

The **NEW CHURCH MESSENGER**



March 9, 1938

In This Issue

Swedenborg, Prophet of the
New Humanity

Othmar Tobisch

The Doctrine of the Lord

William H. Beales

"The New Christianity" and
the New Church

Clarence Hotson

Regeneration

Charles W. Morse

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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A Day of Prayer

MARCH 4th was observed in many churches in this land as a "World Day of Prayer." We understand that this observance was not limited to churches in the United States but had the cooperation of many Protestant churches throughout the English-speaking world. The object of the observance was to seek Divine help for the establishment of peace and for the acquisition of wisdom whereby the nations may be led out of confusion, ignorance and other obstacles to spiritual growth. Of the earnestness and unselfishness at the back of this movement there is no possible doubt. It was an altruistic, consecrated effort to seek Divine help for mankind in the present state of uncertainty and confusion in human affairs. It was in direct accord with the teaching of the Saviour, "that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

Of course it is impossible to evaluate the results of a day of prayer. That there should be any immediate, visible effect would be too much to expect; but unity of thought and purpose on the part of millions of people must surely have some effect in opening up the avenues whereby spiritual influx from the heavens is effected. But we may be justified in saying

that for such unity of thought and influence to be effective it must be continuous and not limited to one day. Doubtless the promoters of the effort realized this, and expected that the prayerful attitude of millions of people would be maintained over a considerable period of time.

We do not know much about the telepathic influence of prayer. To what extent the prayers of peaceful people may influence and moderate the thoughts and desires of the warlike and aggressive portion of the world's population is something of which we are almost entirely ignorant. What little we do know of mass psychology tends to support the idea that the human mind is open to the influence of waves of thought from other minds that are operating in unison. There is evidence, also, that prayers for the sick may be helpful even though the sick man himself is unaware of the fact that others are praying for him. How far, if at all, the minds of the evil and selfish may be influenced by the prayers of the good is something that at present no man understands.

"Prayer," says Swedenborg, "regarded in itself, is talking with God; and some internal

view then of the matters of the prayer, to which there answers something like an influx into the perception or thought of the mind, so that there is a certain opening of the man's interiors towards God" (A. C. 2535). This reveals to us the meaning and effect of prayer upon the mind of him who prays. We have not found anything in the Writings that gives information regarding the effect upon him for whom prayer may be offered.

During His early ministry the Lord frequently prayed, not only for strength during His hours of combat and temptation but for His followers and their spiritual welfare. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."

Worthy of note is the fact that the prayers of the Saviour were almost always for the strengthening and extension of good, rather than for the confusion and defeat of the evil. Which justifies the assumption that the victory over evil in this world will be accomplished only by the development and extension of good. Our prayers will never secure from the Almighty a suspension of liberty in the lives of the evil; but the power of righteousness may grow so great that evil men would feel its influence and be restrained thereby. The most effective form of prayer is individual obedience to Divine law. Widespread righteousness would be a rock against which the waves of evil would beat in vain.

This does not mean that we should dispense with prayer. More prayer, and still more prayer, is needed in the world. But it should be prayer that seeks first the growth of righteousness and it should be supplemented by a life according to the Golden Rule.

There is a significant passage in Swedenborg's *Apocalypse Revealed* that should be memorized by all New-Church people. "That he who knows anything about the Lord's Advent, and the New Heaven and the New Church . . . should pray that it may come: and that he who longs for truths, should pray that the Lord may come with light; and he who loves truths will then receive them from the Lord without any labor of his own."

Compared with some of the prayers of the

Old Testament the prayers of the Saviour strike an entirely new note. The psalmist frequently prays for the confusion of the evil and the condemnation of the heathen. The Saviour prayed for the extension of good, and for His bitterest enemies His petition was "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

A. W.

Mardi Gras

THE annual celebration of *Mardi Gras* in New Orleans, and of course, in France and French colonies reminds most of the celebrants that the season of Lent has arrived. The *Mardi Gras* of the French is the Shrove Tuesday of the English and akin to the Fast-nacht of the Germans. It was originally "shriving time," "absolution time." People indulged in a little bout of merriment and feasting, then hied themselves to the priest to get absolution; after which they settled down to seven weeks of rigorous self-denial, fasting and other penitential observances.

The influence of the medieval customs of the Christian Church is greatly diminished; but something of those customs still linger—Shrove Tuesday, Ash Wednesday and Lenten solemnity still remain with us, though their observance is no longer obligatory. Many people approach Lent with reluctance. They feel that they ought to make some attempt at personal self-sacrifice and self-discipline during this season. And many of them arrange a little private *Mardi Gras* before devoting themselves to their self-apportioned discipline. Having entered the Lenten season, however, they commence to mortify the flesh. We know one man whose idea of a suitable form of mortification is to dispense with cream in his coffee. Another acquaintance makes a great sacrifice. He buys no cigars and contents himself with a pipe.

We are not seeking to gibe at small sacrifices or at self-imposed Lenten discipline. They are excellent things. We need more of them. Children, especially, should be taught to use Lent as a season of self-restraint. Even if it had no higher significance, Lent would be of value as a season wherein to break the chains of questionable habits, and as a season for the

cultivation of serious thought and self examination. But for grown men and women, the abstinence from sugar or some other dainty seems feeble and puerile. If we want to make sacrifices during Lent, let them be real sacrifices. "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke. Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked that thou cover him, and that thou hide not the naked from thine own flesh?"

