

The **NEW CHURCH MESSENGER**



February 9, 1938

In This Issue

Was Swedenborg Born Too
Soon?

God Shuts the Door

Antony Regamey

Some Suggestions for Sunday-
school Teachers

Laura Test Mack

The Wandering Jew

A Page for the Younger People

Price 10 cents

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THE NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER

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WHAT THE NEW CHURCH TEACHES

1. THE DIVINITY OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, WHO IS JEHOVAH GOD MANIFESTED TO MEN.

2. THE DIVINITY OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES—THE SPIRITUAL NATURE AND INNER MEANING OF THE DIVINE WORD.

3. THE UNBROKEN CONTINUITY OF HUMAN LIFE.

4. THE NEARNESS OF THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.

5. THE NECESSITY OF A LIFE OF UNSELFISH SERVICE AND SELF-DENIAL AS A CONDITION OF SALVATION.

THE NEW CHURCH FINDS THESE TEACHINGS IN THE DIVINE WORD. IT TEACHES NOTHING THAT CANNOT BE CONFIRMED BY THE WORD OF GOD. IT ACKNOWLEDGES ITS INDEBTEDNESS TO EMANUEL SWEDENBORG IN WHOSE THEOLOGICAL WORKS THESE DOCTRINES ARE FORMULATED. SWEDENBORG ASSERTS THAT HE WAS CALLED BY THE LORD TO MAKE KNOWN TO MEN THE SECOND COMING. THIS SECOND ADVENT WAS NOT A PHYSICAL APPEARANCE, BUT A NEW REVELATION OF DIVINE TRUTH TO MEN BY WHICH THE INTERNAL SENSE OF THE SCRIPTURES WAS MADE KNOWN.

THE NEW CHURCH ACCEPTS THIS CLAIM OF SWEDENBORG BECAUSE IT FINDS THAT ALL THE DOCTRINES FORMULATED IN HIS WRITINGS ARE CONFIRMED BY THE WORD OF GOD.

THE NEW CHURCH BELIEVES THAT IT IS COMMISSIONED TO MAKE KNOWN THESE DOCTRINES TO THE WHOLE WORLD. IN ALL HUMILITY IT BELIEVES IN THIS DIVINE COMMISSION; BUT IT CHEERFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THAT IN A WIDE AND CATHOLIC SENSE THE LORD'S NEW CHURCH EXISTS WHEREVER HE IS WORSHIPPED IN HIS DIVINE HUMANITY AND HIS REVEALED WORD IS ACCEPTED AS A GUIDE TO HUMAN CONDUCT AND REGENERATION.

The NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER

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Was Swedenborg Born Too Soon?

ON January 29th, we listened with interest and pleasure to the dramatic version of the life of Swedenborg given over the Red Network of the National Broadcasting Company. We have nothing but praise for the production. To hundreds of thousands of people in the U. S. A. it presented Swedenborg as a man of loving, gentle character and brilliant intellect. To many who had never heard his name before it made Swedenborg a living figure in history. We are confident that many who from the broadcast heard about Swedenborg will want to read for themselves the life and work of this illustrious man.

We liked that broadcast. It was a fine contribution to the 250th anniversary commemoration. Also we liked the title—"He Was Born Too Soon." It suggested to its hearers the neglect of genius of which the world is often guilty. It arrested the attention of listeners and appealed to their imagination. As a caption for a newspaper column and a title for a broadcast it was excellent.

To the esoteric Swedenborgian, however, the title was lacking in exactitude. Is any divinely commissioned man ever born too soon? Are

not appearances deceptive in regard to Swedenborg's relation to time?

It was the purpose of the Lord that Swedenborg, among other duties and privileges, should witness something of the Last Judgment and reveal the facts of that Judgment to mankind. It was his duty and privilege to reveal to men the internal sense of the Divine Word. That revelation constituted the major factor of the Second Advent. In the belief that Swedenborg was specially selected and prepared to be the instrument and agent through which the doctrines of the Second Advent should be given to the world we must also believe that he appeared, under Divine Providence, at the right and proper time. That he should be, for the first two hundred years after his illumination "the voice of one crying in the wilderness" does not imply that he was born too soon. Even in relation to his scientific work he was not necessarily premature in his entry into life. Without in any way seeking to disparage Swedenborg's scientific attainments we may point to Newton's discovery of universal gravitation. There was nothing in all Swedenborg's scientific work as epochal as that of Sir Isaac Newton.

The great mathematician's ideas on gravitation were published in his *Principia* in 1687, about six months before Swedenborg was born. But there was no long neglect of Sir Isaac Newton. He was knighted in 1703 and for twenty-five consecutive years he was re-elected as president of the Royal Society. Another great contemporary of Swedenborg was the philosopher Leibnitz who was also acclaimed in his own day as an exact and brilliant thinker.

The range of Swedenborg's scientific investigations was immeasurably more comprehensive than that of either of his two brilliant contemporaries. In scientific research he outran both of them. That he was denied the recognition accorded to them was due to two circumstances. In the first place, his versatility and the wide range of his investigations robbed him of an opportunity of specializing either in mathematics, philosophy or the natural sciences. A discoverer and investigator in many realms of knowledge he failed to achieve the position of an authority in any of them. Probably his native modesty kept him from assuming any authoritative position. In the second place, and this is of far greater importance, his resignation from his assessorship, his retirement from public life, and the fact that he had turned from science to theology, alienated the sympathies of nearly all his Swedish friends.

It is fortunate for the world that this occurred. Had Swedenborg's scientific work won the recognition it deserved, there would have been a tremendous demand upon his time and pen. His long days of study and meditation would have been impossible. The scientific world would have beaten a broad track to his door. He would have been forced to give to men the long hours that were destined to be spent with spirits and angels.

A treatise on the ductless glands might have taken the place on our bookshelves now occupied by *Heaven and Hell*, and a larger *Principia* might have stood where the *Arcana Coelestia* now reigns.

