

THE MESSENGER

Official Organ of the Swedenborgian Church

DECEMBER 1968



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

BJORN AND JOSEPHINE JOHANNSON

This month, *The Messenger* carries the news that Josephine Johansson is united with her husband, Bjorn. It is joyful to think of them together again without the pain and disability that had plagued both of them for so long.

The official Memorial for Bjorn Johansson will appear in *The Messenger* next summer, but it seemed fitting meanwhile that the former editor should have a more conspicuous memorial on these pages. Therefore, at Christmas and at Easter, and shortly before Convention, work of his from past issues will appear again, repeating his still timely opinions regarding the life and business of the church he loved so much.

CHRISTMAS, 1968

Leaving the interpretation of the holiday to my distinguished colleague and predecessor, I take the editorial prerogative of using this column to wish each of my readers all of the joys and blessings of Christmas, and to hope that each of you may find ever-increasing enthusiasm and satisfaction in the life you live in 1969.

NEW APPROACH FROM ENGLAND

The article by Mr. Sanctuary is reprinted from the *New Church Herald* because of its inherent excitement

and its striking similarities with the spirit of the discussions at the Urbana Conference, reported in the October *Messenger*. Any reactions to this type of thing about the church would be well worth sharing with other readers of *The Messenger*. Let me hear from you.

"THEREFORE'S" AND "WHEREAS'S"

Ministers, and laymen who are known to be churchmen, often are asked, "What does your church say about —?" These days, the blank is filled in with a social, political or international issue far more frequently than with a theological question. Since Convention rarely adopts resolutions of this type (personally, I do not remember one since 1960), Swedenborgians faced with such a query have a simultaneous advantage and disadvantage.

The disadvantage is that the question is harder to answer than if a pre-packaged reply were available, stored neatly away in the cupboard of our ecclesiastical memories. It requires thought.

The advantage? When you are asked such a question, you are free to think, and free to reply what you, a Swedenborgian, believe and feel about the issue, without being shackled by concern over what six, seven, or eight out of ten anonymous Swedenborgians have voted (whether you share the majority or the minority opinion). It is harder but it is freer; and freedom is one of the primary

Continued on p. 180

Vol. 188 No. 12

December 1968

Whole No. 4916

Published monthly, except for the one double issue in July-August, at the office of the Editor, c/o Swedenborg School of Religion, 48 Sargent St., (P.O. Box E) Newton, Mass. 02158.

Second class postage paid at Boston, Mass.

The Messenger is the official organ of the Swedenborgian Church, founded 1817, incorporated as the General Convention of the New Jerusalem in the United States of America.

Printed at Thomas Todd Company, 14 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. 02108. Incorporated publisher: the Swedenborg Press, Box 143, Madison Square Station, New York, N. Y. 10010.

Subscription free to members of the Swedenborgian Church; non-members, \$3.00 a year; foreign postage, 25 cents extra. Gift subscriptions, if from a member, \$1.50. Single copies, 25 cents. Address subscriptions, checks, changes of address to the Publisher, Box 143, Madison Square Station, New York, N. Y. 10010.

Contributions toward the cost of publishing should be sent to:

The Treasurer, Swedenborgian Church

Chester T. Cook, Box 215, Deer Isle, Maine 04627

Officers of Convention: Rev. Ernest O. Martin, President, 48 Sargent St., Box 66, Newton, Mass. 02158; Stewart E. Poole, Vice-President, 2024 DuPont Building, Wilmington, Del. 19898; Chester T. Cook, Treasurer, Pressey Village Road, P. O. Box 215, Deer Isle, Maine; Mrs. Ethel Rice, Recording Secretary, 31 Poole St., Brockton, Mass. 02401.

Department of Publication: Rev. Richard H. Tafel, Sr., Chairman, Dr. Robert H. Kirven, Miss Cecile Werben, Rev. Paul Zacharias, Mrs. Jan Seibert, Mrs. Leonore Spiers, Mrs. Corinne Tafel, Rafael Guiu, Ernest Martin, Tomas Spiers.

Robert H. Kirven, Editor

Address all editorial correspondence and manuscripts to the Editor, *The Messenger*, P. O. Box E, Newton, Mass. 02158. The opinions of contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or the Department of Publication, or represent the position of the church.

