

THE MESSENGER

Official Organ of the Swedenborgian Church

JOINT MEETING ESTABLISHES CENTRAL OFFICE



MARCH 1968

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir:

I can only say that I was ashamed and dismayed to read the letters to the Editor in the February issue of the Messenger. I pray to God these letters do not truly represent the opinions and feelings of the majority of Convention people re: the present conflict in Vietnam.

In my opinion it is the most barbarous, immoral conflict ever to disgrace God's good earth. And it's all based upon a so-called "treaty" drawn up with a corrupt, puppet regime, a piece of paper that isn't worth the life of one American or Viet Cong soldier. At first, when I read the letters in the February issue, I could scarcely believe my eyes. Here were Christian people saying that communism was spawned in hell... that all the "bad guys" live in Russia and China, and the "good guys" live in America... that God is obviously on the side of United States in this conflict... and that peace will only come when communism is wiped off the map. I would suggest that these people are living in a fantasy world, one which, if persisted in by American leadership, is going to eventually destroy much of the material world. I can see it all now in Washington, New York, Moscow, Peking... all in ruins... an army major crawls out of an ICBM silo in Colorado and mutters (as did an

army major when he viewed the remains of the provincial city of Ben Tre last week), "It became necessary to destroy the city to save it." And apparently he was quite serious. At the present time about 20% of the people in Vietnam are homeless; about 5% have been wounded or killed. In due course all the people will be dead. Then we will have won a glorious victory. And the incredible thing is that communism will be as strong as ever in southeast Asia. You cannot stop an idea with bullets and napalm. It may be that the people in that part of the world actually want to live under some form of socialism or communism. Why not let them choose their own destiny? What gives America the right to "police" the entire world? How the mighty have fallen!

This last point hurts most of all. I've always admired the United States as a shining example of fair-play, integrity, freedom and responsibility in world affairs. To see her caught up in this bloody, senseless morass is sad beyond description.

And unfortunately, the reaping of the whirlwind is still to come.

Paul Zacharias

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Dear Sir:

Let me say first of all that I found the November and December issues of the Messenger especially interesting — both as to subject matter and variety of points of view.

Thank you especially for publishing the fine article by Bronson Clark in November. After many years of experience and service with the American Friends Service Committee, Bronson Clark has much of value to tell us. It seems that many people are still unaware of the wonderful way that the Quakers are really carrying out the teachings of the Christian religion into daily living all over the world.

I find it difficult to understand why so many members of Christian churches seem to be so ready to believe that the world's problems can be solved by military means — especially now with the frightening development of modern atomic weapons. Do the teachings of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ have so little depth of meaning for us?

Elisabeth Randall

Dear Sir:

Many thanks to guest editor E.O. Martin for sharing the splendid article "Vietnam: A Way Out" by Bronson Clark in the November issue.

If we are to help establish the new church in the world which means, among other things, new creative relationships among all people, we must be consciously attempting to find constructive, loving ways to examine and deal with the awesome problems facing mankind today.

It is imperative that the means be consistent with the ends. Any other course not only diminishes the ends but may corrupt them beyond recognition.

We've been slow to see that a "new heaven and a new earth" require a total upheaval of old attitudes and behavior plus a humble search for underlying causes of disorder.

Mrs. John W. Saul

Dear Sir:

Because I enjoy the Messenger much more than I ever did before you were Editor, I thought I should write and tell you so!

It's alive — and also reassuring that there is a younger generation of ministers who are carrying on the work of giving more vitality to the doctrines, and a more understanding way of getting them across to the people. Today's

problems are faced, and discussed and the entire contents are interesting and worthwhile. Yours is a job well done.

Dorothy C. Carter

Dear Sir:

Some of the responses to the Bronson Clark article on Vietnam distress me. I am distressed whenever I learn that Christians, especially Swedenborgians who while worshipping a God of love, and experiencing the presence of the Lord during communion, do at the same time support the destruction of a mass of human beings in a little country far away.

We have a contradiction to solve. On one hand we proclaim as holy the ten commandments and the principles of the New Testament spoken and exemplified by the Lord. These are accepted as the right guide to a progressive and harmonious human race.

On the other hand when national crisis arises, we decide that observing the principles of the N.T. literally would be an invitation to the enemy to take over. We must resort to violence, a principle carried over from primitive barbarism and kill those wicked people who would get us if we didn't get them first.

Accordingly our present administration has already sent over sixteen thousand of our best young men to their death and caused the wounding of over a hundred thousand, many of them crippled for life without any definite statement of purpose. Are we fighting to establish a favorable government in South Vietnam, fighting to contain China, or fighting for some reason not revealed by the administration?

The present war becomes very real when it reaches into your own family. One of my Grandsons was recently drafted. The boy is quite sensitive, is an excellent student and morally well adapted. According to the last word from him he is practicing thrusting a bayonette into the stomach of a dummy with the understood object of later thrusting a bayonette into the stomach of a live boy as innocent as my Grandson himself, only drafted on the other side. This kind of training makes mockery of every Sunday school lesson I ever taught to my youngsters.