It is not true that Swedenborg was born too soon. He was born at the right time for the work entrusted to him by the Lord. That he will eventually receive world-wide recognition depends upon us and our descendants. That

he is receiving even wider recognition was plainly to be seen in the recent commemoration of his birth. A. W.

The Wandering Jew

A Modern Version

By John Stuart Conning

THE legend of the wandering Jew is that of a man in the days of Christ who stood with the crowd on the Via Dolorosa as Jesus bearing His cross passed on the way to Calvary. As He trod the weary road under His heavy burden the man spat at Him with malice and contempt. Turning to him, so the legend goes, Jesus condemned the man, who had so bemeaned himself by adding shame to His afflictions, to become a wanderer upon the earth until that day when he should meet Him again face to face. And so down the ages Ahasuerus, the Wandering Jew, has gone, moving from land to land, enduring weariness and vexation of spirit, seeking death which ever evades him—immortal until he meets again the One whom he rejected and despised.

That is the legend, but it is only a legend. It could not be true, for it belies the character of Jesus who taught and practiced forgiveness of enemies to the very uttermost. Yet the legend of the Wandering Jew has come down from early Christian times in the folklore of various tribes that came under the influence of Christian missionaries. Most remarkable is the way in which it has captured the imagination of writers since the beginning of the seventeenth century when an anonymous pamphlet was published giving "An Account of a Jew by the name of Ahasuerus." It reappeared in 188 editions in French, English, German, Italian, Danish, Dutch, Polish, Finnish, and other languages. Since 1774, when Goethe wrote his unfinished poem on "The Wandering Jew," some 460 books and treatises have taken this legend as a theme, fifty-six of them since 1918.

While only a legend, is not this oft-repeated tale a vivid description of the experiences of the Jewish race through more than nineteen centuries? They have wandered everywhere,

but in no land have they had a secure and abiding dwelling place. Sooner or later persecution or expulsion have driven them forth from the lands of their sojourn. Even before the Christian era Alexandria and Rome issued decrees of expulsion against the Jews. But strange to relate, it has been during the Christian centuries and mainly in lands nominally Christian that Jews have had to endure the most implacable and persistent persecution. Jews were banished from England in 1290, from France in 1346, from Hungary in 1349, and, the greatest expulsion of all, from Spain in 1492. The explanation given for most persecutions of Jews was their persistent refusal to conform to the faith and customs of their neighbors. They insisted upon living their own life and maintaining their own racial culture. They refused to assimilate. Pobiodonesteff, Procurator of the Holy Russian Synod, justified the barbaric pogroms of the Czarist government by announcing their aim: "One-third will be killed, one-third will be driven into exile, and one-third will enter the Church."

Some comfort might be derived from a perusal of the black and ghastly record of the Jewish past if it could be shown that they were the product of a dark and cruel age now happily passed. Instead we are confronted with a Jewish situation to-day scarcely less malign and cruel than that of any former age. The Jew is still a wanderer. The discriminations and persecutions of Jews in the lands of Central and Eastern Europe, and elsewhere, are motivated still by the desire to get rid of the Jews. The fact is that there are five million Jews in these lands who are absolutely not wanted. A large part of German Jewry is in flight. Polish Jewry, facing intolerable economic conditions, pines for some haven of refuge from its sufferings. Thousands of Jews in other lands are similarly circumstanced. It is the story of the Wandering Jew over again. A mass of people is doomed to enforced vagabondage. But where shall they go? No other land, including our own, is willing to receive them. Even Palestine, the land of Jewish dreams and hopes, keeps its door but slightly ajar for Jewish refugees. Not more than 10,000 will be received during the coming year.

The tragedy of the Jew is without a parallel in history. The Wandering Jew is a human problem with which Christians must be gravely concerned. It is vain to hold to old mythological concepts as the explanation of the strange phenomenon. Our responsibility cannot be evaded by regarding the Jew as the eternal Ahasuerus, destined by divine decree to endless migrations and suffering. We are under abiding obligations to seek justice for the Jew and to show him compassion in his distress.

There is one phase of the ancient legend that is especially deserving of Christian consideration. It is surely true that the one hope of respite from unrest and insecurity for the Wandering Jew is a vision of Him whose voice still sounds along the ways of life saying: "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." He is God's answer to the age-long quest of the Jew for rest and peace. The supreme need of the Jew is Jesus Christ. And Christians must make Him known. When prejudice and ill-usage have so long hidden His face from His own people, it is nothing less than sacrilegious to blame God for their blinded eyes. Basil Mathews speaks the truth when he declares: "To say that the Jews have rejected Christ is simply not true. For the most part they have had no opportunity of seeing Him." The appeal of Christ to the Jews is as potent as to any other people. It is the inescapable obligation of Christians by word and deed to reveal Him.

—From *Our Jewish Neighbors Press Service*.

Time for God

A MINISTER sent an hour glass for a Christmas present to the members of his congregation. On the card attached was a word of greeting and the statement: "It takes three minutes for the sand to run through this glass; it will time the cooking of an egg, a long-distance telephone call, and would suggest that at least that long should be spent in prayer." Much can be done in ten minutes. Henry Drummond used to say: "Ten minutes spent in His presence every morning, aye two, if it be eye to eye and face to face will make the whole

life different." But in three minutes or two most of us cannot quiet our minds, divorce them from the pressing interests of life, and open them to the influence of the Divine. We need not only the best time of the day, but sufficient time for talking with God, so that, relieved of a sense of hurry and strain, we can concentrate our minds on communion with him.—From *Youth Action in Personal Religious Living*.

The Commemoration

DURING the past two weeks many eulogies of Swedenborg have appeared in the newspapers. One of the best of those that have reached us is the following from the *Boston Evening Transcript* of January 28th:

"THE SWEDENBORG ANNIVERSARY

"Nation-wide attention is being accorded this week to the 250th anniversary of the birth of Emanuel Swedenborg, which occurred on January 29, 1688. Well may fresh thought and praise be given to this leader's attainments! He is widely known as a great theologian, who founded a church which has many worthy and faithful followers to this day. But the public has little understanding of the extraordinary range and depth of his work as a scientist. He was, one may well say, Sweden's Benjamin Franklin. He made remarkable contributions in the fields of geometry, chemistry, geology and physiology. He developed concepts and descriptions of the functioning of the human brain which were the first of their kind in the history of science, and which served as a basis for later evolution of the study of psychology. A leading professor of the University of Vienna said in 1910, when speaking of some of Swedenborg's researches: 'If we examine these results, we are forced to admit that, regarded from the point of view of modern knowledge, they surpass nearly everything that is to be read elsewhere on this subject in the writings of the eighteenth-century authors.'