Compared with this Divine ideal of fasting, our small Lenten sacrifices appear childish.

They are good for children, but for adults they are altogether inadequate. There are thousands of people who want to get married but will not dare to do so during Lent. In their sight a Lenten wedding would savor of impropriety. Yet these same people will make no real attempt to curb their temper, practice forgiveness, or care for the poor. To fast spiritually is to abstain from evil and to seek the good of life. This is our primary duty in Lent, and in every other season of the year. When we have set ourself to this great task we can add to it any form of self-discipline we may choose; but without it our self-denial is of little worth.

A. W.

Swedenborg, Prophet of the New Humanity

By Othmar Tobisch

(A broadcast over NBC Station KGO, San Francisco, January 29, 1938.)

BY a prophet we mean, generally, one who has a special endowment to see beyond the confinement of his own day, and envision a situation as yet unknown to his contemporaries. Swedenborg was such a person. He lived in the midst of nations which were as yet intolerant of any other kind of faith but their own, established and protected by the forces of state. But Swedenborg found in England and Holland enough religious liberty associated with political liberty to enable him to print and publish his prophetic works on the liberty of faith and the rationality of religion which earned him the name "Prophet of the North."

Swedenborg saw far beyond the confines of his day. He envisioned an entirely new age, an age of reason for religion. He foresaw new liberty in every field of human endeavor. He announced a judgment of spiritual matters, releasing new moral forces which set off innumerable liberalizing movements on earth. Consider only the following "revolutions," which really were liberalizations in political and moral fields: 1. The American Revolution, establishing the right of free-born men and those principles of liberty laid down in the Constitution of the United States. 2. The French Revolution with

its own principles of freedom, justice, and brotherhood. 3. Science threw from her the shackles placed on her by a benighted hierarchy. 4. The period of "enlightenment" in literary circles helped to clear away the clouds hovering over the esthetic foundation of society. 5. Even the self-determination principle formulated by President Wilson belongs into the system of effects started by the "Last Judgment" of 1757. In true prophetic manner, like an Isaiah or perhaps more like a John at Patmos, the Nordic seer announced the coming of a "New Church" a "New Jerusalem." Consider in their full import the inflow of freedom into humanity by such things as the abolition of slavery, the right of women to vote, the freedom to print all matters except the obscene, or the right of meeting and of expressing oneself in public without censorship by government. A new freedom asserted itself, not only in all concerns of the *res publica*, but also on the material plane in increased speed of communication, by radio, telegraph, airplane, television and the like.

A new humanity is forming on earth. We claim that Swedenborg, not of himself, but as a spiritual messenger, was the prophet of this

new humanity. A new body of humanity cannot be formed without its spiritual creative impetus. Swedenborg announced that this new humanity can have only one such creative impetus within itself, namely a Divine Humanity. Swedenborg's vision of the new humanity cannot be seen apart from or without the God-Man (*D. L. W.* 11). The perfect pattern of man or, for that matter, of humanity, is the visible Divine, the Lord Jesus Christ. In Him alone, therefore, do we find the eternal form, or pattern. On earth this pattern shows itself a progressively perfecting humanity.

I believe that all faiths of the world agree in this, that they all look towards the perfect man and the perfect humanity. They all struggle toward that goal in more or less roundabout ways and by more or less accurate directions.

Now Swedenborg's sole mission, in my estimate, was to give to a rather confused mankind the true goal and the correct way of perfection. This perfection exists in the Lord Jesus Christ and, through Him, in the spiritual realm, which is an ever perfecting humanity. From thence it presses down into the hearts and minds of men on earth, bringing forth ever better forms of human institutions, and ever clearer ideas of the true humanity of man. Its goal is a new society of free men and women, acting in conformity with rational ideas, for the benefit of the common good.

We invite you to make your own comparisons. Make a survey of the state of affairs in

the middle of the eighteenth century. Set it off against the situation to-day. Set down the improvements reached and established in human liberty and rationality in every respect. Then read, just as an example, Swedenborg's *Heaven and Its Wonders* and see for yourself whether or not Swedenborg was not actually the prophet of this new humanity now forming ever stronger on earth.

He revealed from the spiritual world and existence, those principles which now take form all around us in every kind and manner. Every permanent change toward a greater freedom of thought, expression and belief, and toward a more neighborly relation with the fellow man finds its spiritual essence in the things heard and seen by him in the world of eternal life.

One day, Swedenborg beheld a temple upon the gate of which was written: *NUNC LICET*—that is, it is now permitted to enter by reasoning into the mysteries of faith. What a boon to humanity this is! For only by a true religion can a true humanity be formed. Reforms which are based on the self-intelligence of men will always fail in the end. Only those permanent gains which are won by the battles of spiritual good and truth against the infernal forces of evil and falsehood are lifting up humanity towards that realm of divine truth and good which the seer envisaged. It is not a commonwealth based on the tables of stone of frigid legality, it is a new commonwealth formed by the Living Word, the glorified humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Doctrine of the Lord

Prepared for Young People

By William H. Beales

THE first principle of New-Church teaching regarding the Divine Being is that He is One in Essence and in Person. This is basic, and does not permit of any variation whatever. It is true that there are passages in the Word which appear to be contrary to this teaching, but when rightly understood, such is not the case. All things of genuine religion must, and

do, harmonize with this basic truth of the Oneness of God.