THE CHRIST SPIRIT

Bjorn Johansson

Commercialism, unseemly gayety, wild celebrations are not in accord with true spirit of Christmas, but kindness, good will and a concern for others are. This is the spirit which were it to prevail throughout the world would really convey the meaning of Christmas, of God's coming into the world in the person of the Lord Jesus. We recall the words of the angel to Mary, "He shall be called the Son of the Highest;" "Of his kingdom there shall be no end;" and to the shepherds come "good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people. For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." Plainly here is a blessing promised not just to a few in a far-distant age but to the unnumbered centuries.

Certainly, some portion of this blessing was manifested as the Lord, clothed in the human nature He assumed, walked about the earth doing good, resisting the temptations that assailed Him, feeding the hungry multitude, healing the sick, and otherwise demonstrating what a life of sacrificial love was like. But the fullness of the blessing was yet to come. The task of breaking the power of evil was accomplished, a highway to God was constructed, but it still remained for man to reach for the blessing and make it his. What might not life on earth have been if man always had been true to the spirit of the Son of the Highest!

The birth of the Lord was the dawn of a new day but its possible brightness was never unfolded. Some hopefully declare that there are now signs of a willingness to turn humbly to the Lord and make an effort to serve Him loyally. Maybe this is true. But the unfortunate fact is that at this moment the Christmas ideal of peace on earth and good will toward all men is not a reality.

Throughout the centuries many have wishfully dreamed of the realization of this ideal. In the last two decades the hope for a supernatural intervention — this time in some spectacular manner — to consummate the meaning of Christmas has flared up anew. Of late we have even heard wistful voices declaring that beings from civilizations far more advanced than ours have been coming to us from outer space, and that the purpose of their visits is to save man from destroying himself. But why does man look afield? Should he not rather find his hope in his ability to respond to the blessing God by His coming to earth has put within his reach?

A Living Influence

Christmas each year should be a reminder to us of the blessing promised by the Lord's coming. Regardless of what the state of the world may be, Christmas should arouse our desire for more of the spirit of the Lord. Each of us should apprehend it as the influence of the living Christ, not as some theological doctrine. Did He not say, "Lo, I am with you alway?" And did He not give the assurance, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them!" Of himself man can do nothing, but in cooperation with the Lord he has the power to move mountains. Spiritual progress is slow today because the individual has failed fully to appraise the strength to affect the destiny of the world that can be his. Christmas is a time for a soul-searching reexamination of this power.

There is nothing novel about exhortations calling for unselfishness, enlightenment, and a sense of responsibility. In fact, such pleas have been made for centuries in every community in Christendom. And yet quarrels take place inside as well as outside the Church. Individuals suffer injustice from those who can exercise power over them. Ill will, even between neighbors, is all too common. Wars and the menace of war stain the pages of history, leaving no era untouched by its terrors. The most civilized nations seem always to have found it necessary to be ready to meet the armed onslaught of an enemy, real or imaginary.

What is wrong with man? Why is it that the race can give birth to many a genius whose intellect is almost godlike when put to inventing machines, including those used for destruction, yet fails to bring forth leaders who can build a peaceful world? Is it because man has lost faith in the spiritual power that is his if he will work with the Lord? Has man fallen victim to the delusion that physical power is the only way to meet the tyrant's brandished steel? Is there no message that the peace-loving people of the earth have that can reach the hearts of millions of their fellowmen including those now thought of as foes? Perhaps even the peace-lover does not trust the Christmas ideal. Perhaps he does not really accept the idea that his faith, if strong enough, can move mountains of resentment, distrust and hatred. Maybe he does not even have that faith.

We come back to the Christmas message. The Lord promised a fuller experience of His power. "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" (Jn. 14:12).

To Know and Obey

But how is it possible to have more of the Christ spirit in this world? How can more of the blessings He promised and longs to give be ours? Oftentimes the first answer to this question which we think of is that we must know more about Him. Some books have easily attained to the best-seller lists by promising to teach what the Christ-power is and how it can be utilized. It is to be feared that too frequently the quest for this power arises more from worldly and materialistic motives than from a desire to obey God.

Yet it will not be gainsaid that it is of value to know more about the Lord as the Gospels reveal Him to us. The purpose for seeking such knowledge should be both to learn the facts about his life and also to sense the inner spirit of the Gospel message. Reading about Him may give rise to a religious experience if His words or an event in His life bears directly on our own experience or problems.