"This potent thinker did not content himself with deep draughts of the rarefied air of pure science. He kept his feet on the ground and did useful work to advance practical industry, especially as to applications of technique

in what is modernly known as mining engineering. At the same time Swedenborg's spirit soared to the heights. Earnestly he sought ultimate truth, a truth higher, as he well knew, than any material learning could establish. He saw, as Sir James Jeans in England and Robert A. Millikan in the United States have so strongly affirmed during our own time, that there is a great unity between the final mysteries of science and the force of religious truth. With utter calm of reason, Swedenborg studied the material world, and then, with rare intuition, he considered man's spiritual nature and he offered guidance and encouragement to reconcile and unify all conflicting sources of power.

"On such careful foundations the teaching of Swedenborg established a strong appeal to many persons of honest mind and worthy nature, who joined in the formation of a church much respected and very valuable to society today. This enduring achievement deserves the widest commemoration."

Convention

THE Convention Council has received and accepted an invitation from the New York Society to hold the Annual Meeting in the National Church at Washington, D. C. This invitation was extended with the concurrence of the Washington Society. Convention will meet May 4th-10th inclusive. This is probably the first time in the history of Convention that such an arrangement has been made. The New York Society will take care of the financial side of entertaining Convention, but the greater part of the real work will be done by the members of the Washington Society. New York thanks Washington for its willing help, and welcomes its fraternal cooperation.

How Far Man Is Conscious of His Rational

THE things that are in the rational are not apparent to man while he is living in the body; for the things that are in the natural are what come to perception, and seldom those in the rational except by a certain manifestation of light illuminating the natural. . . . (A. 3057.)

God Shuts the Door

"And the Lord shut him in."—Gen. vii. 16.

(New Year Sermon)

By Antony Regamey

THERE is an image which readily offers itself to our minds in that of a door. A door about to open.

As a matter of fact, it is a Scriptural image. "Behold I set before thee an open door," is one of the most appropriate and suggestive Bible passages to which a man may turn at this season, as he surveys his inner life. There is in it a divine invitation to look forward to the future with confidence. There is in it the divine promise of fresh opportunities and of new, invigorating experience, the promise of better things to come, if we will but follow where He leads.

Without God, tomorrow would be the dark unknown. Without a sense of dependence upon Him, we might continue for a time to go through the motions and gestures of material existence here on earth, but these would be meaningless and in the long run unsatisfying. For without Him we would not know the deeper, fuller life, nor do justice to our manhood. Apart from Him, there would be no "end for which the beginning was made."

It is in Him, and in Him alone that we may discover the purpose of it all. "His kingdom, on the earth, as it is in heaven." And if by much use that word kingdom has grown stale, then substitute for it, life and growth according to His laws; both the individual and mankind made anew! The complete disappearance of "man's inhumanity to man," and the release and mutual sharing of what is best and noblest in us; by our learning to overcome our baser nature, and consequent behavior as true spiritual beings; giving, in all things, first place to love and truth and righteousness and peace, and placing the welfare of others above that of our own selves.

Apart from that open door which He has placed before men, in the enlightenment He gave them by revelation and in the Scriptures, we would not even know these things, and be still more ignorant of His laws. Apart from that open door which He placed before us when He Himself came into the world, in the

garments of our nature, and said "I am the way, the truth, and the life," and also "I am the door," we could not understand as fully as we do that with which He challenges us. And apart from His presence and power within, we could do nothing.

But, as we learn to make His purpose our purpose, and give our whole selves to it, through the performance of our daily task in His spirit; as we let Him lead the way, by learning to relate all our individual and collective, yet secondary, purposes to His great aim; by learning to depend not on our own strength and wisdom but His, then every step ahead takes us further into the fulfilment of His will. Then, every step ahead becomes our fuller entrance into His kingdom. Then, even in the many choices which confront us in the course of everyday life, we find that He opens whichever door is best for us, and through that door we "go in and out, and find pasture," sustenance for the soul, and larger growth.

We are not always conscious, at the time, of these doors that open for us. At times we are impatient. In our haste to find an outward solution to our problems before we have grown fit inwardly to meet them, it seems that we are kept too long face to face with a blank wall. At times we are stubborn, and try to force open the wrong door, which we think is the only one, sure as we are that we know best, when next to it is the right one. And yet, be this as it may, as we look back upon our journey thus far with God, from the time when we first made to walk with Him; as in memory we live again the many circumstances sad or joyful we have faced with Him, the great alternatives of life on the issue of which we became what we are now, we cannot help realizing that God knew best. To be sure we did not always go by the way in which He wanted us to go; yet He was there, with us, in the very impasse into which we had followed our own ignorance, stupidity or selfishness, helping us find the way out. And He led us in every true step we took.

Our best opportunities never were of our own devising. They were the many doors of His guidance, set before us by Him, in His greater wisdom and love.

If such has been our experience, as we stand on the threshold of a new year we may indeed look forward with confidence, and trust that His guidance will continue in the days to come, and lead us on to better things, in the measure of our sincerity and devotion. We may be sure that, as He has done to this day, He shall keep on opening the doors of the fuller life unto us. But this, when we have made ourselves ready and worthy to enter.

