

The Messenger

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH

OCTOBER 1975



Special Features

Love is a Gift

Emilie Bateman
p. 176

A HISTORY OF CONVENTION'S ATTITUDE TOWARD SWEDENBORG'S WRITINGS

Dr. Robert H. Kirven
p. 178

INDEX

Editorials:	On Setting Priorities	174
	A Forgotten Holy Day	
President's Column	Eric Zacharias	175
Parables For Today	Jaikoo Lee	180
"No Excuse Sunday"		180
That's A Good Question!	Richard H. Tafel	181
Revelation Revisited	"The Good and the True" George Dole	182
Letter to the Editor		183
From Church Records		183
Book Reviews	"The Kingdom and the Power"	184
	"We Are Immortal"	
The New Church Around the World		185
A Chuckle or Two		186
The Last Word	"Building A House With Words" Jan Seibert	186
Convention Calendar		188

Editorials

ON SETTING PRIORITIES

The other day our genial columnist, Wilson Van Dusen, sent me a copy of an article he had written for another New Church publication, asking me to comment on it. The article described his interpretation of Swedenborg's claim that the planets are — or have been — inhabited. Briefly, Wilson feels that this claim should be viewed *symbolically*; that the descriptions of the various planetary beings are *representative* of different spiritual states or levels as manifested in human beings, wherever they may be. I am inclined to agree with Wilson in this matter. (I recall another interesting theory on the subject. Many years ago the Rev. Henry K. Peters theorized that maybe time and matter — probably in forms different than we know them — *have always existed*. That is, time and substance, in some form, have co-existed eternally with God. This is based on the premise that God must, by His nature, love and react to someone outside of Himself.) This, too, provides a fascinating line of thought.

Be that as it may, I must confess that this matter is not near the top of my list of priorities. Whether there are inhabitants on — or inside — the planets is not, for me, a burning issue. This sort of thing does not add or detract from my faith in the doctrinal teachings of the New Church. It seems to me there are so many other pressing issues in our world that we, as Christians of the New Age, do need to be deeply concerned about. For example —

1. Congressmen from California and other agri-business states are sponsoring a bill to cut off food supplies to countries that fail to make "reasonable and productive efforts" to stabilize their populations. A growing number of politicians and scientists are saying that eventually there simply will not be enough food to go around, and, that some have - not nations will be allowed to slip off the "lifeboat". As members, one of another, how do we feel about this?

2. During the past two years, in North America, there has been a sharp increase in the number of battered children, suicides, and cases of mental depression. The reasons given are: economic hardship, lack of roots, general breakdown of moral and religious values, uncertainty of the future, the pressured pace of modern living. If all of these observations are valid — and the signs point in that direction — what can we do, as a Church, to counter - act some of these trends?

3. A good friend of mine smokes too much. He hacks and coughs and openly admits that the nicotine habit is probably shaving about two or three years off his life expectancy. The question arises: How is motivation affected? How is behavior changed? Elevate this example to spiritual matters. How do we actually change our habits? Our loves? Our desires? How do we improve undesirable personality traits? This concern is high on my list of priorities.

4. Why isn't the Swedenborgian Church growing? Over the years I have heard a number of rationalizations, some valid explanations, but very few real answers in response to this dilemma. Bigness in itself is not the issue, but if we love these heavenly doctrines we want others to know about them too. To care is to share, in every arena of life. This priority doesn't head the list, but it is in the top ten. About fifteen years ago a number of lively, provocative articles and letters appeared in the MESSENGER regarding declining church membership. But there hasn't been much lately. Can you tell my why?

What sorts of things are important to you?

A FORGOTTEN HOLY DAY

In the New Church we have almost completely ignored All Saints Day (November 1). In so doing we have lost a great spiritual asset. It reminds us that those dear to us, whose faces are seen no more, are still one with us in a fellowship that death cannot sever. Their example of faith and devotion inspire us on to nobler things in life. At a deeper level, we become more sensitive to the reality of the eternal world in which they and we both live and have our being. It is a sobering thought: that someday we will be the object of someone's memories.

P. Z.

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Paul B. Zacharias, Editor

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The President's Column

REV. ERIC ZACHARIAS

Cherishing a heart filled with fond memories, I recall my teen - age years spent roaming about the plains of Western Canada. By age fifteen, I was strongly determined to become less dependent upon parental financial resources and, thus, hired out as a "harvest hand." On leaving home, in one hand I carried a knap - sack containing a few personal effects and in the hip pocket of my jeans was stuffed a collection of New Church missionary tracts - pamphlets which devoted themselves, in glowing imagery, to the grand truths for a new age of spiritual enlightenment.

Overhead the early September sun burned exceedingly hot. There was, most days, not so much in the sky as a cloud the size of a man's hand to offer a cooling shadow from the intense heat. The time was the mid - 1930's and wheat was prepared for harvesting by first being cut, bound and shocked. While wearily resting against a shock (Can. - stook) of wheat, I drew out of my pocket a tract - and was, for the first time, introduced to Swedenborg's doctrine of ultimates.

"For the ultimate of man's life is in his natural; this ultimate is like a base to man's interior and higher parts - consequently unless life is in the ultimate it is not full, and thus not perfect." E. 666

Through the years, the initial impact of this truth has been filled out and reinforced by a slowly emerging maturity. The Divine love and wisdom that the Lord is, as to his essential nature, is ultimated by descent through innumerable degrees until coming to rest upon the natural. Thus, all of life is one. Nothing exists of itself. There is an inherent inter - dependency that all things have, one of another.

Permit me to make this observation.

Life as it was experienced during the years of the great depression was, from one perspective, a life "in ultimates." There were few luxuries - few frills. The world was not crowded by things. People had need for each other. It was a "survival society" and because it was, there appears to have been present, on the part of this society, an appreciation of the promises of a better life made by the Lord in his Word. I clearly recall my father's message to his congregation, - "men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him." And so, perhaps, because life was lived well "in ultimates",

there was provided a base for man's interior and higher parts.

Can we tie this thought to the direction of activities within Convention? A number of our Associations are now holding their annual sessions on college campuses and retreat centers. The Pacific Coast Association met the last weekend in August on the campus of the University of Redlands. The Ohio Association met September 19 - 21 at Almont, Michigan. The Post - Convention Conference met on the campus of Urbana College. Convention's Board of Education sponsored a "Wilderness Experience for the Young Swedenborgian" on the dates August 21 - September 1st. From every side, from ministers, from people in a variety of professions, from lay people in general, there is heard the need to "ultimate" the truths, the doctrines, the teachings of the Church. There appears to be a longing coming out of a growing awareness of the beauty, the relevancy, the power of the teachings of the New Church to cut through the superficiality of life as many experience it today; to quiet its noise, to stem its haste and sensitively respond to the "ultimate", those basic essentials of the human spirit in search of the Creator. There is the desire among us to know ourselves as human beings, to experience "community" with others in an atmosphere that is open and honest and, thus, to grow in knowledge of the Lord and to live with him in "ultimates" and so to touch within ourselves that which is interior and higher.

