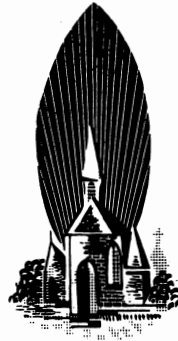


THE MESSENGER

NOVEMBER 1966



UP

The wind swirls past, impelled by the urge of an
upward swing:
It combs the spear of grass, uplifting the face of a
flower, peeping through a rock-strewn ledge.
With an insistant lever the tomb-like clod is lifted up
and up.
A lowly weed, against the fence, presents its querulous
face turned up for the sun's inspection.
The sturdy vine reaches high, as up and up it works
its careful way
To the house which rises in stately dignity.
This, in turn, is capped by a chimney pompously
pointing up.
Blue shade is cast by a tree that stretches its
shoulders
With a hauteur of a sentinel upturned to the sky.

My heart is reaching up to worship Thee
In the towering majesty of Thy Immensity,
While o'er life's brink, Death's Wings are soaring—
UP!



Teresa S. Robb
(see p. 175)

DECEMBER CALENDAR

DECEMBER 4-9: General Assembly of the National Council of Churches

A delegation representing the General Convention will be guests of the General Assembly of the National Council of Churches, when it holds its annual meeting in Miami, Fla., Dec. 4-9. On the agenda of the Assembly is an application for Constituent Membership by the Convention. Those attending will be the Rev. Richard Tafel, President of Convention, the Rev. Ernest Martin, Chairman of Convention's Committee on Contacts with the National Council of Churches, the Rev. Edwin G. Capon, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, the Rev. Ernest Fredericks, Convention's Minister in Miami, and Dr. Robert Kirven, of the faculty of the Swedenborg School of Religion (see pp. 163, 172), who has participated in some theological discussions in connection with the National Council's Faith and Order Commission. If the application for admission is accepted, these five will become delegates to the Assembly. The January Issue of The Messenger will report on the Assembly, and describe our relations with the National Council of Churches in some detail.

NOVEMBER, 1966

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NEW CHURCH THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL
CELEBRATES CENTENNIAL;
BECOMES THE NEW
SWEDENBORG SCHOOL OF RELIGION

The New Church Theological School celebrated the end of its first 100 years with worship, with memories, with an open house of its nearly-completed new facilities and an announcement that it begins its second century with a new name. All of this happened on the afternoon of Oct. 22 with the Mass. Assoc. taking part.

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The Centennial Service, which took the place of the usual after dinner program of the Mass. Assoc. semi-annual all day meeting, put a good deal of emphasis on both the past and the future. The invocation was delivered by the Rev. Everett Bray, General Pastor of the Mass. Assoc. and retired teacher at the School. Life at the school 45 years ago and 15 years ago was recalled by the Revs. Antony Regamey and Wm. Woofenden. The feature address of the day was delivered by Rev. Ernest Martin, Chairman of School's Board of Managers. Mr. Martin's primary emphasis was on the future, with suggestions of ways in which the school might serve the church of the future and an announcement of the School's new name, Swedenborg School of Religion (excerpts from Mr. Martin's talk are in this issue). The Rev. Edwin G. Capon, President of the School, led the service and offered a closing prayer.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir:

The Talking Woman described in the Aqueduct Papers IV had much to learn. But did she deserve the awful fate of being introduced into the World of Spirits by a superior, humorless, unsympathetic guide like Aqueduct? Aqueduct's judgmental attitude and lack of understanding is curiously akin to today's church member. What a pity the Talking Woman (and Aqueduct) never had a church group where she could begin her journey of self-understanding in an atmosphere of tolerance and love.

Sincerely,
Water-over-the-Dam

Letter from the Editor

This month's "Letter" is more of a "note": a couple of explanations, a couple of requests, concerning mechanical aspects of publishing The Messenger.

Variety at the Expense of Continuity.

For this issue, I found The Messenger blest with an embarrassment of riches: two articles, so written that they could not be cut enough to include both, and so long that either alone would have produced a "one-track" issue. Both divided rather easily near a mid-point however, so I serialized them. I apologize to Mr. Koke and Dr. Calatrello for dissecting without permission what they had conceived as single units; and to you readers, for asking you to suspend a thought in mid-consciousness, and remember later (during, or perhaps even after the Christmas rush) just where you left off.

Letters TO the Editor. I have enjoyed writing to you, and enjoyed receiving letters from more of you than I have yet had time to answer personally; but I would welcome more letters that I could be sure are intended for publication, and that take up--either positively or negatively--issues that have (or should have) appeared in The Messenger. One such appears at left. I will use nom-de-plumes, as here, only when the contributor is identified to me. My last thought on the matter, however (too late to ask "Water's" permission), is that the spirit which I felt at Urbana, and which I have tried to make characteristic of The Messenger, would be better served by signed replies.

(cont'd p. 160)

STEVE KOKE

THE PROBLEM of SWEDENBORG'S "EARTHS"

The conflict between Swedenborg's statements about life on other planets in The Earths in the Universe, on the one hand, and the more skeptical views of modern science, on the other, is usually dismissed as a minor problem. We do not feel a strong need to discuss it. In fact, we do not nowadays feel a strong need for much technical discussion of Swedenborg at all. Yet small problems -- and technical ones, too -- have a habit of coming back to haunt us in other forms. What is involved in this particular instance is the question of whether Swedenborg's spiritual experiences could have been in error, which in turn affects our understanding of revelation and the theology which comes from it. I will not go deeply into that subject now, but I do think that there is a need for more clarity about what the conflict between Swedenborg and science actually amounts to, and whether some of our attempts to resolve it are on the right track.

