

THE MESSENGER

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JULY-AUGUST 1970



Church of the New Jerusalem
St. Paul, Minnesota

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

To keep the mailing schedule as filed with the Post Office, *The Messenger* must go to press before there is time for significant reports back from the New Church World Assembly in London. With organizations at a summer standstill, and so many Swedenborgians attending the Assembly, this issue marks a period of doldrums in our church life that the mailing schedule usually manages to avoid.

This does not mean, of course, that nothing is happening. A great deal is happening in London that will be reported later; and it is also important to realize that periods of quiet are among the most important events in the life of any individual or organization. Sleep, relaxation and recreation are vital in the lives of individuals; the strength and hardness of wood is developed during the winter when the tree appears not to grow; and the life of a church—on a local or a national scale waxes or wanes as its individual members shape their lives, far more than it does in the moments of its visible inter-action and apparent changes.

In a very real sense, we each work for or against our church as much when we are apart as when we are together.

News of the World Assembly

A good many writers, and at least two photographers whose work is being coordinated by the Department of Publication, are preparing an extensive report of the Assembly in London. This will appear in the Fall, probably in the September issue. Additional reports, and probably texts or digests of some of the addresses, will appear in succeeding issues. In addition, to help make the unifying encounter with Swedenborgians from all over the world more of a reality to those of us who remain at home, plans are afoot to develop a program of slides and recordings, by which faces, voices, and high-lights of the World Assembly can be brought to associations and local churches during the coming year.

Meanwhile, a happy summer to you all.

Robert H. Kirven

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THE SWEDENBORGIAN CHURCH IN KOREA

The Rev. Chungsun Lee of Seoul, General Pastor for the Korean field, made several visits in the United States during June on his way to the World Assembly. His wife, Po Young Woo, accompanied him, and at a gathering in California, told the following story about her life in the Korean New Church.

My name is Po Young Woo, and I am 42 years old. I am the wife of the general pastor of the Korean Association of the New Church and the mother of four children. I was born to devout Presbyterian parents, and brought up in the Christian church and also disciplined in strict daily Bible reading and pious church life. But accidentally I went to school at primary, high even at the university, which had been operated by the Methodist missions. I began to feel much contradiction in the teachings and life of the contemporary church in general since I had participated in Y.W.C.A. movement in the university.

During my university days, I practiced wearing a white blouse and a black skirt, and organized the group which practiced daily Bible reading and prayer on the campus. More, I tried my best in such a practice and could not help feeling the great resistance to the doctrine of saving by faith alone and predestination—because I firmly believed that the church life must be poured into the life of love and service to our neighbours. Little by little without knowing it, I built up the habit of comparing and choosing between the home education of Presbyterian atmosphere and the school education of Methodist atmosphere. And I became like a hunter of religious meetings. Then I attended various religious meetings—lectures of various denominations and their famous leaders, sermons and Bible classes of theirs and even non-church movement leaders and confucianistic interpreters of Bible. Indeed I wandered around as wide as I could reach in seeking the truth.

At the graduation of the university, I resolved in my mind to consecrate myself for the life of service to others while I could not satisfy myself with

the faith of the contemporary church in general. Therefore I got the job as a volunteer teacher at the social work institution, the Han Ul high school, which was located in a very isolated area of the most southern part of the Korean Peninsula.

However, the threat which our nation had to face, did not make me an exception. The invasion of the North Korean Puppet army drove me also into the lines of the refugees and I also had to evacuate to the southmost isolated island, Cheju, with other folks. Even through the life of starvation and nakedness, the Providence of our Lord provided me a special loving care. In the narrow island life I could meet various religious groups and experienced many people and their faith. They were all in need and had difficulties. Nay, they were faced with death and critical experiences. They could do nothing but cry to the Lord for His help. Therefore at that time there I could attend many a prayer meeting and religious practices.

