

THE NEW PHILOSOPHY

VOL. LXII

JULY-SEPTEMBER, 1959

No. 3

TRANSACTIONS OF THE SIXTY-SECOND ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SWEDENBORG SCIENTIFIC ASSOCIATION

The Sixty-Second Annual Meeting of the Swedenborg Scientific Association was held at Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, on Wednesday, May 20, 1959.

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 p.m. by the President, Prof. Edward F. Allen.

Upon motion, the reading of the **Minutes** of the last Annual Meeting was dispensed with, and they were adopted as printed in the *NEW PHILOSOPHY* for July-September, 1958.

The Chairman appointed Mr. William R. Cooper a **Committee on the Roll**. Mr. Cooper later reported an attendance of 73 persons, 49 of whom were members of the Association.

Mr. G. King Wille, reporting for the **Nominating Committee**, which consisted of himself and Mr. John C. Echols, placed in nomination the present incumbents.

There being no additional nominations from the floor, the Secretary was instructed to cast a unanimous ballot, whereupon the following were declared elected:

President: Mr. Edward F. Allen

Members of the Board:

Mr. Randolph W. Childs

Mr. Charles S. Cole

Dr. Marlin W. Heilman

Rev. W. Cairns Henderson

Miss Morna Hyatt

Rev. Hugo Lj. Odhner
 Mr. Joel Pitcairn
 Mr. Kenneth Rose
 Rev. Leonard I. Tafel

The following reports were read and accepted :

Report of the Board of Directors
 Treasurer's Report
 Report of the Editorial Board of the NEW PHILOSOPHY
 Report of the President

Reports from Chapters of the Association in Glenview and Kitchener were read by the Secretary.

Mr. Kenneth Rose then presented a resolution honoring the work of two members recently called into the spiritual world : Mrs. Robert M. Cole and Mrs. Thorsten Sigstedt. The resolution was carried with a rising vote [see page 72].

The Chairman then called upon Dr. Hugo Odhner to read the Annual Address, entitled "Appearance and Reality," and written by Bishop George de Charms. Bishop De Charms was unable to be present because of illness.

Following the Address, the Rev. W. Cairns Henderson presented the following resolution :

RESOLVED that this Association, in Annual Meeting assembled, request the President to convey to Bishop De Charms, its warm appreciation of his stimulating address, its deep regret that the address could not be delivered by him, and its affectionate good wishes for an early return to his duties.

The resolution was adopted by acclamation.

President Allen expressed thanks to Dr. Odhner for reading the paper.

In discussing the paper, Bishop W. D. Pendleton pointed out that it deals with the main questions of philosophy. He stressed the importance of Swedenborg's philosophical works to the church at the present time.

Others taking part in the discussion were Mr. Charles S. Cole, Mr. Kenneth Rose, and Dr. Hugo Lj. Odhner.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

MORNA HYATT, *Secretary*

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
1958-1959

Since the last Annual Meeting of the Association, four meetings of the Board have been held on the following dates: May 21 and October 14, 1958, and March 10 and May 20, 1959.

At the meeting held on May 21, 1958, the following officers were elected:

Vice-President: Mr. Charles S. Cole

Executive Editor of the New Philosophy: Rev. W. Cairns Henderson

Members of the Editorial Board:

Mr. Edward F. Allen, Rev. Hugo Lj. Odhner, Mr. Lawson A. Pendleton

Treasurer: Miss Beryl G. Briscoe

Secretary: Miss Morna Hyatt

A little over a year ago, plans were made for the publication of a work entitled *A Partial Concordance of the Rational Psychology*, compiled by Mr. Harold F. Pitcairn. By last fall the work of arranging and editing this book by Miss Beryl Briscoe was begun.

Preliminary plans for the publication in photo-offset of the two volumes of the *Animal Kingdom* have been made. Messrs. Charles S. Cole, Grant Doering, John Echols, Lawson Pendleton, and King Wille are a committee to see this work through publication and to work up a campaign for its sale. It is interesting to note that this work has not been published since the middle of the 19th Century, i.e. over a hundred years ago. Therefore it is in the libraries of very few, either in the church or outside. It is hoped that enough people will be able to subscribe to its purchase so that a substantial portion of the publication costs can be met by this means. If, for example, 200 sets are sold at \$10.00 per set, the resulting \$2000.00 would represent about two-fifths of the total initial expense.