Also, all things of religion must and do harmonize with the love of God. For God is Love Itself, and nothing comes forth from Him that is not actuated by that Divine Love. There is much in life which calls for explanation, much which may, at times, tend to shake our faith,

but in New-Church thought, all things are seen to harmonize with the one great central truth: The unchanging, unfathomable love of God. Life is understandable only in the light of that truth.

Can a man know God? We owe all that is good and true, all that is beautiful and lovely, yes, even life itself, to Him. How natural, then, that there should be the deep desire to know this God "in Whom we live, and move and have our being." Is it possible for this desire to be gratified? In one sense, no. The finite understanding cannot possibly grasp the true nature of the Infinite. The very terms imply a difference, not merely of degree, but of kind. God, as He is "in Himself," is divine; He is the Absolute, the Eternal. True, we use these terms, but we can never do other than think of them in a finite, limited way, and there is nothing of finiteness, nothing of limitation, in the Divine. No, from the very nature of God and of man, we can never know Him in the absolute sense.

But that fact need never disconcert or discourage us. Is not our knowledge of each other also limited? I go back in thought to a certain white-walled school room. It is Sunday afternoon, and the late winter sun is shining through frosted windows. There is the low, pleasant hum of voices in the big room, as the classes are busy talking over the lesson for the day. Near the door is the great wood-stove, into which the older boys throw the cord-wood logs, and around that stove is gathered a class of lads taught by a gray-haired old gentleman who is very earnest. There comes a lull in the sound of the voices, and even now I can hear, as though spoken only yesterday, that kindly old teacher's words: "You never saw a man; I never saw a man; you never saw me; I never saw you."

I was young, then, and I thought the old gentleman had suddenly lost his senses. "You never saw me!" Why, I was *looking* at him. What foolishness! But to-day I am older, and I understand better what that teacher meant—and he was right. For we never do see the "I" and the "you." Why? Because they are not subject to the laws that govern what we call seeing. The real "I" and "you" are not of such a nature that they can ever be seen.

But what of it? That fact does not interfere with the joy of mutual intercourse to the slightest degree. For that "I" and "you" which cannot be seen as they are "in themselves," are clothed with substances which *can* be seen. They are clothed with bodies, in and through which they manifest themselves to a wonderful degree. The real inner self, which is not subject to the laws of time nor space, is the real determining factor in the formation of the body which clothes it. All unconsciously to us, it controls and directs its growth and development and infills and animates every fibre and cell. It imparts the light of love to the eyes; it gives tone to the voice; warmth to the hand-clasp; the smile to the lips. The true "you," the true "I" are seen and known only as they are manifested in and through the body. Also, to a lesser degree, in the things with which we surround ourselves. Go into the room of a person whom you have never met, and you will be able to form at least some conception of the character, the habits and the tastes of that person. The inner self will manifest itself in countless ways. The kind of pictures on the walls, the curtains at the windows, the furniture, the general tone of the room. In all of these the real nature of the occupant will to some degree be manifested.

So it is with our relationship to God the Lord. As we have seen, we cannot know Him as He is "in Himself," but we can, and do know Him as He manifests Himself to us—God as He is "from Himself." And to all eternity, as we progress in spiritual development, as we grow more and more in His "image" and "likeness," receiving more and more fully of His love, that manifestation will become clearer and more perfect. Just as the deepening of mutual love between two human souls brings a deeper understanding which is often beyond the power of language to express, so the deepening of that love which flows from the heart of God into the hearts of men, brings a deeper, fuller knowledge of the true nature of the Divine. And it will always be so, to all eternity.

But, how *does* God manifest Himself to man? We will reverse the order of our thinking. First, He makes Himself known in and through His creation. Just as we may see something of the nature of the occupant of a room by the

things which adorn it, so we may see in the glories and the beauty of the created universe something of the nature of God the Creator. In the wonder of the starry heavens, the glory of the sunset, the beauty of the rose, we may see evidences of the love and wisdom of the Almighty. Man's selfishness and folly have marred much of this beauty, but even so, to those with eyes to see, "the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord." God manifests Himself in His creation.

But is that all? Can we not hope to know more of Him than is evidenced even in this wonderful way? Is there no personal way in which we may know God?

Go with me down the ages which have passed. Hear the voice of Jehovah, the Eternal God, speaking through the mouth of the prophet Isaiah: "I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour." "Thus saith Jehovah that created the heavens; God himself, that formed the earth, and made it—there is no God beside me; a just God and a saviour; there is none beside me." "Behold the Lord God will come with strong hand, and His arm shall rule for him; he shall feed his flock like a shepherd; he shall gather the lambs with his arm." All through, this glorious prophecy rings with the promise of the coming of the One God, to redeem mankind. He Who was and is Creator, would Himself become the Saviour.

Now go forward with me in thought. It is the same land, the same people, only many hundreds of years have passed since the time of Isaiah and the other prophets. The Babe of Bethlehem, Whose coming was heralded by the hosts of heaven in the most glorious anthem ever heard by mortal ears, has grown into manhood. He has been telling His disciples of that unseen God—the "Father," the Eternal One. And one disciple, Philip, voices the thought which was probably in the minds of each of the twelve: "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Show us the Father! And patiently comes the answer, the significance of which the world has been very, very slow to realize: "Have I been so long time with you, and hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. I and the Father are one."

