



ways of getting to know and seeing the value of Swedenborg's writings.

I am gradually helping my personal library lose some weight, but Swedenborg's will remain the backbone of what I look toward for satisfying my spiritual hunger for good and true ideas.

Hopefully the next few years will see a slimmer set of books on my shelves, so that when I do my final house move into the spiritual world the books will no longer be required as they are being lived out.

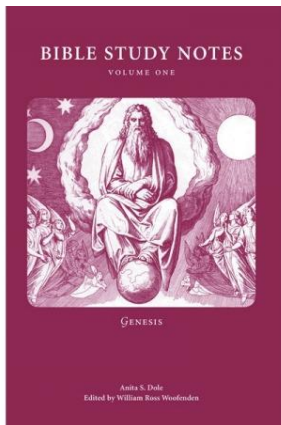
* Logopraxis is a home study course organised by the Australian New Church College for those wishing to gain a deeper understanding of Swedenborg's writings and lead a spiritual life based on them. More information at <http://anccollege.org/>

My early and invincible love of reading I would not exchange for the treasures of India.

Edward Gibbon

BOOK REVIEW

BY Wayne Kasmar



For many years now I have regularly dipped into my set of the **Dole Notes**, which is the name given informally to a six-volume teaching resource for those conducting bible study classes ranging in ages anywhere from the youngest Sunday school children through to adult level. It is an American New Church (Swedenborgian) publication written around sixty five years ago by Anita Dole.

The fact that it is still in print after so long says a lot about its quality, for despite its pragmatic nature, it is nevertheless a remarkable distillation of everything in Swedenborg's writings about the bible and the stories therein. Written in a simple and straightforward style, it is well worth checking out by anyone interested in Swedenborg or the bible.

There are some things to be aware of though. Firstly, it can feel sometimes like you're reading something from a different age; the values and attitudes of people having changed so greatly since it was written. Secondly, it is easy to find yourself quite overwhelmed by the great intensity of truth flooding your way. As it is the Word of God being explained, it is naturally going to be a lot to take in. But curiously, because the style is simple and straightforward you may not actually realise that you are struggling in this way.

Luckily, you can read instead the material covering the same bible story that is pitched more basically at children. I often find myself appreciating greatly reading these sections. They reflect the great beauty of the sphere of innocence with which children respond to bible stories. Still, I always find myself drawn back to the adults section to experience the thrilling richness of deep truth. To help me mentally assimilate it, I sometimes take a pen and paper and just copy out the text in a leisurely fashion. This allows me to examine closely exactly what has been written and gives me the time to ponder it deeply. That seems to help understand the limitless wisdom of God as revealed in his Word.

These volumes can be bought or borrowed from the Swedenborg Centre in North Ryde. A new paperback version has been published.

In books lies the soul of the whole past time, the articulate audible voice of the past when the body and material substance of it has altogether vanished like a dream. - Thomas Carlyle