The President has appointed a committee consisting of Messrs. Robert Johns (*chairman*), John Echols, Lawson Pendleton, Kenneth Rose, and King Wille to make a study of the Swedenborg Scientific Association and report to the Board of Directors its recommendations. Many suggestions have been made from time

to time: such as inaugurating a campaign to increase its membership, extending its uses, contracting its uses, changing its name, getting new blood in as officers. The committee is to take a good look at the entire organization. Only one member on the committee is a member of the Board, and he is its youngest member, so that the viewpoint of the committee will be almost a generation younger than that of the present governing group. The idea here is not a criticism of what is, but a recognition of a very important fact—that if the work of the Association is to continue, its uses will have to be understood by the coming generations, and that the only way to achieve this is to get younger people into the work of the Association.

Respectfully submitted,

MORNA HYATT, *Secretary*

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Although there is at present a considerable amount being done by the Swedenborg Scientific Association in carrying out part of its first stated purpose, that of preservation and publication, its second objective is not receiving the emphasis for which one might hope. This has to do with the promotion of the principles in the philosophical works and with relating them to present-day science and philosophy.

People are not much interested in this phase of the work. Yet the story is not as bad as some have suggested; because this kind of interest, from the origin of the Association, has depended for the most part upon the work of one or two people alone, at each period of its history.

There are a number of contributing factors to this state of affairs. At the time of the organization of our Association in 1900, a number of people were involved who were also stimulated by the prospects of the growth of the New Church. A new Revelation was recognized by them, and, somehow, the philosophical and scientific works were related to this revelation and a great promise was felt to be in store for the future of the Association.

There was another factor that we forget today. That was the relative simplicity of science then. People could get together in

a room and discuss questions in chemistry, physics, psychology, anatomy, geology, astronomy, and so on. Today it is almost impossible to get a group together on this basis. The fact is, that each science has developed to such an extent that about the only people who can get together on this basis are those people who do not know much about science! They can still get together and talk about everything in creation in the short space of an hour or so.

The serious worker in any field is very uncomfortable in such an environment. I suppose that this is because he has so many problems in his own field, and is exhausted from hearing superficial solutions of them. Not all people who wish to deal philosophically with things have had a reputation for considerable training in the scientific aspects of the topics about which they wish to philosophize. This does not encourage the person who has difficulty enough to solve problems in his own field to enter into general discussions. This is not a criticism, nor is it a justification. It is merely a statement of fact. These are the circumstances under which we live—and it is interesting to note that Swedenborg warned his readers that this might happen someday in science.

The study of science is difficult. The study of philosophy is difficult. To develop original ideas and make contributions to science is more difficult than its study alone. The contribution of original ideas to philosophy is more difficult than its study alone. A contribution to philosophy backed up by scientific competence is even more difficult to make, and, indeed, is rare. The intellectual task that the Swedenborg Scientific Association set for itself is therefore one of the most difficult.

There is some temptation on the part of certain people to question the value of the effort put into Swedenborg's pre-theological works. This is not the place to enter into an argument to counter-attack that view. Yet one such argument might be noted. It is that if we distinguish between New Church philosophy and Swedenborg's philosophy, all that is essential to philosophy is in the Writings.

I doubt if there is anyone in this room who seriously wishes to contest this view. But the supposed corollary that goes with this is, I think, false. This is that consequently there is no use to be associated with the philosophical works.

What is essential is one thing. But to admit an essential feature does not carry with it the logical conclusion that what is ancillary, what is supporting, is useless.

I have thought many times about our history and why, in so far as its intellectual growth is concerned, it has been so slow—why we have been somewhat unsuccessful in stimulating more people in the study of New Church philosophy; and I would like to make what I consider two reasonable suggestions for this state of affairs.