Let's take a look first at Swedenborg's arguments for the existence of men on other planets. With one rather picturesque exception, these arguments seem to have a theological basis, and therefore (it may seem) we ought to try to defend and repeat them as if they were as valid as the theology embedded in them. This will take us into some fairly subtle issues, however, so let's consider Swedenborg's only nontheological argument first:

That the planets which are ... within the boundaries of this solar system are earths, may be clearly known from this, that they are bodies of earthy matter, because they reflect the light of the sun, and appear not as stars radiant from flame, but as earths variegated with darker portions. Also, they are borne like our earth around the sun ... and thus make their year, and seasons of of the year ... (n. 3)

They also have days and (he points out with some poetic intent) times of day, morning, noon, evening and night, and some of them also have moons. Finally he asks, "Who that knows these things and thinks rationally about them, can ever affirm that these are empty bodies?" His point, of course, is that planets which are this much alike must be alike in other ways, too.

On the surface at least, this is an example of argument by analogy, and of course any analogy can be proven to be invalid as soon as more information comes in. In order to know for certain that the other planets are capable of supporting human life, we have to know quite a bit more than that they have seasons, shine by reflected light, and so on. The light and dark portions that Swedenborg mentions may be, as they now seem to be in some cases, clouds of poisonous methane and ammonia. And the fact that a planet moves in orbit around the sun does not indicate that its summers and winters are mild enough to be endured by any living organism. There are, in fact, a million-and-one environmental factors that have to be present before we can say without qualification that a planet can support human life. Once all these factors are considered one might wonder why Swedenborg offered this argument at all. For there should be some reason why he would construct such a sweeping analogy on such a short list of similarities.

The answer is provided by an argument which he offers just before this one, and it is in this first argument that we find some of the assumptions which lie at the core of his thought:

I have occasionally spoken on this subject with spirits of our earth, and it was said that any man of good understanding may infer from many things that he knows, that there are very many earths, inhabited by men; for it may be concluded from reason that such great masses as the planets are, some of them exceeding this earth in magnitude, are not vacant masses, created only to be borne along and re-

volve around the sun, and to shine with their scanty light for one earth, but that their use must needs be a much more important one than that. Whoever believes, as everyone ought to believe, that the Divine Being has created the universe for no other end than that the human race may exist, and thence heaven -- for the human race is the seminary of heaven -- he cannot but believe that wherever there is an earth, there are men. (n. 3)

An "earth" is an inhabitable planet. Because the purpose of the universe is to provide for the existence of men, Swedenborg argues in this last sentence that we cannot believe that a planet is both inhabitable and uninhabited; for a purpose must, by definition, be fulfilled whenever there is an opportunity to fulfill it.

There are two important premises involved in this earlier argument. One is theological: God created the universe so that the human race may exist. The other is less easy to find, but it in fact determines at least half of the force of the argument: The general physical properties of a planet are known. It is just because Swedenborg felt that he could make a list of what all planets are capable of doing that he felt that he could spot an incongruity between our knowledge that God created the universe as a nursery for the human race, on the one hand, and any statement which implies that other planets are not inhabited, on the other. For if a planet does not support human life on its surface, then the only thing left for it to do, he seems to say, is to simply shine with its scanty light for our earth. In terms of God's purposes, this would be a rather meaningless role for such a large and massive object to play.

Working within this conception, Swedenborg could then go on to add weight to his case by showing that, as far as we know, all the other planets in the Solar System are like our own.

But now suppose that we do not, in fact,

know all that a planet can do; suppose that as science advances, our list of the properties a planetary mass might plausibly have becomes quite a bit longer, so that it includes also the possibility that a planet may have a number of different functions which are in some way vitally important to human life on other planets, but still inimical to life on its own surface. Such a planet would not be incompatible with Swedenborg's theological premise. It will not, of course, have a primary role in supporting human life; it will instead be playing a secondary role. But it will still be part of a general system of uses which places man at its focal point.

There are two major points I want to make here. One is that Swedenborg's argument depends on a scientific premise as well as on a theological one, and scientific premises cannot be held longer than the science from which they arose will support them. As soon as new evidence comes in which changes our concept of what a planet may be able to do, then the old argument, based on the old concept, is no longer applicable. And it is always possible for such a change to take place.

The second point is that Swedenborg's theological premise is compatible with an indefinite number of different scientific points of view. Life does not have to exist on every planet if only a planet does, in the last analysis, support the existence of a vast human race in some meaningful way. Swedenborg's theology, strictly speaking, does not imply the existence of men on every planet in spite of an impression it sometimes seems to give that it does.

Later on, in n. 126, Swedenborg offers an argument which is closely related to the one above. After saying that every star is like a sun and therefore should have planets in orbit around it, he writes:

... For the end of the creation of the universe is man, that from man there may be an angelic heaven; but what would the human race, and thence an angelic heaven, from one earth, be for the Infinite Creator, for Whom a thousand earths, nay, tens of thousands, would not be enough?

This argument is similar in form to his earlier one, and once again he seems to feel that enough is known about stars to enable us to say that we have no real reason to believe that they do not have planetary systems of their own. Like our sun, another star can be best thought of as the center and source of life of its own family of planets.

