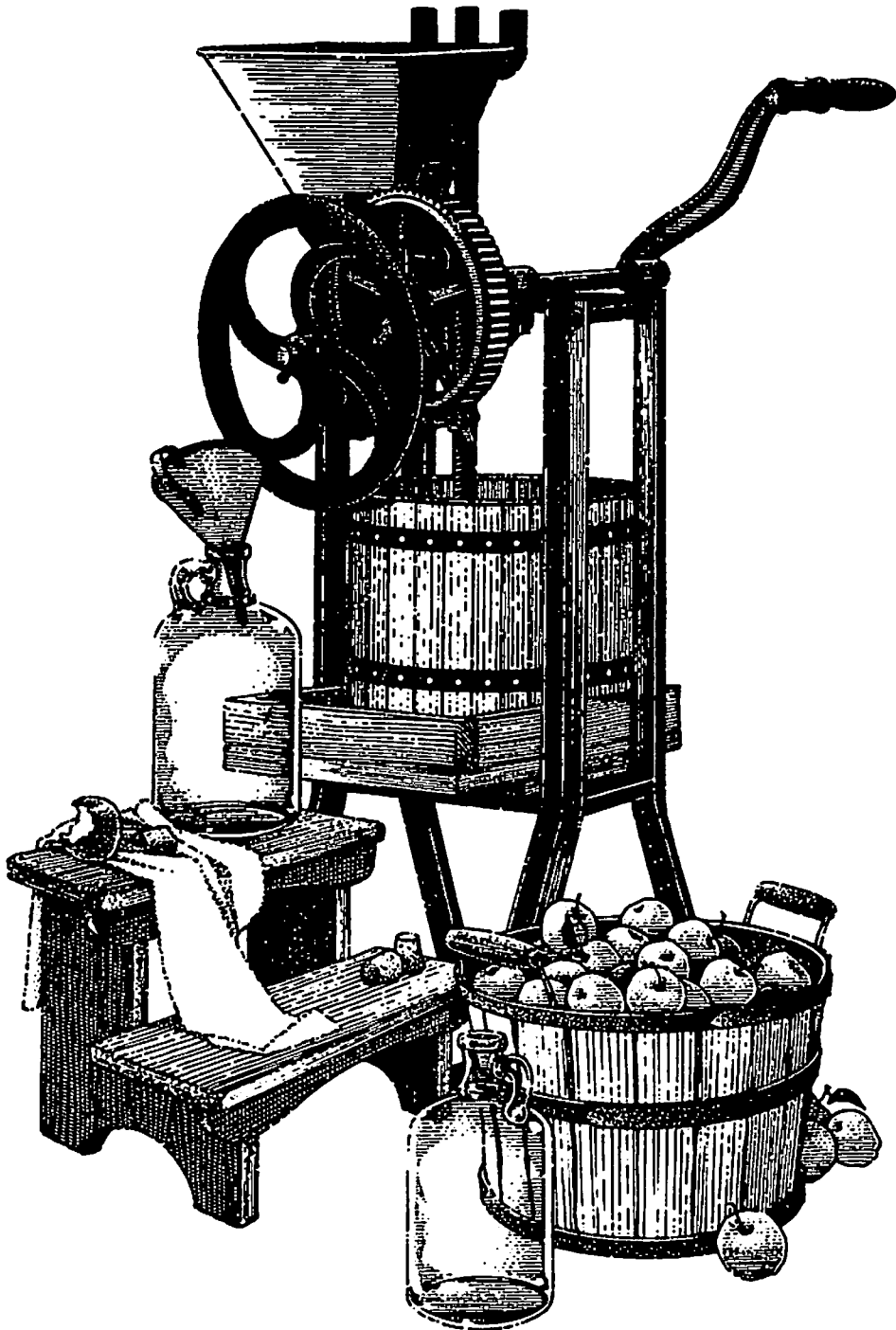


The Messenger

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
GENERAL CONVENTION OF SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCHES

October 1984



Editorial Notes

The first of the school and church year normally arrives concurrent with a paucity of timely and publishable material for *The Messenger*. The reason for this confluence of affairs is that July and August are traditionally the slowest times of the year for most, if not all, of our churches. This makes for a mighty exiguous flow of letters, noteworthy events and free-lance pieces.

I heartily encourage correspondence, "idea pieces," poetry, commentary and any submission that interests and excites you. The more *The Messenger* can represent of Convention's aggregate viewpoint, the more nearly we will understand the Swedenborgian Church. Let me hear from you! Please submit all pieces typewritten and *double-spaced* on 8½ x 11 white paper.

The lead article for this issue, by Bill James Cook, takes us back to yesteryear when the Ohio and Indiana regions were just being settled. I invite you to let Mr. Cook walk you through a special relationship between one of his ancestors and Johnny Appleseed. Himself a member of one of Convention's most historical societies (the Glendale, Ohio Society), Mr. Cook tells a true tale of pioneer grit and frontier religion, of a young questing soul

and his eccentric tutor, of poignant memories and a rotting pew. The pew, a remnant of an early pioneer church, is a sacred relic, in a way. Many a time it upheld one of the "patron saints" of Swedenborgianism: Appleseed Johnny.

Also in this issue Dr. George Dole, on faculty at the Swedenborg School of Religion in Newton, Massachusetts, writes on *Parabolic Thinking*. Drawing heavily on Swedenborg, Dr. Dole examines the relationship between our internal intentions and our external behaviors. How do we evaluate the actions of others? What are the standards for our self-evaluation? *Parabolic Thinking* may help to clarify your thoughts on these matters.

The Rev. Andre Diaconoff, a longtime servant in the professional ministry of the Swedenborgian Church, passed into the spiritual world on August 19, 1984. Ordained in 1924, Rev. Diaconoff was still actively serving Convention in the Riverside Church in southern California. With dear and beloved friends all over the country, Andre will be fondly remembered for his gentle spirit, his pastoral nature and his inquiring mind. Next issue will feature a full-length In Memoriam for this longtime leader within General Convention.



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SWEDENBORGIAN WELLNESS

Dorothy Clayton Travers

The concept of wellness, often called the holistic approach to health, can be divided into four major efforts. Last month we discussed mind attitudes and their effect on the efficiency of the body. Now let's look at nutrition. And let's examine with some historical perspectives the foods of this current period with those of past periods.

Before 150 years ago, natural grains were ground throughout the earth between millstones. Then it was discovered that a wire screen could be used to remove the coarsest particles and the bran or outer coating of the grain. The results were still highly nutritious because 80% of the wheat germ remained. But in the middle of the 19th century, when the wheat and rye grains in America were passed through fine silk "bolting" cloths, a high percentage of the minerals and B-complex vitamins were removed. Particles of the embryo were filtered out, which meant a reduction of Vitamin E.