1) In the early history of our Association, much of what Swedenborg wrote, even in his pre-theological years, was regarded as on a level with the Writings by some of the most important leaders of thought of that time. Thus the view was held by many that Swedenborg's philosophy was the final word. Now, of course, this was an extreme view; but many of the followers held to such a position which was not far removed from it.

A possible result of this was that when correlation of the *Principia* with the modern science of 1912 or thereabout failed, during and after the Beekman period, the idea of the infallibility of Swedenborg's philosophy received a jolt. Yet the fact remains that one of the saving features of Swedenborg's philosophy is that it could *not* be correlated with the science of 1912! The circumstances would be very embarrassing if, coupled with our normal troubles with the science of Swedenborg's day, we would also have to support the science of 1912.

We have missed a point here. What is infallible is not the science either of 1734 or of 1912, or the use to which Swedenborg put the one or the earlier workers in the Association put the other; or, in fact, the use to which we put that of 1959. What is permanent at least in Swedenborg's philosophy, and what will be a part of any New Church philosophy, is that it promulgates certain fundamental doctrines: First and foremost, that God the Creator exists: that there are end, cause and effects originating in God the Creator: and that our understanding of His creation in nature is made possible through such doctrines as that of degrees, which distinguishes between what is continuous and what is discrete; of form, which recognizes reality in nature, in the mind and in the spiritual world; of correspondence—a something that is far beyond

mere analogies and similarities that somehow should make it possible to relate what happens in one degree with that in another.

And every single one of these doctrines raises problems which every student must solve for himself, which every generation must solve for itself. That is the very nature of philosophy. Its very nature prevents us from wrapping up knowledge and its meanings in neat little packages to pass on to others so that we may perform the uncharitable act of encouraging their thinking powers to solidify and to atrophy.

The person, or the generation, who does not recognize problems to be solved has taken on faith alone, without any thought on its own part, that all is well, all is solved. *Faith* we do need, faith that we have the means.

2) The other suggestion really follows from the one just given. I am not quite sure that it is distinct from it.

Without questions, without problems, the mind has no challenge. But once we see these questions, what to do? Take correlation as an example. Swedenborg does make an appeal to the science of his day as evidence for his *Principia* doctrine.

If the science of our day has any merit superior to that of his day, and if the fundamental principles of his philosophy are true principles, then there should be better agreement between a "Principia" developed on these principles and the evidence of the science of our day than there was during his time. This is not correlation. This is to see the operation of certain fundamental principles manifest in nature.

But the object lesson is in the works of Swedenborg. He asked many questions. And he asked some of them over and over again. The search for the soul—its mechanism, the *modus operandi* relation between it and the body—was a time consuming and endless task for him. But he believed in the existence of the soul. In another case, in his studies he wished that someone else might have the task of getting under way the explanation of the first element of creation in the *Principia*. These are two clear illustrations that Swedenborg recognized unsolved problems in man's desire to understand creation.

Swedenborg was searching for the truth, he was not preaching it. The fact remains that the object lesson is that his labors were

not reflected in a few well chosen words. They were labored—as labors are.

Do our scholars and their supporters take the same kind of view of the demand upon their intellectual resources? Whether it be the *Animal Kingdom*, *The Principia*, or the *Rational Psychology*, if any one of them should carry the day with us it will be only because some hard-working scholar or scholars will recognize the principles in Swedenborg's philosophy, will feel the challenge of questions which they raise.

EDWARD F. ALLEN

REPORT OF THE TREASURER

FOR THE YEAR ENDING MAY 20, 1959

GENERAL ACCOUNT

Receipts

Dues	\$757.24	
Subscriptions to the NEW PHILOSOPHY	42.66	\$799.90
Contributions	112.93	
Cash held in General Account for Publication Fund	497.56	\$1410.39
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Balance May 21, 1958	1753.89	\$3164.28
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Expenditures

Printing and mailing 4 issues of the NEW PHILOSOPHY		\$1053.90
Safe Deposit Box	4.40	
Office Expense	20.00	
Annual Notices	7.50	
Editorial Expense	2.00	\$1087.80
		<hr/>
Balance in General Account: May 20, 1959		\$2076.48