But knowledge is not enough. Conceivably a man might win \$64,000 on a quiz program about the Gospels, yet have very little of their spirit in his heart.

Bringing the Christ spirit into the life of the world must be an act of will on the part of man. The latter must open his heart to receive it. The shepherds on the plain heard the song of the angels because their hearts were attuned to heaven. The record mentions no others are listening to it — certainly proud Herod did not, nor did his courtiers. Also let us note that these simple men on the plain were not content just to listen to the celestial music; they set out for Bethlehem in order to enter fully into the presence of the Lord. The Wise Men did not merely study the star they saw afar off — they used it to guide them to the Lord.

Of course, we cannot go to the Lord after the manner of the shepherds or the Wise Men. But we can go to Him by striving to understand our lives in terms of service and sacrifice. For example, how much could not each of us do in bringing the Christ spirit into the home! Could we not think of Him as abiding there? One person told me that the first thing he did on waking up in the morning was to address a prayer to the Lord. Starting out the day with the thought that he had spent a few minutes in His presence, this man felt the Lord was with him throughout the day — with him in all his handling of problems that were coming up. Surely, the Lord will be with all who inwardly battle against hate, anger, impatience and who try

to fashion their attitude to others after His teachings.

Too Sure of Ourselves

Of course, we may be so sure of ourselves that we feel little dependence on the Lord. If so, His promised blessings can never be ours. What we may really need is to see ourselves in Christ. A popular preacher once said, "Christ is a mirror which we should look into often if we want to get wise to ourselves and see just what kind of folks we are." If we look at ourselves in that mirror we may be appalled by what we see. Maybe when Paul on the road to Damascus met the Lord he saw himself in Christ, and what he saw was too much for him so he was blinded for several days. At any rate Paul came out of that experience a different man. He had not only seen himself in that mirror, he had seen his Savior.

In observing Christmas, we must not look upon it as a past event which tradition and custom require us to commemorate. We cannot speak in the past tense of the Lord as our Savior. He is our Savior. The only salvation that can have value for today is one that takes place today. Every soul whether just beginning to be born anew or far along in that process depends — each moment — on the Lord's inflowing life.

In the wider relationships of life it is only the Christ spirit that can bring about peace where now there is strife. It can change the attitude of the individual about his occupation, enabling him to see in this an opportunity for service, not merely a means of livelihood or of making money. We hear much about the conflict between labor and capital. How little of this would there be if both parties saw the meaning of their lives in terms of service. In fact, experience has more than once demonstrated that where the vision of industrial relations as an expression of the Golden Rule prevails there is a minimum of strife. The wider relationships of life include the international field. It is here where the greatest concern is felt today about what may happen as the result of fear, suspicion, envy, hatred, and the lust for dominion. Diplomatic and other measures for lessening tensions have hitherto accomplished little. Maybe it is the Christ spirit that is lacking. Would it not be well if millions of believers over the world would kneel before their God and pray for peace — pray for peace in their own hearts, in their homes, in their churches, in their communities, and between nations? Pray for the Christ spirit to manifest itself in the hearts of men!

Reprinted from The Messenger, December, 1961.

THE GROWING NEW CHURCH OF THE FUTURE

John R. Sanctuary, M.A., B.Sc.

The future of our organisation is irrevocably influenced by the present climate of opinion about religion, and also by what we personally believe New-Churchmanship is. We know that not only are traditional doctrines being everywhere challenged, but the whole system of Church organisation, service and Sunday Schools are being increasingly abandoned. But this should not be a surprise to any alert New-Churchman who knows that Swedenborg forecast this decline of traditional Christianity in his writing on the necessity of the vastation of the Church. Is our organisation, as at present operating, going the same way because we are putting new wine into old bottles?

Our present position is that we have only seventeen Societies that can muster on the average over thirty in the congregation, which is a very small proportion of our membership. In addition we have at least nine hundred members scattered about the country, who are isolated from any of our societies. Many of our societies are struggling to maintain archaic buildings far bigger than their resources can afford, and so their efforts and interests are deflected away from the important spiritual matters for which they should stand. As New-Churchmen we know that "Influx is into efflux", or to put it in modern English, spiritual power flows into us in the measure that we make an effort to serve the Lord and the neighbour, but let the effort be directed to present needs.