Finally, the steam-powered rolling mill crushed the grain so completely that it was possible to separate the starch of the wheat berry from the rest of the grain. So, by now, what has been lost from this natural kernel of wheat through the processing which bleaches and gives longer shelf life?

Answer: Virtually all of the vitamin E, 1/4 of the natural fat, most of the protein, and 80% of the thiamine, 65% of the riboflavin, 50% of the pantothenic acid and pyridoxine, 70% of the phosphorus, 98% of the manganese, 50% of the calcium, 80% of the iron, 75% of the magnesium, 50% of the potassium, 65% of the copper, and considerable losses of biotin, inositol, folic acid, choline and para-aminobenzoic acid.

Three synthetic vitamins of the B-complex group are added in the new product as well as iron, mostly for advertising purposes. But when 21 nutrients have been processed out, can we any longer call bread the "staff of life"?

The food industry transports foods from one section of the country to another. Granted our selections have broadened and "seasonal" foods are virtually a thing of the

past. But what is the trade-off? One study found that potatoes lose 60% of their food values in shipping and storage. The potato was watched from ground to supermarket, and it was discovered that "fresh" produce could be out of the ground for as much as 6 months. (Smart business people buy cheap and hold until the market price is high.)

While processing can wipe out 75-90% of the nutrients, transporting, storing and packaging can do just as much damage. Without the education to identify fresh-looking foods, buyers often lose another 4% by choosing older fruits and vegetables. Another 2-4% can be lost by washing and rinsing. (In fact studies have shown that it is easy to wash off 25% of the iron in rice.) As high as 10% of the nutritive values are lost in freezing and defrosting, and some claim that up to 40% can be lost in the canning process with more than 2% lost in the cooking.

The final 2-4% loss is how it is eaten. For example, if you peel, cut, mash and smash potatoes and put them on a steam table there is a 39% loss of Vitamin C which rises to a 65% loss in 30 minutes.

So, do you feel that you are nutritionally aware? Here is a short quiz; ask yourself these questions:

1. Do you drink coffee or tea more than three times a day?
2. Do you consume soft drinks almost daily?
3. Do you frequently use low calorie (artificially sweetened) foods and substitutes?
4. Do you eat starchy foods frequently such as spaghetti, macaroni, white bread or biscuits?
5. Do you eat jams, jellies, candies or syrup daily?
6. Do you frequently eat bakery products such as cakes, pies, donuts, or cookies?

Give yourself 3 points for each "yes" answer. If you have a total close to zero, you are working on a high, informed nutritional level. As your score climbs, your proneness to mental and physical illness increases.

John Henry Cook and The Johnny Applesed Pew

By Bill James Cook

On Congress Avenue in Glendale, Ohio, stands the little white and green Church of New Jerusalem. On a bright clear day a visitor can observe its spire pointing upward against a background of blue. That same spire has been pointing "Heavenward" for over a century. Few people viewing the church today in all its serenity realize the story of the Johnny Applesed Pew and what took place in the shadow of that steeple.



"Go west, young man, go west." This was the cry heard following the Revolutionary War. The cry echoed up and down the Atlantic coast. It echoed loud and strong throughout the valleys of old New Jersey. It echoed and re-echoed in Hunterdon and Somerset counties in New Jersey, triggering the rush to the Northwest Territory and the land boom that followed.

Fathers sent their sons, pockets heavy with gold coins, to scout the wilderness in search of new homesites where they might carve a farm from the wilderness and settle. Most of these young men who headed west were veterans of the Continental Army.

Almost all the men who settled early in the Mill Creek Valley of Ohio were members of one large family connection. They carved their farms out of the wilderness when it was still filled with the fear of hostile Indian attack. Large families

Family devotions in the home were not enough to feed their hungry souls. Hence came into being what was called, "Pentecost in the Back Woods."

were in order and marriage to your own cousin almost a common necessity. The people were hard workers, yet a people of wealth and fine cultural background. One of their chief complaints was the lack of churches in the wilderness. Family devotions in the home were not enough to feed their hungry souls. Hence came into being what was called "Pentecost in the Back Woods."

Everyone in the family connection would arrange their work and business affairs in such a manner as to have three weeks completely free. Gathering together all the family connections and their servants, they would make a camp in the woods. Then sleeping in tents and covered wagons, and cooking their food over open fires, they listened to preaching from early in the morning until late in the evening.

Throughout the years this Pentecost in the Back Woods drew some of the most outstanding preachers from the eastern United States and even from far-off England and Scotland.

In choosing a site the men tried to meet within an equal distance of the pastoral scenes of all concerned. Several were tried, but the site eventually chosen was an oak, beech and maple grove just north of the trails which became the Princeton Pike and the Springfield Pike.

writing for the landowner to let him have a certain number. He pays me if he's able. If his pocket be empty, he trades something, or he gets the trees for nothing, and God go with 'em."

John Henry Cook in later years described Johnny: "a little old man who did not appear to have a very great quantity of this world's goods. Johnny was very good and religious. Judge John Young of

The other was an old man on his own business and that of the Lord. He was John Chapman, better known as Appleseed Johnny or Johnny Appleseed.

Throughout the Mill Creek Valley concern for the lost soul reigned supreme. Great men came in the name of the Lord to call the sinner to repentance, away from the devil and certain destruction. At the end of camp-meeting every back-woods peer had absorbed enough religion to avoid all evil for yet another year.

In time a sweet freshness of a new board meeting house took the place of the canopy formed by the trees to shelter this eager crowd. Two of the visitors in later years to the Pentecost in the Back Woods were men who frequently traveled on business throughout Ohio, Indiana and Illinois. One young man, John Henry Cook, traveled as his father's aide-de-camp in looking after the family business enterprises. The other was an old man on his own business and that of the Lord. He was John Chapman, better known as Appleseed Johnny or Johnny Appleseed.

Johnny owned land in Springfield, Ohio, Mt. Vernon, Ohio, Mansfield, Ohio, and Fort Wayne in Indiana. His business was planting and selling apple trees. He described it this way:

"When I plant on a man's farm, it's agreed that half the trees shall be his own orchard. When anyone wants my trees, I set down an order in

Greensburg, Pennsylvania, a Swedenborgian, kept sending Johnny church tracts which he distributed to the settlers. He carried these tracts in his hat. He wore a pyramid of three hats. The first was only a brim. Next came his cooking pot. Surmounting all was a hat with a crown. The sum total was, if extremely odd, rather ingenious. It enabled him to carry not only his kettle but his treasure of sacred literature, sandwiched between the pot and the crown of the uppermost hat. The books were kept dry and his hands were left free to deal with seed bags and tools."