I was working for the war orphans at an orphanage there but besides this, I tried my best to attend meetings for finding the truth. Having done this, I once found a strange church, which was the "New Church." Since I had the conviction that the church had to be made anew, I was attracted by the name of the "New," naturally. Must not the structures of a revolutionary church in the age of revolution explore the new way in the contents and lives of faith?

Walking to the unknown church, I imagined that an old and authoritative pastor might lead the church and deliver a sermon there. But contrary to my expectation I found a very young pastor on the pulpit. He spoke that without love the Christian church meant nothing and the forcing God with prayers of self-love was inconsistent with the genuine attitude of Christian love. I could not help but agree with him, indeed.

I was able to find my love and the growth of the new faith at the same time, and I could develop my life with Mr. Lee in a quite new phase of the world. Our love was growing more and more. I called on Mr. Lee on a certain day of September 1951. Our conversation moved naturally to our problem. Mr. Lee asked three questions of me. I am putting these three questions (which Mr. Lee asked me on that day) here because I believe these three questions are based on the principles on which Mr. Lee has lived and served his church here in Korea.

Mr. Lee slowly opened his mouth and asked the first question with a smile. "If we marry, do you think you can bear a poverty-stricken life and hardships with your people so that you may be in the midst of your people? In brief, will you be happy if you must wear white cotton ordinary Korean suits and go without a veil and hat at your wedding ceremony? And will you bear the walk to and from the wedding?"

I was quite at a loss when I heard that from Mr. Lee because I was nothing but a girl like the others. However it was the time when all other folks had to go through a hard life and starvation, and the circumstances did help me to say yes. But I realized profoundly that Mr. Lee was deeply sincere and had lived a poverty-stricken life with our people, and had ministered his church with no help but with the conviction and joy that he might have work for the Lord's New Church among his people.

This is the second question which Mr. Lee asked me. "Can you cut your friends and your loves away from this moment?" I could not answer this question easily but I did answer "yes" to him because I loved him so much. Mr. Lee did not mean by this question to occupy my love for himself alone. He meant to suggest and teach me repentance. He meant that I should leave the things which I had loved from self-love, and should love the Lord and our neighbours. And also he suggested to me that our conjugal love would grow this way.

Mr. Lee asked the third question to me. "Can you desert yourself from God?" I felt very much opposition against this question. Then I asked him back and said, "What do you mean by it, Mr. Lee? How can you dare to speak such a profane thing as a Christian minister?" Upon this, Mr. Lee showed me a big smile and pointed out my erroneous belief of God tenderly. Indeed I did not know any contradiction in the idea of God, which I used to be taught by various Christian teachers, but according to Mr. Lee's explanation, it was a wrong belief of the trinity of three persons. He told me that we should believe in Jesus Christ as our God who came to us having assumed our nature, and if we do not leave the wrong or mistaken idea of God, we could not worship the true God, the Lord Jesus Christ. To tell the truth, until the Easter Sunday of 1963 I could not solve this problem of the idea of God. But I did answer him that I should try my best to

follow his suggestion because I trusted him and loved him very much.

At last we married before the alter of the Lord on January 23rd, 1952, basing ourselves upon the above three questions and answers. I exerted consciously as a wife of the New Church Pastor. And little by little I could learn that we had to find out the internal sense in the Holy Scriptures and that the second coming of the Lord already had taken place. With the blessing of the Lord, I could at last anchor in the faith of the Lord's New Church and my wandering for the truth reached the end of the line. I came to understand the specific way of the life of service and the real meaning of charity. At last I became satisfied with the ideal of the New Church. Especially I was glad that I could take off the authoritative form of religion and take in the joy and satisfaction of having found real spiritual freedom in the New Church.