I firmly believe that the world is so created that human love governed by reason can establish a

progressive harmonious human society. What we need now is enough individuals who choose to rise above an emotional state of mind and apply the principles of our Lord and Savior.

Henry K. Peters

Dear Sir:

Having just read your "State of the Church" article, I wish to commend you for your penetrating and forward thinking analysis. I do not feel that we should be at all discouraged by our small size, for I am sure that the "Church Universal" that Swedenborg speaks of is much larger than we imagine. We know from our doctrines that the New Heavens are growing in size and power, with the effect of bringing to all the churches an awakened sense of mission and urgency for change. Being somewhat isolated, I have been attending a Methodist church where I find much self-examination going on. The church is awakening to the need of finding new ways of expressing Christian love in the life of society. They believe that Christians should be deeply concerned and involved in areas such as slum clearance, improving race relations, and in exploring avenues toward world peace.

Christian ways are peaceful ways, and I believe that war is basically evil and brings only disaster to those who participate in it. I want to especially commend you for including in the November issue the very excellent article by Bronson Clark entitled "Vietnam — a Way Out". I was thrilled to read it as it was in harmony with my own thinking on the subject. I was sorry to see two letters in opposition to this article in the January issue.

It is true that we must not fear conflict. But it must be expressed in loving ways. We must become involved in solving our world's pressing problems, deeply concerned that truth and justice prevail. This is a wonderful New Age and we must be ready to take our part in it as a church.

Ednah E. Richard

Dear Sir:

Perhaps I shall not stand alone among your readers in saying it was a surprise and disappointment that a lengthy extract from Prof. Ernest Benz' biography of Swedenborg was chosen as your leading article in January, evidently intended as the birthday number.

Despite the German scholar's somewhat com-

prehensive knowledge of his subject's writings, and generally affirmative attitude, his real interest, as with Signe Toksvig's, seems always to lie in what for a better term one may call the "spiritualistic" realm.

"Mystic," "seer," "visionary" are liberally sprinkled throughout the published selections all of which conjure up to the uninitiated reader a suave turbaned soothsayer gazing into his crystal ball.

As having had a small hand in the public relations and "evidence" work of our organization the past 40 years, I and others have assiduously endeavored to allay those beliefs concerning Swedenborg, and more than one encyclopedia and biographer have amended their listings in the face of cogent explanations.

One can argue indefinitely as to who or what a "mystic" really is, introducing say Joan of Arc or St. Francis of Assisi, yet inevitably the turbaned crystal gazer in the modern scene will intrude upon the general public's vision.

It was most regrettable, too, that in editing or preparing No. 15 in the article, you overlooked deleting or challenging Dr. Benz' completely erroneous, not to say derogative, statement that Swedenborg came to "the conclusion that the Christian Gospel would be accomplished in his person."

Leslie Marshall

Dear readers:

In the following short article, I would like to make known my uneasiness experienced after reading Professor Benz' theses about E. Swedenborg, which was published in the January issue of the Messenger. I am uneasy because I did not find any commentary on the New Church after his surprising "Conclusion".

Being in a position to meet the editor of this journal every day, I communicated my feelings to him. And if I understood correctly what he said to me, the absence of commentary is due only to his concern for freedom of thought, allowing the reader's attention to be held throughout. The reader must be able to judge the value of words before him by himself.

Indeed, I entirely share this opinion, but it seems to me that our freedom can and must be exercised within a context of free choice, and for there to be a free choice it is necessary for us to have two opinions at our disposal within any given debate.

An opinion of a man (as the case is here), who is not related to the New Church was given the right to contest the entire veracity of Swedenborg's Writings. Certain people among us have been called by the Lord to be Shepherds of his flock. These Shepherds must show the way. They must proceed before the flock, leading it toward the greenest pasture. Clearly they must indicate what they deem the best teachings to those who are under their care.

To tell the truth, my uneasiness is primarily caused by the fifteenth thesis of this article. Indeed a genuine man of the New Church can't read it without a heart-pang, and I think it is for this reason that one strictly New Church opinion would be necessary to bring another conclusion to this affirmation. Our entire freedom should rest in our choice of either accepting or rejecting Professor Benz' opinion. This is why I feel that to render such a modern interpretation of Swedenborg without any commentary injures our freedom.

We can, for instance, ask ourselves if by this behaviour people do not lead us toward a new way of understanding Swedenborg. In my opinion it was, on the contrary, necessary to put the reader openly in the face of New Church membership responsibility, and give him sufficient warning.

It is important to help the reader distinguish between those paragraphs which are cheerful and those which are afflicting, rather than to let him take the risk of losing his way in the tortuous paths of certain interpretations of Swedenborg's Writings.

I am afraid that in our days and under the pretext of freedom of thought, one certain form of ministry is beginning to die, the form which consists in saying to others: Take heed here it is dangerous. This ministry has been willed by the Lord. From my point of view, it is not sufficient to inform people, it is also necessary to help them understand. Someone taken up into the whirlwind of everyday life, can be only more or less disposed to meditate upon this article.