* * *

Request from Pres. Zacharias

GOOD SLIDES FROM CONVENTION?

The Rev. Eric Zacharias is hoping to collect color slides of this year's convention. Many people were taking them, and he would like to see copies of some of your best ones. He says he'll be happy to pay copying costs.

MESSENGER DEADLINES

The FIRST day of each month is the deadline for all MESSENGER material. Short items, received before the fifth of the month, may be included; this depends upon space requirements.

The MESSENGER will leave Kitchener on or before the twenty fifth of every month. If it does not, you may safely assume that one of the following is in effect: a) A postal strike is on; b) Cober Press has burned to the ground; c) Your editor's subscription on Planet Earth has expired.

Assuming that a, b, and c are inoperative, you should have the MESSENGER in hand by the fifth of the month, depending on the efficiency of the Canadian and American postal employees.

Love is a Gift

Emilie Bateman

Love is life itself. The very substance of life is love!

Ask any physicist what substance is, and he will tell you that it is energy – the arrangement of molecules in orderly motion.

Whatever exists materially is exactly as it is because it is the external ultimatum of spiritual existence. So, the substance of life is made up of the energy of love.

But love also is inseparable from the lover and the beloved. Love exists only as it exists in a person. Thus the very energetic substance of love exists in the person of God.

The Lord God is a personal God, and His love - energy is constantly creating, for love is not static. Love loves.

The substance of love flows out from God in an energy sphere; and potentially we, His people, can receive, be joined with and become one with the very love substance of God. To do this we have to want it. We must make a choice to have it. If it came to us without our volition, without our choice, without our desire, we would not be people. We would be things.

How then can we want it? Without some experience of love, we could not have any desire for it. We cannot want something which has never come into our consciousness. Yet God uniting us into His Being without us wanting it, is an impossibility. So, somehow God has to give us love - experiences as unasked for gifts, while at the same time waiting until we want to make it really ours.

And that is just what He does.

THE EARLY STAGES

As infants, the Lord God opened our spiritual faculties to heavenly experiences. With open spiritual eyes a baby sees the highest angels of heaven: "The angels of these little ones do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven." Matt. 18:10. With open spiritual ears, a baby hears the voices of angels in song and speech. With spiritual sensitivity a young child feels the touch of the Lord God. These heavenly experiences of love – of heavenly life – are a gift from God.

Then, at about the age of three, the Lord closes off this phase of our memory. Only occasional glimpses of memory experiences come into consciousness after a child has reached the age of three.

But the experiences are there! They are buried in our subconscious. They are held there for the deep unconscious knowing of the quality of life itself – love itself – substance itself – energy itself – God Himself.

Those experiences need to be there. We have a vague relationship to them, which gives us a hunger and thirst for finding them.

But if they stayed in our conscious memories, we could never have them for real, because we could never choose them. We would be like puppets, performing mindlessly in an act for which we had not searched or desired. There would be no quality of reality in it.

If these deeply hidden subconscious heavenly experiences were all we had, with which to make our choice to find love, they would be too remote. We would not have a strong enough desire for the triggering of a search. So, the Lord has more gifts along our way.

These later gifts are not the vivid experiences we had as babies, so they need not ever be completely closed off from memory. They are tangibles, which we can recall as we make our life choices.

"I WANT TO BE ME"

The *urge for independence*, which comes to a four year old, is not always recognized as a God - given asset, yet it is. If a child remained completely compliant, he would not develop choicemaking propensities.

And, there falls upon the school - age child, or rather, there flows in from the energy - substance of God's love, a *quality of delight in fairness*. To be unfair is the worst thing a child can say about his teacher. He is completely upset with inconsistency and unfairness. This is a universal quality belonging to childhood. He has not developed fairness yet as a part of his chosen character, but God gives him the gift of discerning and caring about fairness. With such temporary gift experiences from the living God, we have a basis for making later adult choices for fairness or unfairness.

And there is *the gift of kind concern*, which flows into childhood from the Lord. One of the

manifestations of this sphere flowing in from God, is the love children feel for animals. Watch and listen to your children, and you will discover many gifts of feeling - love, which pour into them from the living substance of all love.

THE GIFT OF IN - LOVE - NESS

Then comes adolescence. In this phase of life childhood love gifts from God are fading away, preparing us for the time when we must make our own choices in real freedom. Love of fairness along with sensitive responsive caring, gives way to a more mundane concern for folk's welfare. But this external awareness alone might not be enough to tie our earth living to heavenly awarenesses. And so at this vulnerable age the Lord flows in with a new gift experience, *the gift of in - love - ness*. It is easy to see that this is a gift bestowed by God, for there is a glow of idealism in it, as it flows in.

WHICH ROAD WILL I TAKE?

Then, what about young adulthood? Here, we are confronted with choices, some of the most important choices of our lives: What jobs shall we choose? What woman or man shall we marry? What shall be our established principles of life?

Shall we be completely self - centered, self - sufficient, self - seeking? We were born into a self - centeredness. Up until now, the Lord has balanced this off with temporary heavenly gifts. Self - centeredness, when we were infants, was offset by the actual experiencing of the highest angels. Selfish tendencies of our childhood were offset by the gift of feeling for fairness and kindness. Self - seeking in our youth was offset by urges to construct better lives for needy folks, and by the beautiful new experience of in - love - ness. Self - centeredness has always been offset by temporary love - gifts from God. We have been kept always in a balance.

But now we are adults. The call of infant experiences is buried too deep to hear clearly their music or their cry. Fairness and kindness belong to kids. Youth's idealism is a fair but passing dream. Now we have to cope with a man's hard world, or with a woman's realities.

But our marriage is still new enough so that for awhile the experience of in - love - ness can stay on as the temporary gift it is. Gradually it must, of course, be replaced with actual choices. It must move on from being a free gift to being a reality from choice. But for awhile it lingers as a gift.

THE LOVING FAMILY -- A FORETASTE OF HEAVEN

Lest the balance between heaven and earth should tip too heavily toward pursuit for self, God

has one more out - and - out gift for us as adults. A child comes into the family, and God actually gives us temporarily *the experience of paternal and maternal love*.

This gift of parental affection has a two - way purpose. The parents need it, and the children need it. Orphan children who have been deprived of love often develop severe personality defects and sometimes even die from the lack of affection.

So here we are as adults, in the business of making choices. And we make these choices in the God - given balance of freedom. Our will is free to live according to our love.