In the Eighteenth Century, this was a valid way to argue. But, once again, our picture of a star has changed. Under the impact of much new data, theories have been suggested which postulate such things as first-and-second-generation stars which, in their immensely hot interiors, are continually building up heavier elements out of lighter elements; this process will eventually culminate, after these stars have died and in various ways left their products behind, in the formation of third-generation stars like the sun which are capable of forming planetary systems out of these elements.

Whether it is true or false, this theory is still compatible with Swedenborg's theology, for it enables stars to give necessary support to the existence of the human race even though they may not in all cases have planets of their own. And (once again) an indefinite number of such theories is possible.

Swedenborg's theological premise here is that the infinity of God cannot adequately express itself except through the creation of very many inhabited planets. We might interpret this as a way of saying that God would take every opportunity to create as large a human race as possible. "But," someone may say, "that in turn may mean placing men on every planet and planets around every star, thus eliminating all 'secondary' roles for either stars or planets." But what would constitute a genuine "opportunity"? The fact is that there are already secondary or supporting elements in God's scheme where we might have imagined Him to have created more men. For example, we are limited to only a part of the surfaces of relatively small planets, and these planets are isolated from one another at great distances in a universe populated by an immense number of other kinds of objects. The question is only, "Where shall we draw the line between objects with secon-

dary roles in the support of man and objects with primary roles?" As far as Swedenborg's theology is concerned, it may eventually be drawn between planets and between stars rather than around them.

I have gone this far into Swedenborg's arguments because we should be aware of the fact that it is only Swedenborg's spiritual experiences, not his experiences and his arguments, which conflict with modern science. His arguments are necessarily conditional: because they are based on Eighteenth Century astronomy as well as on his theology, they hold only as long as science's picture of how stars and planets function remains unchanged. When science comes up with a different picture, then we have to formulate new arguments with perhaps different conclusions. But in the case of his spiritual experiences, we have a conflict of another and more serious kind between two systems of knowledge: one spiritual, the other natural, each with its own independent ways of obtaining information. Our task in a conflict like this is at least to try to understand both systems as well as we can. But in the absence of a complete understanding of either one, the most attractive course to take is to try to find some way to show that there is no real conflict.

(NOTE: A future issue will carry the remainder of Mr. Koke's article, in which he discusses various attempts which have been made to deal with the problem. Ed.)

(LETTER FROM THE EDITOR - cont'd)

Size of Type. In what I hope is a satisfactory response to one letter to the editor, I am using two sizes of type in this issue. If you have a strong opinion about the larger or the smaller type, let me know. The December issue will be at the printer's before I've heard from you, but when I stop using one of the sizes, it will be in response to your opinions.

SWEDENBORGIAN EDUCATION

It's very kind of you to have me here and I deeply appreciate it. It's very difficult to invite as you have invited -- a stranger in your midst to talk to you about something you all hold, I think, as a rather close and personal concern. It's very brave of you as well. I hope that you will get as much out of it as I feel I will, since there is sort of a burden of catharsis upon me to say within a short time what seems to me very important, because on the one hand, I do not believe in denominational education, but I do very much believe in Swedenborgian education and it seems to me very important for a number of reasons that range afield from the scholarly reasons, to speak to you to-day.

Education in the New Church interests me. Not just Swedenborg's thoughts, but education itself has always been an issue. I suspect it is almost psychological history within the New Church to find education as an extremely thorny issue. There are a lot of wounds in this church body over education. The schism of 1890, arose over the question of education and New Church responsibilities in education. Now unfortunately, as one reads the minutes and the reports of this separation, one can see that people were forced in this time into positioning themselves in extreme polarity with regard to the issue. When extremes are pointed out they are inevitably foolish, they are inevitably overdrawn, and I suspect that both ends of the church, both the -- which end is the schismatic end I don't know: at any rate, (I don't really have to concern myself with this) -- both groups have placed themselves in positions that became entrenched and which never have been re-evaluated. There was a great deal of meaning attached to both of them. Unfortunately, it seems that the issue was joined for reasons other than an attempt to fulfill Swedenborgian philosophy of the expectations of the New Church as a reflector of Swedenborg.

Now, if they had turned to Swedenborg, I think the answer could have been resolved. But a number of other things came up, so that on the one hand you have one group saying, "We have no responsibility in education"; the other saying, "We have a very great responsibility in education." Both of them are right and both of them are wrong.

In point of fact, I think that Swedenborg would argue that you had no responsibility to any type of education other than that which is truly education, and when Swedenborg talks about education, he talks about education which is primarily higher education. To quote Swedenborg himself, he says that the only instrument which is capable of being educated is the adult intellect, the mature mind, and this is a very important concept in Swedenborg in education. It means, probably, that if Swedenborg had children he would have sent them to PS108 or its equivalent because it wasn't too important really where they got the building blocks upon which they would later be truly educated in the Swedenborgian sense, as long as they knew how to read and know how to write and knew how to communicate and do some mathematics: they would be prepared to become educated.

