

NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER



The Visitor

"My dear, there is light upon your face!
Where can it come from, in this dark place?"
—It is the shining face of my baby.

"That little crown you have on your breast,
Is it from Herod's treasure chest?"
—It is the golden hair of my baby.

"A perfume of roses all around . . .
That bush can't be blooming, with snow on the ground!"
—It is the sweet body of my baby.

"Hark, I hear singing at the gate!
Who could be out in the street so late?"
—Angels, singing for joy of my baby.

—BRIAN KINGSLAKE

Christmas, 1965

NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER

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ESSENTIAL FAITH OF THE NEW CHURCH

There is one God, and He is the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Saving faith is to believe in Him and keep the Commandments of His Word.

The Word is Divine and contains a spiritual or inner meaning which reveals the way of regeneration.

Evil should be shunned as sin against God.

Human life is unbroken and continuous, and the world of the spirit is real and near.

EDITORIAL

man's hope

A DELIGHTFUL STORY is told about the famed scientist, Einstein. A group of carolers stopped at his Princeton home and began to sing,
"O, little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see the lie."

Suddenly Dr. Einstein, violin in hand, appeared and started to play with the singers. He played through each verse to the end. Quietly the carolers left, and Dr. Einstein without a word returned to his house.

Dr. Einstein, a great scientist and a great Jew. Did he sense the peace that the spirit of Christmas brings to all who will hearken to its message of peace on earth, good will to men? Assuredly he did. Although Dr. Einstein's ideas about that first Christmas may have differed from those of the carol singers, we may be sure that he felt himself one with them at that moment. And perhaps the line, "The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight," touched a tender cord in his heart. The most profound meaning of that first Christmas is and ever will be contained in the angels' song about peace on earth.

True, Christmas as celebrated today is often an occasion for merriment. Santa Claus has no small part in it, along with "Jingle Bells." This is not necessarily objectionable, for Christmas should be a joyous season.

"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people" (Luke 2:10).

Christmas is ever a reminder of those good tidings of great joy, a joy we all may experience. Something wonderful beyond words can enter our lives, if we but open our hearts to God's abiding peace and blessing. This holds true even if many a sensitive heart feels the bitter irony of the contrast between the words "on earth, peace" and the conditions that actually prevail. For the peace brought by the Lord in His assumption of a humanity is one that arises from a harmonious relationship to God. It is not diminished by either hot or cold wars. Nevertheless, it is upon this relationship to God that man's hope for an eventual world peace must rest. The prophets of the Old Testament had a vision of a day when nations would not learn war anymore. That day would come when the Kingdom of God was established in the heart of mankind. When compassion for our fellowman was born on Christmas day, there was also born a new and bright hope for mankind. Over the ages there has been an increasing determination on the part of growing numbers to lift the world from its misery, to make a better life for the children of men.

Does it not mean something very significant that so mighty a power as the United States should spend millions of dollars to organize idealistic youths into peace corps which go into strange lands to help people win a way to a better life? Yet back of that effort, and all similar efforts, lies the spirit of the Christ. Truly the Lord started a fire on this earth that is still burning.

The song of the angels on that first Christmas, "Peace on earth", has not died out. It still lives in the hearts of untold millions. And as long as it lives there is hope for mankind.

the angelic chorus

by **Brian Kingslake**

THE MOST IRONIC feature of our Lord's birth is that history has recorded nothing of it. We don't even know when it took place, nor where—except in a general way, that it was somewhere in Bethlehem of Judaea. It was by far the most important thing that has ever happened: it dwarfs into insignificance the birth of the greatest pharaohs or caesars or emperors or kings. It was, in fact, the pivot event in the whole story of mankind, the turning point of life itself on this planet. Prophets through the ages had foretold it, and just at that time there was in Israel a stirring of expectancy. Everything was building up to this astonishing and glorious act of divine mercy and grace. But when it actually took place, nobody knew a thing about it, except a group of rustics camping in the fields outside Bethlehem, and some astrologers in Persia. In Jerusalem, only six miles away, where several of the prophets had lived who had prophesied the event, nobody was aware that it had happened. Nor apparently in the nearby inn, where the travellers were too preoccupied with their own concerns to notice it. So the God of the universe, born as a human baby, had to be laid, for want of anywhere better, in a horse's feeding trough.

But though the event was so little observed on earth, there were those on the "floor above" who were fully aware of the magnitude and significance of it. I mean, those men and women who had passed over from this little school we call the world, and were now living their eternal lives in the

many mansions of the Great Beyond. Some evil, some good. These are naturally very concerned with this school-world, because from it their numbers are recruited. And at that time in human history, the evil spirits were dominating this world from within, and thus effectively hampering the production of angels. They were permeating every area of its life and activity, and befouling it and corrupting it. But even more than that. Swedenborg tells us that the sphere of hell was actually penetrating into the lower heavens, like a paralysing poison gas or an intolerable stench. The angels were suffering distress on their own account. But also they were distressed on account of what was happening to men and women on the earth plane, many of whom were actually being possessed by demons. The angels were troubled: when would the release come? With no sense of time, they must nevertheless have often cried out, "How long, O Lord, how long?"

And now the long-expected day of deliverance was at hand. God was himself coming down into his creation to re-order it and set it to rights. What a joyous relief! How welcome, how wonderful! The angels were overwhelmingly happy, and when they are happy they sing—as do uninhibited people on earth also. Swedenborg often heard them singing together, and almost always the subject of their improvised anthems was the same—one topic only—"the glorification of the Lord on account of his advent." Let me quote Arcana Coelestia 2133: "Of the divine mercy, heaven has

on several occasions been opened to me; so that I have heard a general glorification of the Lord. This was of such a nature that a number of societies glorified the Lord together and with one mind, and yet each society did so by itself, with distinct affections and the derivative ideas. It was a heavenly voice, heard far and wide, to an extent so immense that the hearing failed to reach its end, and this was attended with inmost joy and happiness."

A contemporary of Swedenborg, the composer Händel, also claimed to have had his ears opened to hear an angelic choir, which inspired him to write the Hallelujah Chorus of the "Messiah." I have heard the Hallelujah Chorus sung in the old Crystal Palace in London by two thousand voices. It was thrilling indeed. But only a crude echo of what Händel (and Swedenborg) heard on the other side! Very well: if the angels were still singing so gloriously about the Lord's advent, 1750 years after the event, what must it have been like on the actual night when the event took place? Imagination swoons at the contemplation of it.

And since the angels had this wonderful and thrilling "good news," can't you see how eager they were to impart it to somebody—somebody on earth where the event was being staged?—somebody in time and space, near that point in time and space where the infinite was touching and fusing with the finite? It is hard for angels to "get through" into the consciousness of men on earth. It was easy enough in the early days

of man's creation—in the Eden days, for then a two-way communion over the barrier of death was natural and normal. But after the "Fall," or expulsion from Eden, when love of self and love of the world wholly occupied men's hearts, how were the angels to do it? Especially at that moment of our Lord's advent when men were at an all-time "low." Probably the heavenly voices pressed hard upon thousands of minds in and around Bethlehem that night, but the only ones to whom they could get through at all were "certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay; in fields where they lay, keeping their sheep, on a cold winter's night that was so deep." Not literally the

winter, I imagine—more likely the lambing season. But surely that was the period of the deepest winter of the human race, when only those innocent, illiterate shepherds could be made to hear the tremendous resounding chorus of angelic praise!