In the early days Johnny was safe among the Indians. The Indians considered him crazy and would do him no harm, believing him to be under the Great Spirit's care.

A vegetarian, Johnny abhorred eating meat because it meant killing one of God's creatures. Johnny was a dedicated Swedenborgian who followed the doctrine of love of God for humanity and of humanity for God. He often visited the Swedenborgian preacher and congregation in Cincinnati. A more humble man never walked the early trails and roads of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois.

As a young man, John Henry Cook often met Johnny in his travels. If they were both headed in the same direction, Cook provided the little old man with food, transporta-

tion, and shelter as his traveling companion. Although many thought Johnny demented, Cook believed him to be intelligent and full of pleasant tales and good advice. He found it easy to overlook Johnny's eccentricity and manner of dress. Johnny's piety, wisdom of the Bible, and love of God drew Cook away from his own church and, in time, Cook became a Swedenborgian with Johnny as his tutor in the doctrines.

In 1844, Johnny and Cook, traveling north from Cincinnati, visited the last gathering of the Pentecost in the Back Woods. After that meeting the old meeting house sitting among the trees was abandoned. It was closed up, a place full of memories.

The old building continued to stand among the great oaks and beech. In the spring the trees reached out with branches of happiness and told with good smells of the dark greenness which would soon follow. The spring rains pattered on the old roof and poured from the eaves. The water dripped until the clouds broke and drifted apart. Then the sun smiled down upon it and dappled through the trees that formed a canopy overhead. The moss-covered shingles in spots twinkled back at the sun. The violets, spring-beauties and other wildflowers blossomed around the old structure. The birds nested in the trees. At night the hooting of an owl and the whisper

the woods being one of their favorite haunts.

In the autumn families gathered hickory and beech nuts from the woodland floor. Wagons came laden with hay and men packed the hay into the old wooden structure. Men acting like woodcutters came and felled a few trees. The trees crashed to the ground, their branches cut off and set on fire. Then the fires burned and flickered out. The trunks were hauled away on the wagons to be used a winter fuel.

In winter the snow lay all around, white and sparkling. It covered the man-scarred world with a goose-feather whiteness. When a winter storm came, the wind howled and rattled the loose boards. The old building offered shelter for wild creatures inside under the warm hay.

Each year the spring thaw melted the snow. It revealed the old building as an abomination of desolation surrounded by naked trees, the interior partially cleared by the using of hay during the winter except at one end where hay had accumulated from many years past.

Thus the cycle of the seasons continued unbroken. In time Glendale came into being. The land on which the old building stood was acquired as a site on which to build a Church of New Jerusalem.

John Henry Cook, much older now, along with his friend Rev. James Park Stuart both shared a love for the architec-

He found it easy to overlook Johnny's eccentricity and manner of dress. Johnny's piety, wisdom of the Bible, and love of God drew Cook away from his own church, and, in time, Cook became a Swedenborgian with Johnny as his tutor in the doctrines.

of bats as they circled on unsteady wings broke the silence, the holes in the ancient roof giving them shelter inside.

Then came the soft sounds of summer: quiet murmurings of various insects, a plaintive warble of a bird calling its mate, the whinny of a horse across the meadow. Cows in slow procession walked close by,

ture and simple beauty of a little Catholic chapel located in the Black Forest of Bavaria. They tried to set down on paper, as nearly as their memories would provide, an exact copy of that little church.

Mr. Mullett, an architect, was hired to take the plans and work them over and come up with the final blueprints. John

Henry Cook and his business partner started construction on the new building. Later, after the lovely new church had been completed, a group from the church set about to pull down the old hay house crouching within the shadows of the spire of the Church of New Jerusalem. Before the old building could be demolished, Cook ventured to cross the threshold for one last time. He stood and gazed.

In Cook's memory, shadows of the past arose like objects in a dream. He recalled

How the old man had sat enchanted through the message, keenly excited when it was all over. How he had held up his hands in one last prayer.

Yes, this had been the last service in the old meeting house. It was also the last service John Henry Cook would attend with old John Chapman, for the following spring someone sent Cook a page from the "Fort Wayne Sentinel" of March 22, 1845. It stated:

"Died—in this neighborhood, at an

Whistling softly to himself, Cook trudged through the debris. He said a little silent prayer as he threw back the musty hay and uncovered an undisturbed, though decaying pew.

the times as a young man that he had attended the camp meetings in the old building. Cook stopped and closed his eyes, recalling the people who in the past had packed it to the door. Opening his eyes, all he saw was desolation—hay and the remains of some old pews in one end of the old building.

Whistling softly to himself, Cook trudged through the debris. He said a little silent prayer as he threw back the musty hay and uncovered an undisturbed and decaying pew. It moved him almost to tears. He remembered how he and John Chapman had traveled in almost wordless companionship in his carriage from Cincinnati to attend the last camp meeting held here. Smiles and tears struggling together in his speech, Cook told the others who had followed him of the distant speaking voices of things long past:

How Johnny and he had marched down the aisle. He had sat on one side of the pew and Johnny on the opposite end.

How the humble old man's soul had risen and stretched its wings, feeling secure and joyful. His gentle, clear voice singing Psalms.

How Johnny's cheeks had flushed from exertion as he prayed. How his eyes had sparkled with love for all creatures in God's world.

advanced age, Mr. John Chapman (better known as Johnny Appleseed). The deceased was well-known throughout this region by his eccentricity, and strange garb—He is supposed to have considerable property, yet denied himself almost the common necessities of life—not so much perhaps from avarice as from his peculiar notions on religious subjects—He submitted to every privation with cheerfulness and content, believing that in doing so he was securing snug quarters hereafter—He always carried with him some work on the doctrines of Swedenbough (Swedenborg) and would readily converse and argue on his tenets, using much shrewdness and penetration—His death was quite sudden. He was seen on our streets a day or two previous."

John Henry Cook whistled like a whitethroat as he marched out of the old meeting house. He knew what he would do; he would preserve that pew.

The "pew" was restored by Cook and used by him as a model for some pews he made for the church. The Johnny Appleseed Pew, repaired and refinished, was placed in the church for the Cook children

to sit upon. After the Cook children had all matured, the pew was taken to the Cook home to be cherished and used as a garden bench.