Now unfortunately, or perhaps it is fortunate, Swedenborg wrote no essays on education such as Locke and Rousseau. He didn't fall into the fashion of the time, which was to discuss education. Even Plato, the ideal philosopher, the traditional philosopher, went deeply into education. I think it probably a good thing that Swedenborg did not do this, because it requires one then, in order to gain a picture of Swedenborg's education, to go deeply into his philosophy and to educe his philosophy of education by logical extrapolation, by determining what are his concepts of man and the universe and the relationship between these. This requires a rather insightful knowledge into his ontology. You have to be able to have a metaphysical picture of Swedenborg's metaphysical picture. You have to have some concept of his epistemology. You have to know what his ideas of ethics are, and then from these elements you can apply his principles to the educational demands of the

time, and then you have a built-in philosophical mechanism for achieving what will be -- and I suspect there have been 50,000 sermons preached on this in New Churches -- Education for new times. If you continually apply this philosophy to the exigencies of the times, so that you have the advantage on the one hand of the guideline to go by but the new set of social circumstances which whether you will or no are going to be upon you, you are in a position to contend with them, as they change, in the light of his philosophy.

Now, it would be very difficult to argue in favor of finding Swedenborgian education anywhere than in an institution of higher education. Earlier I made the implication that denominational education and Swedenborgian education were not the same things. Yet, the Swedenborgian makes a unique commitment to education. The Book of Worship contains a commentary on worship (and as I read earlier in the hymnal), this entire volume when it was adopted was greeted by the applause of the convention. I take this to mean that its contents had the endorsement of all of you. There's a statement in here that you either mean or do not mean, and I think you have to join the issue on this point -- either you endorse what you say here or you mean something else. It's a commentary on worship and for a philosopher to comment on worship he has to move into philosophical terms. But there is a process whereby theological terms can be reviewed -- can be analyzed, can be expressed, in philosophical terms and this is a very important element that the church has neglected for sometime. I'll cite some of these examples as we move along. It makes an interesting transition from worship to, in a sense, doing. And it makes the same sort of transition here which Swedenborg makes in his philosophy between thought and action, between being and doing. Your statement here -- not his -- is, "for though worship begins in one precious hour, it extends to the whole of life. It is opening our life to the Lord, that he may work in and through us." And this is the important thing: "It is staking our faith in the man that is to be and the world that is to be, because of the God who is." It seems like an entirely theological statement, but it has

deep philosophical implications that are congruent to what has been elicited from Swedenborg's philosophy.

Swedenborg has a concept of worship and a concept of the Lord that is very interestingly translated back and forth from theological to philosophical terms. He talks of knowledge in a particular sense: for Swedenborg, knowledge -- and what is done with knowledge -- is divine love, and wisdom is divine love in action. Swedenborg's concept of this working, this force, is seen through people and how people act, and what they do with knowledge, and what they do with new knowledge. Now this new knowledge is the continual revitalization of the creative force. This is for Swedenborg, divine love; for you, perhaps, God; for me it just happens to be whatever it is that projects man along.

Now, other denominations, (I think very conservative denominations), frequently hold that scientific progress and scientific knowledge is very often the work of the devil rather than the work of God, that man is confounded by these things and that somehow or other he must cling to the old, and justify the new in terms of the old, if he is to stand by the conservative, the timeless, the eternal, the absolute elements of faith. This is an unhappy support-base for education.

However, the Swedenborgian is an interesting position because his faith forces him into an acceptance of new social forms, new social institutions and new knowledge as being the direct working of divine wisdom, divine love. This is the creative force. His position, Swedenborg's position, is that all of man's social development and the implementation of his knowledge is this expression. You find this in Divine Providence, 5234. Now, no one would deny, I think, the basis of Swedenborg's ontology is love, love as it is conceived of in a number of ways. Very interesting research is being done into the nature of love, man's love. Sorokin at Harvard, is studying the power of creative and altruistic love. Love is a thing, and we can establish this rather scientifically and empirically and that it

does exert certain forces. And this is very interesting because Swedenborg has been saying that love is the life of man and that love has to be manifested in social and in scientific and in intellectual terms. Swedenborg also makes religious experience, as he defines it, or as he understood it, a part of the education. But his description of it in relationship to education is something that might not be acceptable to Swedenborgians. He says in effect that no one can consider himself wise who does not acknowledge the divine and the infinite. Well, that's reasonable, I think. Will you accept that as religious experience? Now he also says that if you have in you the innate ability to recognize what is good and bad, by hit or miss, trial or error, by and large, man is going to come out pretty well if he has the freedom to choose and is educated to the rational use of his facilities. He suggests that this freedom to choose is, in a sense, in metabolism with creative force -- the cosmological entity which is yet in a state of becoming: that all the universe is going some place and that man is growing and going some place, and where he is going to go depends largely upon what he does, the choices that he makes. If he acts in accord with this divine plan, to use the terms of theology, if he is able to exercise freedom and rationality which are made available to him through education in the Swedenborgian sense, which is the use of the adult intellect already fed with the building blocks of information that were mentioned earlier, then his life is a religious experience.

We see examples of this freedom and its problems. Let's turn to my own institution with its 65,000 students, and take a look at a cross-section of them. We picked out eleven of these students who were deeply committed to civil rights. They were far above average in intelligence, and highly effective in the use of this intelligence. Six of the eleven had just completed or were just completing their Phd's and two of them were in the fourth year of medical school. The balance of them were achieving far above the expected norm in their own field of graduate study and they were anticipating entering the Peace Corps or some similar altruistic service. They were not beatniks:

only three of them evinced any eccentricity in dress or personal cleanliness; they didn't wear beards. They were the children of the the american dream, all eleven of them. They were not impoverished. They did not come from homes that were deprived.