To illustrate my point, some people in the New Church will actually say that Swedenborg lacks Christian humility and that he has been a victim of his own system. Is not there a danger here?

The members of the New Church are adult but they need help to see more clarification in the whirling of actual ideas. Those how go to

Church and who meet their Pastor can be enlightened about such things as Benz' article, but the others, the isolated who have no other contact with the New Church other than journals need commentary to help them see issues more clearly.

Is it not true that these isolated folks are in a position of being troubled? Is their confidence toward Swedenborg and his Mission not being shaken?

It is these men I think about, when I regretfully see that a commentary has not been joined to this article. The commentary could have been only two verses from the Word, for example: Psalm 118. v 23-4. This is Jehovah's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which Jehovah hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

Claude Bruley
SSR Student from France

THE MESSENGER'S APPEAL

WHAT PRICE A "FREE" PRESS?

The Messenger is free to members of the Swedenborgian Church, but somebody pays the bills. Who? The Convention — i.e., you members of the Swedenborgian Church, who get it free. The Messenger is one of the services of the church to its members, which means it is one of the costs for which financial support from members is required.

An appeal for support for the general work of the Swedenborgian Church has been mailed to all members. This is a supplementary appeal, by, in and for The Messenger: your support of the magazine and its distribution to all members will be gratefully accepted and seriously appreciated by the Editor and the Treasurer alike.

Send checks to The Messenger, c/o Chester T. Cook, Box 215, Deer Isle, Maine

CONVENTION, 1968
mark your calendar

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at Windsor College, Windsor,
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Room & Board, only \$7.75 per day
Excellent facilities for housing
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*An interesting and smooth-
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prepared for you by
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DOROTHEA HARVEY JOINS FACULTY
CHURCH-SCHOOL DEVELOPMENTS
AT URBANA



Several steps toward closer relations between the Swedenborgian Church and Urbana College have been announced recently. Dr. Harvey, life-long member of the Swedenborgian Church, and respected Old Testament scholar is leaving a post at Lawrence College, Appleton, Wisc., to become chairman of the Division of Philosophy and Religion at Urbana College. Direct denominational support has been pledged by General Council on a regular basis to establish Urbana's standing as a church related college on an official basis. Also, Convention is helping to make possible arrangements for construction of a new 100 bed dormitory on the Urbana campus.

Dr. Harvey's appointment, announced recently by Dr. Jones, answers a need, long recognized by both the college and the church for a member of the Urbana faculty with preeminent scholarly qualifications in combination with membership and commitment to the teachings of the Swedenborgian Church. Dr. Harvey was a member of the Ad Hoc Committee on church-college relations which brought together a group of Convention leaders, and faculty and administration representatives from the college. She has the unanimous endorsement of this group—including Convention President Tafel, members of the Swedenborg School of Religion faculty and Board of Managers and Swedenborgian representatives on the Board of Trustees—as being uniquely qualified for the post.

Asked about her reasons for leaving her present position in favor of Urbana, Dr. Harvey commented, "We (the Swedenborgian Church)

started this college, and we can't let it decline or become wholly secular without doing everything possible to make it a first rate educational institution. We have to make sure that these young people get an education of a quality as high as they can get anywhere, but with something they can't get everywhere — a serious exposure to ideas and values like those which we value in our church."

Although curriculum and requirements for the Division of Philosophy and Religion are still being developed, Dr. Harvey has suggested offering alternative courses which would leave each student free to fulfill divisional requirements by studying either Philosophy or Religion, designing the courses so that either alternative will bring the student face to face with the fundamental options in developing a philosophy of life. Courses or tutorials dealing specifically with Emanuel Swedenborg's works would be offered every semester according to her preliminary plans. But in keeping with the Swedenborgian emphasis on freedom, no specific courses would be required.

The commitment for on-going support of the Urbana program by the Swedenborgian Church is of particular importance at this time, when accreditation for a universally recognized B.A. degree is possible in the near future. Since the application is for accreditation as a church-related college, this new commitment by the church, along with the contributions to the new library by individual members and groups of the Swedenborgian Church and program being developed for Urbana by Dr. Harvey, strengthens the school's position: it demonstrates tangibly that Urbana's historic relation to the Swedenborgian Church is significant in the present as well.

SWEDENBORG RE-TRANSLATED

The arches of the new library on the campus of Urbana College are superscribed with the full quotation from Swedenborg's Latin: "Nunc licet intellectualiter intrare arcana fidei." Although several translations are more or less familiar, most Swedenborgians recognize something like "Now it is permitted to enter with the understanding into the mysteries of faith." Urbana students, however, with some help from their Latin books and some knowledge of Swedenborgians they have met among the students and representing the church in various ways, have come up with a free translation that is current on campus — something like "These days you can take your brains to church!"

NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF NEW CHURCH WOMEN PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

The following changes in the Constitution and By-laws of the National Alliance of New Church Women have been proposed and considered by the Executive Committee:

Article 1: The name of this organization shall be NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF NEW CHURCH WOMEN.

Proposed change: The name of this organization shall be NORTH AMERICAN ALLIANCE OF NEW CHURCH WOMEN (or another suitable name which reflects the fact that Canadian women's groups are constituent parts of this organization).