If God compelled us to do good, He would indeed live in us, but it is only as we make choices for good in real freedom, that we can also live in God. He is the vine and we are the branches.

Love is life itself. Love is God Himself. And we can become a living part of His vibrant love.

Children's Fund



"Estimates reveal some 230 million children are malnourished. About 50 cents a year can provide a protein and calorie supplement for the most needy children. This is hardly an overwhelming burden for countries where the expenditure on armament can cost each citizen about \$100 per year." UNICEF News, Issue 83, 1975.

To date Swedenborgians around the country have sent \$1,755.00 to help feed hungry children. Please add your contribution by mailing a cheque today to:

The Swedenborgian Church
Children's Fund
48 Sargent Street
Newton, Massachusetts, 02158

A History of the General Convention's Attitude Toward Swedenborg's Works

In 1948 - 1949 Convention's Council of Ministers commissioned, adopted, and voted unanimously to distribute to the church, a report on "the positions which the General Convention has taken historically" regarding Swedenborg's writings, their authority, and related matters. That report was later published as *The Cause of the New Church*. This paper is a brief and selective account of developments which led to that statement, the first which can be documentably identified as "Convention's attitude."

Probably the earliest published friendly commentator on Swedenborg was Friedrich Christoph Oetinger, whose writings from 1765 - 1770 recommended comparing Swedenborg against any and all other writers to examine which was "best," i.e., which "comes nearest to the Sacred Scriptures." Saying of the *Arcana*, "But O, what a book this is!", and, "There are wonders in it, astonishing, unheard - of, important things," he was unreservedly convinced of Swedenborg's divine call and immediate revelation, but found "nothing directly revealed which is not spotted with much that is human," including even some "errors and false conclusions." This mixture was quite tolerable to him even in the face of Kant's *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*, and attacks on his own career, because he was confident that "time...[and the touchstone of comparison to the Sacred Scriptures] will reveal whatever in Swedenborg's teachings is not genuine." With this attitude Oetinger remained a personal friend and strong supporter of Swedenborg. 1 Four points of the Convention position as stated in *The Cause* find origins in Oetinger: 1) distinction between Swedenborg's revelation and his works, 2) distinctions made within the works themselves, 3) finding "authority in the truth described," and 4) including "freedom of inquiry" in the concept of authority. Hartley, in his "Preface" to *On Influx* and to H. H., and John Clowes in *An Affectionate Address to the Clergy etc.*, relied on readers' perception of truth in Swedenborg's works as authority for their endorsement, rather than on the authority of the works as guarantor of their truth. These are early examples of the implicit form of point 3) above. 2

THE MANCHESTER POSITION

By 1779, however, alternative statements evoked more explicit response. *The Aurora* proclaimed that Swedenborg was not the "author" of his theological works, but only a scribe of the Lord, and therefore (especially in the *Arcana*) infallible. A "Manchester position," written by one "S. M." and purporting to represent "many hundreds," held that *meaning* was revealed to Swedenborg, but not words and phrases, and that "the expressions, the illustrations, and confirmations were all found by E. S. in his own mind, which had been previously prepared for the purpose." From Birmingham came the voice of Henry Peacock, whose 1799 pamphlet distinguished between kinds of revelation to Swedenborg and others and concluded, "We are not to believe E.S. explicitly... Examine, compare, and reason, so as to be convinced in our own minds." For this reason or another, he soon left Birmingham for more congenial society in Manchester!3

BOSTON - PHILADELPHIA VIEWS CONTRASTED

In the early nineteenth century America, the Oetinger - Manchester approach had become the "Boston position." The Rev. James Reed, acknowledging that "We hold them [Swedenborg's writings] to be a Divine revelation," adds in the next paragraph: "Another sure fact is that he always distinguishes between his writings and the Divine Word." The writings thus distinguished are then placed in context:

Religious teachings must commend themselves to our intelligence as reasonable and credible, if we are to adopt them sincerely for our own. The doctrines of the New Church meet this requirement and therefore we receive and value them. 4

In correspondence with Philadelphian opposition, the Boston position was stated by the Rev. Samuel Worcester, on February 25, 1822 to Daniel Lammot:

You mention our seldom referring to the works of Swedenborg. We read them for instruction, and not for authority; hence we talk of what we have learned, and not of what he says...

Interestingly, the next sentence cites four passages from AC, AE, and HH, “for authority”! After hearing himself quoted back from several sources, he expanded this on April 5:

A Newchurchman should not read the works of Swedenborg as authority. He should read to understand, acknowledge and apply truth. Every truth that Swedenborg communicates, is a truth in and of itself, independently of all authority. If it is perceived, it will be believed, of course, without reference to the place where it is found, and the medium through which it came. His mission should be inferred from perceiving that he wrote the truth, and not *vice versa*.

So far as truth is taken on authority, internal perception is not given...An internal perception of truth destroys all idea of authority.⁵

EMERGENCE OF THE GENERAL CHURCH

It should be noted that attitudes toward Swedenborg's authority did not appear as the central issue in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Other conflicts precipitated the formation of rival conventions, and it was agreement or accommodation on other grounds that permitted the emergence in 1852 of the General Convention as the structural unity of all American Swedenborgians. The “conjugal heresy,” the “wine question,” and various matters of polity and education, were the apparent battle lines all through the period of temporary unification in the fifties and sixties, as well as through the founding of the Academy in 1876, the General Church of Pennsylvania in '83, and the General Church – General Convention schism of 1890. With that break, however, the attitude toward Swedenborg's writings that I have so far called the “Oetinger - Manchester - Boston position” became the “Convention position.” This identification was not based on consensus within the General Convention (that was not tested, and presumably did not exist), but was based rather upon the position's lineage as the opponent of that other position – which might have been called the London - Philadelphia - Academy position – which now was identified with the General Church.

That position was promptly established in the name of the General Church with the publication in 1902 of *Testimony of the Writings Concerning Themselves*. The most detailed response to that work came not from Convention, but from Londoner J. G. Dufty, in *The Word of the Lord and the Works of Swedenborg*, or, *Other Testimony from the Writings*. He lived in London, but

published in Manchester, home of John Clowes and S.M.'s “many hundreds” (we must not be too proprietary about our “Convention position”). Indeed, when Dufty published in 1922, his position was not that of an unanimous General Convention.

CONSERVATIVE – LIBERAL VIEWS

By 1924, for example, the proponents of this “Convention position” were called the “modernists,” or “liberals,” and their opponents within Convention were called the “conservatives.” E. M. L. Gould, then editor of *The New - Church Messenger*, said for the modernists:

There are those in our body . . . who would shift that infallible authority which Luther transferred from the Pope to the Bible onto the capacious shoulders of Emanuel Swedenborg. These, though they do not know it, are the real sectarians . . .