And again, back for a moment to Isaiah. He is telling of the coming of that Babe of Bethlehem, Who was to save mankind from spiritual death. And by what name does he call Him? Names put into his mouth by the God Whose prophet he was: "His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, Father of Eternity, the Prince of Peace." The Mighty God! Father of Eternity! Can there be any doubt about it? "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father. I and the Father are One."

Here, then, is the New-Church teaching of the Lord: God, the Eternal, the I Am, did manifest Himself to mankind, as fully and definitely as one human being is manifested to another; and in the same way, but with certain very important differences. We have seen that the soul is the real "I" and the real "you"; and that the soul is clothed with a body. In and through this body each one of us is present on this earth; is seen by others of our kind; and we know that in course of time the connection between the soul and the body is severed, and the body ceases to exist as such. It decays, disintegrates. We have seen that God Himself promised to become the Saviour of men; and we know that a Saviour *was* born in Bethlehem and was seen of men, talked with them, lived among them, taught them, loved them, and died for them. That Saviour was born of a human mother, like any other babe. But with a clearness which cannot possibly be mistaken, the same wonderful Record which tells of His coming, and of His life and death, also tells us that He had no human father. Is not that significant? "How can these things be?" asked Mary, when told of His coming birth, "seeing that I know not a man." And the answer is found in the words of the angel to Joseph, the promised husband of Mary, "before they came together": "Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." Yes, God manifested Himself among men. The Divine Life inflowed into the creative power of Mary, and she became a mother. But her Child was unlike any other ever born to human flesh. The inner selfhood, that which in every human being is the soul, derived from a human father, the

"I," was God. "The Father that dwelleth within, he doeth the works." In Christ, as He walked the earth two thousand years ago, men saw the "Humanity of God."

A Being of dual nature, at first. Both divine and also human. Divine as to the true inner self; human as to the form in which that Divine dwelt. A human which could grow, even as we grow, "in wisdom, and in favor with God and man." A human which could suffer hunger; which could be tempted, even as we are tempted; which could be persecuted and slain. And a divine aspect which could declare to the disciples: "I Am; be not afraid"; the same name given to Moses, ages before, at the burning bush: "Say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent thee."

What of the names "Father" and "Son," so often used in the New Testament? Do they not indicate two *persons*, at least, in the Godhead? No. The Word recognizes the dual nature of the Lord, the Saviour. And it distinguishes the two aspects of that wonderful nature by the use of the two names indicated. There is much more here than can be expressed in a few sentences, but the explanation is: Wherever the Indwelling Divine is referred to, that is indicated by the name "Father," and wherever the Human which clothed that Divine is indicated, the name "Son" is used. Not two Divine Persons; two aspects of the One God, as He manifested Himself among men in human form. In course of time, that Human, put on through Mary, was rejected, as *we* reject and put off the bodies which clothe our souls. And yet, *not* as we, for we leave the physical body behind us, and awaken in possession of spiritual bodies, while He, the Christ, glorified, made perfect, that Human, putting off all that was of the earth, and putting in its place that which was and is divine.

And it is to Him, the Risen Lord, that we of the New Church look; it is He Whom we worship. As we delight to repeat in our faith: "We worship the One God, the Lord, the Saviour Jesus Christ; in Whom is the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; whose Humanity is Divine: Who, for our salvation, did come into the world and take our nature upon Him."

"The New Christianity" and the New Church

By Clarence Hotson

THE *New Christianity* for Winter, 1938, contains well-written articles of interest and value to all New-Church people. But in reading this quarterly, the organ of the Liberals in Convention, I find particular stimulation in the Rev. William F. Wunsch's editorial remarks, "Trends and Developments." Under the caption "The New Church and Historical Christianity," Mr. Wunsch takes exception to a statement which I made in a letter published in THE NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER for December 8, 1937. He comments:

"A separate religious body has a tendency to take a sweepingly separatist view, to cut itself off from historical foundations, even to cut out separate and peculiar foundations for itself. It is tempted to say, as has been said, that 'the fundamental belief of the New Church . . . cuts us off entirely from historical Christianity.'"

My entire sentence, which Mr. Wunsch quotes in part, reads as follows: "The fundamental belief of the New Church, that in the Writings of Swedenborg we have a new revelation of the will of God, cuts us off entirely from historical Christianity." What can be objected against the truth of this entire statement? I was not so much taking a position or view in that sentence, as stating a fact. Are not the Writings of Swedenborg to the New Churchman a divine revelation, and thus authoritative? Is not the test of New-Church faith, the affirmation of the truth that the Writings are not Swedenborg's, but the Lord's? If "historical Christianity" is the tradition of those who do not believe that the Writings of Swedenborg have divine authority, does not belief in their divinity cut off those who hold this faith, from historical Christianity?

Mr. Wunsch tries to draw from my statement of fact as to the relation of the New Church to historical Christianity, the following conclusions: "But if that is true, it has no 'fellow Christians.' It should and must walk alone. It should in honesty seek no common work with others then, in church federation or otherwise. It can sincerely share no effort after Christian unity. The revival of Christianity

and its own existence become identical, then. It has forgotten that, like others, it starts in a Christian life at low ebb, and that the flood tide of revival is not the same thing as the espousal of a different doctrine."

