

EDITORIAL REMARKS

In This Issue

The opening article by Anders Hallengren gives a fascinating account of some aspects of the place of Swedenborg in Russian thought and life. We are delighted to bring to our readers this contribution of a scholar and writer who has contributed widely to the fields of comparative literature and international relations. Recently, Mr. Hallengren and the Reverend Donald L. Rose represented Swedenborg Publishers International at a conference titled "The Recovery of the Russian Philosophic Tradition," held at St. Petersburg and Moscow early in September, 1991.¹

William Ross Woofenden's treatment of the theory of causality in Swedenborg's works continues with a focus on the mind/body problem. This latter has had a central place in the history of philosophy, and is a problem with which modern philosophers still grapple.

In her letter, Linda Simonetti Odhner offers some response to papers by Horand K. Gutfeldt, "The Evolution of Life on Earth and the Search of K. E. von Baer for the Ultimate Causes; Highlights from the History of Interpretation" (October-December 1989, 171-182), and Mark R. Carlson, "Evolution, the Limbus, and Hereditary Evil" (*ibid.*, 183-228). We appreciate the trouble she has taken to juxtapose various ideas that impinge on the question of biological development. Perhaps more detailed application of the doctrine of causality found in Swedenborg's theological works could help resolve some of the issues that surround it.

New Projects

The generous response of our subscribers to an appeal for funds has enabled the association to proceed with several projects, among them the translation of a major work on Kant and Swedenborg by German scholar Gottlieb Florschütz. The translator, the Reverend Kurt Nemitz, reports that this text could play an important role in restoring Swedenborg's name in Europe following the damage done by Kant's *Dreams of a Spirit-seer*. A German edition of the work is being published in the spring of 1992 by a German publisher. We are exploring the possibility of publishing an English edition at the same time.

¹ Please note that this issue is one year behind schedule.

Swedenborg Publishers International

At the close of the International Swedenborg Publishers Conference held in Manchester, England, April 15-18, 1991, people interested in particular projects worked together to initiate them. As a consequence, four ventures were undertaken during the period June to November, 1991: (1) a library data-base project coordinated by Mrs. Carroll Odhner, Swedenborg Library director in Bryn Athyn, and the Reverend Norman Ryder of Chester, England; (2) participation by Mr. Anders Hallengren and the Reverend Donald Rose at the Transnational Institute's St. Petersburg-Moscow conference on the recovery of traditional Russian philosophy spoken of above; (3) distribution of Swedenborg's works and collateral literature by Aline and Guus Janssens of RE Breda, Netherlands, in Eastern Europe and Germany; and (4) organization of a book booth at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting at Kansas City, Missouri.

These projects were undertaken under the auspices of a newly forming organization title "Swedenborg Publishers International." With the success of the projects, and the expressed desire on the part of participating organizations to continue joint activities, it is becoming all the more necessary to establish the identity of SPI, and to work up a budget for the coming year to enable supporting organizations to include SPI in their budget process.

To this end, the January issue of *SPI* (newsletter of the organization) contains a first statement of purpose to serve as a basis for discussion and final determination of the nature of the organization by participating bodies. It is our expectation that this organization will be clearly defined in the near future, necessitated particularly because new projects are already taking form. If you are interested in SPI and would like to be put on the mailing list for its newsletter, please contact Mr. Leon Rhodes, Editor, at Box 23, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009, or Dr. Erland Brock, Projects Coordinator, at Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009 (FAX (215) 938-1056).