Now, its interesting when we consider their religious background. Every one of the eleven came from homes that did not practice religion, which did not have any active denominational affiliation, although two of them were nominal Quakers. When their close friends were required in a questionnaire to make a force choice of describing these people as religious or non-religious, they uniformly described them as being religious although none of them went to church. Now, is this a religious experience: to live in freedom and rationality and yet not go to church, not have visions, not pray unceasingly? Their friends seemed to think they were exemplars of a religious mode of living. I don't know, but I do say this: if Swedenborgian education is going to exist under Swedenborgian auspices, then somehow Swedenborgians have to take into consideration what will be the degree to which they will limit their expectations of religious experiences.



(NOTE: A future issue will continue Dr. Calatrello's address, dealing with (some other aspects of Swedenborgian education. Ed.)

**A CALL to COMMITMENT
OVER THE TOP**

350,000.00
*TOTAL COST
of PROJECT*

the
**URBANA
COLLEGE
MEMORIAL
LIBRARY**

175,000.00
*TOTAL GIVEN & PLEDGED
TO DATE, INCLUDING
GOVERNMENT GRANT
JUNE 22nd 1966*

108,000.00
*GOVERNMENT GRANT
APRIL 1st 1966*

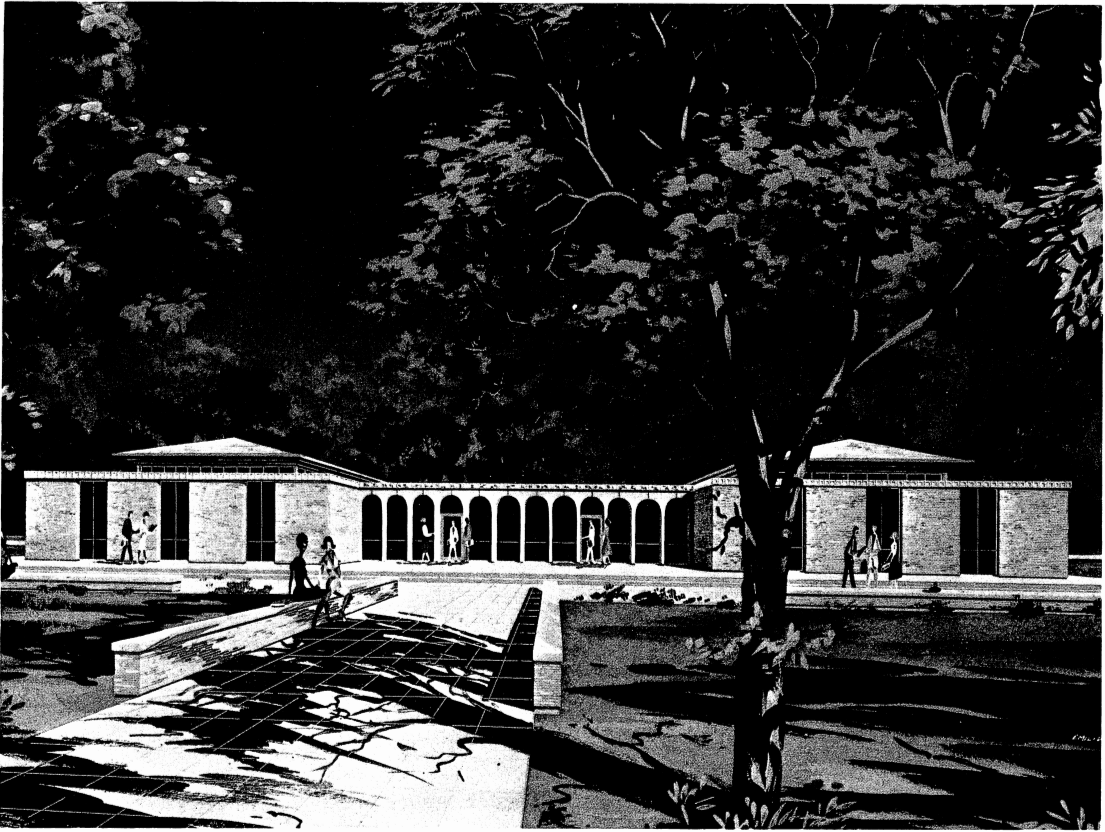
Your HELP, in
the Form of a
Gift or Pledge,
is **URGENTLY**
Needed **NOW** to
Subscribe the
Amount Needed to
Put This Capital
Fund Drive Over
the **TOP!**

• Won't You
Make a Commitment—an
INVESTMENT—NOW in the
Future of our Young People?

URBANA LIBRARY FUND DRIVE NEEDS YOUR PLEDGE NOW

URBANA COLLEGE, and the drive to raise funds from members of Convention to build a new library as part of the program of expansion to a four-year degree-granting program, has been discussed in The Messenger for July-August and September. Now the time is running out faster than the big thermometer is going up. The deadline for receiving pledges for the \$350,000 is January 30, and much depends on meeting that deadline. The present growth in students and faculty depends for its continuation on development of the four-year program; the program depends on the library; the library depends on the government grant of \$108,000, as well as on contributions from the church; and if contributions and pledges do not make up the necessary total in time, the grant will be lost.

How much can you give this year, if you give up something else to give it? Try to give a little more than that, then multiply by three and make a three-year pledge now.



FOUR ASSOCIATIONS ACT TO SUPPORT URBANA LIBRARY FUND AND SWEDENBORGIAN CHAPLAINCY

The offer of the New York Association, announced at Convention, of \$1,000 per year for three years toward the establishment of a Swedenborgian chaplaincy on the campus of Urbana College (provided enough additional funds are found to support the project adequately) has been paralleled by two more associations which met during October.