So far as we know there is not a liberal in the New - Church body who questions the truth or the Divine origin of the teachings made known through Emanuel Swedenborg . . . The issue in the New Church is that of the meaning and use of these teachings . . . If, as we hold, these doctrines are true, must not all truth of whatever kind serve but to throw a clearer light upon them? Are they not verifiable in the office and laboratory, by the sociologist's statistics or the telescope of the astronomer?

For the conservatives, the Rev. L. G. Landenberger replied:

Such language [as Horatio Dresser's, in another article in the immediate debate] makes it appear as if one could study Swedenborg in the right way without considering the peculiar inspiration or illumination and experience which he had, including his training as a scientific thinker and his phenomenal intromission into the Spiritual World . . . We are not reading literature of an ordinary kind . . . but a revelation from the Lord as he [Swedenborg] distinctly states.

To emphasize that the liberal position was not recognized as that of Convention, the Rev. W. H. Beales, the Rev. Louis A. Dole, Mr. George H. Owen, and the Rev. Arthur Wilde – all writing in support of Landenberger and the conservative view – all took their strongest exception to the fact that Gould had taken his stand in the name of the *Messenger*, and had done so “because the *Messenger* is the organ of the General Convention, and we believe Convention is and always will be an essentially liberal organization.” The opposition was stated directly and entertainingly by Mr. Wilde:

(con't. p.182)

ONE LOVE THAT WON'T QUIT ON YOU

A man decided that the time had come for him to pass his wisdom on to his son. He had his boy stand on the roof above the garage and told him to jump. "Dad, do you want me to break my legs?" protested the youngster. "Don't worry! I will grab you before you hit the ground!" the father assured the son. So the boy jumped and landed on the driveway. In pain and utter disbelief the youngster cried, "Father! You said you'd catch me!" "Son, that's precisely the lesson I wanted you to learn," said the father. "People are like that. Never trust them!"

In the process of growing up, living, and working, people experience others quitting on them. As a result, they learn not to trust others. What is worse, they choose not to believe in themselves, saying, "If so many people quit on me, I must not be worth standing by." In other words, they lose self-esteem and faith in themselves — that necessary power for successful living.

You and I need to re claim this essential power, which is rightfully ours as the children of God. And the best way I know to experience and personally get to know *one love that will never quit on us*, God.

Hosea told his generation of the 7th century B.C. about this love. And he did it in the form of a parable, which was not only told, but also *acted out*. In a vision Hosea was commanded by God, "Go, take to yourself a wife of harlotry and have children of harlotry, for the land commits great harlotry by forsaking the Lord." He went ahead and took a woman named Gomer for his wife. She gave birth to three children, who were not Hosea's. Then she left him for other lovers. God commanded him to go after her and bring her back to him. And God reminded him that that was like God's love for His people who were fast turning away from Him.

In the dramatized parable Hosea is saying to us, "God's love is one love you can always count on, because His love won't quit on you even if you quit on Him!" This message sounds timely for this generation whose steady diet seems to be rejection. Hardly a day goes by without our hearing about A rejecting B because B has first rejected or displeased A. We have personally experienced the difficulty of remaining loyal and loving toward someone who rejects us. It is very easy for us to say, "Well! If that's how you feel about me, I can show you a thing or two!" It is imperative for us to experience God's love which does not reject us even if we reject Him, so that we may become able to express His love in our interpersonal relationships.

Today's psychology supports the truth of this message. By not rejecting others even when they reject you, you have done more good for your own mental *and* physical wellbeing than the harm you could do them by rejecting them. If you reject because you are rejected, the negative feelings you harbor are fed into your subconscious (that inner core of your being which may more traditionally be called "self" or "soul") and later your subconscious will express them outwardly in life. And it can be rather destructive.

Whenever we feel that the world is quitting on us or that life has quit on us, let us open to God's love . . . the one love that won't quit on us. It helps restore our self-esteem and faith in ourselves: the spiritual power for successful living.

NO EXCUSE SUNDAY

(The following was "stolen" from a church bulletin.)

To make it possible for everyone to attend church next Sunday, we are going to have a special "No Excuse Sunday".

Cots will be placed in the foyer for those who say, "Sunday is my only day to sleep in."

Murine will be available for those with tired eyes — from watching TV too late on Saturday night.

We will have steel helmets for those who say, "The roof would cave in if I ever came to church."

Blankets will be furnished for those who think the church is too cold, and fans for those who say it is too hot.

We will have hearing aids for those who say, "The pastor speaks too softly," and cotton for those who say he preaches too loudly.

Score cards will be available for those who wish to list the hypocrites present.

Some relatives will be in attendance for those who like to go visiting on Sundays.

There will be TV dinners for those who can't go to church and cook dinner also.

One section will be devoted to trees and grass for those who like to seek God in nature.

Finally, the sanctuary will be decorated with both Christmas poinsettias and Easter lilies for those who have never seen the church without them.

THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION!

Rev. Richard H. Tafel Sr.

What is the difference between "forgiveness of sins" and "remission of sins"?

Because our Lord is a God of perfect love he immediately and completely forgives our sins, no matter what these are. But his forgiveness does not wipe them away nor set us free from them, unless we take a definite stand against them and do our best to avoid them in the future.

As parents, we forgive our child, no matter what he has done. But we cannot shield him from the consequences of his wrong - doing. He must straighten up and fly right. We will do everything in our power to encourage and help him, but the actual doing must be his. So it is with our heavenly Father and us. He will never take away our freedom nor relieve us of our responsibility, for his is an all - wise love.

We speak of "washing away" our sins, of "blotting out" our transgressions. But this is figurative language. Actually, nothing that we have experienced, nothing that has claimed our attention or that we have responded to, is ever erased from our memory. In the case of sinning, if we are truly sorry and with the Lord's help turn away from our wrong - doing, he graciously pushes those unfortunate episodes to the periphery of our consciousness. They become quiescent, and for all intents and purposes cease to exist. But they are there, for nothing that has touched our lives is ever lost. This is our Lord's gracious way of "remitting" our sins which, out of his love, he "forgives" immediately.

What about death - bed repentance and the thief on the cross?

Jesus' reply to the "thief's" words, "Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom," troubles many readers of the Bible. Does his reply, "Verily I say to you, Today you shall be with me in Paradise," mean that one can live a life of crime and, as death approaches, pray that the Lord will have mercy on him and receive him into heaven, thus assuring salvation?

The Christianity of an earlier day once actually taught that you could put off "taking Jesus as your personal Savior" until you were about to die, thus guaranteeing that you would not fall from grace. But this was risky, because one seldom knew the hour of his death! Fortunately few people today hold this as a viable option, and yet our Lord's words continue to be troublesome.