Article II of the By-Laws:

Section 1: Each State Alliance shall be entitled to one (1) delegate to the Annual Meeting of the Alliance; each Local organization shall be entitled to two (2) delegates and one (1) additional delegate for every twenty (20) members. Each Round Robin group consisting of six (6) or more paid members shall be entitled to one (1) delegate. Members-at-large in attendance at the Annual Meeting may elect one (1) delegate for each six (6) members so represented, the six members so represented shall be seated together at the business sessions of the meeting.

Section 2: Only officers of the Alliance, its Past Presidents, and duly accredited delegates, who have signed the Roll of the Annual Meeting, shall be entitled to vote.

Proposed change: Any New Church woman in attendance at the Annual Meeting of this organization shall be entitled to a vote upon signing the Roll of the Annual Meeting.

SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION MEETS IN PHILADELPHIA

On Nov. 17, 1967, the Executive Committee of the New Church Sunday School Association met in Philadelphia.

President Harold Larsen reported that the Lesson Committee is in the process of taking



*Sunday School Association President
Harold Larsen and wife Mabel at
Convention*

inventory. A resume of the Teacher Training Course has been sent to Carolyn Balckmer and Dorothea Harvey, who are members of the Board of Education. Rev. Larsen also announced that the Gray Fund has sent \$500 to help expenses of the Sunday Visitor. It is hoped that additional contributions will come from individuals as well as Sunday Schools.

Vice-President Franklin Blackmer gave a financial report on Sunday School Notes and presented facts produced through the inventory.

On the following day, the Executive Committee of the Sunday School Association met with the Board of Education at the Philadelphia Church. After a financial report by Franklin Blackmer and a report on Teacher Training, recommendations were made to the Board of Education by the Sunday School Association. It was proposed that the Board of Education and SSA Executive Committee confer in providing instructions for Teacher Training for Sunday School teachers and superintendents at summer camps. The Board of Education agreed and it was decided that they will function as coordinator for any educational committees.

Secondly, it was recommended that the BOE state its position on publication of the SSA Journal. The policy of publishing this Journal within Convention Journal has been in effect for 30 years. The SSA Executive Committee stated that they will have the constitution printed for distribution to be used at annual meeting. Vital statistics will be published in Convention Journal.

JOINT MEETING ESTABL



General Council, SSR Managers and Directors in Joint Meeting

The Swedenborg School of Religion in Newton, Mass. was the scene for a joint meeting of Convention's General Council with the Boards of Managers and Directors of the Swedenborg School of Religion. The three bodies met together to discuss the advantages and possible difficulties of establishing a central office at the school, providing facilities for its staff and a full-time presidency, and inauguration of a program of research and development. After dinner followed by an evening of joint discussion, the three groups met separately to consider their interlocking responsibilities in connection with the proposals.

Despite a fog that shrouded airports along the Atlantic coast, delaying several arrivals, almost thirty members were on hand for the dinner. Approval of the central office idea was generally enthusiastic. The school will provide

rent-free space for the Convention facilities, with Convention assuming the costs of certain minor improvements which will be necessary to accomodate the separate operations of school and central office without interference. Flexibility is maintained in the arrangements so that the Convention office could be moved when or if relocation to a different part of the country should become advisable.

Research and Development Plans for the Church

Urbana College will be the site of a several-day consultation this summer, bringing together Swedenborgians with many points of view from different parts of the country to share and sharpen ideas for revitalization and expansion of the Swedenborgian Church. Proposed by the Rev. Ernest Martin as a first step in a program of research into new approaches and possibilities for the church and of development of forward-looking ideas and projects, the Urbana Consultation received budgetary approval from General Council at its mid-winter meeting. Selection of staff and participants will begin soon.



Detailed plans for a long-range project of research and development have not been completed, and the nature of such work requires flexibility in preliminary stages especially. However, it is expected that studies growing out of the Urbana Consultation this summer will be purposed intensively, beginning this fall.

ISHES CENTRAL OFFICE

Action is being taken to have a central office for Convention functioning by fall of this year. President-elect Ernest Martin, will work from it, and supervise its organization to provide more efficient service — and new services — to local churches, associations, and Convention boards and committees. Such a move was discussed, and steps toward it were voted by Convention in 1959, 60 and 61. No location for the office was chosen at that time, the authorization was for temporary facilities and the employment of a staff to determine from actual experience how the new unit could function to the best advantage for local and national activities. Now, for the initial period, the headquarters will be located at Swedenborg School of Religion in Newton.

The activities of the central office will expand as needs for improved service to Convention become apparent; but from the outset it is expected to make communication to and from congregations and the boards and committees which serve them easier and faster, and to



develop regular communications between congregations and between boards and committees where such channels need to be improved — or created. It is hoped that new activities of the church will become possible through this mechanism leading to effective action, growth, and accomplishment.