As we gratefully think of this wonderful guidance of God in His Divine Providence, however, let us not make the mistake of conceiving Him as a glorified and earthly doorman, leaving nothing for us to do but fold our hands and walk on. The gates of the Holy City we are told, are ever open. And yet we are told also that "These shall not enter therein . . . anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." There is no complimentary entrance ticket into heaven. No man can enjoy the fuller, deeper life, until He has made His own the realities of that life, through the labor of regeneration. Neither will the kingdom of God be established upon the earth, and the lasting peace and goodwill it is to bring, until every effort is made on our part, to provide for their indwelling within the hearts and minds of men. For when all is said and done, it is as we allow the Lord to create us anew; it is as we collaborate with Him in this great work; it is in the very process of this inner transformation of our nature that God opens the doors for us.

We look upon the daily routine of our life with lassitude, and discouragement, not to say with distaste. There does not seem to be anything in it worth looking forward to, when, all of a sudden something happens to us within. The work remains the same, but we are changed. We find the Lord within, and what was up to this time commonplace becomes illumined with a new glory. How could we have ever been so blind before? Here, in our every-day work, are a thousand opportunities we find to serve God in our fellow men. A new motive, a new incentive, a new joy enter into all we do. A new

door has opened! And if the experience is sincere, if we persevere in it, if we keep on cultivating the Lord's presence within, and using His power, that joy shall continue to increase, regardless of outward success. So in all our other human relationships; in the circle of the family and in that of our friendships, in our many civic responsibilities, in our studies and even in our pleasures, He opens doors that lead to a newness of life, as by inner preparation we make ready to enter them.

But the text which is before us this morning tells us that God not only opens new doors for us, continually, but also that He closes them. "And the Lord shut him in." This is taken from the beautiful and spiritually potent story of Noah, which we need not believe literally. It is not historically true, but is a divine parable of the soul, and so, truer than history as we know it. It has an important lesson to teach us, if we but apply it to our present experience.

Noah obviously represents the gap between an old world order and a new one. As death and destruction wipe out of existence the old order, God in His providence sees to it that a small remnant of what was good in it, should be spared and preserved to serve as a new beginning. So the ark is prepared. And when all have entered it who should, the door is shut, and the ark is made to float above the waters until such time as a fresh start can be made.

Suppose we apply this to our present case as we look within ourselves, whilst we outwardly contemplate the passing of one year and the coming of another. Suppose we ask ourselves the question, what is it that shall make for us the new year truly new? Surely not a different numeral on our calendar. Surely not alone and in itself that uncertain element which we call the unexpected, the outward form which events and circumstances shall take, unpredictable as these are at the present time. For if we think spiritually, it is not time or things that matter in themselves, but what we make of them; not so much what we shall do but what we shall become by doing. Time in itself might as well stop as go on, if there is no deep change, for the better, that takes place within us and all mankind, as it pursues its course. In other words, for the soul it is not time that

exists, and counts, but spiritual progress, the passing from one state to another. If in the coming days we are, were it ever so little, made anew, then by that much, shall this new year be new for us. By that much we shall be more fully alive. By that much we shall be nearer to our goal.

Neither can we expect this process to take place all of a sudden. We shall not be changed and transformed in the twinkling of an eye and at the stroke of twelve. But slowly and gradually, as we meet our new opportunities in the right spirit, and thus as we make our own new spiritual qualities, of courage, love, patience, and endurance, of loyalty, self-sacrifice, truthfulness, purity and unselfishness.

And as we contemplate this new state in which we shall become still more truly spiritual, it is essential that we should both preserve and build on all that was good in our former state.

As we look back regretfully upon our mistakes, and disappointments and deliberate sins in the past year, let us also remember that despite what appears unto us as evident failure, despite whatever we wish to leave behind us forever, to vow to destruction; despite these things which belong to spiritual death, there are others which have been good, which are worth preserving, on which we can build our hope for better days. Let us not dwell tearfully upon the bad, but rather on what must be now carried over, and serve as a basis for improvement. Let us ask our Lord's blessing upon these good acquisitions of our true self, that whatever victory we have won over temptation may be made secure, that the inspiration we have received from that the new insight we have gained into new friendships may be lasting and increased, heaven's nearness and the life everlasting may continue to strengthen us in our earthly trials, that the new and better understanding of God, of ourselves and our fellow men to which we have attained may bring us ever closer unto Him, and make us the better able to serve Him. May He indeed, in His mercy, close the door upon these, and save them from destruction, and make them sense His purpose in us in good time!

And suppose we apply the same picture also to the present passing of an old world order in the midst of which we find ourselves, and the

coming of a new age. May He then give His Church on earth, to keep alive among men the true and tried spiritual values of religion, respect and love for His Holy Word, loyalty unto Him as He revealed Himself in Jesus Christ, life lived in the consciousness of our immortality, the subduing of self, and love for the neighbor without thought of reward. May He, in His mercy also close the door upon these, that in His own good time a good time—which is not further away from us than we are willing to receive Him—men may know the power and great glory of His Second Coming in Spirit and in truth, both in the deeper sense of the Scriptures and in their own hearts and minds; and that they may at last acknowledge Him, in His Divine Humanity, the Christ risen and glorified as the only God of heaven and earth, and change the world because of their assurance that they are alive in Him and He alive in them.

New York Alliance

On Saturday, January 15th, a meeting of the New York Alliance was held in the Brooklyn Church, with the usual box luncheon at noon providing an opportunity for a pleasant social time. A short business meeting was held at two o'clock, opening with the singing of Hymn 28—"In boundless mercy, gracious Lord, appear"—attributed to Swedenborg.

The paper on "The Use and Misuse of Love," selected for the afternoon's discussion, was not presented, as the speaker, Mrs. Tomas Spiers, was unable to be present. Following out a suggestion offered as a substitute program, and as part of the Alliance Commemoration, brief extracts were read from "Swedenborg—Life and Teaching" by Trowbridge.

Selections made relating to his "Ancestry" were read by Miss Sophie Saul; "Childhood," by Mrs. Joseph Mills; "Signs of Seership," selections made by Mrs. J. Millar Nicol were read by Mrs. Louis J. Urich; "Theological Teachings," by Mrs. Leslie Marshall. Mrs. Homiller then gave a short paper on "Does It Matter What I Think of God?" Several pertinent quotations from the Writings were used to show this is indeed a very vital matter.