The pew is now owned by a great grandson of John Henry Cook. It is still used in a garden and shared with God's little creatures—those that Johnny Appleseed loved so much.



Bill James Cook, a descendent of John Henry Cook, is a member of the Glendale, Ohio Society.

ABC 'DIRECTIONS' SPECIAL, Oct. 21

George F. Will, ABC News Analyst, moderates an hour-long program on women in society, entitled 'The Other Rebellion.' Guests include:

- Elizabeth Holtzman, District Attorney;*
- Midge Decter, head of Committee for the Free World;*
- Rev. Elizabeth Scott, director of the Justice for Women Program of the National Council of Churches;*
- Carl Degler, educator, historian, Pulitzer Prize winning author and one of the founders of the National Organization of Women.*

Urbana University to Seek New President

Mr. John Keller, Chair of the Board of Trustees of Urbana University, has announced that a Presidential Search Committee has been established. In making this announcement, Mr. Keller thanked acting President James M. Eaton for fulfilling his contract through August 1, 1984, in leading the University through the last ten months. Mr. Keller further thanked Mr. Eaton for the organizational and financial progress at the University during his term of office.

Mr. Eaton will resume his position on the Board of Trustees and chair the Audit Committee. He will also be an active member of the Presidential Search Committee.

Dr. Harold Dickerscheid, Dean of Academic Affairs, will act as Chief Administrative Officer and will be responsible for academic and student affairs. Mr. William R. Wilson, Executive Vice President of Finance, will continue to be responsible for financial and developmental activities of the institution. The Chair of the Board of Trustees or his designate will meet with Dr. Dickerscheid and Mr. Wilson on a weekly basis to assure timely decision and institutional continuity.

Mr. Keller also announced that summer school enrollment has increased by 38%. The University has a near record enrollment of 282 full-time students for summer. He also stated that 1984-1985 looks like one of the best years the University will ever have experienced and they are looking forward to moving ahead.

Notice

The Bath, Maine Society of the New Church has voted to become a member congregation of the General Church of the New Jerusalem, headquartered in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania. The Bath Society formally withdrew from the General Convention of Swedenborgian Churches last spring.

Board of Education Notes

The Board of Education held its semi-annual meeting this past August 24-26 at the Fryeburg New Church Assembly. The agenda included making a budget for 1985-86 and planning many new (and continuing many) exciting programs and resources. To highlight a few:

The Board is very hopeful and excited about the prospect of re-introducing the mini-courses at convention. The Board is putting together an array of course offerings which are bound to include something for everyone (possible examples: *Introduction to Swedenborg—Questions and Answers*; *What About "When Bad Things Happen to Good People?"*; *Being and Using Clowns in Worship*.) If you have an idea of a mini-course you would like to offer, or of a mini-course you would like to see offered, write to Board of Education member Margie Shelley, 125 Reynick, Saginaw, MI 48602.

The first unit of the Board of Education's Parenting Program—the pre-natal cassette tape and booklet created by Ken Turley and Ron and Val Brugler was delayed in production due to technical difficulties, but the project is now available and copies have been sent out to all advance-orders. The Board is very pleased with the finished product and hopes that it will be enjoyed and appreciated by the church at large and beyond. It is a joy to read and listen to for all. Write to the Board's executive secretary, Rev. Rachel Martin, 12553 Wissant Lane, St. Louis, MO 63146, to order your copy (Price: \$10. plus \$2. postage and handling.)

Another Board of Education project completed this year was accomplished through Louise Woofenden's creative efforts: it is a slide and tape show of the church's summer camps. The show is available to be lent to any interested groups—send requests to Rachel Martin.

The Sunday School Association representative at the Board meeting reported that the Activity Books which accompany the Dole Notes are virtually completed. They are beautifully conceived and created,

primarily by Louise Woofenden. It was a huge project to undertake and will provide many years of good use. One can order them through the Swedenborg Library, 79 Newbury St., Boston, MA 02116.

Plans are already underway for next summer's Pre-Convention Conference to be led by Lorraine Sando and Laura Lawson. The Board of Education is also hoping to take over full responsibility for the care of children, up through League age, for the duration of convention week. The hope is that this will facilitate comprehensive-quality childcare through the consolidation of responsibility and planning.

Another highlight of the meeting was getting the ball rolling, at Ron Brugler's instigation, for reviving the LEI (Leadership Education Institute) program. The plan is to sponsor a week-long LEI Program at the Almont New Church Assembly after the 1985 annual convention. Be in touch with Ron Brugler for ideas and interests to share regarding this endeavor: 246 Lafayette Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15214.

The Board hopes that it is now well-known that Val Brugler, the Board's graphic artist, is available to help you in custom designing literature and advertisements for your church programs. Contact Val Brugler, at the address listed in the previous paragraph, for her graphic arts services. The Board of Education also has available for use a network of people, including someone from nearly every church society, to help share useful information and to let people in their congregations and neighborhoods know about special national and regional church activities. If you have an activity to publicize, or are looking for a way to display information in an attractive brochure, contact Val Brugler. If you have any ideas percolating that you think the Board of Education could help with or if you would like a brochure of resources that the Board of Education has to offer, please write to Rachel Martin at the address given above.

Rachel Martin
Executive Secretary

PARABOLIC THINKING

By G.F. Dole

My assumption is that spiritual consistency is wholly desirable. Ultimately, it is inevitable, for in the World of Spirits, everything that disagrees with our ruling love will be taken away, and we will become consistently heavenly or hellish.

Our teachings insist that there is no one-to-one relationship between spiritual quality and external forms in this world. The same act, done by different people for different reasons, differs in essential quality. They also insist that obedience to the commandments is the necessary foundation of spiritual health and growth.

But if there is no one-to-one correlation between the inner and the outer realms of our lives, then we cannot be both inwardly and outwardly consistent. One of the most readily available illustrations of this is in raising children. What works with one child may not work with another. The shy and sensitive one will wither under the treatment that gets through to the boisterous and aggressive one; and the aggressive one will not even notice the gentle suggestions that can be so effective with the shy one. At times when the children themselves conceive of right and wrong in strictly behavioral terms, there will be the cry that the parents are not fair—"You let Eddie do it, why won't you let me?" The answer is very clear to the parent—"Because you are not Eddie"—but not at all satisfactory to the child.

My assumption is that spiritual consistency is wholly desirable. Ultimately, it is inevitable, for in the World of Spirits, everything that disagrees with our ruling love will be taken away, and we will become consistently heavenly or hellish. We can conceive of our task here as being

to do what we can toward becoming consistently heavenly, consistently loving and understanding, which will require us to be consistently responsive to changing circumstances.