At its meeting in Cambridge, October 22, the Mass. Assoc. voted to make an offer for the same purpose and on the same terms as New York's, the specific amount to be determined by the financial committee. At its meeting in Detroit, the following day, the Michigan Association voted another \$1,000 per year for three years. The Michigan action involved particular interest in the chaplaincy being coupled with a faculty position. These three offers -- and, perhaps, others not yet reported to The Messenger -- raise the possibility of Convention's being officially represented on Urbana's campus to the level of definite probability, as soon as someone can be found to fill the post.

Word has come to The Messenger of actions being taken by associations to help the drive for funds for the proposed Urbana College Memorial Library.

The slightly-funded Kansas Association has given \$1,000, in a gesture of open-hearted generosity that almost halved its treasury.

The Michigan Association voted to contribute \$5,000, in addition to the \$1,000 per year that it has offered toward the chaplaincy.

At its general meeting, the Massachusetts Association recommended to its financial committee a contribution of \$5,000. On November 2, the Mass. Executive Committee considered new information on the urgency of the deadline, and the example of Kansas' gift, and changed the recommendation to a pledge of \$5,000 per year for three years--a total of \$15,000. Final action and a necessary legal opinion are still pending at press time. This premature announcement is published with the frank hope of starting a bandwagon. The name of the game is "Can You Top This?"

SWEDENBORG SCHOOL OF RELIGION

Carl Sandburg has said that nothing happens unless first a dream. This new school has come into being as a result of many dreams -- dreams that go back 100 years and more.

I will not trace the stops of the last few years leading to the purchase and renovation of our buildings here in Newton. The major concern for all of us now is -- Where do we go from here? What dreams do we have for the future?

The school must serve the church of tomorrow in many ways. Following are a dozen possibilities:

1) Train men and women for the ordained ministry in our established churches, including specialized ministries in education, group work, counseling, etc.

2) Train men and women for lay leadership, the lay ministry, and specialized ministries.

3) Provide post-graduate training for ordained ministers, offering scholarship aid on a semester basis, or for a sabbatical year.

4) Provide the setting for a community of scholars, where men and women can stimulate one another in their study, research, and writing.

5) Offer facilities for visiting scholars, church historians, and students of comparative religion.

6) Sponsor institutes for ministers and laymen, especially during the summer.

7) Offer the advisory and consultative services of faculty members to our denominational leaders and boards -- interpreting new trends in Christianity and offering guidance in new forms of ministry.

8) Provide resource personnel for local churches in the exploration of new approaches to their work.

9) Provide a center for public lectures and seminars.

10) Offer courses for special students, including students from other seminaries and denominations.

11) Provide leadership and housing for young people's conferences on special themes, such as the inner life, social concerns, war and peace, etc.

12) Sponsor weekend retreats for laymen on the same themes, inner life, social concern, war and peace, etc.

I am not suggesting that all twelve possibilities will be carried out this year or next. Some of them may never be feasible. Others that I haven't dreamed of may come into being. It is my hope that the policy of the school will be characterized by flexibility. We must constantly be alert to new possibilities, forms, approaches, and programs. This openness to change is especially vital in our intern program at the field work center in Bellevue, Washington. Under the leadership of a team of three ministers, the students spend the last fifteen months of their training immersed in the total life of a church, participating in worship, religious education, discussion groups, counselling, and administration. This involvement in the everyday life of a church, under professional supervision, enables a student to begin to bridge the gap between his academic training and his entrance into the parish ministry.

The school of the future must be marked by boldness and a high degree of imagination. We are here today because of innovators like Thomas Worcester, the first president of the school; the Board of Managers who directed the move to Cambridge in 1889; Franklin Blackmer, who instituted the inter-seminary program; the men who initiated the field work program in Bellevue; and the present faculty, managers, and directors who have carried out the exciting and promising transition to the Newton campus.

As an illustration of their boldness, I want to report an action taken by the Board of Managers during their meeting here at the School this morning, adopting a new name: "Swedenborg School of Religion." The question of our name and the possibility of changing it, has been before the Managers at several of their recent meetings. We wanted a name that placed proper emphasis on our identity and our purpose, and which would not inhibit the variety and flexibility of our plans for the future. We felt this was served well by the new name that we chose, so our School begins its second hundred years with a new name, Swedenborg School of Religion.

VI. A Trip to Hell

by Brian Kingslake

This is Aqueduct speaking. Greetings, dear friend from the other side! I have just had a memorable experience which I should like to share with you. I have been on a visit to hell! For a long while it has seemed to me that a Receptionist could be of more help to the newcomers from your world if he had actually seen for himself something of the conditions prevailing in one or other of the lower regions; and the opportunity came in the Lord's good time.

One of the recent new-arrivals from your world is a clergyman, an evangelical modernist of liberal views, who throughout his life on earth always denied the existence of hell. "How could a loving and merciful Creator punish his own children?" he would cry. I have named this man Vindicator, because he is always trying to vindicate the love and mercy of God -- though one wonders why such vindication should be considered necessary! When he arrived here, and discovered that, despite the love and mercy of God, there is nevertheless a hell (in fact, there are many hells), he was at first incredulous and then profoundly shocked. I explained to him that hell is not a place of punishment for sins committed on earth, nor is anyone compelled to live there. This he could not believe: "for who," he said, "would go willingly to hell?"