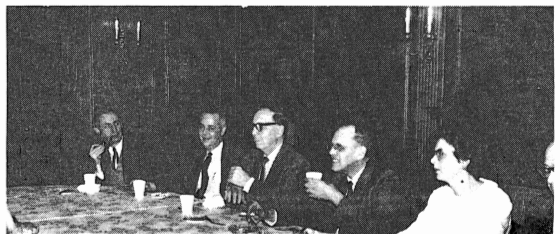


ERNEST MARTIN
TO SERVE AS
FULL-TIME
PRESIDENT

The Rev. Ernest Martin, President-elect of Convention has offered to serve full-time as President of Convention when he takes office at the close of the 1968 Convention in Windsor; and this was approved by General Council at its mid-winter meeting.

In commenting on the move, Mr. Martin pointed out "the effective direction of a central office requires the full-time services of a president or executive secretary and I am ready to devote my talents and energies to this task during the next three years." In addition, plans are being developed for an intensive, long range program of research and development for Convention which would be directed by Mr. Martin through the central office and with the cooperation of Swedenborg School of Religion faculty and other ministers and laymen.

Steps are being taken to provide temporary relief to the Washington congregation following Mr. Martin's departure and until permanent ministerial leadership can be provided.



THE AUGMENTATION FUND

This Fund is succinctly but accurately described in the Annual Journals of Convention as follows—

The Augmentation Fund was established by vote of the General Convention in 1912. It has as its purpose" the support and extension of the New Church ministry and the missionary field."

The specific appropriations made by the Committee are not published, but its annual reports to Convention disclose the nature of its activities. Thus the report in the Journal for 1966 at page 99 shows that it paid out in one fiscal year —

Assistance for 11 Societies	\$20,535.00
Assistance for 7 students	15,168.35
Expenses of Treasurer, travel, etc.	542.75

The Committee in acting upon requests for assistance made by various Societies has before it information from the Societies concerning its progress and activities during the last prior year, accompanied by financial reports covering the same period.

It appears that some misunderstanding arises from time to time concerning the nature of assistance that can be given to Societies. As is pointed out above, it is limited to the ministry; and we were advised some years ago by the Counsel to Convention that this purpose is to be strictly adhered to, without regard to proposals for other objectives, no matter how desirable they may be, and doubtless are. For example, some relate to building activities, say for a Sunday school; while others come from Societies that are not served by a minister.

When the Augmentation Fund was raised over the years, by gifts and bequests covering more than half a century, it was based upon the limitations above set out. Its founders had in mind the vital need for the services of ministers as leaders in our religious life. This is accomplished by grants for student aid for prospective ministers; and by making available the services of a minister to Societies unable to support one, until hopefully they develop sufficiently to carry the burden without assistance. Over the years the help of the Fund, quietly but surely, has been of vital benefit to a large segment of Convention, in enabling the beginnings of Societies or in helping when financial difficulties arise; and a source of gratification has been the

number of Societies that have succeeded in eventually "paddling their own canoe" through the help of the Fund.

Stewart E. Poole, Chairman

MANCHESTER NEWS

The Manchester, New Hampshire, church has recently completed extensive improvements on their building, a long-time landmark in the city. Structural repairs have made the floor of the down-stairs parish hall solid and sound, while a new ceiling has made it more attractive. New stairs provide easier access to the hall, and new electric service and a new furnace, behind the scenes, make the church more comfortable and useful.

Northernmost center of the Massachusetts Association, Manchester is being served by Mr. J. Frank Shaw, Swedenborg School of Religion student, and Authorized Candidate for the Lay Ministry.

MIAMI NEWS

A new venture into an intensive outreach program by the Swedenborgian Church in Miami was described to General Council by Mr. Herbert Young of Miami. The project will be carried out by the Rev. Ernest Frederick and his Miami congregation, with the support and cooperation of General Council, the Board of Missions and the Augmentation Fund Committee.

TWO CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS PROPOSED

In accordance with Article 6 of the Constitution of the General Convention, public notice is hereby given of two proposed amendments to the Constitution at the request of the General Council.

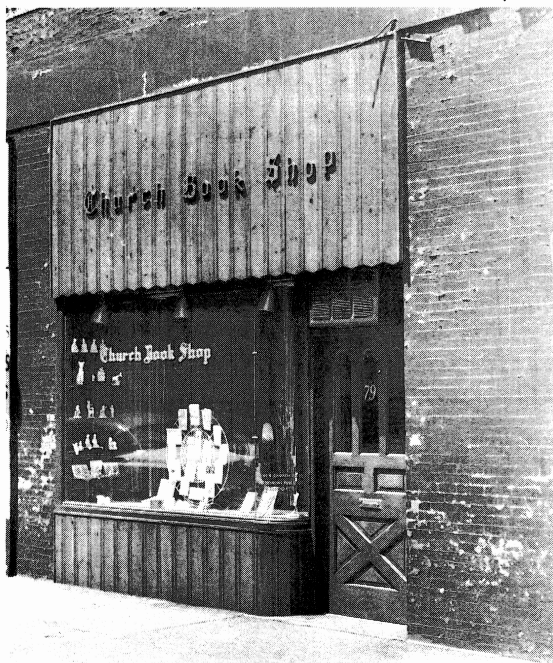
Article III Section 2: add "members of the General Council shall be ex-officio voting members of Convention during their terms of office."