Some of these conclusions follow from my statement, and some do not. As believers in the deity or divinity of Christ, we have common ground with genuine Christians, and might work for some sort of Christian cooperation, if not unity, under certain circumstances, on that basis. We could cooperate for certain common purposes with Christians, and for that matter, even with Jews. Whether there is to be a revival of Christianity in the historical sense, however, is the affair of the historical Christian denominations, not ours. We have in the Writings of Swedenborg the basis of a new world religion, as distinct from Christianity as Christianity is distinct from Judaism.

In his paragraph immediately preceding that which I have quoted, Mr. Wunsch contends that Swedenborg foresaw or worked for a revival of Christianity, and not a new religion to supersede historical Christianity. He tried to rebuild the Christian Church on the old, historic foundations. That there is a certain element of truth in this contention I do not deny. But the analogy of Christian Church history is fatal to Mr. Wunsch's conclusions. A very good case, indeed, can be made out for the view that our Lord Himself never intended, before His death on the cross, to start or found a religion separate from Judaism, but that He was merely trying to reform the Jewish religion, which had reached a low ebb. He said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." The Jewish authorities, however, disliking the way He was fulfilling them, rejected and finally crucified Him. Only a remnant of the Jewish Church became His disciples. After the Resurrection, these disciples were persecuted in their turn by the Jewish leaders when they preached the Gospel. Though they still considered themselves good Jews, the early Christians had to turn first to Gentile converts to Judaism, and then to out-and-out Gentiles, for converts to their "New Judaism," or Christianity. From being a sect of Judaism, the Christian Church became in time a new world religion, quite dis-

tinct from Judaism. It then erected the special Christian religious literature into a New Testament of the Word, though retaining the Jewish Scriptures as an Old Testament.

In the same way it can be argued that Swedenborg never contemplated the founding of a special new religion, or even of a separate New-Church denomination, but sought only a revival on sound lines of the historical Christian Church. Even if all this is true, however, it is irrelevant. New religious movements follow inevitable trends of their own, regardless even of what may have been the original intentions of their so-called founders. Religious history has its own relentless logic. Whether Swedenborg foresaw the launching of a new world religion, or even of a new denomination of Christianity, or not, the opposition encountered by "Swedenborgianism" in its attempt to evangelize the historic Christian bodies made a separate New-Church organization inevitable. Only a remnant of the Christian Church has been or ever will be converted to the faith of the New Church. The great growth of the New Church as a new world religion will come in countries now outside the Christian world, from among people now Gentiles. Our chief missionary effort should go to convert to the New Church the former Gentiles who have embraced the Christian faith, yet are not weighed down by the traditions of historical Christianity.

It was inevitable that the early Christians should be Jews first and Christians second. They thought of themselves for a long time as a superior kind of Jews, who had accepted Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah, yet who clung to most of the Jewish customs, and tried to make their Gentile converts conform to them. Their Jewish conservatism prevented them for a long time from regarding as Sacred Scripture anything except the Jewish canon, what we now call the Old Testament. Yet in time the logic of history forced the Christian Church to erect its own special or distinctively Christian religious literature into a new canon of Scripture, or New Testament, thus placing it on a par with or even superior to the Jewish Testament or canon. The tendency which opposed this change, as well as the change from the Jewish Sabbath to the observance of Sunday, or the Lord's day, has been aptly called

"Jew-Christian." Though at one time universally dominant, Jewish Christianity became a reactionary sectarian tendency within Christianity, and finally became extinct, in the measure in which Christianity from being a Jewish sect became a new historic world religion.

Those New-Church people who are called "Christians first and Swedenborgians second" correspond very closely to the "Jew-Christian" conservatives or reactionaries of early Christianity, though curiously enough, they are known as "Liberals" in present-day parlance, and the opposing majority is known as "conservative." Led by the Rev. Mr. Wunsch, our so-called "Liberals" oppose the tendency to exalt the Writings as a new authoritative Divine Revelation, and, as the special Divine Revelation in written form for the New Church, as thus a new canon of sacred Writings or Scriptures, in the light of which both Old and New Testaments must be interpreted. They would thus keep the New Church a mere sect of historical Christianity, and prevent it from becoming the new world religion which it is destined to become, just as the Jew-Christians of old would have kept Christianity a mere sect of Judaism. In the ultimate disappearance of Jewish Christianity we may find a prophecy of the eventual disappearance of the entire tendency now known as Convention Liberalism.

It is a universal law that a new historic world religion must and will place its own distinctive Divine Revelation or sacred books on at least as high a plane as it places such books as it holds sacred in common with religionists who do not accept its special sacred books. The New Church will obey this law, in the measure that it realizes its divine mission as a new world religion, and especially in the measure that it "takes hold" among Gentile converts to Christianity, and later, among Gentiles in general. This will be done because the New Church will realize that without this shift of emphasis it cannot progress, nor even survive. I already believe that the Writings of Swedenborg are the special means by which the man of the New Church is conjoined with angels of the New

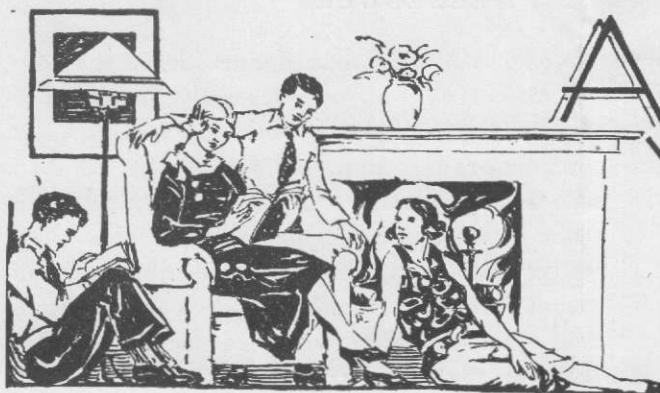
Christian Heaven formed since the Last Judgment in 1757.