As this was a matter of overwhelming importance to him, and affected his whole attitude towards the Lord as his heavenly Father, I asked one of my neighbors, who is a Guard in hell, to help me explain to Vindicator what the true position is. This neighbor travels regularly to his place of employment in a flying carriage. "Why don't the two of you come with me tomorrow," he said, "and see for yourselves?"

Normally, to get to a distant place, we concentrate our thoughts on where we want to go, and the strength of our determination carries us speedily to our destination. Yes, we fly like the birds; but, as you see, we have no wings. (Angels with wings! How absurd! We should be monstrosities!) Actually I fly to this Middle Region every morning from my home in the foothills of heaven, and back again each evening when my day's work is done. It is a relaxing experience. But to get to hell is another thing altogether. How could anyone concentrate his thoughts on a region so utterly alien to his own? So my friend the Guard travels in a flying carriage. There are many kinds available. The prophets of old called them "chariots of fire,"

for chariot was the only word they knew to indicate a moving vehicle. Today you would probably call them aircraft, or even space capsules! To travel to hell is rather like visiting another planet. We were given what you would call space suits, to enable us to live in the poisonous atmosphere, and endure the stench which they say are frightful, and to protect us from the dead heat or dead cold of those regions, and from the destructive rays emanating from the inhabitants; and also, it was explained, to protect them from us! These suits are practically invisible, and do not hamper one's movements to any extent.

Our flying carriage rose into the air, and we set off towards the west, over the escarpment of the Middle Region which drops away like a precipice. Soon the sun disappeared, and night closed around us. I began to feel restless and nervous and homesick, and it required a definite effort of prayer before I felt the Lord's presence with me again. The Rev. Vindicator seemed quite scared, so we all prayed together, and soon a soft glow of light filled the carriage and we knew we were safe. Looking out through the windows, we could see straggling cities far below us. In some of them there appeared to be big conflagrations, with flames leaping into the air and billows of smoke. Suddenly a volcano erupted beneath us, belching fire; a trail of molten lava moved down into a lake, from which rose a hissing noise and clouds of steam.

"These conflagrations and eruptions produce a kind of light which takes the place of the sun," commented our guide.

I asked what sort of hell we were going to.

"Only a small one," he explained, "and not very deep down. My folk there believe they are still in the natural world, for they cannot rise to a conception of anything spiritual; and so, by hallucination and fantasy, they produce all the things they were accustomed to in the old life. They live in a squalid slum; they drink whisky and quarrel and rob one another, just as they used to do. They feel most at home that way."

"Did they all live in slums on earth?"

"Oh no, no. Some were from the upper crust. But this is their mentality."

Eventually we began to descend. Down we came, and landed gently in front of the administrative office. The door of our vehicle opened, and we stepped out. Our eyes soon became accustomed to the dim light, and with a little practice we could breathe and walk about quite freely.

* * * * *

Behind the office stretched a high fence of barbed wire.

"A concentration camp!" muttered my friend

Vindicator, examining the spikes.

The Guard unlocked a small door in the fence, and let us through. We followed him along a narrow alley between shanties with chimneys belching smoke, and shacks made of old bedsteads and burlap. Soon we were engulfed in a maze of lanes between dilapidated tenement buildings. Garbage and filth lay everywhere. Hostile faces peered out at us from doors and broken windows.

"What puzzles me," said Vindicator, "is how a God of love and mercy could make people live in a place like this." (He jumped back to avoid a painful of refuse that was flung out of an open door.)

"On the contrary," answered the Guard. "I and my associates are trying to move the people out, so as to clear the site for demolition. The whole area inside the fence is condemned property. We take them away, a few at a time, to a place where they can train to become respectable citizens. But they are so cunning! Most of them escape and come back here. They climb in through the barbed wire, even tearing their flesh in their eagerness."

"So the barbed wire fence is to keep people out, not keep them in?" exclaimed our clerical friend, with dawning comprehension.

"Assuredly."

"So God does not compel these people to live here?" he persisted.

"Indeed no, nor anywhere in hell. Hell is illegal, from start to finish."

There was a pause while the implications of this remark sank in. Then suddenly my friend drew back with horror and pointed to a small group of people ahead of us. "See!" he cried, "Those poor wretches are writhing in fire!"

So they were. "But don't you see?" smiled the Guard. "The fire is coming out of themselves! It is a projection of their lusts and passions."

Yes, we could see it now. Some were staring at us fiercely, with fire flickering from their eyes, and smoke belching from their snarling mouths. Others were running hither and thither, deliberately fanning their burning clothes. An eruption of smoke and cinders drew our attention to two men fighting savagely with sticks. This was hell fire.

At that moment a shriek rent the air, then another and another. My companion's face blanched, and he clutched my arm. "It is the torture," he muttered. "In God's name, we must stop it." He dashed off in the direction of the cries, the Guard and I following as quickly as we could. We reached the house, and Vindicator wrenched open the door.

We were in a squalid Room with cracks in

the walls. A smoking kerosene lamp hung from a nail. The table was littered with an accumulation of bottles and glasses, pots and dishes and plates and remains of food. The shrieks came from a wild-looking woman in a soiled and torn dress. She had apparently hit her husband with a poker, and blood was dripping from his head. He had now caught her by the throat, and was forcing her down, down to the ground. In a few moments he must surely have throttled her, but, surprised by our sudden entry, he let her go. She sprang to her feet, and faced, not him, but us - looking more like a tiger than a human being. "What do you want?" she cried. "This is a private house, isn't it? Can't we do what we like in our own home? We want no policemen spying here." She seized the frying pan from the stove and flung it at the Rev. Vindicator, missing his head by inches. We forcibly drew him out and shut the door. In a few minutes the screams began again.