Since I had to face hard and poor living while Mr. Lee was away from home for his theological study at the New Church Theological School in Cambridge, Mass. of the United States of America, I was forced to stand on the platform for food. However I could not help but praise the Lord for His goodness because I did experience the genuineness of the New Church teaching during my teaching life. Indeed I could successfully counsel many a girl collegiate with teaching concerning the World, Man and God, history, etc. and I found very effective help in the New Church teachings for young students in Korea. The education course which I teach at the college is one of the most popular lectures among students and even in 1967 I was recommended to be a counselor for a Collegiate Diplomatic Tour Group to Japan by the Government. I honestly believe that the result of counselling with the New Church Faith (of course I did not speak to them in strict terms of our church but in free, translated terms) might have been admired by young girls and boys of colleges and universities. However is it not our OUTREACH mission in a sense?

Indeed I wish eagerly for the kind of student center in Seoul where I can mix with students more effectively. In other work, if we Koreans have our church building in Seoul and it has enough rooms and equipment both for worship and services for students, I do not know any other joy and happiness. O Lord look upon us and provide us thy abundant blessings.

DREAMING INTO REALITIES

Dreams are defined as something thought, felt, heard, or seen during sleep, or a fantasy or vision. From the Bible, in Jeremiah 27 and 28, we read "Which think to call my people to forget my name by their dreams which they tell every man to his neighbor, as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal. The prophet that hath a dream let him tell a dream, and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat, saith the Lord?" Devotion to the Lord must not be occasional, but constant. Paul said, "Maintain the spiritual glow." Worship creates a sphere, and each and every soul is inspired by it. This sphere of worship is stimulated by the Lord's own presence as he moves in the lives of his people. The Christian has been taught to offer sacrifices of love and faith and service in his daily life. He must be understanding and sympathetic. He must be alert with a constant willingness to help his fellow beings, that the Lord's love through Him as an instrument might heal the spiritual ills of his neighbors.

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." This is the great teaching of Jesus, and places a demand on his followers to live daily in the warmth of his all-embracing love. Regardless of what others might do, the Christian is expected to observe a constant discipline, living the laws of love. Well may the dreamer live by the law of the Lord and continue to be of service to his fellowmen. He can dream and hope and fulfill his duties to his neighbors and friends, then bring it into reality personally. Of the several references in the Bible on dreams, many are brief and misinterpreted. The Bible says that Joseph was a dreamer, and his brothers resented the two dreams that set him above them. He was later given the power to interpret them. Are we given power to interpret dreams today? Perhaps so, in many instances. Dreams can be realistic, but a person should not let his dreams fill his mind to such an extent that he lets it get too much into his life and living. It seems we can be bold and dream of tomorrow's realities by not accepting a dream as though it were to come to pass. Facing it as a vision or a fantasy and letting it consume an individuality is an error in itself. It is true that visions are conducive to thoughts that are apt to disrupt a man's equilibrium. However, visions can be helpful in planning for the future, and attending church could be an aid to this in stricter divine worship.

Realities become a highway to fortune, therefore meaning much more in many folks' lives. They are the living, symbolic truth of many an individual's dreams, but are not true to form in the sense that dreams do come true. It is said that nations and individuals are gambling with the letters of the Scriptures in their efforts to avoid the clear teachings of the Spiritual sense, which cannot be twisted into agreement with human selfishness. Christianity has been taught to the world nearly two thousand years. Today, Christianity is the professed religion of the leading nations of the world. And yet, nowhere in this world is a certificate of church membership a guarantee of actual good character, or a passport to the confidence of our fellowmen. And it is so, because the churches have been satisfied and delighted with a theory of salvation which bears no practical relation to the spirit and life of Christ. In this world today comparatively few are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ as the one and only God, the Giver of life, the Leader and Savior of men, whose teachings understood in our rational dreams and spiritual minds are to be to us the breath of life and the bread of life. Also, the way to heavenly living here—in order that we may abide in heaven in us, hereafter.

The author of this article submitted it some time ago, and the Editor has lost the name which did not appear on the typewritten copy. It appears here as "Anonymous with Editorial Apologies" with a promise to print the mystery name when it is learned.