For one thing, we know so little about the two men who hung on crosses on either side of Jesus. Matthew and Mark call them "thieves," whereas

Luke calls them "malefactors," that is, criminals. When we remember that Barabbas would have been on one of those crosses, had the people chosen to spare Jesus, and that it is expressly said of him that "he was in custody with the rebels who had committed murder in the uprising," we can readily see that the two men were crucified for that political crime.

It is also Luke who notes their differing reactions to their fate, and who alone records the dialogue of one of them and Jesus. Matthew and Mark say both of the thieves reviled Jesus: Luke says only one of them did, and that the other rebuked him, saying that they were getting their just desserts while Jesus was innocent of any wrong - doing.

If we can sense the difference in the spirit of this man, how much more readily could Jesus know the kind of man he really was! Here was a good man, guilty of rebellion and the crimes that went with it, yes, but essentially a good man. "Today you will be with me in Paradise." We are not saved by one good deed or lost by one mistake. Our eternal destiny depends on the whole tenor of our life.

Do the modern Bible translations destroy or distort the spiritual sense?

Not the good ones. They faithfully seek to present in modern English what the best Hebrew and Greek manuscripts say. The Word is in its fullness, holiness, and power in the sense of the letter. Although no translation will ever be perfect enough, we should be forever grateful for the scholarship and devotion which has brought us our fine modern versions.

Remember that the spiritual sense, the deeper levels of divine truth in the Holy Word, does not reside so much in the words themselves as in the ideas conveyed by those words. Also remember that the spiritual sense is distinct from the correspondent sense, and that it is only glimpsed by those who are "in the good of life," that is, by those who seek to be led by the Lord, who go to the Bible to learn of the path of life, and who seek to apply its eternal truths to life situations.

Send your religious queries directly to:

Rev. Richard H. Tafel Sr.,
200 Chestnut Ave.,
Narberth, Penna. 19072

Letters should be signed, though names will not be used in this column.

The Good and the True

No. 11 Everything in the universe that is in keeping with the Divine design goes back to what is good and what is true. Nothing occurs in heaven, nothing occurs in this world, that does not go back to these two. The reason is that each of these, the good and the true, emanates from the Divine, the source of everything.

No. 12 We can see from this that there is nothing more vital to people than knowing what "the good" is and what "the true" is, how one focuses on the other and how one is bonded to the other. This is necessary above all for the churchman. For just as everything in heaven goes back to what is good and what is true, so does everything in the church, heaven's "good" and "true" being the good and the true of the church as well. This is why our opening theme is the good and the true.

It is in keeping with the Divine design for the good and the true to be bonded together, not separated, to the point that they are one thing rather than two. They are in fact bonded together as they emanate from the Divine, they are bonded together in heaven, and they must be bonded together in the church.

In heaven, a bonding (*conjunctio*) of what is good and what is true is called "a heavenly marriage (*conjugium*)" for everyone there is involved in this marriage. This is why, in the Word, heaven is compared to a marriage, why the Lord is called a bridegroom and a husband and heaven a bride and a wife, as is the church. The reason for giving these names to heaven and the church is that people who are in them accept the Divine - Good in things which are true.

NOTES

No. 11 *ordo*, usually rendered "order", involves more than order in the sense of sequence, referring often to a whole multi - dimensional pattern.

bonum and *verum*, usually rendered "good" and "truth", are adjectives used as nouns. They refer to things which are good or true, rather than to goodness and truth as qualities.

se refert ad (here translated "goes back to") is literally "takes itself back to."

Paragraph 11, then, states that from the Divine there emanate ("proceed") what is good and what is true, and that these underline the existence of everything in heaven and on earth that is serving the Creator.

No. 12 *conjugio* (and its derivatives), usually rendered "conjoin", denotes a particularly intimate and lasting connection, for which "bond" seems most appropriate.

The main point of paragraph 12 may perhaps be underscored by imagining how completely we

must misunderstand the Writings if we misunderstand the words "good" and "true".

No. 13 There seems no way to capture in English the word - play of *conjunctio* and *conjugium*.

The reader will soon discover that "good" and "true" are not going to be defined. Rather, paragraph 13 offers the central clue to understanding them - simply that they are so intimately connected that they are really one thing. Any separation between them is not in keeping with the Divine design. If they are conceived of as independent, they will be misunderstood.

Angels see this bond as a marriage, one which exists vertically as well as horizontally. Not only is everything on a given level constituted by a bonding of the true and the good, there is a bonding of the Lord with heaven and the church. Angels and church folk possess things which are true, which the Lord fills with what is good from Himself.

(Kirven's article con't.)

In common with all men I admire courage. I concede to you, Mr. Editor, the courage of your convictions. You evidently believe in nailing your colors to the mast. No one will question your right to do this. Some people may ask that you nail your colors to your own mast, not to that of the Church as a whole. They may fear lest you are about to hoist the "Jolly Roger" of Modernism to the masthead of the Church. 6

It is idle to speculate whether a test of consensus in 1924 would have justified Mr. Gould's conviction that he spoke for the majority in Convention, or that of his opponents - namely, the conviction that there was no consensus, and if there were it would not be a liberal one. A quarter - century later, however, the Council of Ministers did "adopt" a report; and though the ambiguity of that report stands as a monument to the consummate skill of its authors, it identifies the "Oetinger - Manchester - Boston - Convention Liberal position" as "the position Convention has taken historically." By then it was possible for the editor of *The New Church Messenger* (the Rev. Leslie Marshall) to print a letter supporting a strongly conservative view on the writings, but to suffix the following note:

(This correspondent's convictions seem to rest on the position taken by the General Church of the New Jerusalem concerning the relationship of Swedenborg's writings to the World. There can be no objection to subscribers discussing the merits of any article appearing in *The Messenger* on that essential topic, but no space can be given to letters concerning the credibility of other churches' beliefs. - Ed.) →

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir:

The Convention issue of the *Messenger* which has just arrived is the best ever in coverage, quality of pictures, and general format.

I would like to say, however, that it would have been better (fairer to those who criticized the play as to its suitability for performance for a church convention) if the wording on p. 119 had been more explicit. Instead of "vocabulary that was used" say "negative comments referring to the fact that the Lord's name was taken in vain." Instead of "several ministers and laymen were deeply offended by the language" say "were deeply offended by the blasphemy."

While the play did have some lines suggestive of lewdness, I believe the critics objected most to the language that broke the First Commandment. It was indeed unfortunate that the praise was quoted so specifically while the words of criticism were couched in such vague terms as to be meaningless to those who did not attend.

Sincerely
Elizabeth M. Munger
La Porte, Ind.

HOW BIG IS THE UMBRELLA?

It should not go unnoticed, however, that the "Convention position" has never been a shibboleth for membership or participation in Convention or the Council of Ministers. The very formulation of the position as adopted in '48 - '49 is notable for its accommodation of the broadest possible range of compatible views. These data suggest the historical judgment that one unspoken corollary of that position is freedom of debate concerning it.