Each of us, however isolated, and whatever our abilities, is a part of the Church, and so we should be active in the world; a growing point. We all have our part to play, whether as individuals, families, small groups or societies, and however different the functions may be that we can perform. The doctrine of the Grand Man shows this quite clearly, and it shows us something else too which will be developed later. Our concern should be growth, not contraction, and I would urge the Church at large, through Conference to make a detailed study of the methods of those religious bodies which even today are showing great numerical growth, and also of the methods of those New-Church Societies which are at the present being most successful.

I would like to place before you, for your consideration and debate the following proposals for preparing our organisation to face changes which

are being thrust upon us by the force of events, under Providence. Any such changes, however, must not be carried through suddenly; they could only be effective if they grew out of the changing needs of our members. Where there is a vigorous, active society at present it should be encouraged to continue and extend its function to the district in which it is established. Societies which are finding the upkeep of old buildings difficult but are still showing enthusiasm should be encouraged to consider constructing a smaller, more attractive building on the same, or on a more central site.

Members of all societies, strong or weak, should search their hearts and consider whether they really regard the Church as their responsibility. If some of these members, say half a dozen in each society, individually pledge themselves to invite a small group monthly, or more often, to their homes, a new situation would be created. Two types of groups might emerge: the first type would consist solely of a small group of New-Church friends and be conducted for their own spiritual enlightenment and worship. These would continue to function even if a society had to sell its property. The second type of group would, I hope, be the more common. In these "House Meetings" one or two New-Church members and their families would invite other non-New-Church friends prepared to discuss religious matters to join them, and to talk over various problems of the day — social, ethical, racial, religious — in the light of New-Church doctrine introduced as and when possible. This type of meeting is in fact being attempted in Birmingham now, with some success.

House Meetings of this kind could also be attempted by convinced New-Church people who find that by removal they are far away from a Society: such is the new group at Arnside. If many isolated receivers did this quite a net-work of House Meetings would spread in parts of the country where the New Church is not known. I can hear some say, "What is the use? We could never join up with a church, or even be visited by a minister". But is the function of the New Church to preserve a man-made organisation, or to spread a knowledge of the truths of the Lord's Second Advent? Some of these groups may not continue for very long, others will grow in strength as interest is shown in what is being taught. When this happens, the group when it grows to ten or a dozen should split and form two House Meetings. Such multiplication of groups, all different and growing along different lines, brings me to my allusion above to the Grand Man. If the Grand Man of Heaven consists of innumerable groups and

societies down to the least particular, why not the New Church on Earth? Its groups, (House Meetings), could be likened to the cells of a living organism — all living things must reproduce or die!

I can see a pattern developing here; a number of well-established New-Church Societies carrying on as hitherto, and some of these to be developed as regional or nodal centres to which two or three ministers could be attached. This would not only give constant liaison and brotherly contact between ministers, but would enable each to specialise for a period on one kind of work — pastoral, religious services, social work, visiting a network of House Meetings and the present Study Circles. It might become possible, as we approach the 21st century and this proliferation of small groups takes place, to establish one or two more regional centres with their own multipurpose buildings to serve further areas.

At suitable intervals these central churches could lay on special services to which the various scattered groups could be invited, and social gatherings would follow a similar pattern. These regional or nodal churches with ministerial groups could form the basis of Provincial Councils, and could also elect representatives to Conference. Conference Council (which, I suggest, should actively encourage these developments) would function as now through its various committees, which would become modified as the needs changed.

All this might mean a considerable change in the distribution and pattern of our organisation; groups might flourish where none exist today — this has happened before. We might see regional centres in Devon or Cornwall, in Wales or in the Eastern Counties. Some older Societies might disappear — that is not uncommon, but under these proposals they may leave behind them some active House Meetings ready for future growth. Ministerial service would be more flexible, and more widely felt; nobody would be left out.

Whether such suggestions meet with wide acceptance or not, it cannot be gainsaid that we are becoming a very scattered and diffuse body of New-Church members, and whether we like it or not many of our societies will have closed their doors long before 2000 A.D. unless some such new effort and individual responsibility amongst members is shown.

Reprinted from the New Church Herald, London, June, 1968.

BoM & Bd. Pub.