EVIDENCE NOTES

Why was he gazing upwards from the steps of the porch, hearing their shrill twofold cry, watching their flight? For an augury of good or evil? A phrase of Cornelius Agrippa flew through his mind and then there flew hither and thither shapeless thoughts from Swedenborg on the correspondence of birds to things of the intellect and of how the creatures of the air have their knowledge and know their times and seasons because they, unlike man, are in the order of their life and have not perverted that order by reason.

James Joyce

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

SWEDENBORG SCIENTIFIC ASSOCIATION

The seventy-third Annual Meeting of the Swedenborg Scientific Association was held on Wednesday May 6, 1970, at Pendleton Hall in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, with an attendance of 47 members and 24 guests.

The officers and members of the Board were all reelected or reappointed for the coming year: President, Mr. Donald C. Fitzpatrick, Jr.; Vice President Mr. Charles S. Cole, Jr.; Treasurer, Mr. E. Boyd Asplundh; Secretary, Miss Morna Hyatt; Editor, Mr. Edward F. Allen; Editorial Board: Mr. Lennart O. Alfelt; Mr. Donald C. Fitzpatrick, Jr.; Mr. Kenneth Rose; Members of the Board: Rt. Rev. Elmo C. Acton; Mr. Lennart O. Alfelt; Mr. Edward F. Allen; Mr. Erland J. Brock; Mr. Charles S. Cole, Jr. Rev. W. Cairns Henderson; Rev. Hugo Lj. Odhner; Mr. Joel Pitcairn; Mr. Tomas H. Spiers.

The Treasurer noted a three-fold increase in book sales, which are now handled through the General Book Center.

Professor Edward F. Allen in his report as Editor of the *New Philosophy* commented that while it is still behind schedule, he believes that what is published continues to come up to the high standards set in the long history of that Journal because certain individuals have dedicated their time and other resources to this work. These individuals see the use of understanding the preparation of Swedenborg in the science and philosophy of his day and of an affirmative understanding of the scientific and philosophical perspective of the eighteenth century; they are making an affirmative effort to understand the contributions of Swedenborg on the natural plane of science and philosophy; they are in the effort to understand the relation of these contributions to the manifest appearances of the philosophical in the Writings. Society today encourages specialization and efficiency rather than the broad perspective required by the above goals. The Editor thanked the contributors to the *New Philosophy* and also the Editorial Board, especially Mr. Lennart Alfelt for his practical help, his interest, and his constructive ideas.

Mr. Fitzpatrick announced with pleasure the publication of the new book by Dr. Hugo Lj. Odhner

The Human Mind. This work is based on a series of articles which appeared in the *New Philosophy* in the 1950's under this title. Dr. Odhner has revised and enlarged the study into what should be a very important book.

The President then introduced the speaker of the evening, Rev. William R. Woofenden, pastor of the Church of the Open Word in St. Louis. Mr. Woofenden is involved in the study of Swedenborg's philosophy at the graduate level, having done his master's thesis on the ethics of Swedenborg. His doctoral dissertation will be on Swedenborg's concept of causality. The title of his address was "Swedenborg and the Philosophy of Time." A brief write-up such as this cannot do justice to the closely reasoned paper nor can it convey the delightful manner in which the speaker carried along even those unfamiliar with this philosophical topic. He combined a lightness of touch with an earnestness that conveyed a sense of the importance of the subject matter. An historical sketch included thoughts on the subject of time from the Psalm and from the Greeks and Romans-Zeno, Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus. Augustin summed up the difficulty of defining time. "If no one asks, I know what it is, but if asked to explain it, I cannot." In the modern period the concepts of Descartes and Newton were contrasted with those of Leibnitz. To Newton, time is absolute and flows without relation to anything external. Leibnitz held space and time to be relative, an idea carried further by Einstein. To Locke, "Time is duration set out by measures." Kant's concept of time is psychological.