NOTES

1 Quoted, with more details, in R. H. Kirven, *Emanuel Swedenborg and the Revolt Against Deism* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University Microfilms, 1962), Chap. I, esp. pp. 65 - 89.

2 Ditto, op. cit., Chap. II, esp. pp. 124 - 130.

3 Ditto, op. cit., Chap. IV, esp. pp. 191 - 193.

4 James Reed, *Our Attitude Toward Swedenborg's Writings* (Boston: Massachusetts New Church Union, n.d.), pp. 5, 10.

5 *Newchurchman - Extra*, Vol. I, pp. 105 - 120, esp. 105, 113.

6 *The New - Church Messenger*, Vol. CXXVI, 1924, pp. 67 - 68, 73, 125 - 126, 168 and 212 - 213.

7 *The New - Church Messenger*, Vol. CLXIX, 1949, p. 79.

Robert H. Kirven

FALL LEAGUE RETREAT AT BLAIRHAVEN

The Bridgewater (Mass.) New Church League is hosting a young people's retreat over the long weekend of October 24 - 27.

The retreat will be held at Camp Blairhaven in South Duxbury, Mass. Cost is only \$6.00. For further information, directions, or reservations contact:

Bridgewater New Church League
c/o Ian Woofenden
48 Highland St.,
Sharon, Massachusetts. 02067

Deadline for reservations is October 10, 1975

FROM CHURCH RECORDS

BAPTISMS

AYERS — David Ayres of Grand Rapids was baptized on August 10, 1975, at Almont, Michigan, the Rev. Walter Orthwein officiating.

DIENESCH — Stephanie Elizabeth Jean, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Dienesch of Scarborough, Ontario, was baptized at Kitchener, Ontario, on August 17, 1975, the Rev. Paul Zacharias officiating.

RIENSTRA — Mrs. Nancy Rienstra and her children, John and Julie, were baptized on July 27, 1975, at Almont, Michigan, the Rev. Walter Orthwein officiating.

MARING — Krista Suzanne, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Maring, St. Louis, was baptized on July 6, 1975, the Rev. Walter Orthwein officiating.

DEATHS

BROOKS — Mr. Clarence A. Brooks of Chicago, Ill., president of the Church of the Holy City, Chicago, died on July 30, 1975. A memorial service was held on August 17, the Rev. Thornton Smallwood officiating.

CLARKE — Mr. Wilfred Clarke of Haney, B. C., died on July 26, 1975. The resurrection service was held on July 31, the Rev. Harold Taylor officiating.

LOEPPKY — Mr. Larry Leoppky of Moose Jaw, Sask., died on June 21, 1975. The resurrection service was held on June 24, the Rev. Henry Reddekopp officiating.

SIPES — Mrs. Frederick (Eva) Sipes of Kitchener, Ont., died on August 21, 1975. The resurrection service was held on August 23, the Rev. Paul Zacharias officiating.

MARRIAGES

ROGERS — NEUDORF — Donald Rogers and Katherine Neudorf were married at Lloydminster, Sask., the Rev. Henry Reddekopp officiating.

DERR — KEITH — David Derr and Karen Keith were married on August 16, 1975, at Almont, Michigan, the Rev. Walter Orthwein officiating.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER, by Louise Hurlbutt de Wetter, published and edited by Christian Ravndal, Thomas Road, Rindge, N.H. 03461. Third edition published in 1968; first edition in 1957.

"The one reality," wrote Emerson a century ago, "is spirit." We have wandered far from that saying; nevertheless it remains true that the one subject of tremendous importance to human beings everywhere is the soul of man, its relation to life here and the life to come.

Over the years I have read many books in the "spiritualist" category, including works by Conan Doyle, Arthur Ford, James Pike, and the well known "Voices From the Open Door" by Margaret Houts. "The Kingdom and the Power" stands head and shoulders above everything else I have read in the field. Why? Because at least two thirds of the book deals with *spiritual implications and consequences for this world*. There is little description of other world activities, though this is not neglected and is in complete harmony with the accounts given by Swedenborg. But the main thrust of the book deals with heavenly principles as they should be — and could be — practiced on earth. Here the spirit waxes eloquent on such themes as: Accepting guidance as a fact; The small things in life; The many roads to God; Wordless prayer; Human relationships; At home in God's world; The Lord's Prayer; and many more. The style is simple, clear, forthright; like that of a wise teacher counselling a willing learner. And how much we can learn from this little book!

The Rev. William F. Wunsch liked the book too. A portion of his review is quoted on the back cover: "The messages assembled in this book are a ministry from beyond to us here, a ministry loving, wise and warmly extended. To tell us of life beyond is not the uppermost aim, but to help with life here. These lessons have brought faith and courage and strength to reader after reader."

There is one thing that puzzles me. I do not expect the inhabitants of heaven to know everything — they are still learning and growing — but I expect them to have a grasp of basic theology. Why then, in this, and in almost every book of this kind, do we find such glaring theological errors? The traditional view of the Trinity is still upheld. Reincarnation is mentioned as a rare, but sometimes necessary procedure. The blissful promise given in C. L. 51 is repudiated here. This angelic source is a loving, spiritually mature person, but somewhere along the line his theological education seems to have been sadly neglected. Perhaps someone out there in "reader land" can enlighten me in this matter.

This 170 page book is available **only** from the publisher at the above address; price **unknown**.

P. Z.

WE ARE IMMORTAL, by A. C. Ferber, \$7. Published by Exposition Press, Hicksville, N.Y.

Mr. Ferber signs himself, "adjuvant" which by definition means 'serving to help or assist.' And this is just what he does in this, his latest book just off the press, July 29th.

So many and so often Swedenborgians have cried out, "why doesn't someone explain the writings in terminology we can all understand." Well, here it is, that is, that which concerns us about Heaven and Hell, expressed sometimes in Swedenborg's own words, but only those selections that are appropriate to Mr. Ferber's immediate sequence.

There is a tiny booklet that Swedenborgians like to distribute called PEARLS OF WISDOM. Here is a large, but not ponderous book that might have also been called Pearls of Wisdom. It is for you who know and love the New Church writings as well as for those who are just being introduced to them.

Alice Spear, Librarian
Los Angeles, Cal.

LATE NEWS BULLETIN

The "Marcus Welby" television program on Tuesday, Oct. 21, entitled "An End and a Beginning", which includes the wedding of Dr. Kiley, was filmed at the WAYFARERS CHAPEL. Our regular service was followed in the filming of the program, with the Rev. Harvey Tafel acting as technical advisor. Following the wedding a reception was held, using the Biblical garden as a background. Consult your paper for local viewing time.