I have seen many nativity plays and pageants. All have been charming, and many have introduced original features of production. But one day I want to see a nativity play staged from the point of view of the inhabitants of the spiritual world! The angels will be singing with rapturous adoration, concentrating their attention on a bright light that is Jesus—"the light shining in darkness, which the

darkness cannot quench." And then, at first dimly, but gradually in clearer focus, will appear the shepherds, as seen through the angels' eyes. And one of the angels, acting as the spokesman or messenger (the word "angel" is Greek for messenger) will tell them the astounding news. "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you. Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." The other angels will now interrupt—they just can't hold themselves back! "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men." And then the scene will go out focus, and the ghostly shepherds will fade into nothingness, and we shall be back in the clear atmosphere of the spiritual world. The light from the Christ-child will grow stronger and stronger, until it dazzles our eyes, and the angels will fall on their faces and worship, saying: "Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen."

This is the nativity scene I want to lay before you. Let the travellers in the inn, (and the drinkers in the inn), pursue their various ways, and their various goals, too busy with "more important things" to care what is going on in the stable. Let Herod enquire diligently of the priests and scribes, and find mere facts of geography, that the Messiah was to be born in such and such a place. Let the whole human race feel its way through the cold, dark night, oblivious of what is happening. The angels know, and we know! Nothing will ever be the same again. Silently, without observation, the mid-winter is passing; spring is on its way. The new dawn has broken. And all flesh shall see the salvation of our God.

ROADS TO BETHLEHEM

The glowing crimson fades from autumn hills,
The gold recedes from branches stark and bare;
Nature seems dead, as desolation fills
The gloried haunts that lately shone so fair.

Grim tokens of the end? Silence your fear!
Dread not the wailing winds which sweep the earth,
Hark to immortal music in the air,
Wafting glad tidings of eternal Birth.

Dark was that night and darker yet the age
When stirred the groping void with Light that cheers,
And Life emerged triumphant, to assuage
The massive sorrows of a thousand years.

So, Bethlehem speaks liberating grace,
Lost seasons live again in kindling hearts—
The scented spring, the summer's soft embrace,
And harvest gold, like autumn time imparts.

With treasures borne in star-lit pilgrimage,
We seek the Manger, where, in giving all,
We gain that heritage which crowns an age
Of nurtured hope 'neath angels' beckoning call.

—Earl C. Hamilton

NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR

as seen by **Loraine Scott**

(In June four of us were sent by the Ohio Association to work at the Swedenborg Exhibit at the New York World's Fair. It was a strange, wonderful experience which will, if we can evaluate it properly, give us a better understanding of our role as Swedenborgians in our communities and in the world. We will try to share some of our impressions of this experience.)

Everyone should have come to the Fair. It was interesting and exciting, like one great circus of lights, noise and entertainment.

If you look a little closer, you will find other things: food, science, industry and religion. It is a crossroads of many nations, many languages, many customs, many races and many religions. There are 646 acres of this wonderful place, with people and things from nearly all over the world. We had time for only part of them. The weather was mostly cloudy and on the cool side, but there were a few days that were pretty hot and were bright enough to take pictures. I am sorry I did not push myself a little harder so I could have taken in more.

At our Swedenborg Exhibit we helped to distribute great volumes of New Church literature to all who would accept it, young and old alike. This is what we really came for. We got better acquainted with some of the literature ourselves as we told more people about it. Many listened. Some were already acquainted with the Swedenborg teachings, and some were happy to hear it for a first time. A few seemed to pass it by. One was indignant. The Swedenborg Foundation gave literature gener-

ously. One individual paid for books to give to an interested person; others were anxious to buy extra books to supplement those already owned. The Writings seemed to fill a great need in the lives of those that knew about them and read them.

Most of us made an effort, during our spare time, to find out a little about other religions or organizations that were represented at the Fair. This was with the idea of understanding all faiths and all people a little better. We kept remembering the theme of the Fair: "Peace Through Understanding." It is to be hoped that people all over the world will develop their appreciation of the various expressions of the religious message.

While at the Fair we lived near the Long Island Expressway. The traffic roared by without stopping twenty-four hours of the day. Fortunately we could shut out most of it, when we cared to. Mr. and Mrs. Larsen had seen to it that all the workers at the Fair are provided with an adequate and beautifully furnished apartment that is air conditioned.

We left happy, although a little tired from it all, and somewhat wiser than when we came.

as seen by **Isabelle Winfield**

Working for two weeks at the Swedenborgian Exhibit in the Protestant-Orthodox Building was not only an education, but also a reformation.

Here in this impressive building we were able to come in contact with people from all over the world. We were able to watch their reactions, or listen to their comments, whenever we offered them

Swedenborgian literature: "Religious Offbeat," "Chart of Swedenborg's Life and Works," and "Church of the New Jerusalem, Swedenborgian."

Some of the sightseers would pass by without accepting anything, while others, purposely or unpurposely, looked the other way. Sometimes a few people would either stop and glance at the name of the church, or at the interior of the exhibit (the altar of the Chapel) or at the books for sale, or at us, or even at everything in view, but soon afterwards would walk away without accepting one piece of literature. Then there were some people who had already seen the original Chapel at Portuguese Bend, California, and even though they would stop and take time to tell us about it, some of them would not take any pamphlets from us.

Many people, however, accepted our material although they were not willing to come inside the booth and listen to the six different one-minute recordings on the telephones. But whenever anybody came inside, we were more than pleased because of the opportunity we had to talk with some of them.

Those persons whom we conversed with gave me a better idea of how the New Church concept is beginning to spread, in a general sense, throughout the world. Many of the people after having listened to the recordings were quick to tell us that this is what they had believed always. And they quickly consented to take more of our material away with them, such as "The Bible or Word of God Uncovered and Explained."

Also there were the ministers, priests, and nuns who very readily

received the special offerings of Swedenborg's books—many with that I-wonder-what-he-has-to-say attitude and others with that it-never-hurts-to-learn-more-truths attitude.

In spite of these very cooperative people who came inside the exhibit, there were also the fundamentalists who were ready to challenge us on our every word. They could not only quote verses from the Bible verbatim, but could also turn quickly to any chapter that they were quoting. Yet some of these challengers seemed eager to exchange talk and take additional literature with them.

All in all I feel certain that from the thousands of tracts and pamphlets handed out, from the hundreds of people who listened to our recordings and from those persons who took pocket editions; that if one iota of these recipients will have gained a clearer understanding of the Word, or even a spiritual interest that looks toward the ecumenical, then the New Church Exhibit will have been a most successful undertaking.

as seen by Jean F. Bestor

Back in New York—this time with a specific object in view—to help familiarize the public with the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg by manning the Exhibit in the Protestant and Orthodox Center at the World's Fair.