BOARDS MEET AT SSR

The Board of Mission's Executive Committee, and Convention's Department of Publication, both met during the latter part of October in the meeting rooms of the Swedenborg School of Religion.



Miss Margaret Sampson, Convention President Ernest Martin, Board of Missions President Tomas Spiers, and (standing) Bo M Secretary, the Rev. Leonard I. Tafel, attending a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Missions. Also at the meeting were Chester Cook, Treasurer, Dr. George Dole, and The Rev. Antony Regamey, who is serving this year as a consultant to the Board on its Foreign Field.

Department of Publication

The Department of Publications has been established by Convention's elected Board of Publications as consisting of the elected board, plus ex officio representatives from the five publishing bodies related to Convention, plus the President of Convention. The Board nominates the Editor of *The Messenger*, and acts as his advisory board; it has responsibilities in the publication of *The Messenger*, *The Convention Journal*, a *Union Catalogue* of Swedenborgian publications by all publishing bodies, and has offered to handle the mechanics of printing and mailing of *The League Journal*. In addition, the Department has a revolving Editorial Committee which will read and make recommendations on all manuscripts that come to it.

Names of the members of the Department of Publication are listed in the Masthead on the inside front cover of *The Messenger*.

A CHRISTMAS STORY

A long, long time ago, long before any of us here were born – in fact more than a thousand years before Columbus discovered America – God wanted to give his children on earth a present. And he wanted it to be a very special kind of present: the kind which would make people happy forever and which people would always remember.

He had already given them many presents, wonderful presents; in fact so many that everybody should have been happy all the time. To begin with, he made this beautiful world, just for his children. He gave them all kinds of good things for food. He gave them the flowers, and plants, and trees. He gave them the rivers and lakes and oceans, and fields and mountains. He gave them the sunshine, so that they could see and enjoy all these wonderful gifts. He made and gave the sky and clouds, the beautiful sunsets, rainbows, and the stars and the moon.

Hundreds and hundreds of such gifts he gave his children on earth, because God is our heavenly Father and loves us very dearly. He loves us so very much that we can not begin to imagine how much he really loves us. If we take all the love our mothers and fathers have for us, and add to that all the love that the millions and millions of people in the whole wide world have, and put it all together, it would not begin to be as much as God's love is for us!

That is why when he wanted to give a special present on that first Christmas so many, many years ago, he wanted to make it the very, very best present that he possibly could. What could that present be? God thought, and thought, and thought. What should it be? Since he had given so many wonderful gifts, it was going to be very hard indeed to find an extra special present!

"Maybe I should give them a new song," he said, "One that would be so beautiful, so lovely, so thrilling, that it would fill people's hearts with joy and gladness every time they heard it." The words could be about how much I love them, and want them to be always happy. I could set the words to heavenly music, and have my angel-people sing it to them!

"But, no! that wouldn't be special enough. They

already have the beautiful songs of the birds that I have given them, and they have learned from them how to make songs of their own, and music. No, that won't do! And, besides, I have already given them my glorious Psalms to sing."

God thought harder and harder still. "Maybe this special gift could be a new star: a star that I would make so big and bright and glowing, that whenever my people see it in the sky they will think of me, and then they will be so glad to remember that I am watching over them and taking care of them. I am sure they would like that! Still, I have given them so many stars. No, I'm afraid that that wouldn't be special enough."

God thought still harder. "I wonder if this very special present shouldn't be a wonderful book? I could fill it with angel-like stories, telling them how much I love them and am taking care of them. I will tell them about the heavenly home which I have made for them, where they will always be glad and happy. Wouldn't that be an extra special present? But, no! that won't do! They have just such a book, which I gave them a long time ago, and some people are still reading it. No, that won't do at all!"

"It is certainly going to be hard to find just the right present. Something that would be a special gift. I think maybe I have given them everything. I don't think there's anything left. Wait! I have it! I will give them myself! Isn't that the very best present, after all, that anyone can give? To give one's self is surely better than any thing anybody can give!"

And you know, that is exactly what God did when long, long ago he wanted to give us an extra special present, the most wonderful gift that he has ever given us, a present that he called the "Christmas Present." This is why we give presents to one another at Christmas. It is our way of saying, "Because God loved us so much, we should love one another." (Some people think we got our custom of giving gifts from the Wise Men, who brought gifts for the new-born King. But I think they themselves brought gifts as a way of saying, "Thank you!" to God when he gave us his Christmas Present.)