S. S. A. ANNOUNCEMENT

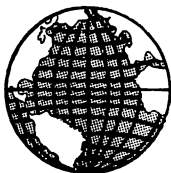
The Rev. Franklin H. Blackmer, chairman of the Sunday School Association Lesson Committee, informs us that all S.S.A. Notes for teachers, parents and children are still available. It is expected that the new edition, with minor revisions, will be ready by 1978. For further information — and all Sunday School Association materials — contact:

Rev. Franklin H. Blackmer,
928 Middle St.
Bath, Maine, 04530

THE NEW CHURCH AROUND THE WORLD

In Korea

by the Rev. Ian A. Arnold



We are fortunate in regard to Korea that those two men who were virtually the pioneers of the New - Church interest in Korea are still alive and active and are able to give precise details as to the way in which they each came to a knowledge of the writings. Both did so independent of the other. Under Divine Providence they met at a Presbyterian theological College in Seoul, and later went together to the U.S.A. where they were trained and ordained by the General Convention.

The two men referred to are the Rev. Chungsun Lee and the Rev. En Bo Chung. And I think we owe it to ourselves to hear the story that each has to tell.

The Rev. Chungsun Lee's association with the New Church goes back to the 1930's, a time of upheaval in Korea and of Japanese occupation. He speaks of Christian Churches being utilized for political purposes at that time and of communism infiltration leading to the spiritual blindness of a number of Christian leaders.

Concerned about the general drift of things, a number of Christians, among them Mr. Lee's father (Cho Kenn Lee) initiated a Prayer Group "and studied the Bible eagerly and humbly". The Group also studied *Sunder Shing* from whose book they learned of Swedenborg, "but there was no contact with any Japanese New Church person."

There were, however, soon to take place two unusual developments. One of the prayer group members went to Manchuria on business and there happened to pick up a piece of "worn and dirty" paper which he was attracted to read. It turned out to be a portion of the book "Heaven and Hell" and he brought it back to his friends. At almost the same time another group member visited Tokyo, Japan, and sought out Dr. Kanai, President of the Tokyo Bible Seminary, whose translation of *Sunder Shing* group members had been reading. Dr. Kanai had however moved on to a complete acceptance of Swedenborg to whose books he introduced his Korean friend. As a consequence translations of "Heaven and Hell" and "The Divine Providence" were brought back to Korea.

In 1933 members of the prayer group founded the New Church in Pyong Yang, North Korea, calling it the "Jesus Church". "Like a fire on a hill,

this church was spread all over North Korea" and, in 1935, there were 12 Churches, 8 'Circles', and a membership of some 12,000 people. In 1938 leaders of the Church founded a theological College and best - selling New Church novels were being written.

But then, tragically, came Japanese persecution, war, and later the communist uprising, all of which seriously dislocated the establishment of the Church in Korea. In 1945, the Rev. Chungsun Lee and his father fled to Seoul where they founded a New Church Society. Feeling the need for professional training however, Rev. Lee attended the Presbyterian Theological College and here, as we mentioned earlier, he met En Bo Chung from whom he obtained copies of the writings and who in turn helped in the Seoul church.

Until he was 21, En Bo Chung "hated Christians much, underestimated them because they seemed poor and no power, ignorant and crazy to believe unseen God". A spiritual experience led him to change his ideas, though, and he was interested to read of Helen Keller who was visiting Korea at that time. "Reading 'My Religion' I made up my mind" he writes "to search out Swedenborg first, and could have a set of his writings (Rotch edition) through Rev. Doi in Japan. To me there was no doubt reading his writings. My heart trembled with joy and happiness."

In 1955 both men, Chungsun Lee and En Bo Chung, enrolled at Convention's theological school in America. At the present time the Rev. Lee is serving in Los Angeles, and the Rev. En Bo Chung continues as the pastor of the Kwangju Church, South Korea, where he virtually has a Korean theological school. The pastor of the Seoul Church is the Rev. Young K. Lee. In 1973 when Mrs. Margit Tobisch visited Seoul for a service of worship there were some 50 people present, "with not a grey hair among them. They seemed to be bubbling with enthusiasm for the teachings of the New Church."

Reprinted from "The New Age" (Australia)

* * *

At the invitation of the Sydney Society, whose new premises in Clarence Street he will dedicate on October 5th, the Rev. Obed S. D. Mooki will be visiting Australia during September and October. Arrangements have been made for Mr. Mooki to visit all Australian Societies — Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney — where he will preach and speak at meetings. The Rev. Mooki's visit to Sydney on October 5th will coincide with that congregation's Centennial celebration.

A Chuckle or Two

A circus strong man offered a reward to anyone who could extract more from a lemon which he had squeezed dry. A small, frail - looking man accepted the challenge and, after great exertion, got one drop of juice out of the lemon. The strong man paid up willingly and asked in amazement, "Who are you?" The successful challenger replied, "I'm the treasurer of the local Swedenborgian Church."

An army chaplain was invited to be the guest speaker in a civilian church twenty miles away. His family was invited to accompany him. In the hustle of preparing to go, he failed to inform his six - year - old daughter of their destination. After a few miles on the highway, she raised a life - sized question: "Dad," she said, "When we get where we are going, where will we be?"

An African woman who wished to marry a Christian man and become a Christian herself was taught the Faith. The wedding was to be soon, and the woman's training was not as thorough as it should have been. Baptism and confirmation were followed by the marriage, and the woman tried hard, in a confused way, to remember all she had been taught. When asked, "Wilt thou have this man to be thy wedded husband?" she replied, I renounce the devil and all his works." — Rosamund Essex in the *Church Times*.

Then there is the stalwart who refused a pain killer from his dentist, saying: "I'm trying to transcend dental medication."

During last winter's violent snowstorms in the South, one Red Cross rescue team was carried by helicopter to within a mile of a mountain cabin all but covered by deep snowdrifts. The rescuers struggled on foot through the deep drifts and finally arrived at the cabin, where they shoveled away enough snow to clear the door. They knocked, and when their summons was answered by a mountaineer, one rescuer stepped up and said, "We're from the Red Cross." "Well," said the mountaineer, scratching his head, "it's been a right tough winter and I don't see how we can give anything this year."

The whale and the herring were very close companions who swam together so frequently they were called "the twins". One day a mackerel, seeing the herring alone, asked where his friend was. The herring replied: "How do I know? Am I my blubber's kipper?"

The Last Word

BUILDING A HOUSE WITH WORDS

Jan Seibert

There's a story to be told about how my husband, Ellsworth, and I built our retirement home. The story isn't much about the house itself. It's about the young people who built it. As we worked together, I drew a new and deeper and far greater understanding and love of the ones who live in the counter - culture, those who choose an alternate lifestyle, the lifestyle that many call hippy.