History has a way of settling questions. For a number of years, we may recall, the New Church in England was disturbed by the question of separatism versus non-separatism. Men of equal learning, devotion and apparently of equal insight were to be found on both sides of the question. Hindmarsh led the separatists; Clowes the non-separatists. For many years numerous Swedenborgians in England conformed to the Church of England, and held the annual Hawkstone meetings. But history has decided that question once for all, and non-separatist activity has ceased. In the same way, history will decide the question of whether Swedenborgians can be Christians first and Swedenborgians second, by decreeing the eventual extinction of the entire tendency that goes by the name of Convention Liberalism.

The Lord Became Thereby More Nearly Present With Man

BEFORE the Lord came into the world He was present with men of the church, but only mediately, through angels who represented Him. But since His coming He is present with men of the church immediately; and this is for the reason that He put on, when He was in the world, a Divine Natural in which He is present with men. The glorification of the Lord is the glorification of the Human that He assumed in the world; and the Lord's glorified Human is the Divine Natural.

The truth of this is evident from the fact that the Lord rose from the tomb with the whole of the body that He had in the world, leaving nothing in the tomb, and therefore He took with Him from the tomb the Natural Human itself from the firsts to the lasts of it. So after the resurrection when His disciples thought that what they saw was a ghost, He said unto them: "See my hands and my feet that it is I Myself; handle Me and see; for a ghost hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have" (*Luke xxiv. 37, 39*). This makes it clear that by means of His glorification His natural body was made Divine. Therefore Paul says, that in Christ dwelleth all the fulness of Divinity bodily (*Col. ii. 9*).—(*T. 109.*)



A PAGE FOR THE YOUNGER PEOPLE

By the Editor

Men Who Are Like Trees

FEBRUARY 12th was the anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, the heroic President of the United States during the Civil War. His name, his work and his tragic death are so well known to us that it seems as if he died but yesterday. It is difficult to realize that he was born one hundred and twenty-eight years ago, and that he has been dead for seventy-three years. His memory is so fresh and green.

During the seventy-three years since Lincoln entered the spiritual world many tributes have been paid to his memory. And to-day it is almost impossible to say anything new. I have read hundreds, perhaps thousands, of tributes to his fine, outstanding character, his heroism and his courage; but the one that inspires me most is this: "He stood like a lonely giant tree." I suppose I like that phrase because it is a Bible symbol of a righteous man. The psalmist says of the righteous, "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth fruit in its season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper." In another place in the Bible it says of the righteous, "They shall be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord."

When a man spoke of Lincoln as a "lonely, giant tree," he uttered a fine tribute to his memory. For there is no higher praise you can bestow on a man than this, "he was a heroic, righteous man."

It is a good thing that we treasure the memory of the great men of the nation; but we make a mistake if we think they were so

great that their deeds, their triumphs are forever beyond our grasp and attainment. The memory of Abraham Lincoln would be wasted unless it impelled us to attain to the same grandeur of character. Of course we cannot all be presidents; we cannot guide the Ship of State in troubled times; we cannot be called upon to preserve the Union of the United States. Duties like that arise only once in a hundred years, if as often as that. But we can all live lives of obedience to the Divine Will. We can all love the truth. We can develop an heroic character. We can be "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord."

In the days of our youth we all have times when we want to be heroes. We read stories of adventure, or the lives of great men, and we burn with a passionate desire to emulate heroic deeds, and lead heroic lives. But real heroism never comes from dreams. It comes, first of all, from self-discipline, from the development of fine character, from obedience to the law of God. I am quite sure that if someone had told Abraham Lincoln, when the latter was twenty years old, that some day he would be a great national hero, and one of the world's great men, he would have laughed. His mind was not set on heroism: it was set on duty. He was not asking for grandeur and glory. His great desire was to be useful to his fellow men. It was because he sought righteousness that he developed courage, and was fit to do great things. Everything of character that Lincoln possessed is offered to us to-day. We may never be famous, but in the sight of the Lord

we can be just as great as Lincoln. If we ask for them and strive for them the Lord will give to us the same fine elements of character and make us "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord."