The Rev. Harold Larsen, who runs the Exhibit, allowed us time to settle into "The Apartment" at Lefrak City: then he and Mrs. Larsen initiated us into the mysteries of high-rise housekeeping, after which they took us to the Fair and gave us much information and many hints as to how we should approach the visitors to the Exhibit. Mr. Larsen spared himself no possible trouble to make our stay enjoyable, and in the several meetings we had with him and his

wife, we quickly succumbed to their kindness and charm. Even after so many months of complications and difficulties in connection with the Fair, they retain a calm and philosophical attitude towards the many unexpected and unavoidable annoyances which crop up. While happy that our presence at the Exhibit permitted them to attend Convention with a comparatively easy mind, we ourselves were disappointed not to see more of them.

The unusual decor in the apartment delighted us; and for four independent females, we shook down into an acceptable routine with very little trouble. Meals had to fit the schedule of duty, and more than once we found ourselves "tucking in" wholeheartedly at midnight. This probably caused some wild dreams but no permanent damage. The New York Society must have spent long hours planning, for we were delighted to find everything we needed from an iron to a shoe-cleaning outfit!

The Fair was a conglomeration of pitifully shoddy merchandise and fascinating objects and scenes from lands far-away and near. Too much sightseeing we found inadvisable, as we preferred to be fresh for our duties at the Exhibit, but it was possible to take in a certain amount each day, as Mr. Larsen wisely advised us to do.

The Exhibit itself was quiet, cool and attractive. Many people who had seen the Wayfarers' Chapel at Palos Verdes recognized it and stopped to tell us how very beautiful and inspiring they had found the original. One young couple took photographs—they were married there a short time ago.

The intelligence and the enthusiasm of the young people who stopped to ask questions was most inspiring. Luckily Mr. Larsen had suggested we mark down any encounter we found particularly interesting, because with so many people passing through each day,

memories proved faulty! Some are unforgettable, such as little Alan Chen, a Chinese boy who had fled China to Japan; who had a Christian mother but whose father he regarded as doomed because he "did not confess Christ on his deathbed." Alan had come entirely alone to New York, had tried to commit suicide five times, but felt something hold him back each time. He showed us many interesting facets of Chinese culture, and politely disagreed with much we had to say. But we felt he was open to New Church doctrines, and he eventually had trouble tearing himself away.

There was the young German girl, Rosemarie Morewedge, who had come over to be a counselor at a camp. She had studied literature and knew the influence Swedenborg has had on many writers and was anxious to find out more about him. She asked many intelligent questions and seemed to find the information readily acceptable.

One gentleman who won "The Four Doctrines" at a daily drawing this year came back to buy two more volumes of Swedenborg's writings.

There were five young men from Israel, all mutes, who had met Helen Keller and were delighted to recognize her likeness on the cover of her book "My Religion." Mrs. Winfield seemed to have no trouble understanding what they wanted to convey, and they went away loaded with literature.

When he entered the Exhibit, James Hanley, a young Catholic boy, appeared quite disinterested. He listened to a few of the phone messages and accepted the literature when told that the nuns and priests were doing likewise. He bought two books and signed a card for the free drawing, choosing "Heaven and Hell" to be sent if he won.

We were surprised at the readiness with which many of the Roman Catholics accepted our literature; the nuns taking advantage

of the set of Swedenborg's writings for their libraries offered by the Foundation, and others even buying books. "Heaven and Hell" was a prime favorite.

With so many people coming into the booth, some were bound to be scoffers and Bible-thumpers. Mr. Kenneth Anderson warned us about the latter, saying they would "take away our peace of mind." This dedicated Swedenborgian, who is retired but still very active, opens up the Exhibit almost every day. He lovingly cleans the carpeting, wipes off the phones, and sees that the literature is stacked as it should be. We found in him a mine of information which he has ready on the tip of his tongue, not lurking at the back of his mind, which is the case with most of us. Our beliefs and teachings have a perverse way of refusing to come to our lips lucidly and intelligibly. Let us hope that this is not a sign that they have not yet become a part of us, but only of a stumbling tongue!

This wonderful opportunity to meet with and talk to so many people from so many different backgrounds couldn't fail to alter our outlook on many things. I personally feel that mine has changed considerably. Instead of feeling discouraged about our numbers dwindling, I can see where the leaven of Swedenborg's teaching is lightening the beliefs of many other denominations, and causing these beliefs to converge in many ways in which we can agree with others, not keep harping on our differences. Of what use is it to "get the better" of someone in an argument regarding technicalities, if thereby we engender ill feeling and resentment?

This does not mean that our Swedenborg Societies are no longer necessary. They may always be necessary to keep alive the vital spark ignited by Emanuel Swedenborg's writings. We must "shine like a good deed in a naughty world."

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

Matthew 10:34

The Church Militant

by George F. Dole

FOR CENTURIES, war has been one of the facts of human life. Archeology in Mesopotamia has discovered that cities began to be walled early in the fourth millennium B.C.—the first widespread evidence of man's defense against the attacks of man. Since that time, our history is largely the history of our wars. The important nations are those like Rome, who conquered. The unimportant ones are those like Syria, who were conquered. Studying these wars at a safe distance, we tend to take them for granted.

When war threatens us, however, we feel different about it. We talk of our age of anxiety, of how difficult it is to live under the shadow of the atomic cloud. Perhaps we should pause a moment and ask ourselves how much of this is really self-pity. Have we so much more cause to be anxious than those who lived under the shadow of Egypt or Assyria or Rome? These were hostile, aggressive powers that virtually filled the known world. We have no parallel today. As to the threat of vast destruction, what of those who lived ever under the threat of famine? What of those who saw the actual devastation of the plague?

Actually, each one of us has a better chance of living out his life as he chooses to live it than have the people of any other age in recorded history. We are living in the dawn of a new age, and there are radical changes taking place. Let us gather a few of the symptoms of the change concerning war.

We hear an increasing number of voices raised against war, and

we are witnessing a growth in the number and scope of experiments in non-violent resistance as an alternative to war and surrender. We are witnessing the strange phenomenon of the "limited war", a sort of military jockeying for position at the conference table.

In other words, we are in a slow shift from fighting for men's bodies with men's bodies to fighting for men's minds with men's minds. From a strictly military point of view, it might be worth our while to seize this moment to conquer the world—it would be costly, but we could probably do it—but we are becoming convinced that this would not mean very much. We still feel obliged to demonstrate that we could if we wanted to, and this seems to serve as a sort of substitute to our national ego instead of actually doing it.

Values, objectives, and means are changing. Instead of using physical force to expand the physical territory of a nation, we are increasingly using persuasion, both ideological and economic, to enlarge the subtler dominion of our political ideals and our economic forces. We do not know how long this shift will take, or how many lapses there will be, or how great the lapses will be. But "cold war," war with verbal and economic means, is moving in.

The church has long been involved in wars. It has started many, and supported more. The churches today are involved in the cold war. A religious leader most opposed to the use of military force may be most dedicated to the triumph of democracy. As men

were once prone to equate Christianity with the Holy Roman Empire, so it is now easy to equate Christianity with political ideals.

But the war for men's minds is not the final phase of war on earth. We can look at countries where different ideologies reign, and find the same symptoms of inhumanity — crime, injustice, broken homes, and neglected children. Even when the battle for men's minds is won, there remains the battle for men's hearts.

