

TRANSACTIONS OF THE EIGHTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING

Swedenborg Scientific Association

The meeting was called to order on Monday, April 30, 1984, at 8:00 p.m. in Pendleton Hall Auditorium, the Academy of the New Church, Bryn Athyn, PA.

The minutes of the previous annual meeting on May 2, 1983, were accepted as published in *The New Philosophy* for July-September, 1983, Volume Eighty-Six, No. 3, p. 130.

In his opening remarks, the President welcomed a large gathering of members and friends. He commented on the philosophical manner of thinking developed in Swedenborg's pre-theological works and related this to the objectives of the Association in publishing and disseminating related ideas.

The names of Professor Charles S. Cole, Jr. and Assistant Professor Prescott A. Rogers were placed in nomination for the positions of President and Vice President of the Association, respectively. Both were duly elected.

The following names were placed in nomination for the Board of Directors of the Association: Dr. Gregory L. Baker, Dr. Grant R. Doering, Rev. Daniel W. Goodenough, Rev. Andrew Heilman, Rev. Willard L.D. Heinrichs, James L. Pendleton, M.D., Rev. Donald L. Rose, Mr. Jerome V. Sellner, and Rev. Dr. William R. Woofenden. The above gentlemen were duly elected.

The Secretary reported on various projects in which the Association is currently involved.

The Treasurer, E. Boyd Asplundh, Esq., noted that his formal report will be published in a forthcoming issue of *The New Philosophy* after the close of the 1983-1984 fiscal year.

Dr. Erland J. Brock, Editor of *The New Philosophy* in his report presented a statement of purpose as it related to publication of the journal.

The business portion of the meeting being concluded, Mr. Prescott A. Rogers, Assistant Professor of History and Greek at the College of the Academy of the New Church delivered the annual address which was entitled, "The Philosophical and Ethical Movements Around the Sixth Century B.C."

Many students of cultural history have noted the remarkable intellectual achievements *circa* 600 B.C. Both in western and eastern civilization great advances were made in the areas of philosophical inquiry and ethical living. The students have wondered as to why

and how these advances were made, without discovering a satisfactory explanation.

Although the Heavenly Doctrines do not specifically refer to these philosophical and ethical movements, they certainly offer clues so that we may better understand the reason for and the methods of these movements.

The annual address described in general terms these movements (Mahavira, Buddha, and Hindu Classic from India; Lao Tsu and Confucius from China; Zoroaster from Persia; the prophets of Israel; and the philosophers of Greece). The annual address focused on these movements in light of the Lord's teachings concerning His church on earth. The movements were linked with the prior Ancient Church, the subsequent Christian Church, and the New Church.

Discussion from an enthusiastic audience continued until approximately 10:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jerome V. Sellner, *Secretary*

EDITOR'S REPORT

In this report I want to comment on three matters: last year's advertising campaign, true order in developing philosophic principles, and the challenges we face.

Advertising

Our advertising through the American Philosophical Society with displays of *The New Philosophy* at regional meetings drew no responses and will therefore not be repeated in future. However, the distribution of free issues of Vol. 86 to 244 college and university libraries whose institutions have religion and/or philosophy departments resulted in new subscriptions from five institutions, some in the USA and some overseas. This 2% response by new subscribers is what market consultants say you can expect from mail advertising. This brings to 22 the number of institutions of higher learning that receive the journal. In addition, advertising in the College of the Academy of the New Church resulted in several new subscriptions from students.

True Order

One kind of thinking I am trying to encourage through our

journal is that described in *Arcana Coelestia* 129, here quoted in full from the Elliot translation (Swedenborg Society, 1983):

Anybody can recognize that the basic assumptions a person makes, even when completely false, govern him, and that all knowledge and reasoning buttress those assumptions. For countless flattering ideas occur to him to confirm him in falsities. Consequently when a person's basic assumption is to believe nothing until he sees and understands it, he cannot possibly believe; for spiritual and celestial things are neither visible to the eyes nor comprehensible in mental images. But the true order is for a person to become wise from the Lord, that is, from His Word. In that case everything follows as it should, and he is also enlightened in matters of reason and of fact. Indeed, nobody is forbidden to acquire knowledge, since it is useful for life and gives delight. And the person in whom faith resides is in no way forbidden to think and to talk as learned people in the world do. But he does so from the premise of belief in the Lord's Word and of confirming spiritual and celestial truths by means of natural truths, using as far as is possible the terminology of the learned world. Consequently his premise must be the Lord, not self; the former is life, while the latter is death.