At the close of the meeting, the Rev. William F. Wunsch gave some interesting information on "The Man Swedenborg."

L. L. H.



A PAGE FOR THE YOUNGER PEOPLE

By the Editor

Our Better Part

EVERYONE knows the parable of the prodigal son, the story told by the Lord Jesus, in which a young man, having got from his father the portion of wealth that would have come to him on the father's death, went into a far country and wasted his money in a riotous evil life. For a time he forgot all about home and duty, forgot the commandments of the Lord, forgot the training of his early days. Life became for him a continuous round of wicked and careless pleasure. As long as his money lasted there were plenty of companions ready to help him spend it.

The day came when the money was all gone, and the young man found himself friendless and penniless. His former companions forsook him. He was so reduced as to seek work as a swineherd, so hungry that he was sometimes glad to eat the food of swine.

In his misery he thought of the home he had left, the father he had neglected. "And when he came to himself, he said, How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger. I will arise and go to my father."

There is one sentence in this parable that speaks of our better nature. "And when he came to himself." All the time of his disobedience and evil conduct his better nature had been asleep. When it awoke, when misery brought to remembrance the innocent and happy days of his father's home he wanted to return. "He came to himself."

Does not this teach us that in the sight of the Lord our real "self" is the good within us, the heavenly qualities and affections planted by the Lord? In each of us are good and evil affections striving for the mastery. There is the self that is disobedient, untruthful and dishonest. And there is the self that is truthful, obedient, dutiful. These two selves are often in conflict.

Far away in the sky there is a star that sometimes shines brightly, sometimes grows dim. Men noticed it in olden times, but could not understand why its light waxed and waned. They called it Algol, which means, "The Demon." Men of science now tell us there are two stars revolving round each other. One is warm and bright, the other cold and dead. When the bright star comes in front the star looks big and bright to us: when the dark one comes in front it hides the light and makes it faint and dim.

Something like our minds, is it not? There are days when our better nature seems bright and active. We let the light of our good qualities shine out. We are honest, cheerful, kind and happy. There are other days when we are grumpy and bad tempered, a nuisance to ourselves and all around us. Bright star days and dark star days. Bright days are happy days; dark ones are wretched.

In the sight of the Lord only the good, bright, innocent part of our nature is of any value. Only *that* is really ourselves. If we

choose we can keep the evil part in subjection. If we will allow Him the Lord will keep the better part of us in constant wakefulness. The

bad days come when we forget the Lord. The good days come when we remember Him and call upon His name.

Some Suggestions for Sunday-school Teachers

By Laura Test Mack

(First read before the Illinois Association in Chicago in 1921. Condensed and rewritten and read at the Ohio Association in Cincinnati, October, 1937.)

A NEW-CHURCH Sunday-school should impress the children with the sacredness of the Word of God. This can be done easily if they be taught to handle the Bible carefully, and told never to let anything rest upon it.

Let them feel that where the Bible is being read that God is talking to them, and that when they pray they are talking to God, and they should kneel, facing the open Word.

Two little girls reached a basement Sunday-school early one day, and it was dark. The lights had not been lighted, they were afraid. When the teacher arrived she found that they had opened the Bible on the lectern. They said that their teacher had told them, when the Bible was open "God was with them." So they were no longer afraid.

Tell the children that each one has an inner body and inner senses—that these make the angel inside of him. That he wants that angel to grow, just as he wants the body that he can see to grow. So he will have to feed the angel. How can he do that? By reading the Bible every day, learning verses from it and doing what it tells him to do.

Try to impress each child with his responsibility for the care and growth of the angel inside of him.

Teach him that when he reads the Word, it draws the heavenly angels very near to him and gives him power to send evil thoughts away. He must watch his thoughts, for bad thoughts make him do bad things. Tell him his mind is like a moving picture machine. That it not only takes pictures of what he does, but even of what he thinks. In order to have beautiful pictures to show, when his mind is seen in heaven, he must do beautiful things for other people.

Try to apply the Sunday-school lesson to the everyday happenings of the child.

With these thoughts in the teacher's mind, she should not find it hard to give a distinctive New-Church teaching to each lesson.

Make the stories of open vision very plain, for if these are understood, I believe it will be easier to teach the child how Swedenborg was taught by the Lord. These stories of open vision teach so plainly the power sin had to shut the Lord out of the lives of the people in the Old Testament.

Teach them how the earliest people had perception of the spiritual world; that later because men sinned they could not see God, so He had to send an angel with His message. Only those whose spiritual eyes and ears were opened could receive that message. Later, in the time of Samuel, the ear only was open, "For the Word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision." (*I Sam. iii. 1.*) Dwell on this.

Later the prophets lamented that the "way" was closed by which the Lord approached His people, on account of their sin. For this reason, because the "way" was closed, the Lord came Himself, as He had promised, in a body He took from Mary, to overcome this evil for us. Then all could see His body, but no one seemed to understand who was inside, for instead of an angel, as we have inside of us, it was God Who lived in Jesus' body, so we call Him the Lord God. The evil spirits seemed to know this better than the disciples did. Many quotations show this.

"They cried out saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy one of God." (*Mark i. 24.*)

"He cast out many devils; and suffered not

the devils to speak because they knew him." (*Mark* i. 34; also *Matt.* viii, 29; *Luke* viii. 28.)

Impress the children with the fact that the Lord wants to live in their hearts if they will let Him, but as the people in the Old Testament stories shut Him out of their lives, so they are doing if they do not listen to Him when He tells them what is right and wrong.

Do the older children have the same interest and love for the Sunday-school that the younger ones do? I fear not, and if not, why not? Are the teachers of the older children as well fitted to feed them as the teachers of the younger classes? They are not as easily fed! Can the teacher answer one question so as to awaken an interest and call forth another question? Is there a satisfied look when the answer is given or does the child leave with an uncertain feeling?

Are we satisfied with ourselves as teachers? Do we know much that we cannot dilute to feed the child? Can we accommodate our knowledge to his mental state?