The speaker listed four ways that time has been considered. 1. What is time. 2. Static (tenseless) time versus Dynamic (tensed) time. 3. Temporal fatalism versus temporal freedom. 4. Psychological time. As to what is time, Aristotle said that motion is an attribute of substance, and time is an attribute of motion. Some claim that the present always includes a little of the past and of the future, whatever is in one's mind at present. Others claim that the present is crucial. The Hopi Indians have no tenses in their language. They conceive of time as dynamic process. Swedenborg's *Principia*, unlike Newton's, did not include a definition of space and time, but in *The Infinite* there is a treatment of time and eternity. Time is related to velocity, which is an attribute of motion. Thus time is an attribute of

an attribute of an attribute of a substance. Some have thought that Kant derived his ideas from Swedenborg, but he could as easily have derived them from Aristotle.

In his work on the *Five Senses* Swedenborg treats of the doctrine of order and degrees and discusses successiveness and simultaneity in nature. "Thence is space and time." Mr. Woofenden acknowledged the obscurity of this passage but offered his own well-thought-out explanation. In the theological writings of Swedenborg we learn that the idea of time cannot be together with the idea of eternity. The concept of time blocks any attempt to conceive of infinity and eternity. The angels do not know what time is, for they have no sun and moon to measure time. Past and future for them are together. A thousand years is like a minute. Heavenly time is an appearance, thus it is psychological.

Mr. Woofenden noted the interesting point that without the marks to indicate the vowels in the Hebrew writing, Hebrew verbs have no tense, a fact that makes it peculiarly adapted to be the language of revelation in the Old Testament.

Philosophers have characterized time as the mind of space and space as the body of time, and have called space-time the basic ingredient of nature. Swedenborg's concept of space and time is in the main stream of thought, but his idea is richer, for it involves good and truth as well as space and time. His concepts of time and space as treated of extensively in his works have yet to be evaluated as to their philosophical implications. Here is a field where research is needed and deserved.

Mr. Woofenden had said that the aim of his address was to widen the horizon of his listeners and readers and to stimulate further reading on the subject. It is evident that the paper was stimulating both to those who have given thought to this philosophical topic and to those for whom this in an entirely new line of thought. It carried forward the purpose of the Association by showing the relation between concepts in the works of Swedenborg and the philosophy of the present day.

In discussing the paper Professor Edward F. Allen illustrated the importance of this concept in the history of Philosophy and in understanding the relationship between the natural world and the spiritual world.

The minutes of this meeting and the address will be published in the July-September, 1970 issue of the *New Philosophy*. Those wishing to subscribe to this journal or to join the Swedenborg Scientific Association are cordially invited to write to Mr. E. Boyd Asplundh, Treasurer, Bryn Athyn, Pa. 19009.

Morna Hyatt, Secretary

THE SECRET OF SWEDENBORG

The Secret of Swedenborg is told in a book written about a hundred years ago by Henry James, father of Henry James, the novelist and William James, the philosopher for whom a towering new building at Harvard is named.

The book did not make his famous sons ardent Swedenborgians, and, in fact, Henry James himself was not pleased with *The New Jerusalem* as their set up.

His book is hard reading, but it proclaims his emancipation and immense relief in finding through Swedenborg that "God" was not the aloof, haughty and indolent Tyrant that he had been led to suppose, but a careful, clever and diligent Worker, Who works from all directions at once, but very secretly. This is what Henry James found to be the Secret of Swedenborg.

If the matter is brought to his attention, man can see how the Divine Power has been working beneath, above, within and through him. Recognition of what is so quietly given, is what is desired by the Supreme but Secret Giver. The great Secret is that the Lord does work, but in ways that the man does not see or feel except as he freely responds with gratitude to use what is given him, from the Lord, in all his dealings with others.

Words, many words, do not necessarily convey an idea. There must be a willingness to see—and an object—mental or otherwise to be seen—along with desire, ability and some preparation to appreciate what is there to be seen—before an idea is conveyed.

There are many "secrets" worth finding in Swedenborg—all very carefully explained, and well worth the Effort to find them.

Cornelia Hinkley Hotson

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