"Don't worry," said the Guard. "This is all under control. Those two are allowed to punish each other to the limit, because only thus can their love of domination be kept within reasonable bounds. They are already better than they used to be, thank God."

Vindicator was lost in thought as we continued on our way. Then: "My problem," he said "is a theological one. Did not Christ redeem these people by His passion on the cross? Has not the Father forgiven them, for Christ's sake? Can they not go free?"

"You had better tell them that," said the Guard with a smile.

We approached a large ramshackle building which looked like a dance hall, and slipped inside through a door marked "Bar." People were singing bawdy songs, which were interrupted by idiotic mirthless laughter. A scantily-dressed female was serving liquor. She took a glass to a prosperous looking gentleman slumped on a chair. He was too drunk to notice. She looked at him defiantly and without shame, then slipped her hand into his breast pocket and drew out his bulging wallet. Someone snatched it away from her; she rapped his hand and he dropped it. Someone else seized it, and immediately there was an uproar, everybody punching, biting and kicking everybody else. Oblivious of the madhouse scene, half-a-dozen men and women sat along the wall smoking some kind of dope; they looked scarcely alive.

The Rev. Vindicator boldly clapped his hands and called for attention. The fighting ceased abruptly, and all except the inebriated turned menacingly towards him. "I beseech you, my beloved brethren," he pleaded, "leave this fearful place! Your sins have been forgiven

you. The Son of God has redeemed you. He died for you on Calvary Hill. You need stay here no longer. The gate will be unlocked for you. You may go."

"Go?" snarled one of the guests. "Who is telling us to go? We've paid our money, haven't we? On what authority are you telling us to go?"

"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ," pronounced the Rev. Vindicator.

There was an uneasy silence, and some of the guests edged away. "Don't say that Name again!" whispered one of them, nervously. Then, recovering his self-assurance: "We know all about the One you mentioned. But even He cannot force us out of hell. It would be interfering with our freedom. He respects our freedom, doesn't He? A preacher fellow once told me He died to make us free."

I was horrified. This was going too far. The Guard raised his hand. There was a rumble of thunder, followed by a gust of wind which shook the building to its foundation. The wind increased in force; the walls became wisps of rag, then cobwebs, then vapor, and soon it had all blown away. People were running frantically in all directions, seeking cover. When at last the gale subsided, we were alone.

Back in the administrative office, and afterwards in the flying carriage, the Guard explain-

ed to us that there is, indeed, frightful suffering in hell. Punishment is administered by the evil spirits themselves, who enjoy nothing better than to torture one another. It is permitted by the Lord, if and when He perceives that some good can come from it. Sadly enough, punishment is often the only force which can break and reduce a spirit's evil desires sufficiently to enable him to live with others in some sort of ordered society. Once anyone has entered the spiritual world, his ruling love cannot be changed; it can only be battered down by fear and pain.

Oh, dear friend from the other side! I beseech you to give this earnest warning to your readers over there! Impress upon them how vitally important it is for them to overcome their evil tendencies while they are still living in the physical world, the formative world, the world where changes can be made with comparative ease! Pride, cruelty, hatred, contempt of others, deceit, cunning, adultery, self-abuse by drink or drugs, envy, covetousness ... shun these things like hell itself, which they are! Root them out, while there is yet time; for in so far as these evils are still ruling you when you die and come over here, you will be abject slaves to eternity!

STATISTICAL NOTICES

DEATHS

Mrs. Theresea S. Robb. On Oct. 8, 1966, Mrs. Theresea Robb, a long-time member of the Church of the Open Word, St. Louis, Mo., died at the age of 92. Mrs. Robb who was the author of several books of poetry, also wrote her own funeral service based on some of the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. Mrs. Robb is survived by a nephew, Emerson Brown of St. Louis.

Mr. John W. Keith of Livonia, Mich., beloved husband of Helen and father of Brian and Karen, passed into the spiritual world on Oct. 4, 1966 at the Henry Ford Hospital.

Jack was an active family and community man -- keenly interested in public and civil affairs and acutely aware of the need of "real religion" in human relationships. He was a good neighbor and friend and little concerned with the "praises of men."

Besides his immediate family, Jack leaves also his mother, Mrs. Vera Keith and a sister Mrs. Dorothy Hard.

A service was held in his memory at the Harris funeral home in Livonia on the evening

of Oct. 6th with about 150 friends and neighbors present. Cremation was at Evergreen Cemetery.

BIRTHS

Douglas William, born to Roberta (Thurston) and William Jones on May 7, 1966.

Born to Martha and David Richardson on June 7, 1966, a son, David Perley.

Matthew Frederick Baker was born in June, 1966 to Patricia and Ronald.

Born to Elaine and Ralph Gushee on July, 26, 1966, a daughter, Alice Barbara.

Mark Norman Bulley, born to Collette and Perley in August of this year.

Born to Sharon (Heath) and Wayne Gaudette, a daughter, Lynn Marie, on Sept. 17.

Jeffrey Pete McLellan, born to Raelene (Sawyer) and Harley in August, 1966.

Born to Mr. and Mrs. Edward Bommer, a daughter, Susan Rene (6lbs., 4 oz.) August 4, 1966 in Gulfport, Miss.

The Messenger

November, 1966

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