

8172⁴. "Stand still, and see the salvation of Jehovah." Salvation is from the Lord alone. Man of himself cannot overcome even the least evil. Yet man must fight against evil as of himself, that the Lord may fight for him. (8176, 8179²)

8179³. Prayers of those in temptation are but little heard, because temptations are for the amendment of life and salvation. This does not mean that we should not pray when in temptation. The Lord gave us the example when He prayed, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will but as thou wilt."

8192. The pillar of cloud that protected the Israelites was a choir (company) of angels. Compare this with the angels round about Elisha. "Michael," "Raphael," and others are not individual angels, but are such societies or groups.

8200. "All divine power is through

the truth that proceeds from the Lord. This created all things." "Divine truth has in it all power, inasmuch that it is power itself." Read this whole number very carefully, especially the last sentence.

8220. "There was not left one of them" as applied to the Lord represents the completeness of the Redemption.

8223. Note Swedenborg's rendering here of *Matthew 7:12*. One cannot do harm of any kind to another without doing the same harm to himself. This is a universal spiritual law. And very often even in this world what we wish for another returns upon ourselves.

8237. Evil cannot be seen from evil, but only from good. An evil man is spiritually blind. There is no such thing as "enlightened self-interest."

8247. The cheerfulness of the inhabitants of the planet Jupiter is due to their freedom from worldly cares and from anxiety about the future.

Readings for October

October	1 - 7	8252 — 8272
	8 - 14	8273 — 8288
	15 - 21	8289 — 8312
	22 - 31	8313 — 8343

Arcana Class II—September, 1953
Vol. IV, 3139—3227

The Scripture covered by this month's reading completes the story of the successful mission of Abraham's servant to get a wife for Isaac.

As we noted last month, the spiritual meaning deals with the development of the rational. We are more familiar with the natural plane of the mind because we are born natural and while we live here on earth, everything of which we have any consciousness comes to us by means of the body. "Man is born into no truth, but has all to learn, and this by an external way." (3175²)

So to the natural plane of the mind belong "all memory knowledges, thus all knowledges of every kind whatever, and all natural affections that man has in common with brute animals." (3220) Love to the Lord and to the neighbor are not of these.

Though everyone has a rational plane of the mind, no one is born rational, but only with the capacity of becoming rational. He becomes rational through memory knowledges, namely through knowledges of many genera and species, the first of which are means leading to those which follow next, and this in order even to the last which are knowledges of the spiritual things of the Lord's kingdom, and are called doctrinal things. (8161²)

"For the case is this, man is never

born into any truth, not even into any natural truth, as that he should not steal . . . still less is he born into any spiritual truth—as that there is a God, and that he has a spiritual which lives after death. Man learns both these kinds of truth, otherwise he would be much worse than a brute animal; for from his hereditary nature he loves himself above all and desires to possess all things in the world." (3175)

The rational mind is internal to the natural. To it belongs the thinking faculty that is perceptive of what is equitable and just, and of what is true and good, also all spiritual affections which are properly human and by which man is distinguished from beasts.

It is of order that the rational should be made spiritual by means of spiritual knowledges. Yet spiritual knowledges alone are not sufficient: there must be "good" in the rational. "Good is not good separate from truth" (3141), neither we see is truth separate from good, for it is good in the rational which comprehends and sees and is able to judge between right and wrong.

The work of the Lord in bringing into order this rational of the human assumed from Mary, and how it was united to good in the Divine is the internal meaning of the story of getting a wife for Isaac.

Notes

3141. Instruction must come first, for influx takes place according to the degree of instruction.

3207³. Appearances: "Be it known however, that neither with man, nor indeed with an angel, are any truths ever pure, that is devoid of appearances." It should be noted that the word "appearance" does not mean that the appearance is necessarily false, but refers to an object as seen or perceived, the immediate object of experience; and there are different levels of experience, as for example sense experience, rational experience, etc. These facts concerning the meaning of "appearances" should be held in mind especially when Swedenborg is speaking of space and time.

Readings for October

October	1 - 7	3228 — 3243
	8 - 14	3244 — 3267
	15 - 21	3268 — 3296
	22 - 31	3297 — 3306

"New Religion" Rising

According to a recent article in *Collier's* a new religion called Caodaism after one Cao Dai who "revealed" himself from the spirit world to an official, has been started in Southern Indochina. It seems to be made up of Christian and oriental beliefs, though "its heart is spiritism."