Military force gains territories and their inhabitants for a nation. Ideological force gains adherents to a political system. What force gains hearts, and to what are they gained?

First, as to the goal, hearts must be won to love. The Writings define love as "feeling the joy of another as joy in oneself." Whatever nation, whatever political or economic system rules, there will be injustice and misery unless this quality rules. As long as our hearts are insensitive to the hearts of others, we cannot avoid hurting them. For then the only desires we know are our own, and these guide us completely. But when we can feel the desires of others as our own, and they can feel ours, then at last the walls that separate us are broken down, and we live together. If we hurt someone, we feel the pain. When we lift someone's burden, a burden is lifted from us.

Second, as to the means, only our lives will suffice. Neither our muscles nor our words are adequate, for the battleground is essentially within us. We must so fight against all in us that is contrary to love, that we begin to embody love, to be forms or manifestations of it. This means more than doing and talking about love, for we ourselves must be in our actions and words, going forth to others.

Here, in this battle, is where the church can and must be militant. Here is the sword the Lord

brought, to cleave our very souls, to pluck up, to root out, to destroy all our delight in ourselves. We are at war, every one of us, now. We are at war with the very sources of war in our own hearts. Every bit of egotism, pettiness, resentment, insensibility, greed and hatred in us is a contribution to a worldwide fund dedicated to the destruction of humanity.

Why religion for this war? Why not psychiatry, or humanism? Simply because we have no power to create love in ourselves. We can direct our actions and our thoughts to a certain extent, and bring certain loves to the fore at times, but we have no more power to lift ourselves above ourselves than we have to raise ourselves into the air by our bootstraps.

Or, more fundamentally, love is one, and that one love is the Lord. There is no other source of love. When we say that the goal of the ultimate war is love, we are saying that the goal is the Lord. Hearts must be won to Him. And as love is essentially self-giving and self-revealing, so He is essentially known in His Incarnation, His gift and revealing of Himself to us. When the Lord Incarnate, the Risen and Glorified Christ, is seen as the essential embodiment of infinite Divine Love for our sakes, then we can apprehend what love is, and we have the greatest of all resources for the ultimate war.

Truth is the form and the weapon of love. Words can bear it, but it is more than words. Distinguishing good from evil in ourselves, seeing others for what they are, knowing the Lord in our lives—these are truths. Through them we are armed, through them we may conquer if we will use them.

The battle that is taking place in us now might be called the great battle of the future. The church that is plunged into it is not behind the times, but ahead of them; and its life may be as difficult as the

life of any individual who is "born too soon."

But in a truer sense, this is the present war, the unacknowledged war, raging under the surface and ready to emerge as soon as we are ready to face it. Even now it shows signs of breaking forth to view. We can hush it up, and so lose it, turning all other victories into defeats. Or we can face it, conquer in the Lord's strength, and turn all other defeats into victories.

The author is the pastor of the Cambridge New Church. He recently received a doctor's degree from the Harvard University.

CELEBRATION

The Missions Stamp Outlet, conducted for the Board of Home & Foreign Missions by Rev. Leslie Marshall, in St. Petersburg, celebrated just recently the filling of its 100,000 order. It will distribute to collectors and others a souvenir of the occasion. Beginning in a converted bedroom of the Marshall's residence then in Hawthorne, N.J., in 1918, its first month's sales amounted to \$17.87. Gradually the distribution of used stamps, post cards, etc., increased, and there now have been months when as many as 600 \$1.00 mixture packets have been ordered by collectors. The success of this work has been due to the wonderful cooperation of our churches and individuals throughout the world, the net proceeds resulting at times in substantial contributions toward the Mission Board's work at home and abroad. Increases in the cost of materials and postage of late years has somewhat reduced returns, though due to the use of the Swedenborg postcard in acknowledging orders, and other correspondence, and the placing in the stamp packets of some Swedenborgian pamphlets likely to be attractive, has increased collectors' interest in us. Please send your used stamps, postcards, etc., to Mr. Marshall at Box 386. Postage will be refunded if desired. —L.M.

Letters to the Editor

RELIGION AND SCIENCE

To the Editor:

Although we often say that there can be no conflict between religion and science (The MESSENGER, February, 1964), science sometimes does pose serious problems for religion, and although we are much freer than many other Christians from these problems, we still have some rather important unresolved conflicts between science and religion in our own faith.

The fact that there can be no conflict between religion and science can itself be true only in the sense that there can be no conflict between a genuine religion and a genuine science, or a science which correctly describes the universe. But the science that actually exists at any moment in history always seems to correctly describe the universe, whether it actually does so or not, and it may therefore conflict meaningfully at one point or another with any religion which makes statements, or has implications, about the universe that can be directly challenged or verified by science.

Swedenborg's *The Earths in the Universe* is an excellent example of a religious book which contains statements of physical fact, the kind of fact that is normally left to scientific investigation; and where our faith and science overlap in *The Earths in the Universe*, there are some sharp conflicts between them. For example, according to Swedenborg, the planets in our solar system and their satellites are inhabited. Science, on the other hand, says that this is extremely doubtful, particularly in the case of the moon and, since the flight of the space probe *Martiner II* over a year ago, particularly in the case of Venus as well. The Moon's gravitational field is too weak to be able to hold down an

atmosphere; and as far as astronomers can see, other conditions on its surface are too hostile to the development of intelligent life for us to place much faith in its existence there. The most dramatic fact about Venus is that it seems to have a fairly uniform surface temperature of 800 degrees F., higher than the melting point of lead.

Unfortunately, one could go on to say similar kinds of things about other planets. The problem that conflicts like these pose is: How are we to see clearly that Swedenborg, whom we believe received a revelation from God, is correct, when science, in the normal pursuit of its investigations, must seriously question his statements on the basis of what is apparently perfectly good evidence?

Science, regarded by itself, always seems to be correct because it by definition always follows the lead of empirical evidence. If science is really incorrect, nothing within the discipline can show it except a later science which has uncovered contrary evidence. Consequently, the only way to neutralize science in a conflict with re-

ligion over a statement of physical fact is to see more clearly than the scientist does whether the statement is true. This typically poses a difficult problem for religion, because it is hardly ever immediately clear how one is to do this.

One could, of course, try to infer the truth of the statement from already established religious premises. Swedenborg derives the inhabitability of the planets from the infinity of God. But his argument assumes that planets can have no other governing purpose than to directly support the existence of human life on their surfaces, and that is at least a large part of what science threatens to revise. For if in fact it is necessary for some planets to support human life only in less direct ways, their place in the scientific scheme of things must eventually reflect this necessity, and the trend of the evidence may be turning in that direction.

Swedenborg formulated his argument on the basis of the astronomy of his day, which was not as complex as ours, but he seems to have been consciously aware of the fact that science's picture of

CHRISTMAS SONG

To Bethlehem town
When Christ came down
What did the angels say?

"Light yon bright star
To guide from afar
The shepherds, who watch and pray.

And hide from the King,
With night's borrowed wing,
The Babe, who hath flown away.

Then flood the dark manger
With light, for a stranger
To truth is this dark day."

Came the wise men to town,
To the Babe they bowed down:
At His feet kingly gifts did they lay.