There do need to be limits to behavioral relativism, and in disciplined thought there are. Suppose, for example, it were possible to rank all forms of behavior from the very best down to the very worst. Every act would then have an absolute value. It would then be possible, and necessary, to choose the highest *available* value in any given set of circumstances.

The key word here is "available." Suppose a child starts to run out into a busy street. It might be best in theory to stop the traffic, but the available best is more likely to be to yank the child out of the way, at the risk of some pain or slight injury. We could describe this as giving the child a brutal yank on the arm and sending it sprawling on the sidewalk. That would be a physically accurate description. We could also describe it as saving the child from serious injury or death. That more conjectural: we cannot be absolutely certain what would have happened. One man actually survived a fall of some thousands of feet when his parachute didn't open, and recovered enough to go sky-diving again. I wouldn't count on it.

But surely in terms of the quality of the act, the conjectural description is far more accurate than the strictly physical one. It reflects the situation and the intent, the

reasons for the action. It reflects a best estimate of the available options. It at least suggests the spiritual dimension, the concern for the health and well-being of the child. Without this dimension, we are not really dealing with human behavior. For

A person's deeds are only gestures, and if we look at them apart from their intent they are only motions variously formed

process of regeneration. It would be futile to command universal perceptive attention because not everyone has present access to that intelligence. But it would then be a shameful neglect of our teachings to make a virtue of that lack, and to label behaviorism as anything but what it is—a functional absence of intelligence. It is necessary to admit that it is not intelligent to pay primary attention to people's deeds.

Suppose, for example, it were possible to rank all forms of behavior from the very best down to the very worst. Every act would then have an absolute value. It would then be possible, and necessary, to choose the highest available value in any given set of circumstances.

and more or less clearly distinguished. They are rather like the motions of a machine, and therefore soulless. But when we look at deeds together with their intent, then they are not motions of this kind, but are instead forms of the intent made visible to the eye. For deeds are nothing but witnesses to the kinds of thing that exist in intent, and draw their soul or life from their intent. . . . (So) anyone who is intelligent does not pay attention to another's deeds but only to the intent from and through and for which they occur. In fact, anyone who is wise scarcely sees the deeds, but does see the quality and the amount of their intent (A.C. 9293).

I know there is that passage in *Conjugal Love* (n.523) that allows us to say "If you are inwardly as you appear outwardly. . ." But suppose we take the *Arcana* passage as rigorously as the *Conjugal Love* passage has been taken. Then if we are intelligent, we do not turn our attention to deeds but to the intent within them; and if we are wise, we scarcely see the deeds at all.

According to our theology, we are all inwardly intelligent, and can have access to that intelligence if we do our part in the

Deeds or works are important. They are necessary expressions and confirmations of intent; and it may be helpful to draw a comparison with language. The deed itself is like the specific words of a sentence, and the will within it is like the meaning of that sentence. In order to communicate effectively, we need to learn the language. This means learning its "rules," trying over and over again to say things as well as we can, making mistakes and learning from them. It means having respect for language *as a tool only*, distinguishing language from meaning, and having a far deeper respect for meaning. Swedenborg sketches this nicely in A.C. 241, ". . . if we pay close attention to the meaning of a speaker's words, we do indeed hear the words, but it is as if we did not hear them, taking in only the meaning; and when we think more deeply we do not pay attention even to the meaning of the words, but to a more universal meaning."

This, essentially, is what I mean by "parabolic thinking." The Lord used parables as tools to train his disciples to discern spiritual meaning in everyday events; and that is precisely what all the foregoing is about. Our task is to discern spiritual meaning in everyday behavior, to see the outward form as conveying an inner reality, and to value it not for itself but for what it conveys.

Our outward lives are parables. It makes one wonder what would happen if we wrote down some of the things we had done, and then interpreted them correspondentially. One catch would be choosing what to write down—"I went to a lecture," for example, or "I listened to a lecture;" "I went swimming," or "I went down to the river with some friends. We swam across and sunned and chatted on the sandbar." But at this point we might remember that the Lord did not leave His disciples with a *Dictionary of Correspondences*. He trained their perceptiveness. We are doubtless better off, once we regard our outward lives as parables, to give direct attention to whatever of the inner quality shows through.

If the experience of the disciples is any guide, we may expect a good deal of confusion at the outset, and a fair share of mistakes. But we are not actually total novices in this enterprise. We do have feelings about other people that we cannot explain simply in terms of things they have done. We do pay some heed to those feelings, and find ourselves avoiding this individual or gravitating toward that one. Most of the time (though not always), we eventually discover that our vague feelings were surprisingly accurate, that the sense of "something good" or "something wrong" was a reaction to something really there.

This, I would suggest, is the "intelligence" that is featured in the first quotation from the *Arcana*—"... anyone who is intelligent does not pay attention to another's deeds, but only to the intent..." It is the same intelligence that gives us a rough sense of the meaning of a parable, of the qualities that interplay in a story. It seems to be a kind of instinct for the heart of the matter, but instinct would be a misnomer. It is simply a normal function of our spiritual senses, of our spiritual eyes and ears.

It is fairly obvious that a preoccupation with the literal meaning of a parable would blind us to its intent. We could probably spend months researching what kind of thorns the seed fell among, or what the route was from Jerusalem to Jericho taken by the man who fell among thieves, or what

would be the current value of the widow's two mites. The irrelevance of this is obvious primarily because we are not physically affected by the thorns or the route or the two mites. But let the subject be the church's budget for the coming year, and our priorities change. Suddenly it seems less important that we realize the sacrifice a gift represents, and more important that we come out in the black.

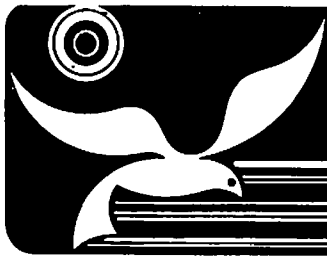
We do affect each other physically. Our actions make life outwardly easier or harder for ourselves and for others. This is inescapable, necessary, and good. Otherwise there would be no point in doing anything. It would be like having a language that was inaudible, or that had no rules whatever and was therefore totally unintelligible.

Further, we do need to pay attention to the effects of actions, whether of others or of ourselves. If we care about each other, then we want to find effective ways to realize that care. We want to discover what works and what does not. One of the statements that immediately raises all kinds of warning flags for me is the absolute, "If X happens, then I'll do Y." This seems to imply a claim to some kind of foreknowledge, a knowing today what will be best tomorrow. It implies that event X can have only one meaning, and that action Y either has only one set of consequences, or that its consequences are irrelevant.