Article IV Section 3: Delete "two delegates, and an additional delegate for each 50 members," and insert in its place, "two delegates and an additional delegate for each 30 members."

THE MESSENGER'S APPEAL

WHAT PRICE A "FREE" PRESS?

SEE PAGE 37



BOOKSTORE CLOSES AFTER 40 YEARS

The Brooklyn Heights Press and Cobble Hill News, Jan. 18, 1968, carried an article, "Church Book Shop Closing After 40 Years," which we quote in part.

"The sign in the shop window on Orange Street states simply, 'We regret. . . after forty years of business on Brooklyn Heights, The Church Book Shop will close early in 1968. . . .

"Miss Cecile Werben, a Heights resident and manager of the long-running shop, has been with the book store since 1928, 'the year,' she said, 'it really started growing like Topsy.' "

"She went on to explain the history of the shop. The shop had been started as an endeavor to keep church literature for the public in the Church of the Neighbors of the old Swedenborgian Church which was at one time located at Clark St. and Monroe Place. The bookage was replete with an old Franklin stove and an open gate fireplace. Bibles were sold along with religious books for children. (See sketch)

"Miss Werben indicated the turn of events that heralded the beginning of the end for the shop. The business had operated free in the old church. With rent to pay (the shop moved to Orange St. seven years ago), even the endowments were not enough to keep the old shop afloat. 'Although sales have always been good around Christmas and Easter, it has not been enough to keep us going,' Miss Werben said.

"Now Miss Werben will close the shop around the first of March and instead of walking to work, she'll make the daily trek to Manhattan (E. 23rd St.) where she'll fill mail orders for the church's religious publications.

"The Book Shop manager said that she felt the shop had maintained 'a tradition of good taste.' And you had the feeling that every one of those forty years, since the time Miss Werben (as a bookkeeper) answered the Book Shop ad, have been highly pleasurable. . . ."



Probably it is impossible for The Messenger to do an adequate job of expressing the thanks of the Swedenborgian Church to Cecile Werben for her long and generous contributions of time, talent and great good humor. In any case, it is too early to thank her for "all she has done." From retirement she will contribute her time and experience toward the continuation of the essential functions of the Swedenborgian Press. That means you can still write to her for Books of Worship, collaterals, certificates, etc. — only now at a new address: Swedenborg Press, Box 143, Madison Square Station, N. Y., N. Y. 10010.



BOOK REVIEW

by Elisabeth Randall

MY LORD AND MY GOD: Essays on Modern Religion, the Bible and Emanuel Swedenborg. By Theodore Pitcairn. 283 pp. With a Pictorial Essay, The Lord's New Church, Nova Hierosolyma, at Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, by Richard Yardumian pp. 287-302. New York: Exposition Press, Inc. \$7.50.

The Rev. Theodore Pitcairn has been a life-long devoted student of the Bible and of Emanuel Swedenborg. He was one of the founders in 1937 of the Nova Hierosolyma (New Jerusalem) branch of the Swedenborgian church in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania. He is now its retired pastor. Besides being a distinguished scholar and theologian, Mr. Pitcairn is a well-known art patron. It was of considerable interest to read in the newspapers recently about his selling the Monet painting, "La Terrasse a St. Adresse," at a record price.

Mr. Pitcairn is profoundly concerned with the state of the world today, and he says at once in his Prologue: "We especially address ourselves to those who are distressed at the signs of the times and desire to consider the basic causes of the confusion of our day." (p. 5)

The book has three main sections. Part I deals with "Problems in Today's World and their Solution." He offers his solution to today's problems and confusion — an answer based on the Holy Bible and on the revelation of Swedenborg's Theological Writings. He lays great stress on the need to acknowledge the Divinity of the Bible, to have faith in the Word of God. Keenly aware of declining faith and deteriorating standards in today's world, he has harsh things to say of "the sophisticated, who lack and often despise common sense" (p. 29). He does give, however, what might be called a glimpse of ecumenism — "an ever increasing harmony of thought." But, he says there must be humility and good will in considering doctrinal differences. And there must be no compromise when it comes to "the very essence of faith" (p. 93).

Part II is entitled "An Explication of Genesis and Certain Other Chapters of the Bible based on the Word 'Arcana Coelestia' by Emanuel Swedenborg." Here Mr. Pitcairn presents what might be called "samples" of the spiritual sense as found in the twelve large volumes of the "Arcana." He takes up some of the Genesis

stories, also the Ten Commandments, Baptism and the Holy Supper, and the story of the Samaritan woman at the well. He urges his readers to go directly to Swedenborg's Theological Works, warning of some of the difficulties they may find, for it is "only gradually, as the mind ponders these things, that the understanding of them develops" (p. 190).

"The Word of the Lord, as we have said, treats of nothing but the things of the spirit. It does not in its spiritual sense treat of the history of nations, of science, or of the things of the world" (p. 256).