It all began when I took a six - months leave from my job as editor at the University of California, Berkeley, to take on the totally different job of contractor for our house. That Ells would trust me with the task is a measure of his faith (and of his training over the many years that we've remodeled old houses together).

We had one problem. We wanted to build a log house with a sod roof, and no recognized builder on the northern California coast would consider undertaking such a madcap venture. Obviously, anyone of mature years who wants to live in a queer house like that must be utterly mad. So, with "establishment" builders unanimous in turning their backs, I turned to the more open - minded young carpenters. They lacked something in experience, but they had infectious enthusiasm and minds uncluttered by "we've always done it *this* way." Working with them was a joy and an education. Now we're living comfortably in the log home they built for us. Some day we may even lay up that sod roof.

How do you go about finding capable young people to build your house when you don't know any of them? Simple. Go where they congregate. That meant taking up residence on a stool at the cafe five miles down the road. It's an establishment of eight stools and three tables where they purvey wonderful rough home - made breads served with a dollop of wild honey, herbal teas, pies made from wild fruits and berries, and a vegetarian menu alongside the hamburger list. The couple who ran the cafe listened to my tale, immediately allied themselves with the cause, and in record time the news was out on the bush telegraph. Hopeful carpenters started dropping in to the cafe for a chat over tea and toast. Then followed the fascinating business of prowling deep into the

woods with them as they showed me what they'd built already. It wasn't long before I had my crew, and a motley assortment they were, if judged by conventional standards.

To a man — no women had applied — they had long hair, mostly wildly unkempt. They wore overalls, tie-dyed T-shirts, and sandals, switching to boots and hooded sweatshirts when the weather turned cold. Most of them lived hand-to-mouth, working when they could, taking welfare when they couldn't. All of them had at least some college education. One had graduated in English literature from Yale. Two had their Master's degrees. One was a dissertation away from his PhD. Despite the high educational level, though, they used the rough language that offends the sensibilities of my generation, the language we think of as blasphemous and vulgar in the extreme.

Now it's about that language use I want to talk, for it's a subject of considerable interest in Convention right now, a subject that's brought out strong opinions and divisive sentiments.

After the men and I had worked together for several months and had established a warmly wonderful, and truly loving, working relationship, I was able to bring up the subject of why they used the words they did, especially those undeleted expletives that practically curled my string-straight hair. Our discussions brought back to me vividly my parents' anguish at the slang I used as a teenager, my own sufferings from the punishment meted out (soap tastes awful!), and the parental avowals that I had absolutely gone to the dogs when I said such words as heck, gosh, darn, golly, or gee. To my Victorian-age parents, saying heck was the same as saying hell, gosh equalled God, darn was the equivalent of damn, and so on. For each slang word they had a parallel swear word. Regardless of my protestations of innocent thought, I was tarred with the brush applied to the blasphemer. If they hadn't taken such pains to point out the equivalencies, I'd never have known that the slang I slung counterparted the evil swear words. Their virtuous and pious stance certainly had the effect of putting ideas into my young head.

While I was retrospectively, the men were doing some real thinking. I'd like to share some of their observations. Since shouting down the opposition hasn't, so far, changed the usages appreciably

(although it may have driven them underground at times), perhaps those of us who feel strongly can make our point better after we have a greater understanding through hearing from the other side.

The group observed that historically each generation has tried to one-up its parents, to make its mark as something unique, to be different. Either go the parents one better in the same line of work, or choose a drastically different field. Either have a larger house or larger farm or more money or more education, or show the need for individuality by taking the reverse tack. Somehow, we have to be identifiable as distinct from our parents' generation, to be something or to say or do something for and of ourselves. Every generation is howled down by its parents on one score or another. The children need, somehow, "to show them." When grandfather hammered his finger instead of the nail, he said "Oh, pshaw!" His son said, "Oh, my gosh!!" His grandson says, "My God!!" Despite our feelings that grandson goes too far, isn't he doing exactly the same thing his forebears did? Venting a feeling that can't be contained? He carries it even farther than the hammer and nail episode, however, and liberally lards his entire conversation with expressions we deplore. Why?

The English lit major threw in an interesting aside when he admitted that he'd been reared strictly, with no quarter given to swearing sons. Then he started reading Chaucer, and from Chaucer he learned the four-letter Anglo-Saxonisms with which he studied his conversation. The pith and zest of Chaucer's words, printed as they were in time-honored books, were too rich to be shunned. The carpenter didn't try to excuse his language nor to "lay it on Chaucer." He recognized that he swore and cussed because it was the "in" thing among his peers. Nonetheless, it's an interesting observation that the literary language of six centuries ago has come back into common parlance, replete with blasphemies and vulgarities. It's a possibility that we've come full-circle, and that as the language continues to evolve, we'll return to the proscriptions not now acknowledged or heeded by many of our young people.

The counter-culture is making a forceful thrust in today's society. It's leaving its mark on not only language, but on clothing, housing, environmental problems, educational needs, on the whole gamut of human relationships in our country. It's saying that we, the parents, have false standards and have brought our world to the brink of ruin through wars, chemicals, and the push for progress and monetary success.

As you try to fathom why things have changed as they have, and why foul language has penetrated every stratum of our culture, please look beyond the facade, beyond the hair and beards and sandals. Break the barriers. Get really well acquainted. Chances are you'll find human beings with a greater perception of some of life's values than is held by many conventional friends.

These men are no longer our carpenters. They're our beloved friends. And it's notable that at least in conversations with us, they keep their language much cleaner. Respect is not dead, but it must be won, and I venture to say that the soap-box approach isn't going to win it, nor is a great show of piety. If we approach with reason instead of rhetoric; if we keep our cool; above all, if we let it be known that we understand the needs but do not condone the expression, then perchance we'll be - collectively - a bit more than voices in the wilderness. It's just possible that without alienating the young altogether and by using the tangential approach instead of the frontal attack, we might make our point.

* * *

Your comments on articles in the MESSENGER, or on Convention affairs, are always welcome. Feel free to write us at any time. Letters to the editor should be limited to *three hundred words*. All letters must be signed.

CONVENTION CALENDAR

Mass. Association	Oct. 5
Planning and Development at Blairhaven	Oct. 6 - 8
Kansas Association	Oct. 12
Canada Ass'n Executive	Oct. 26
Bd. of Ed. (Urbana)	Oct. 30 - Nov. 1
Urbana College B.O.T.	Oct. 31 - Nov. 1
Mid - Atlantic Ass'n at Washington D.C.	Nov. 8 - 9
S.S.R. B.O.M.	Dec. 5 - 6

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Are all Convention members in your area receiving the MESSENGER regularly? Is your MESSENGER correctly addressed? Are you planning to move in the near future? Send new or changed MESSENGER addresses to:

Mr. Roger Paulson,
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