Have you ever thought about why we do up our gifts in beautiful wrappings, and tie them up and label them, "to so and so....from so and so"? To

show just how much we love the person we give it to? To make the surprise and delight all the more complete when the present is opened? That's part of it! But we really wrap our gifts as beautifully as we can because that is what God did when he gave us his Christmas Present!

He wrapped himself up in the form of a lovely little baby. All the mighty power that had created the sun and moon and stars; all the majesty that tints the flowers in our garden and paints the rainbows; all the glory that shines in our sunrises and our sunsets, was wrapped up in that infant baby, lying so quietly and so lovingly in the manger of Bethlehem's stable. And he had his angel-messengers tell the shepherds whom this present was for:

"Unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord."

And so he had himself born a little baby to a loving mother called "Mary", and had a manger in a stable for his little bed. Our Christmas Present: God coming down from heaven, so that we might know what he is really like and truly love him; and so that we can be glad knowing that he is always so near us.

Was that not a lovely present? And do you know why God called this his "Christmas" present? Because, when he came to live here on earth, his name was "Jesus the Christ".

This is the Story of Christmas. But this is not all. When God gave us his extra special Christmas Present he gave us, besides, all those other gifts he had thought about when he wondered what he should give us.

He gave us that great Star—and you remember that it led the Wise Men to him in Bethlehem. And that Star is still shining! If you look for it, you can see it in the lights on our Christmas trees, in the candles we burn, and especially in the brightness that shines inside us during these glorious days!

And he gave us that wonderful new Song, the most glorious song that the world has ever heard, and he had his angels sing it to the music of heaven:

"Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace, good-will
to men."

Even today you can still hear that song which the Shepherds of Bethlehem first heard. Listen to it in our carols, in the hymns we sing in Church, and in the bells on Santa Claus' sled.

And that Book, which he thought would perhaps make a specially fine present, was actually being written and given to us, beginning on that first Christmas night when God gave us his Christmas Present. It is called "The New Testament of God's Holy Word." It tells us all about Christmas, his Birthday, and his Present to us. As part of your celebration this year, read or have your mothers or fathers read to you, the whole wonderful story of how God gave us CHRISTMAS'.

Rev. Richard H. Tafel

Continued from p. 174

bases of the Swedenborgian conception of the Christian life.

One aid to clearer thinking in the work of answering such a question, was suggested recently by a speaker at a National Council of Churches meeting. Dr. Robert Burns spoke of a distinction between the "Whereas's" and the "Therefore's" in the process of meeting any particular problem. The "Therefore's" are specific actions or decisions—the kind of thing that gets reported in newspapers, the kind of issue where expertise is vitally important. The "Whereas's," on the other hand, involve reasons, motives, contexts—the kind of things that newspapers continue to page 12 (or neglect altogether), the kind of issue where wisdom and conscience make all the difference. The "Whereas's" are the particular concern of the church, and of churchmen *per se*.

This emphasis on the "Whereas's" is the guiding principle in the planning of the January *Messenger*, a special issue on the teachings of the Swedenborgian Church. A special issue later in the spring will deal with some of the "Therefore's"—the practices, particularly in new directions, of the Swedenborgian Church.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Over the years we note that from time to time scientific and medical journals, not to say lectures and papers by noted thinkers, suddenly as it almost seems, discovering some facet of Swedenborg's genius on which they write and speak, to some account.

Perhaps the most recent and important as brought to our attention by Roger Paulson of the Urbana College staff, is a remarkable article in the Journal of the American Medical Association for October 21, headed "Swedenborg Points Way in Cerebral Physiology."

Illustrating the article with a picture of the postage stamp which Sweden issued in 1938 to honor our author, it leads off by saying "Most biographers fail to note that he was a 'pathfinder' in medicine."

The writer goes on to say "Swedenborg localized hemiplegia to the brain, and paraplegia to the spinal cord." Much else of a medical nature is added.

However, as Othmar Tobisch observes in his recently published "Swedenborg's Genius," whatever may have been his attachments in the sciences and related subjects his greatest contribution, or epoch making work is his "penetration of the spiritual depths of the Holy Word."

