

NOTES BY THE EDITOR

THIS ISSUE

One of our readers, Lennart Alfelt, has written some remarks, included in this issue, using the expression "open world." It is not always clear what recent writers have meant by this term, but it is suggestive. Materialism and mechanistic philosophies earlier in this century represented what we might call a "closed world." It was complete. Earth, body, and mind were all the same—governed by the laws of chemical bonds and physical energy. That is "material" which can be made known to our sense perceptions; that is "spiritual" which is as yet too subtle to come within this domain; yet all is natural.

If we read the words "open world" to mean that our natural world is not closed but open to another more interior one, we find evidence on every hand. Each of the contributors in this issue in his own way has hinted at this.

Kenneth Rose in his discussion ending with comments on Gödel suggests that even such an ultimate as arithmetic is open and never complete. Hugh Gyllenhaal feels from his experience and reading a need for a degree in the existence of things beyond the one obvious to sense perceptions. Bruce Glenn sees error involved in the idea of an hierarchy of the disciplines—science and art each has its role because each alone would have to be content with a closed world. Morna Hyatt knows from her experience as a teacher of science and as a student of it that teleological explanations are explanations because there is so much more to creation than the deterministic world of a mechanism. Sig Synnestvedt quite independently asks questions all of which would seem to call for answers dealing with a world beyond the material one.

Perhaps one of those responsible for the term "open world" was Herman Weyl, a mathematician, who some thirty years ago gave the Terry lectures at Yale—entitled "The Open World—Three Lectures on the Metaphysical Implications of Science." (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1932.) But his open world could never be comprehended, it seems, in any unified manner. He says in conclusion:

. . . mind is freedom within the limitations of existence; it is open toward the infinite. Indeed, God as the completed infinite cannot and will not be

comprehended by it; neither can God penetrate into man by revelation, nor man penetrate to him by mystical perception. The completed infinite we can only represent in symbols. From this relationship every creative act of man receives its deep consecration and dignity. But only in mathematics and physics, as far as I can see, has symbolical-theoretical construction acquired sufficient solidity to be convincing for everyone whose mind is open to these sciences.

But our writers have suggested in many things an open world that *can* be better comprehended. They also suggest that the *mind* can be open, not merely to the means throughout the various disciplines but to the means that govern them all—experience, reason, and revelation—as well. As we go over the contributions to this issue we note a common link among them—they are not expository but rather questioning—questioning with minds open to gaining a knowledge of creation that includes the material world only as a part.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

The Immanuel Church Book Room. Acknowledgment is here made of the activity of this agency in Glenview, Illinois. It was most active in recent weeks in publicizing and selling in its area the two recent publications of the Association: *A Partial Concordance of the Rational Psychology*, by Harold F. Pitcairn, and the two volumes of *The Animal Kingdom*. The Book Room manager is Olive T. Lee.

Association Exhibit at Convention. The Rev. David J. Garrett of Wilmington, Delaware, and Mr. Lennart Alfelt of Bryn Athyn are a committee representing the Association in the preparation of an exhibit to be displayed at the meeting of General Convention this coming June in Washington, D. C.

Materials are being gathered together now with the hope that a preliminary showing will be possible at the annual meeting of the Swedenborg Scientific Association on May 17th in Bryn Athyn.

THE NEW PHILOSOPHY. As noted in the previous issue, a new effort was begun late in February of this year to bring new life into our journal. This effort has placed the so-called January-March issue in your hands and now you have the April-June issue. Deadlines for copy for the next three issues are set for May 17th, September 1st, and November 15th.