The "basic assumptions" referred to in the first sentence above I understand to be philosophic principles. There is no realm of human thought or activity that does not have such principles at its core; and it is our hope that the journal will contain a growing body of studies whose origin is the Word, thereby reflecting true order.

Challenges

In an earlier report I indicated our hope that articles in our journal would address philosophically subjects beyond the natural sciences, and it is gratifying that in recent issues we have been able to publish papers on history. Again we make an appeal for material, and this time particularly for papers on man as a social being—on sociology, economic and political theory, and psychology. These fields of thought are having a profound effect on the character of modern society (as they had on pre-modern society), and philosophic examination of aspects of them is urgently needed.

Finally, our journal must be furnished with papers that, in addition to reflecting our essential purposes, have high standards of scholarly treatment. This does not mean, however, that we seek

only in-depth, highly documented treatises (we do in fact have several papers of this kind awaiting publication). We need as well short articles that represent philosophic reflection or scholarly inquiry of limited scope.

The journal can be a vehicle for the transmission of ideas that can help remold the world. We invite you to participate in this process.

REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

During the past year the Board of Directors met four times subsequent to the previous Annual Meeting: On May 2, 1983, for the election of officers, and on October 11, 1983, February 7, 1984, and April 30, 1984.

The Research Grant Program is administered by Dr. Gregory L. Baker. Three projects are scheduled for the summer of 1984.

1. Continuing translation from French to English of the personal letters of René Descartes by Mr. Paul Funk. As far as is known, English translations other than those being handled under the auspices of the SSA are nonexistent.
2. Continuation of the translation of Swedenborg's *De Sale Comuni (On Common Salt)* from Latin to English by Mr. Michael David.
3. A study of the type of thought and ideas concerning life on other planets prior to the publication of Swedenborg's *Earths in the Universe* by Mr. Richard L. Goerwitz, III.

Dr. Robert W. Gladish's book, *Swedenborg, Fourier, and the America of the 1840's* was published by the SSA and is available through the General Church Book Center at Cairncrest.

A revision of *Psychological Transactions* is all but completed. Included are a new title page, a new table of contents, a foreword, minor changes to the original preface, and an index.

Developing a researcher's manual for the benefit of those doing research on Swedenborg is an ongoing project being undertaken by Dr. Woofenden.

Articles by Mr. Norman J. Berridge which have been published in *The New Philosophy* entitled "Thinking from Correspondences" are being revised by Mr. Berridge and will be published in book form entitled *The Spiritual Basis of Natural Reality*.

Because *Principles of the New Philosophy* is out of print, it was felt to be an appropriate time to consider a more attractive format such as a paperback with larger type, an introduction, a table of contents, an

explanatory foreword, a key to the abbreviations, a title page, and even a glossary, before proceeding with the next printing.

The SSA's exhibit, which was used at the last General Church Assembly in Guelph, Ontario, and was formerly on display at the lower entrance to Pendleton Hall, will be set up at the forthcoming assemblies of the General Church in Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania, and the General Convention at Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire.

Other pending matters include the consideration of attractive dust jackets for our books and revising our book-price structure so as to keep it in line with current costs.

The completion of a cumulative index for *The New Philosophy* is expected soon.

Respectfully submitted
Jerome V. Sellner, *Secretary*

TREASURER'S REPORT

for year ending April 30, 1984

BALANCE APRIL 30, 1983	\$73,183.98
<i>Plus Receipts 1983/84</i>	
Dues	\$ 1,426.23
Subscriptions.....	213.75
Contributions	3,590.00
Book Sales	2,521.04
Interest	<u>2,297.12</u>
	\$ 10,048.14
<i>Less Expenses 1983/84</i>	
NEW PHILOSOPHY	
(4 issues).....	\$ 7,380.24
Postage.....	405.77
Editorial Expenses.....	3,598.82
Book Publishing	1,451.80
Research.....	2,057.75
Misc. Office Expenses	123.92
Travel	<u>300.00</u>
	\$ 15,318.30
BALANCE APRIL 30, 1984	\$67,913.82