L. Marshall

A Rose by any
Other Name

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION BECOMES PACIFIC COAST ASSOCIATION

Word comes from the Publicity Co-Chairman for the next Convention, Mrs. Betty Lundberg, that the correct name for the host body in 1969 is the Pacific Coast Association—a name-change that has been in the works for some time.

NEW STUDENT AT SSR

A new student has been enrolled with the Swedenborg School of Religion, taking his initial work at the Field Education Center, Bellevue, Washington. His name is Dr. Ivan Francuch (although the correct pronunciation comes so strangely to American tongues that he plans to change it to Ivan Franklin), and he is a psychiatrist from Czechoslovakia. He plans to obtain certification to practice psychiatry in the state of California, and also to be ordained into the ministry of the Swedenborgian Church.



Dr. Francuch and his wife Eva arrived in this country early in September. He has a son still in Czechoslovakia who hopes to follow him as soon as possible, and a brother—a clinical psychologist—now in Germany, who hopes to come to this country, too. Dr. Francuch has for some time been a member of a New Church group in Prague.

CONVENTION 1969

The Pacific Coast Association invites you to come to California in 1969 to participate in a convention which will have continuing significance in the life of our church.

The planning committee of the Association, representing societies from San Diego to Bellevue, has met with executives of the General Convention to begin arrangements for a convention related to the ongoing needs of the Swedenborgian Church and its people.

Accommodations at Harvey Mudd College in Claremont will provide facilities for study, worship, meetings, recreation and living together for the groups and individuals of Convention.

Modern dormitories, built around open courts, have double and single rooms, with adjoining bathrooms, at reasonable rates. Families will be housed together so that all age groups will be sharing the experience of Convention, as well as having their own activities. Convention has reserved facilities at Harvey Mudd College from July 21, when the ministers will meet for their Institute, through Tuesday, August 5, and members may stay at the college before and after Convention meetings while visiting points of interest in the area. A tour to Disneyland is planned for Monday, August 4.

The facilities of Harvey Mudd College lend themselves graciously to our Convention needs. There is a large reception lounge, a spacious dining hall and private dining rooms, in addition to modern classrooms and lecture halls. For our recreation, there is a swimming pool and game room. Tennis courts, golf courses, horseback riding and hiking areas are within a few minutes walk or drive.

Founded in 1955, Harvey Mudd is a member of The Claremont Colleges. The others are: Claremont Graduate School and University Center, Claremont Men's College, Pitzer College, Pomona College, and Scripps College. Harvey Mudd specializes in science and engineering.

Harvey Mudd campus is near Route 66 in the city of Claremont, about thirty-five miles east of downtown Los Angeles. To the north within a few miles are the mountain resorts of the San

Gabriel range. Seventy-five miles to the southeast is Palm Springs. Airplane reservations may be made direct to Ontario International Airport. Air commuter service from Los Angeles International Airport serves both the city of Pomona and the city of Ontario, neither of which is more than ten minutes away. The Santa Fe's Super-Chief stops in Pomona.

The first conventions on the West Coast were in 1949 and 1959. West Coast churches are joining their resources to ensure that this third Convention will further enhance the West's reputation for warm and happy hospitality.

BOOKS FOR CHRISTMAS

An Introduction to Swedenborg's Religious

Thought John Howard Spaulding

Excellent as an introduction. Paper \$1.00
Cloth 2.00

Talking with God Gwynne Dresser Mack

The Healing Power of Prayer — very popular
Paper \$1.25

My Religion

Helen Keller

A new paperback edition \$1.00

NEW!

The Secret Path

Olin Dygert

A layman's thoughts on Swedenborg and his doctrines Paper \$2.00

The Genius of Swedenborg

An Address by the Rev. Othmar Tobisch .25

FOR CHILDREN

The Big Adventure Gwynne Dresser Mack

Paper .50

Children of Gospel Days William Worcester

Cloth .75

FOR DEVOTIONAL PURPOSES

My Shepherd Reg Lang .25

Come unto Me " " .50

Divine Blessings " " .50

Divine Searcher " " .50

Daily Readings

A Word for each day \$1.25

Order from:

MASSACHUSETTS NEW CHURCH UNION

175 Newbury St., Boston, Mass. 02116

STATISTICS

DEATHS

Mrs. Bjorn (Josephine) Johannson, 69, of Urbana Illinois, died Sunday, in Mercy Memorial Hospital. She had suffered ill health for several years.