I have often been impressed with the fact that children who come to us from other than New-Church Sunday-schools seem to know the facts of the letter of the Word better than our own children do. Here are a few questions taken from an old Church manual. Can you answer them?

Name, in order, sixteen leading characters of the Old Testament.

Name six periods of Old Testament history.

What was the extent of the Decline?

Name three persons in this period.

What is the extent of the period of servitude?

Name five epochs in this period.

Name five persons in this period.

Give the dates of the following: Zacharias, Sarah, Nehemiah.

I do not believe the person who wrote these questions had any conception of the thoughts I gave earlier, but cannot we, too, give the children the view of the letter that these questions imply.

When we think of the limited time we have for our lessons and that perhaps the child may be with us for only a short period, it becomes a serious duty to us teachers to give each child, each Sunday, some definite spiritual idea. With the Lord's help we are planting "remains" that will help them in eternity. When he look at our teaching in this light, can we go with an unpre-

pared lesson? If we go brim-full will not the child go home happy, the angel in each having been fed, and will not he come back eager the next Sunday for more.

We can make the Sunday-school mean all this to the children if we, the teachers, do our part and intelligently follow our Saviour's command: . . . "Feed my lambs."

EVIDENCE SOCIETY NOTES

The Evidence Society has received an important and interesting letter from Henry de Geymuller, member of the Evidence Society of the French-Speaking New-Church Federation, from which the following extracts are taken dealing with the present public attitude in Central Europe toward Swedenborg's teachings:

Swedenborg was brought notably to the attention of the public during these last two years, and many articles were devoted to him in France, Germany, Austria, Italy and Switzerland, due to a series of literary "events." These are the following:

In France (also French Switzerland and Italy): (1) The publication of Henry de Geymuller's "Swedenborg et les Phenomenes Psychiques"; (2) the French translation of Lamm's "Swedenborg," with a preface by Paul Valery, of the French Academy (1936).

In Germany (also Austria, German Switzerland): the publication of the German translation of Geymuller's book ("Swedenborg und die Ubersinnliche Welt"), with a preface by Geheimrat Prof. Dr. Hans Driesch, of Leipzig University.

(3) An article by Dr. von Winterstein: "Swedenborg's Religious Crisis and His Dreambook," which appeared in the psychoanalytical review, *Imago*, No. 3, 1936, at Vienna.

In France:

So far as one can judge from articles that appeared in the press, reactions were rather favorable, but never enthusiastic; a few were unfavorable. Publications consecrated to psychical research, like the *Revue de Metapsychique*, expressed themselves with favor and admitted Swedenborg's transcendental faculties; Protestant reviews rather commended my book and recognized Swedenborg's importance as a religious thinker. A Catholic review said that Swedenborg's ideas concerning the connection between soul and body were full of interest, though, "of course, utterly false," still the review expressed its contentment because Swedenborg opposed the doctrine of reincarnation. Philosophical and literary publica-

tions took no notice of my book, or simply mentioned its contents.

As to Lamm's book, it was more of a literary event, on account of Paul Valery's preface. Many papers chiefly spoke of Valery's merits. As you know, Lamm's book, excellent as it is from a scholarly point of view, is rather negative. Louis Gillet, of the French Academy, wrote an article in *Gringoire* (the greatest French weekly paper), in a rather condescending and sarcastic tone. The Rev. E. E. Iungerich wrote to M. Gillet, protesting against his inventions. Gillet's answer was indeed quite humble and contrite; the French academician expressed his regret for having ill-treated one of the great "temoins du mystere."

As to Paul Valery himself, he wrote an interesting preface full of admiration for Swedenborg, whom he considers one of the "arresting figures of the great drama of human thought." He thinks there is a great problem, a great mystery involved in Swedenborg's case, which it would be of the highest importance to solve. "I love hunting for the sake of hunting," says Valery at the end of his preface, "and there are few hunts more taking and manifold than the hunt after the mystery Swedenborg." It may be said that the sympathetic interest which a man like Valery takes in Swedenborg is rather significant. It will contribute much toward a more objective and favorable appreciation of Swedenborg's outstanding merits in French-speaking countries.

I may add here that M. Jean Monnier, Professor of Theology at Paris and at Strasburg University, has a profound admiration for Swedenborg. He wrote a favorable review of my book in the *Review of Religious History and Philosophy*, and he is the author of the excellent and appreciative article on Swedenborg in the new Protestant encyclopedia of religious knowledge. This article will no doubt have a favorable influence on Protestant ministers.

I hope that one of us will be able to write the article on Swedenborg in the "New French Encyclopedia" which is now appearing in fascicles.

Italy:

Articles favorable to Swedenborg have appeared in the Italian papers and reviews, chiefly in the *Ricerca Psychica*. A long and sympathetic article, with a portrait of the Swedish seer, has appeared in the *Domenica Illustrata*, of Rome. An Italian scientist (whose name I now forget) has the intention of writing a study on the priority of some of Swedenborg's scientific discoveries and theories. I was told so by Sigr. D'Ambrosio of Florence, who knows the said scientist.

Most, if not all, of these Italian articles were inspired by the reading of the French edition of my book.

Germany (and Austria):

Let us first speak of Dr. von Winterstein's psychoanalytical study ("Imago"), which was

mentioned by Dr. Spoerl in *New Christianity* (Winter, 1937). This article pretends to reveal to us the subconscious complexes of Swedenborg. It is exclusively based on a Freudian interpretation of Swedenborg's dreams, and this interpretation sounds absurd. It need not be taken seriously, but it will be considered as fundamental by the psychoanalysts throughout the world, as Dr. Freud is the editor and director of the review *Imago* (Vienna).

NEWS OF THE CHURCH

BALTIMORE, MD.

The pastor will preach on "Five Miracles" at the morning service of February 13th; and his sermon topics for February 20th and 27th, respectively, will be "Why Have a Law?" and "The University of Experience."

The Men's Club meets at the church on Wednesday evening, February 9th, at 8:00 o'clock for a lively discussion of a popular topic.

The Young People's League will meet with Mrs. Ray Schlehr at North Linthicum at 8:00 o'clock on Sunday, February 13th.