Regeneration

By Charles W. Morse

WITHOUT some knowledge of degrees we cannot satisfactorily understand the process of man's regeneration. To the orthodox Christian man is only one individual of a natural body, whereas to the better enlightened Christian, man is three men in one man—a trinity in unity. There is a trine even in a piece of wood or stone. Many who read that statement of Swedenborg give an incredulous smile. They do not see, even with the most powerful microscope, any sign of three separate degrees of finer to grosser parts in any piece of wood, stone, iron, or anything. Yet this is a demonstrated fact of natural science, which regards the ultimate particle of any such substance, not as an independent thing, but as a molecule, and molecules consist of atoms, and atoms of particles of electricity. At the time of Dalton, the hundred or so of the elementary substances, which enter into the composition of all created things, were regarded as so many little pellets incapable of further division. Then again, prior to Swedenborg's time, man was supposed to consist of a natural body only, which at its death emitted a vapor to hover over the grave to pick up the putrid particles to form his body again. Now we know that man consists of three separate degrees, an internal or highest mind, an interior or middle mind, and an outer or natural mind. It is the same if we say man or mind; for you and I consist of a natural man, a rational man, and a spiritual man. Where Swedenborg speaks of three discrete (separate) degrees in man, or in any other created thing, he does not mean that there is some intervening medium causing the separation. The separation is due to the difference in the force or energy acting on the innermost degree to that operating on the middle degree, and again to that operating on

the outermost degree. These overlap each other as a unit, but remain separate. The highest force from the Lord in anything is the end or purpose of its existence, the middle force is the creative energy causing it to be, and the outermost force is the effect of it being. Do not be surprised at being told that there is a continual moving force in any piece of wood or stone you may pick up. Modern science shows that even the pen I am writing with consists of atoms moving with great energy and rapidity. From the foregoing observations, then, we are able to understand—so far as it is possible for the finite mind to understand—the secret process of regeneration taking place in man through the Lord's Holy Spirit. There is nothing in the world of so much importance to man as some knowledge of how man is to be regenerated. Without it, thousands of religious men and women have become insane, because they foolishly imagined that the dreadful spiritual temptations they suffered from were on the whole of their personality. Through the deplorable ignorance of their teachers they did not know that the real essential part of their personality—their internal man—was never touched by the wiles and snares of evil spirits. We will now endeavor to show what part of man it is that is affected by the evils and falsities of bad spirits surrounding man. When our Lord says, "Cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also," He is speaking of the necessity for the cleansing of the middle or rational man by the truths of faith obtained from the Bible. Truths from the Word are creative forces of the Lord's divine Wisdom. When they enter the mind, when reading the Bible, whether we are religious or not, or whether we believe it or not, they produce a functional change for good or for evil in the rational mind. We either pervert them and become profane, or we assimilate them for the good of our souls. When we do so assimilate them, we enter into spiritual temptation, but only slightly. At this stage the Word is received with joy, but on stony places. We are then Peter alone, professing to be willing to die for the Lord, until we begin to discover that there is something wanting. The inside of the cup and

the platter has been cleansed, but the outside (the natural man), on which the interior structure of the higher personality depends, remains filthy, no matter how scrupulously clean we have kept it with soap and water and respectability. Now we come to the real subject of regeneration—the sensual part of the natural man. It is on the interior sensual of the natural man that evil spirits make their attack, and cause us to feel we are vile beasts before the Lord. It is here that Peter or faith comes into grievous and horrible temptations, inasmuch that he exclaims in the words of Job, "When I say, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint,"—by which he means his doctrines of good and truth, "then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through vision; so that my soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than life." It is at this point that Peter yearns with all the strength of his soul to be conjoined to James and John—to love and to do the works of love, and this he does by prayer, and fasting from the evil passions of the senses. If he does not, he becomes an outcast. Now, in our spiritual trials we have to be careful not to come to false conclusions. When we are "tossed up and down as the locust" (the locust is of the lowest sensual), we wonder if our failure to be as good as we think we ought to be, is through being too intellectual and too little emotional. Some writers of the New Church are trying to show us a short cut to heaven by postulating that, "Christianity is not the acceptance of a creed, but the living of a life." There is no sense in such a statement. A creed teaches us what truths are to be believed. It is impossible to live the life without a creed; for truth leads to the good of life. Good without truth cannot exist. If the world is not to be destroyed through lack of spiritual knowledge, the intelligent members of the New Church must never cease from learning wisdom from the Bible, and spiritual knowledge from the Writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. See *Deut.* xi. 18, 19, 20.

Affirmation

THE LORD IS ON MY SIDE; I WILL NOT FEAR.
—Ps. cxviii. 6.

Swedenborg Commemoration

The Swedenborg Commemoration by the St. Paul Society began on January 25th with a luncheon at the Town-Country Club at which the pastor, the Rev. Clyde W. Broomell, was host to a representative group of clergymen from St. Paul and Minneapolis. The invitation was extended in the spirit of charity shown by Swedenborg in publishing his writings for the world, without sectarian interest.

The occasion proved to be a very interesting and delightful one. Mr. Broomell directed the conversation principally to Swedenborg's psychological approach to the interpretation of the Word. There was opportunity also to touch on many essential doctrines.

The thought of unity through charity was summarized in a novel laboratory demonstration by Mr. Broomell, in which were shown some processes in collecting "free" gold and "combined" gold from sands, rock and refractory ores. Correspondingly the principle of love, in degrees of knowledge, was traced through the Word, with illustrations in life.

Through the kind cooperation of the Rotch Trustees and the New-Church Press, it was made possible to present the guests with copies of the *Divine Love and Wisdom* and the *Book of Worship*. Attention was called to the summary of Doctrines, the Rites and Sacraments in the *Book of Worship*, with the suggestion that they would be helpful in the problem coming before the Minnesota State Pastors Conference when it considers the Reports of the Edinburgh and Oxford Conferences on Unity.

With the books were given beautiful samples of very "high grade" gold ore dug by the host from Colorado mountains. This gave opportunity to explain that as gold, in quantity, is first deposited in regions subjected to great upheaval, so love from the Lord is implanted during corresponding trials of regeneration.