Mrs. Johannson was an Urbana resident for five years. She was preceded in death by her husband, the Rev. Bjorn Johannson, former *Messenger* Editor and a professor at Urbana College, on July 20.

Services were held October 30 in the Neff-Walter Funeral Home, with the Rev. Horand Gutfeldt officiating. Friends may contribute to the Urbana College Memorial Fund.

Suddenly, on September 23rd, Mr. William H. Schliffer, Jr., passed into the spiritual world. Mr. Schliffer was the son of the late Rev. and Mrs. William H. Schliffer. He is survived by his wife, Gertrude, and two sisters, Mrs. C. A. Ouis. and Miss Constance Schliffer. Funeral services were conducted on September 26th, the Rev. Clayton Priestnal officiating.

Mr. A. Duncan Clark of Stoneham, Mass. died on October 4th at the age of 78. He is survived by his widow, Elsie, and three children.

A Memorial Service was held on Sunday, October 27th in the Philadelphia Church, following the Worship Service, for Miss Beatrice MacGeorge, who passed into the Higher Life on October 13th.

BAPTISMS

The Rev. Othmar Tobisch baptized the following infants: September 1st, Steven Blair, son of Robert and Mary Hobson of Lafayette, Calif. September 8th, Peter Anton, son of Othmar Tardin and Elizabeth Tobisch, of Laurel, Md., grandson of Rev. and Mrs. Othmar Tobisch. September 8th, Corey Louis, son of Patrick and Beverly Smith of San Francisco. September 15th, Anthony Salvatori, son of Vincent and Elizabeth Meglio of Berkeley, Calif.

Erika Kristine Schmidt, great-granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Herman Stange, was baptized on November 3rd, Rev. F. Robert Tafel officiating.

On Sunday, September 15th, Laura Deanne, infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harris R. Jerrett III was baptized by the Rev. Erwin D. Reddekopp of the Detroit church.

Lyle Thomas, infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Tommy Wheeler of Flin Flon, Manitoba, was baptized during a worship service at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Eidse at Guy Hill, Manitoba, on September 20th.

The following persons were welcomed into the Philadelphia Church family at the Baptism Service on Sunday, October 17th: Ronald George McCann: Andrew and Shirley Klein and their children—Andrew John, Michael James, Martin Davis, Ronald Charles, Duane Christopher.

On September 29, the Rev. Paul B. Zacharias baptized the following children: Lee Anne Ewing, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Ewing of Kitchener, Ontario; Stuart Andrew Schneider, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Schneider of Kitchener; Susan Christine Viemens, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Viemens, also of Kitchener, Ontario.

BIRTHS

On October 30th, a son, Bryn Link, was born to Mr. and Mrs. Vern Morrow of the Detroit Church.

A daughter, Stephanie Lynne, was born to Rusty and Sharon Beck on September 25. Mr. and Mrs. Beck are members of the Fryeburg, Maine church.

MARRIAGES

The following marriages took place in Fryeburg, Maine: October 12th, Ronald Dean Ela and Brenda Lee Sawyer; on October 19th, Merwin Elwood Wentworth and Pauline Esther Jacques; also Michael Presto Clemons and Sarah Jane Thurston in the Church; and Thomas David Warren and Gail Ann Gagnon; on October 26, Floyd Bruce Hamilton and Evelyn May Thurston.

In Saskatoon, Sask., Canada, Larry David Sutherland and Rita May Healey were united in marriage on Saturday, October 5th. The Rev. Henry Reddekopp officiated.

THE MESSENGER

December 1968

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR	174
THE CHRIST SPIRIT <i>by Bjorn Johansson</i>	175
THE GROWING NEW CHURCH OF THE FUTURE <i>by John R. Sanctuary</i>	177
BOARDS MEET AT SSR	178
A CHRISTMAS STORY <i>by Richard H. Tafel, Sr.</i>	179
LETTER TO THE EDITOR	181
CAL. ASSOC. BECOMES P.C.ASSOC.	181
NEW STUDENT AT SSR	181
CONVENTION 1969	182
STATISTICS	183

THE MESSENGER
48 Sargent St., Box E
Newton, Mass. 02158

Second Class
Postage
PAID
at Boston, Mass.