On Wednesday, February 16th, the Woman's Guild will meet with Mrs. Marion Gressitt, 333 North Charles Street, at 2:00 o'clock. On the following day a card party given by Mrs. David Cordle at 1117 St. Paul Street, will begin at 8:00 o'clock. Admission is thirty-five cents.

The flowers on the altar on Sunday, January 30th, were in loving memory of Mr. George Treut and were given by his family.

The League study class plans to meet on Sunday evening, February 20th, at the church. Supper is to be served at 6:00 o'clock, and the study begins at 8:00.

BROCKTON, MASS.

The Brockton Society felt honored and happy to share in the observance of the 250th anniversary of Swedenborg's birth. Following the supper served by the Ladies' Circle, January 20th, the minister of the Society, the Rev. Harold R. Gustafson, gave an interesting, informal address on Swedenborg and the plans for the observance of this anniversary in New York, Boston, in the local church, and elsewhere. After the supper old-fashioned dances were enjoyed in the ladies' parlor, with young and old joining in these. A Swedenborg Children's Party was one of the most delightful events in the program of the Society. Miss Inez Chapman, general chairman of the Anniversary program, was in charge, assisted by the Rev. and Mrs. Harold R. Gustafson, a committee of young people and a number of hostesses. Mr. Gustafson opened the party by a greeting to the children; Miss Meriel Blanchard, of the church choir, gave several delightful songs; Mrs. Franklin H. Blackmer, of Cambridge, spoke to the children understandingly on the subject, "More Than a Party"; and Mrs. Arthur L. Atwood read brief, original stories in verse. The Rev. Franklin H. Blackmer, former minister of the Society, was a welcome guest who had a part in the program. After refreshments were served, the children sang together several familiar hymns. Over one hundred and fifty children attended the party, including a large number of children from other Sunday-schools of the city.

At the Anniversary Week service, Sunday morning, January 23rd, the Rev. Harold R. Gustafson preached on the theme, "The Vision of John in Patmos." A vesper service was held in the church that afternoon at 4:00 o'clock in charge of the minister, assisted by the Rev.

Franklin H. Blackmer, who showed slides giving glimpses of the life of Swedenborg, and spoke interestingly of him and his great work.

The choir gave appealing special music, with Miss Grace James at the organ. That evening the Young People's League joined with the Leagues of the neighboring New Churches in a group study meeting at Elmwood. Each of the three study groups of the church—the Senior Young People's League, the Junior League, and the Adult Study Class—honored the 250th anniversary of Swedenborg in some special way between January 17th to 29th. Tuesday evening January 25th, Mr. and Mrs. Gustafson entertained the Adult Study Class enjoyably at their home. The Ladies' Circle and the Matronalia Club were hostesses on Friday afternoon, January 28th, from 3:00 to 5:00 at an Anniversary Reception and Tea, to which the women's organizations of the city were invited. On Sunday, January 30th, the Church had a special Anniversary and National League Service in the morning at 11:00 o'clock. At the Sunday-school observance, preceding the church service, the prize essays on the life of Swedenborg, selected by three judges from those written by the boys and girls of the Sunday-school were read.

BUFFALO

The Church of the Divine Humanity in Buffalo celebrated the 250th anniversary of the birth of Swedenborg with a dinner held on January 28th, one day in advance of the actual birth date. The executive committee sponsoring the affair included John Hagmann, President of the Society; A. H. Palmer, Secretary; Thomas Paul, K. S. Acton and Fred Stoldt. The Ladies' Aid Society, Mme. Luetti, President, and Mrs. A. H. Palmer, Secretary, assisted in the arrangements.

The dinner program included the reading of letters from former pastors of the Buffalo Society—Dr. Frank A. Gustafson, General Pastor of the Kansas Association, and the Rev. William H. Beales, of Detroit, who is chairman of the National Council of Ministers.

NEW YORK

The New York Society of the New Church celebrated the Swedenborg Anniversary with an all-day program which was an overwhelming and outstanding success. One hundred and sixty-five persons attended the morning service, and were thrilled and inspired by the wonderful music, and the fine address given by the Rev. Arthur Wilde. Mr. William Eder, talented cellist, who has just returned to this country after ten years in Germany, was guest artist at the morning service.

Over a hundred persons stayed for the congregational lunch at 1:00 o'clock. Following this was an exhibition, in the church library, of phototypes and lithographic copies of Swedenborg's original manuscripts, the former loaned by the Swedenborg Foundation and the latter by the Rev. Arthur Wilde. Another exhibit which excited great interest was the talking machine for the blind, with records on Swedenborg's teachings which have just been completed by Mr. Wilde.

Mr. William Rutherford, the Organist and Musical Director of the New York Society, gave a fine organ recital at three o'clock. His program was unusually beautiful and his magnificent playing thrilled his audience of over two hundred and fifty persons.

Following Mr. Rutherford's recital was an illustrated lantern lecture by the Rev. Arthur Wilde. The New York newspapers had given this lecture wide publicity, with the result that many strangers were present who enthusiastically expressed their interest and appreciation of Mr. Wilde's masterly treatment of his subject. Many of the lantern views were taken by Mr. Wilde on his various

visits to Sweden. Afternoon tea was served in the Parish House at the close of the lecture.

PORTLAND, ORE.

The annual meeting of the Portland Society was held on January 12th and was attended by nearly forty persons. The occasion was preceded by a dinner and by community singing which gave a gay and enthusiastic air to the proceedings. It was decided to try the experiment of having a luncheon to follow the morning service on the first Sunday of every month, each member to bring food and equipment for himself and his friends, in order to lessen the work usually connected with such occasions. This luncheon will be followed by a new program entitled "A Council for Theologic and Spiritual Research." The purpose of this forum will be for the members to jointly find and share with one another things of interest which they have come across during the month on the matter of "The State of Religion Among the People."

A Swedenborg Anniversary Dinner was held on Friday evening, January 28th. Two fine addresses were given at this time, one by Mr. Blackler (chairman of the Observance Committee) on "Swedenborg's Influence on Modern Thought" and the second by the Rev. William R. Reece (pastor of the Portland Society) on "Swedenborg's New Discoveries in Religion."