Now sing we a song:
"Hallelujah! Ding, dong;
Ah, Love, always findeth a way."

—Theresa S. Robb

the universe could change. He is saying to the people of his time that if they would take some basic teachings of eighteenth century astronomy into account, they would find more reason for believing that the universe was intended to be a nursery for a vast and widespread human race. But the conclusion does not entail the truth of eighteenth century astronomy, although, I feel, Swedenborg was just as much a victim as we are of the fact that science always seems to describe the universe correctly unless and until a later science revises it.

There are also, of course, Swedenborg's spiritual experiences. But in order to maintain a rational faith, we must ask ourselves how we know they were genuine, and that is the central problem. It is his experiences which conflict most strongly with science.

We may say, as we perhaps do, that although **The Earths in the Universe** poses some genuine problems, they are restricted to **The Earths in the Universe** and are not really a part of the main stream of the Swedenborgian faith. But I want to suggest that what is in fact called into question is:

(a) The completeness of our treatment of the relationships science and religion have to each other, and whether our ideas of the proper grounds for belief in Swedenborg are sufficient to sustain a rational faith, not only where **The Earths in the Universe** is concerned, but whenever similar problems and conflicts may arise. For if a conflict arises between science and religion, the question is not only whether we shall take the right position, but also whether we shall do it for the right reasons.

(b) The nature of our understanding of Swedenborg's spiritual experiences, not only in **The Earths in the Universe**, but also in his major writings where he also drew heavily from what are apparently the same kinds of experiences, al-

(An address delivered by the Rev. Othmar Tobisch at the 35th Annual Meeting of the San Francisco Society of the New Jerusalem, San Francisco, October 24, 1965.)

what of this New Jerusalem?

We are holding today the 35th annual meeting of our San Francisco Society. I am addressing myself, therefore, primarily to the members of the church and to those who may be puzzled by the odd name of our church.

Since ancient times, religious people have used earthly entities to designate some spiritual thought or feeling.

In a pastoral culture, as the Hebrew one, (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob had immense herds, Israel in Egypt worshipped the calf), the over arching protection of the nation by its deity (Jehovah) was best expressed by "The Lord is my shepherd."

Even today, to a religious person, the Twenty-third Psalm remains a profound portrayal of what a God-dedicated man feels about divine care and love. The Christian Church cannot therefore, "de-mythologize" this mental image of the Lord as the good Shepherd.

He Himself uses it in describing His relationship to us. "I am the good shepherd, and I know my sheep, and I am known of mine. I lay down my life for my sheep," (John 10:14, 15).

Another representation used is that of the vineyard. The prophet Isaiah uses this well-known source of food and pleasure (please, do read the 5th chapter vs. 1-12) to

though they do not involve statements of physical fact.

Steve Koke
Berkely, Calif.

describe the depravity of Israel, the moral devastation in the city of Jehovah. He tells the men in the gate the contrast between the well-kept and the neglected vineyard. They understand. They have seen much. Only they do not apply the lesson to themselves. But Isaiah does. Injustice, immorality, exploitation, suppression have ruined the nation. How well this can apply even to us today. Prosperity and poverty still dwell side by side.

The Lord being a superb observer and utilizer of nature and its visual teaching, called Himself, therefore, a vine and made us the branches (John 15:1-11).

Again, His kingdom is pictured, in His inimitable telling, as a field where the Divine Sower drops the seeds of heavenly truths, to be accepted by some and rejected by others.

But agricultural society soon turned urban, as the tribes began to conquer the Canaanite cities and dwell in them. Even in those days there was a flight from the land, especially when the enemy came.

Thus the city became the final representative of God's protective care. The central city was Jerusalem, the City of Peace, Jeru-shalom. This was the place where God dwelled in His temple.

This was where the laws were kept and interpreted and people were judged by them. This was where people went to, to bring their sacrifices, their offerings, payed their vows, worshipped the

Eternal (Psalm 48, 122). All of you who know the Psalms, can cite many places where this is vividly expressed.

This trend, of course, continued. In the times of our Lord, Jerusalem again had a splendid temple, and the stronghold of the Judaistic faith was centered in it. And it could not be that a prophet perish away from Jerusalem (Luke 13: 33).

When the temple and the city were completely destroyed and devastated by the Roman army under Titus in 70 A.D. the horror of all Jews was indescribable. This was the end of the world. Religion had ceased to be. Men were beasts. God was dead.

The diaspora increased. Jews migrated to all parts of the Mediterranean basin. And John was on Patmos, an island offshore the coast of Asia Minor. And there he received a vision which totally spiritualized the concept of the holy city. It became now an eternal and divine symbol.

This ethereal city was the dwelling place of God among men. "Behold, the dwelling of God is among men" (Rev. 21.3). He did not dwell invisibly in the Holy of Holies as in the temple. There was no material temple anymore. He dwelt in the light, in the illumination of men, in the minds of spiritual beings.

A fantastic structure reared itself before John: 1500 miles long, broad and high. Obviously not of material stones, but expressing the immensity of this new divine structure on earth, the Christian Church.

But the city was not all stone. The green fields, the vineyards, the fruit trees were not forgotten by this urban architect. There was again the Garden of God in this city. A river of ever flowing water. Trees forever greening and fruiting. Nature and city had become one, agriculture and urban culture had wedded.

This then, spiritually, was the symbol of the new Christian church which the Lord was instituting on earth, descending from heaven.

"I saw the holy city,—new Jerusalem — coming down — out of heaven — from God" (Rev. 21:2).

This then is the reason, that when Swedenborg saw the new Christian church, forming in heaven and descending from it, he too called this city "new Jerusalem."

Since the inception of our church on this continent, in 1780, our churches have called themselves "churches of the new Jerusalem" . . . until recently. Now it seems, this holy name has fallen in disrepute with some of our ministers and member churches.

I have heard it said, that this name is not understood anymore by our contemporaries. But is the name "Seventh-Day Adventist" understood right away? Or "Jehovah's Witnesses"? Are they Jews? Are we Jews?

Our researchers have found that the name "Swedenborgians" is most commonly used by the public. So it is.

People tend to pin the name of the founder on a church. So we have Waldensians, Lutherans, Wesleyans, Campbellites, Mennonites. Only Swedenborg was not the founder of our church. It was the Lord who was instituting a new church on earth. Swedenborg saw the sight of this action by the Divine Lord. Men on earth caught the vision also and founded a church.

In order to introduce people easier into a given congregation local names were chosen. We have, therefore, the Hillside Church in El-Cerrito, the Cherry Park Church in Portland, Ore. Biblical names are also popular. The "Church of the Good Shepherd" in Bellevue, Wash., "The Church of the Holy City" in Wilmington and Washington, D. C.

Our British and European churches prefer the short name

"New Church," "Nya Kirka," "Neue Kirche," "Nouvelle Eglise."

Our General Convention has now new stationary and on it we are called "The General Convention of Swedenborgian Churches". This is neither legal nor relevant. No action was taken to change the name of our body. There is no authorization by the delegates from the Associations, no motion was submitted and passed in our Convention.