But apply parabolic thinking to this situation. When someone says "If X happens, then I'll do Y" with that unmistakable, absolutist tone, how do we hear it? As a statement of fact, it is theologically indefensible. But as a statement of feeling, as a measure of present determination or distress, it needs to be taken very seriously. We need not encourage or resist event X because we desire or dread event Y; transfer the qualities of Y to X. Event X will have its own inner values, if it happens, for better or for worse. We do need to realize that we are dealing with someone in distress.

It may be too much to expect that we can be wise, and scarcely notice the deeds. Can we perhaps be intelligent, and pay special attention to their intent?

Dr. George F. Dole teaches Bible, Theology, and Languages at the Swedenborg School of Religion in Newton, Massachusetts.



Peace Page

TO BE A CAMPAIGNER FOR PEACE

By Ian Arnold

Joel Chapter 3, verse 9: "Proclaim this among the nations. Prepare war, stir up the mighty men. Let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your ploughshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, 'I am a warrior.'"

We all want peace.

The last thing we would want is another war. In that we have, to a large extent, enjoyed peace now for nearly forty years, since the end of World War 2, we hope and pray it will continue. We would hope and pray that our young people will, in peace, grow to adulthood, have a worthwhile career, live usefully, marry, and raise their children. All in peace

The risk of war is always there.

Yet we know that the threat of war, or the risk of war, is always there. We are scared in case America or Russia push each other too far. Or, that some madman will get control of nuclear weaponry. Or, that some limited, conventional war, such as the war which is going on in Lebanon at the present moment, will escalate into a nuclear, all-out war. It is surprising how many people even in Australia, are thinking about, or have done something about, nuclear fall-out shelters... in case of such a war.

So frightening is the prospect of a third, nuclear, world war, and so uneasily does the world live, never—so it seems—far from such a thing happening; that it cannot but come at us as one of the biggest of all issues. What of the future for mankind? Can we know? Where are we to stand with regard to the arms build-up? If there were to be unilateral disarmament, on all sides, would this put an end to wars?

Relevant Doctrines

But there is another question, and that question is this: Does our Church have in its Doctrines teaching that can help us as we try to come to terms with these issues? And the answer is, 'Yes, it does'. Not, it should be stressed, that the Church seeks to make up your mind for you. The important thing is for each of us to make up our own minds, having given due consideration to the teaching given. It does not matter if, in the end, we differ in our conclusions. The Church itself does not take a "stand" on uranium mining, either for or against it. Each of us must decide what our personal stand is going to be, either for or against it, having reached that position after thoughtful consideration (and prayer) in the light of what the Church teaches.

As we think about the future for humanity, the possibilities of further wars, maybe even a nuclear war—whether, perhaps, we should be in favor of uranium mining or not, and in what way, or to what extent—we might be a campaigner for peace. What are the relevant

doctrines of the Church we should have in mind which will help us reach our decision? For years, for generations, in fact, for centuries, people have half-expected and in some cases, quite seriously expected, the end of the world. It has generally been believed that this is what Jesus talked about and that it all fits in with the Divine purpose and plan. As the King James version of the Bible has it, "the disciples" came unto Jesus privately, saying, "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of *the end of the world*?" (Matthew 24:3) Again, when Jesus appeared to the disciples after His resurrection, He said, "I am with you always, even unto *the end of the world*." (Matthew 28:20).

Neither the disciples nor Jesus ever talked about the end of the world. They talked about the end of *the age*—the end of one age, that is, and the beginning of another. At this very moment, now, we are living through the end of one age and the beginning of another. The Lord wants this world to go on. The Lord wants the human race, as we know it here, to continue. A new and better spiritual age is dawning. The future for the human race, at least so far as that is concerned, is a good and inviting and exciting one. One can read the teaching of the Heavenly Doctrines as indicating that *from the beginning* the Lord has looked forward to this time when at last He would be worshipped as the one visible God, in whom is the invisible God... a God whom we could all know and relate to. (See *True Christian Religion*, 786).

But we cannot rule out war

Even so, we on our part cannot, and the Lord cannot, rule out the possibility of world-wide war, though it should turn out to be a nuclear war. If it was up to the Lord, there would be no wars. We can be absolutely certain of this. The Lord doesn't want war, and it is as far from Him to set a war in motion as heaven is from hell. And so we have such teaching as in the book, *Divine Providence*.

"It is not from the Divine Providence"(or, it is not from the Lord) "that wars occur, because they involve murders, plunderings, violence, cruelties, and other terrible evils which are diametrically opposed to Christian charity."

Wars, however, as we know only too well, continue to break out, and they do so because we have freedom—the freedom, that is, to do good or to do evil—and because our unregenerate nature is what it is. However unwelcome a fact of life this is, we are all born with inclinations such as would lead us, if they are not checked, to want to dominate over the lives of others, and to needlessly and selfishly accumulate the goods and wealth of the world. These are inclinations—we repeat—which we *all* share. The point is that if we are determined to act on those inclinations, in the end, reluctantly, God has to permit us to do so.

Since we have freedom, and since, as we've seen, our unregenerate nature is what it is, we are capable of all evils imaginable. The Lord is all the time working against the current these inclinations would take us along. He restrains and holds us back as far as it is possible for Him to do so. But if an unswerving determination to go to war sets in on both sides, He has to permit it. It must be said that the human race *can* annihilate itself if it makes up its mind to do so.

The one encouraging thought in all of this is the thought of the Lord unceasingly working to head off such a calamity or to hold us back from it. This we know from the teaching given.

Disarmament won't stop wars

In the light of what has just been said two important points are worth noting. We sometimes get the idea that it's just a few war hungry types who are responsible for wars and that if we eliminated them—particularly if we eliminated them before they got to the top—then we

would have no wars. That's wrong. The love of dominion and of self-aggrandizement is present with us all. What needs eliminating, or what really needs eliminating, are these loves in all our hearts and minds.

The other point here is this. Even if we could get America and Russia to dump their nuclear weaponry and to make bonfires of all their other armaments, this wouldn't stop war. As has so recently been said, "Arms do not make wars." And a reduction in arms does not mean a reduction in the chances of a war occurring. It is, as we've already noted, what lies in the hearts and minds of individuals everywhere which leads to war.