Mr. Pitcairn takes up with great care (Part III) the question: "How does the Lord make His promised Second Coming? What alternative is there to the idea that the Lord does this through a man who has been filled with His Spirit?" (p. 227)

The brief biographical sketch of Swedenborg is especially valuable, telling of his early life when he was engaged in scientific and philosophical studies and held significant positions with the Swedish government. As a young man Swedenborg was mainly interested in "the advancement in Sweden of science and industry" ... "as he approached middle age ... his mind turned more and more to Philosophy. He had the strong belief that philosophy had to be built not only on a scientific foundation, but also on the Word of God. His aim came to be to see the relation of God to His creation. He never questioned the being of God, for in all things of science he saw an order that must have a source in God, and above all, he had faith in the Bible" (p. 226).

After he was in his fifties Swedenborg devoted his entire time to writing and publishing. Mr. Pitcairn gives considerable space to the description of his life during those later years, when he maintained that he was in constant touch with the spiritual world, talking with angels. He was "such a highly respected, good, and lovable man that no one who knew him intimately or who has studied his life has questioned his honesty or sincerity" (p. 231).

The reason many people are skeptical when Swedenborg describes heaven and hell, Mr. Pitcairn says, is due mostly to their prejudice against the supernatural. When he designates Swedenborg's Theological Works as the Third Testament, the majority of those who follow Swedenborg's teachings will not accept this interpretation. However, he reminds us and

continued on page 45

JILL KINGSLAKE

SWEDENBORG AND THE MAILMAN

I have an extraordinary tale to tell.

In Cleveland we have been trying, in various ways, to get the ideas of Swedenborg out into the other churches: by speaking engagements, by leading groups and retreats, and so on. I am on the Spiritual Life committee of the Church Women United, and the Ecumenical Communion Service during Holy Week will contain the New Church doctrine of the Bread and Wine. Our biggest project has been under the auspices of the Swedenborg Foundation: we have sent out 1,300 copies of "Golden Thoughts From Swedenborg" addressed to every minister, priest and rabbi in the Cleveland area. The reaction has been somewhat discouraging: a few letters of acknowledgment, and two phone calls expressing interest, and making appointments to visit the church for further books — neither of which appointments was kept.

Now comes the extraordinary tale. Brian and I were invited to take part in a series of weekly group meetings at Mount Zion United Church of Christ in East Cleveland. We were interested in this church because it seems so well integrated: it has two negro pastors and a white secretary, and about two-thirds of the congregation are colored. The second meeting of the group was to consider the theme of wholeness and the abundant life. We were each given three sheets of mimeographed material, quoting from Tillich, Buber, Fromm, Tagore and many others, and a stimulating discussion began. In the midst of this, a man (negro) rose from the circle and went up to the leader with a yellow book open in his hand, pointing to a certain passage and asking the leader to read it. Brian gave me a prodigious nudge and whispered, "It's our Golden Thoughts!" I thought he was suffering from hallucinations from over-work; but the leader said, "Sam here doesn't know that Brian and Jill are Swedenborgians, but here is a passage from Swedenborg" — and proceeded to quote: "It is the will that makes man, and thought does so only as far as it proceeds from the will, deeds and works proceeding from both." H.H. 474. The discussion continued. Soon Sam said, "If you'll take a look at No. 91 (not page 91, number 91)..." and again the little yellow book was quoted: "A man ought to cleanse himself from evils and not wait for the Lord to do so." T.C.R. 436.

Of course as soon as the meeting closed Brian

pounced on Sam. "Are you one of the ministers we sent 'Golden Thoughts' to?" "Oh no," he replied. "I'm the mailman. I had this envelope to deliver to a Reverend who'd moved a year ago and left no forwarding address." Sam saw the envelope was from The Swedenborg Chapel, so, being interested in religion, he opened it, read it, and carried it in his pocket for frequent reference. He certainly knew it well — could quote passages and their numbers from memory. We don't intend to try to wean Sam the mailman away from membership in the United Church of Christ. But haven't we, perhaps, gained a new Swedenborgian? "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

MASSACHUSETTS NEW CHURCH UNION OFFICE MOVES

The Standing Committee of the Mass. New Church Union voted Feb. 25th to move their offices from 3 Joy Street to 175 Newbury St., on the second floor. The office will be moved sometime in April. The Union took its present location after the rooms in the old Boston Church were razed for the building of Boston-view.

A.N.C.L. NOMINATIONS

The ANCL Nominations are as follows:

President, Ernie Ekberg, Nancy Ball; Vice-President, Betty Jean Johnson, Danny Reed; Secretary, Margie Hill, Cindy Turley; Treasurer, Sharon Lemee, Elaine Tuomanen, Executive Member, Brian Keith, Licia Weare, Ron Athbertson.

BOOK REVIEW *continued from p. 44*
emphasizes that we should love the Lord with all our mind. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matt. 22:37).

In the closing chapter of the book he presents an inspiring picture of "The Genuine Church," followed by an Epilogue in which he quotes from an address by Bishop W.L. Pendleton at the assembly of the General Church in 1899.

This book will be of much interest and value not only to those already acquainted with Swedenborg's teachings but also as an introduction to Swedenborg and to his work.