Have we lost the vision which our forefathers have seen of the future of Christianity on earth and haven't accepted the name used in that grand vision? This new church was nothing small or insignificant. It was a veritable bending down of the heavens again, to clean the old church of its dead branches and to make the new branches green. The city's name was significant. It had all the historic support since ancient times. It is the holy city of three major faiths, Judaism, Christianity, Islam. It is still of tremendous significance in the faiths of millions on earth. Shall we bow now to public ignorance and biblical illiteracy, so prevalent nowadays, and change our name for the public's sake?

Or do we still have this vision which our seer had? **"It was given me to see** how there has been instituted a New Church in Heaven, which is meant by the NEW JERUSALEM" (J. 45e).

"This church is now the New Jerusalem into which all come, all those who are in the truths from good from the Lord (and this I take to be without any denominational or cultural limitations) to whom this discourse is written." (R. 187e).

"By the 'new and holy Jerusalem' is signified the Lord's New Church which will follow the Christian one of this day," (1750), (A 8988;4).

"By the 'holy Jerusalem' coming down out of heaven—is meant

—a new church among the nations, after the present church in our European world has been vastated (wasted away)” (A 9407.7).

Isn't this a tremendous vision now being fulfilled in our sight? The question of our name, which name to bear, will only be solved when we truly understand the significance of this “new Jerusalem”. Only when we most humbly shy away from identifying ourselves with given organizations and power structures, and glory in the spiritual sight of a truly new and Christian church on earth. If we believe what Swedenborg saw, we will continue to bear this sacred, biblical name: NEW JERUSALEM. Not in spiritual pride, nay, but in humble servanthship, as a visible symbol of something which we have seen in the spirit, are believing in spite of the world, and desire to keep as a banner fluttering in the morning winds of a new age.

The author is the pastor of the San Francisco Church.

CONVENTION WILL BE HELD AT

URBANA, OHIO, JUNE 23

THROUGH JUNE 26, 1966

Do you realize that, as a Messenger subscriber, you are entitled to give any number of Christmas Gift Subscriptions for only \$1.50 each which is only 12 cents per issue?

CHURCH TIES

by Alberta Casper

A map of the world is on my desk. Scattered over the continents are red dots representing centers of New Church activity. Looking at it, I remember that someone once said: “A few big bombs set off in the right places can destroy all living men, but a few big men set in the right places can destroy all killing bombs.” It sets me to speculating about the growth of our church as a way of Providence. Rather than beginning in one spot and growing by spreading out over larger and larger geographical areas, our pattern of growth has been one of little groups in almost every part of the world. There is even some evidence, though unverified, that there is dissemination of Swedenborg's writings in Communist China.

Does this have any significance? Our total membership is small, but it is world wide. The groups by themselves seem to have little influence or significance in their immediate surroundings. But their locations (we might even call them strategic) give one reason to think that we are indeed the “small church, the salt of the earth,” that many prominent church men have lately been predicting will save the world.

Or we could think of these centers in another way. Lines of communication between them hold them together. These lines grow strong through use. The sharing of common needs and aspirations, the communion of true fellowship under God—this is the communication that will make us truly one church for one world. Not only do visits, letters, magazine articles, etc., enrich and vitalize each group, but they establish ties of spiritual unity between all groups and with the whole human race. This is a

real strength, for it is those who have grasped the concept of the total church, the New Jerusalem on earth, who remain committed, come what may.

As for saving man from bombs, it is not inconceivable that by keeping in close touch, by really knowing each other no matter how far apart we are physically, we create a vigorous, active spiritual net with which the Lord can hold together a potentially exploding world.

Installation Of New Pastor

THE HAPPY CLIMAX of months of eager anticipation and hard work came to the members of the Greater Cleveland Church on Sunday, Oct. 31, when Rev. Brian Kingslake was officially installed as their pastor. The ceremony was performed by Rev. Bjorn Johannson, General Pastor of the Ohio Association, assisted by Rev. B. Bruce Whittemore, Secretary of the Cleveland Area Church Federation. The congregation, consisting of nearly all the members and several friends, showed their joy by full participation in the moving service. Rev. Whittemore, who told that he had been confirmed a Swedenborgian, spoke on the significance of “calling a pastor” and the mutual obligation the “call” laid on pastor and congregation.

The president of the Society, Mr. Norman Bestor, welcomed Mr. and Mrs. Kingslake: from nearly four weeks' experience in his home, he could say they were “easy to live with.”

Rev. Bjorn Johannson, with his usual fire, preached on “Entering into other men's labors” and emphasized the security which comes from trust in the Lord in these changing and insecure times.

EVIDENCE NOTES

A well-known book in the world of the metaphysicians is Ernest Holmes' "The Science of Mind" (Dodd, Mead, N.Y. '63, 28th printing). In it one may find a chapter heading (p. 483) "The Law of Correspondents." Quoting Romans 1:20, "... the invisible things ... being understood from the things made ..." the author goes on with a few paragraphs as proceeding from his "The spiritual world contains an image of the physical ..." The text then tapers away, as might be expected from the book's title. At page 306 is a sub-heading, "The Law of Correspondence," but the text matter following has no relation to what looked like a promising start toward the realities as indicated at page 483 as above noted. It might seem that correspondence ... the science of sciences "is coming somewhat into general recognition even if the understanding of it in new quarters is still limited, to say the least.

A St. Petersburg newspaper's religious editor's interview with a number of the city's physicians respecting some of their dying patients' views of God or eternity, produced some interesting statements. "I've never seen an atheist die," one doctor said. Reported another, "A patient emerging from a coma described breath-taking beautiful mountains and valleys, and of being transported to a world of wondrous beauty and tranquility." One of the doctors interviewed quoted Oliver Wendell Holmes, "I can give you the medicine, but God heals you."

The following reference to Swedenborg, among the most interesting recently brought to our attention, came about 8,000 miles to reach us. We reproduce it from the Auckland, N.Z., church's magazine, published last spring. It's to be found in Terence Haywood's "Background to Sweden".

"Swedenborg is probably one of our closest links with Sweden ... I remember some years ago at the Sunday Times Book Fair being impressed by the immensity of his volumes on the brain ... There are said to be about a dozen subjects which he definitely advanced or would have, if his researches had been known at the time. I have been reading a life of him and cannot say what an exciting experience it has been plumbing this practical mystic or true Swede writ large. He seems to be the last of all the great heterogeniuses, as I like to call Leonardo and other huge, versatile figures of the High Renaissance. Think what a man he must have been to found a subtle new religion and at the same time to be the first in a country becoming famous for science to give the right interpretation of erratic blocks (those huge glacial boulders so commonly dumped down over Scandinavia), to publish the first statement of the nebular hypothesis and yet not think it beneath him to make improvements in the common house-stove or invent an ear-trumpet for the deaf."

IN HIS MOST RECENT BOOK *The Circle of Faith*, Dr. Marcus Bach, who previously has in his writings given an account of "Swedenborgianism," deals at some length with our teachings in the course of a personal interview some years ago with Helen Keller. He finds the doctrines of the New Church "neither superficial nor mystical, but always relating the visible and the invisible." They "often reach a spiritual height."