PUBLICATION ACCOUNT

Receipts

Publications sold	\$498.99	
Contribution to Publication Fund ..	500.00	
Tax receipts	2.47	
Income from City of New York Corporate Stock	117.00	
Interest (H. V. T. Savings Account)	18.55	
Interest (H. V. Fed. Savings & Loan Assocn.)	44.05	\$1181.06
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Balance in Publication Account: May 21, 1958	1806.92	\$2987.98
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Expenditures

Books bought for resale	42.50	
State Tax	2.80	
Expenses for Mailing, Wrapping, Postage, etc.	58.60	
Balance on Publication Receipts held in General Account	497.56	
Expense on Editing MS. <i>Concordance of Rat. Psychology</i>	400.00	\$1001.46
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Balance in Publication Account: May 20, 1959		\$1986.52

RECAPITULATION

Balance in General Account	\$2076.48
Balance in Publication Account	1986.52
8 sh. The City of New York Corporate Stock, 3 per cent	3900.00
	<hr/>
	\$7963.00

BOOKS SOLD

The Cerebrum	2 sets
Dock and Dam	1 copy
Economy of the Animal Kingdom, 2 vols.	15 sets
The Fibre	5 copies
The Five Senses	4 "

Generation	3	“
The Infinite	1	“
Letters and Memorials of Emanuel Swedenborg, 2 vols.	4	sets
Mechanical Inventions	3	copies
Ontology	2	“
Principia—Latin edition	2	“
English = 2 vols.	3	sets
Psychologica	4	copies
Psychological Transactions	5	“
Rational Psychology	13	“
Retardation of the Earth	3	“
De Sale Communi	3	“
Scientific and Philosophical Treatises, Pt. I: 1,2	6	“
Tremulation	3	“
	—	
	82	
Reprints, Prologue to <i>Animal Kingdom</i>	26	
Swedenborg as a Physical Scientist (Dingle)	4	
E. Swedenborg as a Geologist (Nathorst)	4	
The Principles of the New Philosophy (Odhner)	3	
E. Swedenborg, Anatomist & Physiologist (Retzius) ..	4	
NEW PHILOSOPHY—Back Issues	40	
1 set 1900–1955, 1 set 1900–1958	2	sets
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	165	

MEMBERSHIP

Membership reported May 21, 1958	271
Lapsed	1
Resigned	7
Died	7
	—
	256
New Members	15
	—
	271

Respectfully submitted,

B. G. BRISCOE, *Treasurer*

REPORT OF THE EDITORIAL BOARD

Since the last Annual Meeting of the Swedenborg Scientific Association, four issues of the *NEW PHILOSOPHY* have been published: July–September and October–December, 1958, and January–March and April–June, 1959. There was no increase in the number of pages.

The warning against complacency about the future of the journal voiced in our last report proved to be justified. For good and sufficient reasons the new writers then mentioned as being in prospect are still in prospect, and the task of finding copy of suitable content and quality to fill four issues of the *NEW PHILOSOPHY* each year continues to be a difficult one, even for a four-man editorial board. The problems involved are not peculiar to the journal; they simply reflect the problems of the Association.

It would be with extreme reluctance that the editorial board would recommend reducing the number of yearly issues. We hope that this reluctance is shared by possible contributors, and that it will be expressed by them in a manner that will make it unnecessary even to consider such a recommendation.

Meanwhile the board continues its efforts. A scheme has been initiated to encourage young writers; and while the situation may not change much in the near future, a long-range planning program will be started in the fall which, it is hoped, will bear fruit in due course.

Respectfully submitted,

W. CAIRNS HENDERSON, *Executive Editor*

OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

At a meeting of the Board of Directors held on May 20, 1959, the following officers were elected:

Vice-President: Mr. Charles S. Cole

Editorial Board: Rev. W. Cairns Henderson, *Executive Editor*,
Messrs. Edward F. Allen, Hugo Lj. Odhner, Lawson A.
Pendleton

Treasurer: Miss Beryl G. Briscoe

Secretary: Miss Morna Hyatt

MORNA HYATT, *Secretary*