On Sunday, January 30th, the morning service was inspiringly observed with a sermon by the pastor on the subject "Gates of the Holy City Now Open." Special music by the choir included "Unfold Ye Portals Everlasting" from Gounod's "Redemption" and "Eye Hath Not Seen" from Gaul's "Holy City."

"The Divine Love in the Sunshine" was the theme of the talk simply and reverently presented by Mrs. Elizabeth K. Jacobson, when children and adults met in the sanctuary for the Sunday-school hour. The hymns and Scripture readings were all chosen with this thought in mind.

A collation was served by caterers at 1:30 in the Parish House. Members of the St. Paul Society were hosts to members of the Minneapolis

Society and friends from outside the Twin Cities. Everyone enjoyed the hour of fellowship which followed.

At 3:30 a Vesper service was held in the church for which special music had been arranged. Inspiring talks were given by the following:

Lydia Cutler Schrader—"What Swedenborg Means to Me."

Miss Nellie Walton Ford—"An Illustration of Divine Providence Revealed, by The Honorable John Biglow."

Mr. W. W. Cutler—"Swedenborg and The Churches."

Although the day was stormy outside, preventing some of our friends from distant places to participate in these services, yet the warmth of love and friendship and true thanksgiving prevailed within the walls of the Virginia Avenue New Church on that Sunday nearest January 29th, 1938.

NEWS OF THE CHURCH

WASHINGTON, D. C.

On February 5th, the Ladies' Aid Society of the Washington Church held a most successful card party at the home of the Misses Smith. The Young People's League also held a card party on February 18th, the proceeds being devoted to entertainment expenses at the time of Convention in May.

The Ladies' Aid Society also met in the Parish House on Wednesday, February 23rd, and conducted a Bake Sale in the afternoon.

On Sunday evening, February 20th, the monthly Forum Meeting of the Society was held in the Parish House under the leadership of Mr. Lewis Barrington. The subject under discussion was "What Type of Pacifism Is Consistent with Christian Teaching?"

BOSTON

The Boston New Church was the scene of the Union Ministers' Meeting, sponsored by the Greater Boston Federation of Churches on Monday, February 28th. The guest speaker was Dr. Frederick J. Libby, of Washington, D. C., Executive Secretary of the National Council for the Prevention of War, who spoke on the subject "American Foreign Policy: Does It Mean Peace or War?"

The Society announced "a musicale of selected Negro spirituals accompanying the readings of Scriptural quotations and of passages from our Church teachings concerning the deep spiritual possibilities of the African race, entitled, 'The Universal Christ,'" to be held on Sunday, March 6th, at 3:30 o'clock. The musical part of the program was given by Mrs. Dorothy Richardson and her Greater Boston Negro Male Chorus. A recital of Negro folklore was given by Eleanor Trent Wallace. This unusual service was arranged by the Rev. Samuel O. Weems, who officiated with the pastor, the Rev. Antony Regamey, and is part of the 250th birthday commemoration proceedings. All members of the Boston Society and friends were invited.

BALTIMORE NORTHWEST MISSION

The Baltimore Northwest Mission advertised in the morning and evening editions of the *Sun* of January 29,

March 9, 1938

1938, giving the quotation, "Now it is allowable to enter intellectually into the mysteries of faith," Emanuel Swedenborg (*T. C. R.* 508), it being felt that this quotation was suitable for the Swedenborg Anniversary. The Mission Notice Bill-Board had been repainted and presented a neat appearance. Literature supplied by the Commemoration Committee's office at New York has been distributed.

At the end of January, Mr. G. Clement Allbutt completed sixteen years as leader of the Mission.

BALTIMORE, MD.

The pastor will preach on "Finding God in a New World" on Sunday, March 13th. His topics for March 20th and 27th will be "Patience in Suffering" and "The Uncertain Hope."

The Young People's League will have its monthly business meeting on Sunday, March 13th. On March 20th, the League Study Class will meet at 6:15 for supper at the church, and will have its discussion at eight o'clock.

Round Robins Attention

Until further notice, please direct all robins to Mrs. Charles S. Mack, 333 E. 53rd Street, Apt. 5L, New York City, except those in which Mrs. Lucio writes. She will lead these.

OBITUARY

JOHNSON.—Mrs. Fannie Alice Johnson, born on September 4, 1869, in Texas, passed away in Los Angeles, on February 5, 1938. The services were held in Los Angeles and, the committal service, in Oklahoma City. The Rev. Andre Diaconoff officiated here.

Mrs. Johnson was the mother-in-law of Mr. Emmet L. Lovett, member of the Church of the New Jerusalem, in Los Angeles. She is survived by sons and daughters.

"Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord from henceforth. Yea, saith the Spirit: that they may rest from their labors: and their works do follow them." (*Revelation* xiv. 13.) A. D.

CALENDAR

March 20.

Third Sunday in Lent

THE LORD AS THE SON OF MAN

Sel. 88: "Praise waiteth for Thee, O God, in Zion."

Lesson I. Ex. xxxvii.

Responsive Service III. The Commandments.

Lesson II. Luke xi, to v. 28.

Gloria, Benedictus (to Gregorian Tones, Mag. 715-735) and Faith.

Hymns (Mag.) 364: "Go forward, Christian soldier."

381: "I love the Lord, He heard my voice."

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