AN UNUSUAL ASSESSMENT of the New Church, yet eminently just, as Rev. Dennis Duckworth, president of the British Conference, points out in *The Herald* review of Dr. Elliott Peaston's "The Prayer Book Tradition in the Free Churches", is that our denomination represents the Heterodox

Tradition, and is the only one in Christendom to do so, the others classifying British-wise as Anglican, Dissenting and Roman Catholic. Heterodox, not Orthodox, not Dissenters (in the technical historical sense) not Catholic in the general understanding of that tradition. Concluding an affirmative view of our doctrinal position, Dr. Peaston says "Swedenborgianism is not a name to despise." In a communication to Mr. Duckworth he later said, "The world does not yet value Swedenborg as among the greatest sons of men. Some day it will."

While today, as once in France, at Leves, the ruling cardinal does not send out a military force to remove a Pastor Ledru and his New-Church flock (*vide* New Jerusalem Magazine, Feb. 1839) there are still religious organizations who in their manuals for their aspiring theological students will heavily inveigh against "Swedenborgianism."

The last group we had known to do so was the Missouri Synod seminary of our friends the Lutherans, but now comes the Church of God, which through its publishing concern has produced a student's manual in which (p. 31) we are classified as one of the Oriental (sic.) cults.

However, the manual's author, one R. P. Spittler, does seem to make an honest effort to give the New Church's background, though falling into the common error that our teachings are "built on those of Emanuel Swedenborg."

We ventured to point out to Mr. Spittler, in order that he might revise his booklet on its next printing, that the prophet of the North avers that all doctrine is to be "drawn from the letter of Scripture, and confirmed by it."

The manual also makes the common error, which its students might perpetuate, of supposing that we teach a mystical (in the common meaning of that term)

sense in Scripture. All Bible students including the millions who read the Word everyday, would freely admit that Scripture words such as "rock," "water," "lamb" are in hundreds of instances not to be taken literally. Therefore obviously other nouns, not to say other parts of speech, must likewise be translated into terms which qualify or identify states of mind, or life.

We daresay that in many respects the lack of a knowledge of the law of correspondence, as applying to the Word, is that which divides Christendom into so many denominations and "cults."

Commenting recently on a manuscript by the New Churchman, Rev. Harry Barnitz, entitled "Existentialism and the New Christianity," the psychologist, Dr. Franz E. Winkler, has said, in part, "Whether or not one believes explicitly in his teaching, Swedenborg was unquestionably one of the great geniuses of modern times. He was probably the first human being who combined a mind excelling in the clarity and ingenuity of modern science, with the spiritual vision of a prophet." Many Swedenborgians may have lifted an eyebrow in noting *Newsweek's* reference to their mentor in its review June 7 of Donald Meyer's *The Positive Thinkers* (Doubleday, N.Y. '65) yet some of us may have had in mind Barnum's famous dictum "I don't care what you say about me as long as you say something" when reading Dr. Meyer's comment "the great Swedenborg hymned the 'divine influx,' and countless ladies, the Victorian neurasthenics, responded with fervor." The reviewer was talking about the new kind of philosophy filling "the decay of the Protestant ethic," and he cites such far-aparts as Phineas Quimby (alleged to be Mrs. Eddy's main source of inspiration), Norman Vincent Peale, Dale Carnegie,

and the Christian Science author. Remarkably, the Bettman Archive historical museum came up with the first picture we have seen of Quimby, though it's regrettable the weekly should have used Bettman's horrible and "verbottened" photo of Mary Baker Eddy, when youngish. We must inquire of Dr. Meyer who in his findings were the "Victorian neurasthenics"?

We have known for many years of the knowledge Abdul Baha Abbas successor to the founder of the Bahaist movement had of Swedenborg. Abbas followed the Bab, martyred by the Persians for claiming to be the successor of Moses, Christ, Mohammed. Now there has been called to our attention a copy of the original Tablet by Abdul Baha in which Swedenborg is named as the "forerunner of the Second Coming of His Highness the Christ, and the Herald of the path of the Kingdom." Much also is said concerning the descent of the New Jerusalem.

PERHAPS it is not too much of an exaggeration to say that if all the books on the history of religion were gathered together they might fill a good size room. Usually, however, there's something new in them, as is the case with E. E. Kellett's "Short History of Religion" a Pelican paper back issued some time ago in England.

The "newness" consists in a chapter dealing with unbeknowns, except to the elect, such as "Irvingites," "Plymouth Brethren," "Positivists." We don't include Swedenborgianism which invariably makes its appearance in histories in this field, and with which Dr. Kellett deals "favorably and sympathetically," as David Mack of Tranquill Acres, Warren, N.H., perceptibly informs us.

But the author does fall into a common error which could have been avoided by reference to any encyclopedia or of course to biographies of Swedenborg available in any public library or at the bookrooms of the New Church, as sometimes the Swedenborgian communion is called.

The mistake is that the Prophet of the North is named as "The

founder of the church, though it was not formed until eleven years after his death." One could as easily say that Luther founded the organization named after him, or for him.

Nevertheless, undoubtedly Dr. Kellett's book will have acquainted many with the teachings of the true Christian religion, and that is the great desideratum.

IN IDENTIFYING the "True Christian Religion," as the "universal theology," Swedenborg seems to indicate its catholicity, that is, it is intended for and will reach all mankind—every mode of thought.

There always has been evidence of this being indeed a fact, for well we know that the true Christian religion, and the books that present it, has appealed to the underprivileged and to the scientific thinker alike.

We have lately heard of another famed individual in his field who might be the last person to know anything of the Prophet of the North. Reviewing Alan Trachtenberg's "Brooklyn Bridge: Fact and Symbol," *The Reporter* in its July 1 issue, Hennig Cohen writes, "John Roebling, in Trachtenberg's view, a practical genius who believed that in America men could learn to master nature rationally, was also a visionary and a poet. He read Swedenborg, Channing, Emerson and Henry James the Elder and he wrote essays on metaphysical subjects filled with the catch phrases of Transcendentalism. He believed in correspondence between matter and spirit and that facts become symbols."

While Swedenborgians are aware that merely "to read" Swedenborg by no means indicates a grasp of the tenets of the true Christian religion—for "all doctrine is drawn from the letter of the "Word," and confirmed by it"—even a contact such as John Roebling's is, we believe, one or more steps in the right direction

—LESLIE MARSHALL

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Chester T. Cook, treasurer of Convention. Pressey Village Road, Box 215, Deer Isle, Me.

NEW-CHURCH MESSENGER

THE GREATEST QUIZ

IN THE WORLD

by Barbara Kessler

1. Am I making myself other gods?
2. Am I profaning the name of God?
3. Am I keeping the Sabbath holy?
4. Am I honoring my father and my mother?
5. Am I stealing?
6. Am I committing adultery?
7. Am I killing?
8. Am I bearing false witness?
9. Am I coveting my neighbor's house?
10. Am I coveting my neighbor's wife, his man-servant, his maid servant, his ox or his ass?

As I was cleaning out my desk recently I ran across the above list of questions. My father had written it out for me during the time I clipped quizzes from the popular magazines. I filed it away and soon forgot it for I failed to realize the wealth of wisdom it contained.

Only now am I beginning to be aware of the Ten Commandments and their importance to my life. They should form the standard, the guide to all my activities. Stated in question form, they are the perfect, the only quiz I shall ever need whether I shall test myself as daughter, mate, mother, friend or personality.

