

EDITORIAL REMARKS

In This Issue

In his paper entitled "Towards a Universal Chronology," Erik E. Sandstrom is practicing philosophy of the kind that the SSA actively encourages—the analysis of the natural realm of existence from the perspective of philosophic principles drawn from the Word. In so doing, he is pursuing a path followed by recent contributors to this journal. This paper stands apart, however, because of its focus on history. New Church historiography is not well developed to date. However, Erik Sandstrom's overview of history does reflect one generally accepted tenet of a New Church view of history—that historical events have acted out the spiritual progress of mankind, and this in turn is linked to the historical succession of churches which have been the custodians of the Word in its various forms. These churches are the Most Ancient (Adamic), the Ancient (Noetic), Israelitish (Hebrew), First Christian, and Second Christian (the New Church). This historical outlook is contained in the passage quoted by Erik Sandstrom: "All things that take place in the natural world correspond to spiritual things, and all spiritual things have relation to the church" (DP 251.4).

The concluding part of Daniel W. Goodenough's series on the operation of the Divine Providence in the affairs of men appears in this number. In this series, the author has grappled with questions that have held the attention of philosophers, theologians, historians, and men in general for centuries; and in so doing he makes an important contribution to New Church historiography. It is the Association's intention to publish this series as a monograph in 1984.

Stephen Gladish's commentary on Thoreau was written in response to his reading of N. J. Berridge's "The Natural Basis of Spiritual Existence" (*New Philosophy* 85:4, 1982). We are reminded that art and literature represent the disciplined embodiment of thoughts and affections—those spiritual entities that mould the life of individual and collective mankind. In this commentary on Thoreau, Stephen Gladish gives us a glimpse of one man's expression of awareness of the spiritual reality that lies behind all material existence.

The editor of Translators' Corner, J. Durban Odhner, includes in this issue an interesting suggestion by Horand K. Gutfeldt for the revision of a part of the New Testament Word. As the author makes quite clear, the implication of the revised translation he offers has a significant import for educational philosophy and its history.

Recent Publications

The Association has recently published a monograph by Robert W. Gladish entitled "Swedenborg, Fourier and the America of the 1840's." In the Introduction to the work, the author quotes F. O. Matthiessen in his *American Renaissance*: "The forties probably gave rise to more movements of reform than any other decade in our history...." and for Matthiessen, Swedenborgian thought provided some of the inspiration for these movements. And in her book *The New Church in the New World*, Marguerite B. Block says: "When Fourierism swept the country in the early forties there were many who saw a resemblance between its social philosophy and the doctrines of Swedenborg, and a serious attempt was made to bring the New Church into the movement." This attempt failed, argues Gladish, because "at core the two systems were incompatible." Gladish then sets out "to demonstrate the nature of this incompatibility and to probe ...the more subtle question of why the effort to make this fusion seemed worthwhile and attractive to such a wide variety of men and women."

The work is a valuable contribution to the growing body of literature that analyses and documents the spread and impact of Swedenborgian and New Church ideas. An announcement of the monograph appears at the end of this issue.

Association board member Gregory L. Baker has had published in *The Physics Teacher* an article entitled "Emanuel Swedenborg—18th century cosmologist." After introducing the reader to Swedenborg through a biographical note, Baker presents an account of the *Principia* cosmology from the construction of the elements to planetary evolution. The article is well illustrated both with diagrams from the *Principia* and with some of Baker's own. We recommend this lucid account to those who want a concise overview of Swedenborg's cosmology.