We have a duty to make this a safer world

There is no doubt that we all have a duty to make this a safer world. It is the Lord's world. It is not ours. And He created it that people might be born here and that by means of their experience of life here they might prepare themselves for a life of use and service in heaven. In that war itself is evil and involves such terrible suffering, we want to check it. In that nuclear weaponry, if used, would be so destructive, we must strive to ensure, as much as we can, that it won't be used or that it won't be used carelessly or recklessly.

But how? This is the question. And each of us must and will answer it for ourselves. Some say that the only way to make sure there is never a nuclear, third, world war, is for each side to have in its arsenal the equivalent of what the other has. Others, also sincerely, argue for the dumping of nuclear weaponry and a reliance only on conventional arms. Some, by joining marches, set out to do no more than remind the world's leaders of a fundamental yearning for peace.

Campaigning for Peace

But there is something else here which it is important for us to remember. Wars and conflicts between nations and peoples are, we are taught, reflections of wars and conflicts going on at the higher, spiritual level, where mankind is concerned. The one *corresponds* to the other. To put it another way, the wars which break out in this world are no more nor less than reflections of the disruptions and conflicts which are taking place and which affect humanity at the level of spirit. "All things which take place in the natural world correspond to spiritual things in the spiritual world." (*Divine Providence* 251:4) And this has very real implications for us.

Spiritual forces from the spiritual world are all the time having an impact on life in this natural world. And, in however small a measure it may seem to be, each of us can affect—and does affect—the quality of the spiritual forces in and around us. It's not a matter of something too big for any one person to do anything about it. We each can play a part. We can each strive to put our own lives into better and better order. We can each strive to improve the quality of the spiritual forces in and around us.

We can, if we so make up our minds, affect the quality of the spiritual forces reaching this world. The Lord calls us to go to war against evil and selfishness and prejudices and bigotry in our own hearts and minds. And to the extent that we do so we can be truly effective campaigners for peace.

Joel 3:9—"Proclaim this among the nations: Prepare war, stir up the mighty man. Let all the men of war draw near, let them come up. Beat your ploughshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, 'I am a warrior'."

Rev. Ian Arnold, a New Church minister in Sydney, Australia, preached this sermon on Remembrance Sunday, November 6th, 1983.

WOMEN COMMUNICATING

Annella Smith, Editor

Bertha Berran, Co-editor

OUR NEW OFFICERS

The women in my family have been serving the church since 1885, so who am I to break this precedent? My husband, Gus, and I live in Bethesda, Md. and attend the National Church in Washington, D.C. Our daughter, Sara, lives in California and our son, Eric, in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

At present my main service to our local church is chairing the Worship Committee, which includes Chancel, Worship Service and Music.

I attend Convention regularly and have served on the "Committee on Admission into the Ministry"(CAM). I will try to be of use to the Alliance of New Church Women.

Mary Ebel
1st Vice President

Born and raised in the Philadelphia church, I am 37 years old and have worked for the past 11 years as a legal secretary. I have also served the local church as society secretary for nearly 10 years, so I am beginning to feel somewhat "type-cast!" My interests/hobbies are handicrafts, music and animals, which has led me to volunteer at the Philadelphia Zoo (in their volunteer-run gift shop) and the Pennsylvania S.P.C.A., as well as singing in the church choir, substituting as church organist when needed, and making things for the Ladies Aid annual bazaar.

I co-own a house with Gretchen Worden (whose famous sister, Muff, is known by all) and we have five cats between us.

I am very happy to serve the Women's Alliance as secretary, and to have greater opportunity to meet the backbone of our church—the women!

Nina Tafel
Secretary

Originally of the Indianapolis Society, I have been active in the Chicago Society since 1980 when I moved to that city after my marriage to Ralph Rohrer. In addition to serving as President of the Chicago Society and President of its Alliance, I am the Society's organist and librarian.

I work part time at a local real estate firm as a records clerk; Ralph is a reference librarian at the University of Chicago. We have a son, Frank, 3 years old. In my spare time, I enjoy playing the guitar, flute and piano.

Mindy Jester
Mite Box

I have been a member of our local church for 25 years and have worked with our Alliance for over 20 years. I am the wife of a minister. I have been editor of the *Western Canada Conference Magazine* for 10 years. I have taught Sunday School and am now a substitute teacher. I have enjoyed being on the staff at Paulhaven Summer Camps.

Music plays a large part in my life. I belong to a choral group, and I am keenly interested in the music of our church.

Since attending Convention I have made many dear friends and acquaintances.

Muriel Bennett
Nominating Committee

"HE RESTORETH MY SOUL."

Psalm 23:3

The Lord had told the disciples that certain signs would accompany those who believed; "in My name they will cast out devils; they will speak in new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it will not hurt them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover."

In the early days of the Christian Church there was at times a literal fulfillment of these promises. Miracles and wonders and signs, a visual evidence of the Lord's power over all things disorderly and evil, was essential as a means of leading those He encountered to believe in Him. This miraculous faith was not a genuine faith of the heart, but did nevertheless prepare the way for it, and afterwards ceased to be necessary.

For us the signs are pictures of what happens to us spiritually when we truly believe in the Lord. True believers "cast out devils," when they oppose and subdue evil in themselves. They "speak in new tongues" when they acknowledge the doctrine which teaches that the risen and glorified Lord Jesus Christ is Jehovah God, and that evil ought not to be done because it is opposed to Him. They "take up serpents" when they elevate their sensual nature by compelling it to regard their *higher* nature. They "drink deadly things and they do not hurt him" when false persuasions enter their understanding, but they do not allow them to influence their lives. They "lay hands on the sick and they recover" when they bring the power of the Lord's truth into contact with their weak and disorderly nature that has lost contact with their higher nature, and restores it to spiritual health.

These healings of the soul and its restoration to spiritual health and life are the "greater works" of which the Lord spoke when He said, "Verily, verily I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." By going to the Father the Lord meant glorifying His humanity and uniting it with the divinity of which it was begotten. His going was not a change of place, but a change of state, an elevation of the human into the state of the divine.

MITE BOX

Do you remember your first Convention?

When I was eleven years old, I attended the 1966 Convention held at Urbana College. At that time, the Indianapolis Society was defunct, and my only contact with New Church ideas and people came through monthly (or less often) worship services with the General Church people in our area.

It wasn't easy to explain to my school friends why I didn't attend a local church, and that we sometimes had church in our own living room! It wasn't easy to feel so odd and out-of-it.