PREVIOUS STATISTICS

The Rev. Robert Tafel of San Diego, Calif., wrote last month that he had just realized that his official acts at the church were not appearing in The Messenger. The following list brings the record up to date since his ordination. Though this is practical only for fairly new ministers, The Messenger would like to make the statistics column a complete record for Convention. Ministers and secretaries please note.

MARRIAGES

David James Shelkey married Nadine Gates on Sept. 5, 1964; James Elden Whitelock married Mechele Sherrolyn Meehan on Sept. 1, 1967; Garry Michael White and Kirsten Stuart Preston were married on Oct. 28, 1967; Harold Viggo Thompson and Estelle Helen David were married on Dec. 6, 1967; John Dorman and Dorothy Walker were married on Dec. 26, 1967.

COMMITTAL SERVICE

Mrs. Hedvig A. Johnson, Nov. 7, 1966; Chester Clark, Aug. 10, 1967.

DEATHS

Edward Henry Schneider on Oct. 20, 1964; Esther Chombeau, May 6, 1965; Rev. John L. Boyer, July 13, 1965; Chester David Mills, Nov. 17, 1965; Chester Clark, Jan. 15, 1967.

BAPTISMS

Nadine Gates Shelkey, April 11, 1965; David Otto Anderson, son of Robert and Barbara Anderson, by Rev. John L. Boyer, Rev. F.R. Tafel assisting on April 18, 1965; Leonard Andrew Lattin, Jr., October 3, 1965; Steven Wesley Anderson, son of Robert and Barbara Anderson on May 21, 1967.

CONFIRMATIONS

David James Shelkey, April 11, 1965; Nadine Gates Shelkey, April 11, 1965; Vicki Bowman, April 11, 1965; Susan Abigail Miller, October 3, 1965; Leonard Andrew Lattin, Jr., Oct. 3, 1965; Roger Rittenhouse, December 19, 1965; Cora Locklair, Jan. 23, 1966; and Suzanne I. Robinette, Dec. 25, 1966.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY



Mr. Herbert Toombs, a familiar figure at conventions, and known for his devotion, vitality

of interest and his sense of humor, was a member of the joint meeting of boards that dined and met together at Swedenborg School of Religion on Friday, Feb. 2. What with the unusual joint meeting of SSR Managers and Directors with General Council, and the omen of a Groundhog day so foggy that the original weather forecaster couldn't see his shadow any better than an airplane could find the airport, it was something of an occasion — and Mr. Toombs rose to it with some news that made the day even more auspicious. It seems that the career that included "thirty years a Baptist, and thirty years a Swedenborgian" began on a Groundhog Day, eighty-five years ago! The "Happy Birthday" applause around the table and from the table in the next room was long and loud.

AFTER CONVENTION

Stop for a night in Urbana College dorms, and attend dedication of new library, July 1

NEW ADDRESS

SWEDENBORG PRESS
Box 143
Madison Square Station
New York, N.Y. 10010

STATISTICS

BIRTHS

Eric Richard was born to Mr. and Mrs. David Sonmor of Peace River, Alberta on Dec. 29th 1967.

CONFIRMATIONS

Herman and Marianne Eckert were confirmed in the San Diego Church on Jan. 28, 1968 by the Rev. F. Robert Tafel.

DEATHS

Edwin Hobson of Portland, Oregon, passed away on Jan. 15th.

Resurrection services were held on Jan. 29 for Leon A. Shirley in the Fryeburg Church.

Alvin George Schneider of Kitchener, Ontario, died on Dec. 16. The Resurrection Service was held on Dec. 20 with the Rev. Paul Zacharias officiating.

Mrs. Alfred Maier died on Jan. 20 in Islington, Ontario. The Resurrection Service was held on Jan. 24 with the Rev. Paul B. Zacharias officiating.

David F. Schneider died on Feb. 4 in Kitchener, Ontario. Rev. Paul Zacharias officiated at the

Resurrection Service on Feb. 7.

MARRIAGES

On Jan. 10, Richard W. Gain married Marion L. Lord in the Fryeburg Church.

Rene Couture married Carol Anne Hall on Jan. 20 at Our Lady of the Mountains Church.

Jayne Ellen Lenoci of the Brockton Society and William Wells were united in marriage on Nov. 5, 1967. The marriage ceremony was performed by the Rev. Wilfred Gould Rice.

BAPTISMS

The Rev. Othmar Tobisch baptized the infant son of Darrell and Margo Schaffer of San Francisco to the name of Michael Frederick on Jan. 28, 1968.

Michael Solberg, infant son of Mr. and Mrs. David Schellenberg; and Gordon Douglas, infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Schellenberg; both of Winnipeg, Manitoba, were baptized during a worship service at the home of the grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. John Schellenberg at Transcona, Manitoba on Jan. 28, 1968. Rev. Henry Reddekopp officiated.



Photograph by Wei Chiu

PASSING OF A LANDMARK: The "42 Quincy" dormitory building of the old New Church Theological School campus in Cambridge (see story February issue).

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