It is my father who is teaching me the effect of accepting the Decalogue, not so much by word as by the very example of his daily conduct and deeds. Although a humble man, he has friends in every walk of life. His selfless love, his fulfilling those laws, has the power to reach the hearts of men. Not a season passes without his receiving an expression of gratitude for material or spiritual help from someone around the world. What

is less evident is his inner almost hidden strength to overcome whatever problem arises.

Man longs for a better life but is beset by ills on every hand. In disobeying the Commandments he is suffering the consequences. He still fails to see their omre important, their positive aspect. It is in adhering to them that man or nation reaps the rich reward of their beatitudes. As in the past, so in the future they will serve as the beacon to the promised land of peace and joy.

Weddings

TAFEL - MAC DONALD — Judith Gail Mac Donald and Harvey Allen Tafel were married Oct. 4, the Rev. Richard H. Tafel, father of the groom, officiating.

BISHOP - DUGUAY — Betty Duguay and Harold B. Bishop, Fryeburg, Me., were married Oct. 2, the Rev. Horace W. Briggs officiating.

DAY - HALEY — Sharon L. Haley and Richard C. Day, Fryeburg, Me., were married Oct. 10, the Rev. Horace W. Briggs officiating.

JONES - THURSTON — Roberta R. Thurston and William H. Jones were married in the Fryeburg, Me., New Church Oct. 23, the Rev. Horace W. Briggs officiating.

Baptism

KASTNER — Kenneth Allan Kastner, son of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Kastner, St. Louis, Mo., was baptized Sept. 26, the Rev. Franklin Blackmer officiating.

Births

ALDEN—Born Sept. 20 to Dr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Alden, Schenectady, N.Y., a son, James Carter.

TOBISCH — Born Oct. 4 to Dr. and Mrs. Othmar T. Tobisch, San Juan, Puerto Rico, a daughter, Louisa Margit.

WOODBREY — Born Sept. 19 to Mr. and Mrs. Barry Woodbrey, Omaha, a son, Michael Damon.

CHARLES — Born June 11 to Mr. and Mrs. John Charles, Fryeburg, Me., a son, Dana Alex.

Memorials

UNRUH — Frank H. Unruh, Great Bend, Kansas, has passed away. Resurrection services for him were held Oct. 15 in the Pawnee Rock New Church, the Rev. Galen Unruh officiating. Mr. Unruh was a lifelong member of the church, always giving it his unqualified support.

He is survived by his wife, Viola; two sons: Wilfred of Baton Rouge, La. and Milton of Niles, Mich.; three brothers; five sisters and five grandchildren.

EDITH WHITEHEAD BLACKMER

Word has just come to us of the death of Edith Whitehead Blackmer, 62 Earl St., Malden, Mass., the wife of Horace B. Blackmer, recording secretary of Convention, on Saturday, Nov. 27. The Committal Service was held in the Bigelow Chapel Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Mass. on Dec. 2, the Rev. Antony Regamey officiating. A memorial service will be held at a later date, and in a future issue the MESSENGER will carry a fuller memorial for her.

Her husband, Mr. Blackmer, we are told is in the Malden Hospital seriously ill. May the prayers of all of us be with this outstanding worker of our Church.

**Postmaster: Send form 3579 for change of address to Swedenborg Press
79 Orange Street, Brooklyn, N. Y. 11201**

—Sunday, November 7 At Pawnee Rock

WE WERE just sitting here at the typewriter and thinking of the activities of last Sunday, seventh of November, the day of the annual Association meeting, and wondering how to report to you in writing. Perhaps the most predominant feeling of the writer was one of thanksgiving. The weather was ideal . . . it could have been wet and windy or cold, but Indian Summer seemed almost to prevail. Eric Z. started things off with his leading of the S.S. group and challenging us with the meaning of our personal relationships in terms of new age theology. The reflective mood increased or grew into a mood of deeper reverence, love, and respect for the Lord as the choir gave forth with the Cantata, ably directed by Aletha Loving, called the Lord's Prayer—with narration. We listened attentively as Rev. Richard Tafel, President of Convention, preached about the need for each person to grow in a sense of personal responsibility, using for his text the sixth chapter of Nehemiah who rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem—what may have seemed like a hopeless task in the face of constant distraction, but a most worthy endeavor nevertheless. The idea stayed with us that each person, even though he may be like a grain of sand among countless other grains, does affect the life-stream and its direction in the world. We thought of his own great task and how he must travel from church to church, association to association, giving of his time, energy, and his spirit, and could see him

desiring to do a humble but a very great work for our beloved church. It was a privilege for the two Kansas ministers to assist him in the service of Holy Communion following the morning worship. Then there was the usual good dinner prepared by the local women and the fine spirit of goodwill that pervaded the atmosphere.

The reports in the afternoon business session brought out the fact that the people in the association have been busier than they imagined during the past year. The money for which we asked last year we all felt was used wisely in various ways. A new suggestion came from Helen Hundley of Hays that we provide as many hardback copies of Helen Keller's book "My Religion," as possible for Libraries in Kansas. There are 104 libraries which will continue to receive subscriptions of "Our Daily Bread" because of the Association's interest in that project. Special thanks came from Mrs. Della Felkner and her niece out in Salt Lake City for having provided assistance so they could travel to the World's Fair to work in the Swedenborgian booth there. She said it was one of the highlights of her life. We felt that our experiences with our own booth at the Kansas State Fair were well worth while, and several commented about their reactions to serving there. A considerable number of books went out to people who indicated a desire to read. We will no doubt continue the project, having learned from this experience some things that may help us in another year to reach out with greater confidence

and ease. Pretty Prairie took the S.S. attendance trophy away from Pawnee Rock. Then there were two new faces added to the roll of the Association's officialdom. Lee Kraus of Pretty Prairie and Lynn Welch of Pawnee Rock, both being elected to the Board of Trustees. The executive offices remained the same as before. We missed a few of our "regulars", among them Dan Schmitt of Denver, and our association president's wife, Doris Friesen who had surgery not long ago and felt she needed to conserve strength. The task of Resolutor, usually given to Dan, fell to Mrs. Lee (Margaret) Kraus, and she did a very admirable job indeed.

Four p.m. was recess time and we drove to the hill for the dedication of the parsonage. It was fitting that the President of Convention could be here for this occasion and could give the final dedicatory remarks. Laughter and gaiety resounded through-out the house as people enjoyed refreshments; isn't it always so when there is a Tafel in the group? A beautiful basket of yellow mums graced the southern end of the living room, given by the members of the local church, and we thank them all for it. Somehow we seemed to sense a new and expectant vibrancy in the air on this day; a silent working of the Spirit of the Lord among His people.

After the evening meal we gathered for the final session and heard Rev. Tafel tell about his and his wife's experiences in Europe last summer. There was a great deal of interest in what he had to say, as was evidenced by the many questions asked at the end. He spoke of the feeling they had when they crossed into East Germany, how they seemed to be surrounded with a cloud of sadness and gloom, and how the people there look to America as so many do all over the world for moral leadership, yet fearfullest we destroy all with an impulsive will to over-use our military power.