Attending that first Convention was an eye-opening experience. Though there weren't many children, the important thing for me was discovering that they existed at all. I learned that there were other people my age all over the country who were growing up Swedenborgian; that knowledge was crucial for maintaining my interest at a time when peer pressure began to intensify. It was wonderful to 'fit in' somewhere and meet teenagers and young adults that I could emulate. That first Convention is part of the reason I am still a Swedenborgian today. (It is also the reason why I learned to play the guitar, because there was a hootenanny with songs like "Blowing in the Wind," "Michael, Row the Boat Ashore," and "This Land is Your Land." I was determined to become a folk singer, and I guess in a modest way, I have, although my audience is usually less than four feet tall, and my repertoire is made up primarily of tunes like "Little Peter Rabbit Had a Fly Upon His Ear.")

During the next year, the Mite Box goal will be to help children and young people attend the 1986 Convention by supplementing the financial assistance program set up by the Board of Education for that purpose. Plan now to maximize your giving—and the potential of our youth to find their place within our beloved Church. Thank you.

Mindy Jester

"BOY AND STAR" CHRISTMAS CARD

"Boy and Star," a watercolor depicting the reverence of a young Bolivian herder, is featured on the 1984 Christmas card being sold by Intermedia, the communications and adult basic education agency of the National Council of Churches.

In the painting, by Argentinian artist Doelia Castro, a Bolivian boy watching over his llamas kneels to pray as a star reminiscent of the Star of Bethlehem shines in the distance. The inside text of the card, drawn from Luke 1:48, reads: "Rejoice! From now on all people will call me blessed."

"Boy and Star" was used as the design for Intermedia's 1965 Christmas card, and was so popular that there were three printings to meet demand. There have been many requests in recent years for a reprint, said the Rev. David W. Briddell, director of Intermedia.

Proceeds from the sale of the cards help to support Intermedia's program in literature, education and communication facilities in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Caribbean and the South Pacific. Nearly 22,400 cards were sold last year.

Publication of the cards also is one way that Intermedia helps to bring recognition to artists from around the globe, Briddell said. "It really is a way for people in the United States to gain an awareness and appreciation of the artistry of people in other parts of the world, and of how these artists perceive the Nativity," he said.

Simple in design, "Boy and Star" uses warm browns and reds. Miss Castro said the inspiration for her painting came to her as she rode alone in the hills of Bolivia, absorbing the utter stillness of the countryside and the reverence of the people.

The "Boy and Star" Christmas card may be ordered from Intermedia, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 670, New York, NY 10115. Just under 5x7 inches in size, the cards come in boxes of 20 and cost \$8 (25 percent discount for orders of 10 boxes or more). Postage and handling charges are \$1.25 for one box, \$1.60 for two, \$2.50 for three and 5 percent of the order for four or more boxes. Checks should be made payable to Intermedia; no consignment orders accepted.

BOOK COMPETITION

The Swedenborg Lending Library and Enquiry Centre in Sydney, Australia has announced a book competition open to all New Church people everywhere. In connection with the 1988 Tricentenary of the birth of Emanuel Swedenborg, the Library is sponsoring a competition they hope will engage many writers, experienced and otherwise. Ultimately, they hope the competition will be useful for bringing new written materials to the Swedenborg Movement throughout the world.

Manuscripts for two categories are invited. On topical subjects utilizing Swedenborgian thought and directed towards the general public, manuscripts should be between 30,000 and 50,000 words. Each entry should work on the premise of introducing Swedenborgian thought rather than providing in-depth analysis of Swedenborgian concepts. Preferred topics include Evolution/Creation; Marriage Love/The Place of the Sexes; The Relevance of the Book of Revelation and the Future.

The second category is Children's Literature. These entries should be appropriate for children between the ages of five and ten, and they are free to deal with any subject conveying the thrust of Swedenborg's teachings.

A prize of \$750.00 will be awarded to the winning author in each category. Deadline for manuscripts is June 30th, 1986. For further information, write to the Swedenborg Lending Library and Enquiry Centre, P.O. Box 42, Willoughby, New South Wales, Australia.

NOTICE

The Swedenborg Foundation announces that they are seeking a new bookkeeper and filing clerk, following the retirement of Mary Vindish, who has held the position for the past 21 years. The duties will be varied, and computer experience is required. The Foundation uses an MBSI system. Send resume and salary history to: The Swedenborg Foundation, 139 E. 23rd St., New York City, NY 10010.

Reflections

By Sylvia Rankin

THOUGHTS ABOUT DEATH

If there were no death in our world, life would be low and meaningless. Immortal and eternal life is attainable only through death. Spiritual enlightenment is needed to give us a right attitude toward death. The human is destined to another and higher life. It would be low and meaningless if there were no death. Meaning is found in eternity.

The striving for eternity is the essence of life, but is reached only by passing through death, which is the destiny of everything in this life. Christ's love for the world and for humanity is victory over the powers of death; it is the gift of abundant life. The human being yearns for eternity. Immortality has to be won by the individual. It is unbearable that a complete personality created by God should die. Immortality is won in the struggle by the individual for personality, which becomes the valuable immortal and eternal element in each person. A realized and completed personality is immortal.

In the spiritual world there are no self-contained personalities—they are united with God, with other personalities and with the cosmos.

The art of being wise is the art of knowing what to overlook.

—William James

Our safety does not lie in the present perfection of the knowledge of the will of God, but in our sincerity in obeying the light we have, and seeking for more.

—Edward Worsdell

Conscience is God's presence in the person.

—Emanuel Swedenborg

HEARD ON THE RADIO

A man was told by God to go out to the woods to live and that he would be cared for. A raven came twice each day bringing a chunk of bread. There was a stream running near by. Finally, the raven failed to appear. The man had to look elsewhere for sustenance, but there was a famine in the land. He finally saw a woman gathering sticks. He begged her for some food. "How can I give you any?" she pleaded. "These sticks will make my last fire and I have only enough grain and oil to make myself my last meal."

The man sat himself under a tree and told her to go into her hut and build a fire, taking whatever she had to make him some cakes. With this she complied, and strange to tell, she had all she needed—enough for many a day.

The preacher's remark, on the radio, was, "We must trust in the Lord."

In the light of New Church correspondences, we might think of "a famine in the land" as meaning that when we are directed by the Lord to do some special thing, we may be at a loss to know how to comply—our mind is in a state of famine; we need to learn more about God and His ways. As we struggle for His love (the stick) and wisdom of the woman (guidance of the church's teachings), it brings us to the tree of knowledge (the man sat under) and from there we find that the love we give to others (grain and oil) will return to us in many ways, causing development of our spiritual character, and taking care of us much more than we could have conceived.

That people should regulate their actions by their own conscience, without any regard to the opinions of the rest of the world, is one of the first precepts of moral prudence.

—Samuel Johnson

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