Children's Corner

Sign of the Irish Potato

WHEN NORMA WENT DOWN to breakfast that windy, early March morning she noticed, lying at her place at the table, a large raw potato.

"What in the world!" she exclaimed. She picked it up and looked it over carefully. It was scrubbed very clean, and there was a tiny tag attached to it bearing her name.

"A strange present, isn't it, mother?" she asked.

Then she saw a tiny bit of paper protruding from one end of the potato. She pulled it out carefully, flattened it out and read:

Saint Patrick's day draws near,
you see,

With all its mirth and jollity;
So come that night, at half-past
eight—O,

To the sign of the big Irish potato.

There was no name attached. Norma pondered and puzzled as to who was giving the party. She walked to school with Jane Marie, and they talked and talked, but could not decide. Most of the girls with whom they played had such invitations, and none of them could guess.

That day, as the girls walked home after school, they made plans for the party.

"If we can ever find where it is," they sighed. Jean was going to wear a bright green dress, Ella Mae had a cunning Irish hat. All of them were to get shamrocks.

At last the longed-for day arrived. Still the place where the party was to be held remained a mystery. But that evening, as they went home from school, they found curious, potato-shaped signs posted here and there, with arrows pointing to the "Sign of the Big Irish Potato."

"It will be easy," sighed Alicia.

"Let's all dress and go together to find the place," suggested Jane Marie.

That evening, dressed in their party clothes, they set out on their quest. Phyllis brought her brother's flashlight, and they turned it on the signs. They followed them here and there, hurrying down streets, across corners and back again.

Finally the trail twisted, and they curved back and at last reached Norma's street. As they ran along it, they noticed a light over the gate. When they reached it, there was a huge brown potato, with a big white sign, "The Sign of the Big Irish Potato."

How they laughed!

"That was pretty smart of you, Norma, to play so innocent," said Jane Marie. "I don't believe I could have kept a secret as you did."

"But it was really a secret to me, too," Norma answered. "Mother must have planned it all herself as a surprise for me."

They rang the doorbell, and Mrs. Martin, in a green dress, ushered them in and welcomed all of them.

There were green shades over the lights, green shamrocks everywhere.

What an evening followed! They had potato races, danced Irish jigs and had game after game that everyone enjoyed.

At length Mrs. Martin served ice cream molded to represent little potatoes, and tiny green shamrock cakes.

All of the girls thought it the jolliest party they had attended in a long time.

After they had gone, Norma turned to her mother.

"No one was as surprised as I," she said. "And the girls were all greatly surprised, too! It was a lovely party, mother, and I'm so grateful to you. The Sign of the Big Irish Potato will always make me think of this happy evening."—*Sunday Afternoons*

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Georgetown Church Completed; Furnishings Are Being Placed

The new edifice of the church in Georgetown, British Guiana, oldest New Church mission, is now practically completed, and soon the pulpit will have been constructed, the altar already being in place.

The Rev. Walter F. Fraser, pastor and missionary, is hopeful that a representative of Convention can visit the mission in the near future for the dedication ceremonies.

MARRIED

BECHEREL-JUDSON.—The Rev. Reynolds Eteve Bécherel, minister at Toronto, was married August 2 to Miss Marisha Judson, of that city. The Rev. William H. Beales, Detroit pastor, vacationing in Toronto and Woodbridge at the time, officiated, the ceremony taking place in the church of the local Society. Mr. Bécherel is a son of the late Rev. Cornelius Bécherel, pastor for many years of the societies in the Isle of Mauritius.

RATZLAFF-ENS. — A quiet informal wedding was solemnized in the church of the Rosthern Society July 1 when Miss Lydia Ens and Mr. Thomas Ratzlaff were married. The Rev. Henry Reddekopp, missionary in Saskatoon, performed the ceremony. Organ music was offered by James Ratzlaff, and Art Abrams escorted the guests to their seats. The bride is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Abram Ens of Waldheim, and the groom's parents are the late Mr. and Mrs. Tobias Ratzlaff. A joyous reception followed at the home of the bride's parents.

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