On Sunday, January 30th, the morning service was a commemoration service in honor of Emanuel Swedenborg, the pastor's topic being "Swedenborg, Prophet of a New World." Open House, also at the church, followed from 1:00 to 4:00, with an extensive collection of Swedenborgiana on display and a forum discussion on "Swedenborg's Philosophy of Life" conducted by Mr. Blackler. Chairman of the committee in charge of this occasion was Mrs. Esther Bowman, to whose efforts the Society is indebted for the success of the occasion.

COMING EVENTS

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Directors of Swedenborg Foundation, Inc., will be held at 51 East 42nd Street, New York City, on Monday, February 14, 1938, at 4:00 P. M.

The Annual Meeting of the New York Association will be held in the New York church, 118 East 35th Street, on Tuesday, February 22nd, commencing at 10:00 A.M. The sermon at the morning service will be preached by the Rev. Richard Tafel of Philadelphia. At the afternoon meeting an address will be given by the Rev. Fred Sidney Mayer, President of Convention. The address will be followed by an open discussion. Lunch, at a nominal charge of fifty cents, will be served at the Duane Hotel, 237 Madison Avenue, at one o'clock.

The Rev. Russell Eaton

The Rev. Russell Eaton, president of Urbana Junior College, was the guest speaker of the Campaign County Historical Society at its January program held at the Public Library in Urbana,

Ohio, on January 27th. "Mr. Eaton called attention to the function of the Historical Society in serving the community, and referred to similar functions being performed in other parts of the country in the work of local preservation of memorials.

"He then reviewed the connection between Urbana University, founded in 1850, and the Church of the New Jerusalem (Swedenborgian), members of which were among the earliest settlers of Urbana, and spoke of various presidents of the college who have been prominent in community life in the past. Among these were Milo G. Williams, Rev. Frank Sewall, Dr. Thomas Moses, John Williams, Dr. Carroll May, and others. In closing, Mr. Eaton presented a brief summary of the life of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772), scientist, philosopher, theologian, and as Swedenborg called himself 'Servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.'"

New York Association

The high spot of the New York Association's Commemoration Program in honor of the 250th anniversary of Swedenborg's birth was undoubtedly the banquet at the Hotel Delmonico in New York, on Wednesday, January 26th. Four hundred and fifty persons were present to hear the many fine speakers of the evening. Since it is hoped shortly to publish a complete account of the evening's proceedings, the MESSENGER will not attempt to give a report in the present issue, but cannot refrain from a message of congratulation to the committee which was responsible for the overwhelming success of this notable event under the able chairmanship of Mrs. Frank A. Vanderlip.

California Association

The celebration of the 250th anniversary of the birth of Swedenborg started in California with a lecture, delivered in the Pasadena Public Library by the Rev. Othmar Tobisch of San Francisco, on January 19th. In spite of a rainstorm, some seventy persons attended and viewed with interest the exhibit of Swedenborg's works there.

Friday, the 28th, was the peak of the Commemoration in Los Angeles. A banquet in the Chapman Hotel was attended by one hundred and thirty. Ten speakers on the program lauded various aspects of Swedenborg's influence upon the country in which he was born and upon the civilized world of to-day. Among the speakers was the Swedish Consul, who spoke most interestingly on the change that came over Sweden in the time of Swedenborg.

Open House was held every day of the week January 24th to January 29th. Among the many high spots of the week's activities was a dinner in the Parish Hall given to one hundred and twenty persons, the guest speaker at which was the Presi-

dent of the San Diego Council of Churches. He paid especial tribute to Swedenborg's unveiling of the spiritual sense of the Word of God. A pageant illustrating this theme was written by Helen Shields and executed by the League, leaving a deep impression upon all who saw it.

OBITUARY

DEWEY.—On December 7, 1937, at her home in San Francisco, Mrs. Thyra R. Dewey entered into the higher life at the age of eighty years.

Mrs. Dewey was the daughter of New-Church parents, Pehr Reinhold Ringstrom, a native of Sweden, and Cornelia (Doughty) Ringstrom, of New York. Her grandfather, the Rev. Charles John Doughty, was a minister of the New York Society; and her uncle, the Rev. John Doughty, was the first minister of the First Society of the New Jerusalem in San Francisco. The young Thyra Ringstrom became a member of her uncle's church in 1872. She received her early education in San Francisco and completed it in Europe, where she spent several years with her family. After her return to San Francisco she married, in 1883, Frederick Hastings Dewey, a native of New Hampshire. Without any persuasion from his wife or her family, Mr. Dewey grew keenly interested in the doctrines and became a member of the Church. For several years he was active in the Society and in the old Pacific Coast Association, a forerunner of the present California Association. Later, Mr. and Mrs. Dewey removed with their family from the near vicinity of San Francisco and the problem of distance and the care of a growing family prevented close association with the Church. On their return to San Francisco in 1903, however, Mr. and Mrs. Dewey immediately resumed their Church affiliations. Mr. Dewey became a member of the Board of Trustees and was President of the Society for several years prior to his death in 1913. Mrs. Dewey was active in the Ladies' Aid and in the Women's Alliance which succeeded it. She became disabled in 1930 and could no longer attend services nor take an active part in the affairs of the Church; but she always retained a solicitous interest in its welfare. She was a devoted wife and mother and a loyal friend, and throughout her long life she held to the most steadfast and unwavering faith. She is survived by two sons, four daughters, and a brother, Sigurd A. Ringstrom.

CALENDAR

Feb. 20.

Second Sunday before Lent

(See B. W., p. 461)

THE WORD

Sel. 254: "Ho, every one that thirsteth."

Lesson I. Ex. ii.

In place of Responsive Service, Anthem III, B. W., p. 327: "Blessed be the Lord."

Lesson II. Luke viii, 4-15.

Gloria, Benedictus and Faith.

Hymns (Mag.) 239: "Lord, Thy Word abideth."

241: "How shall we celebrate Thy love?"

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