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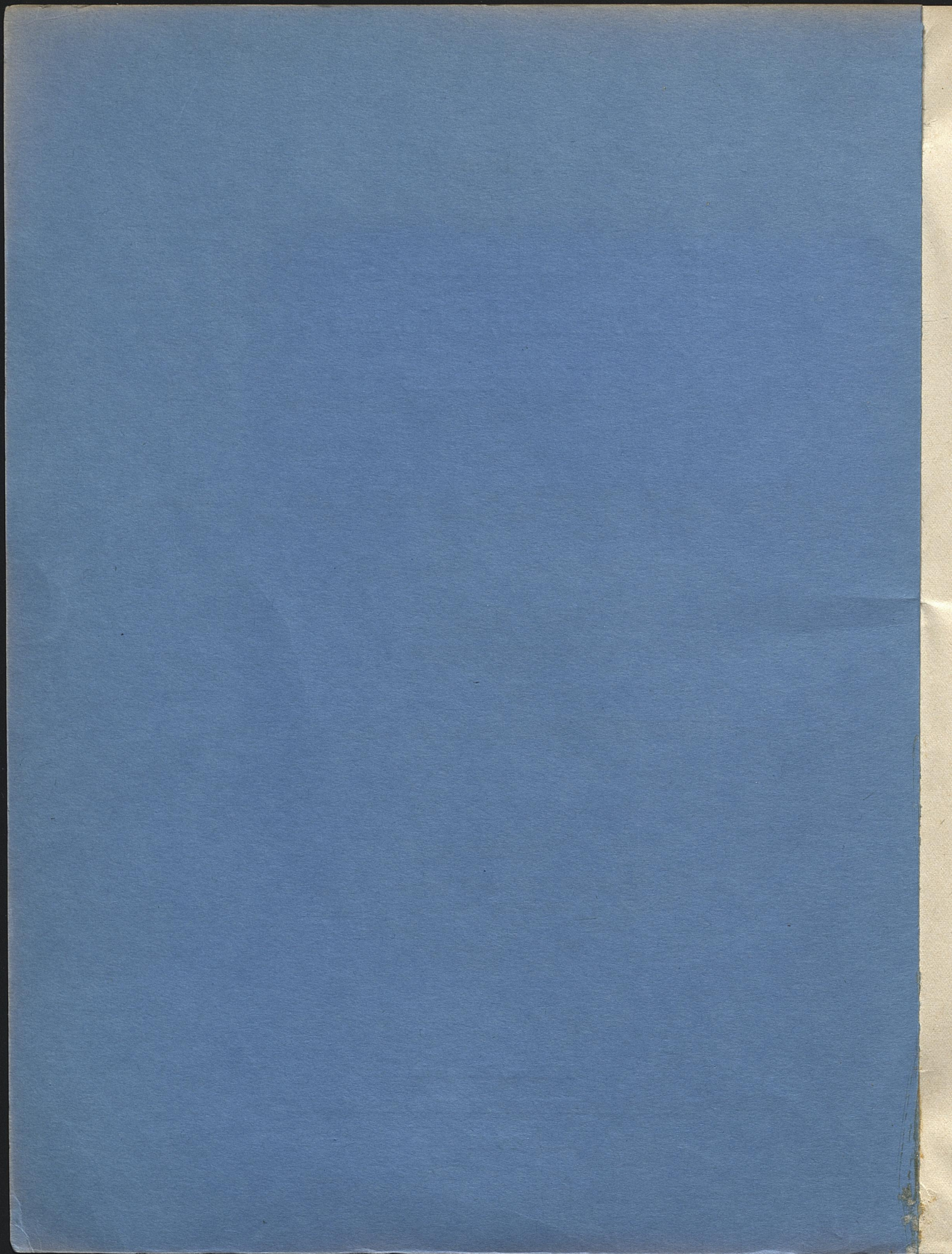
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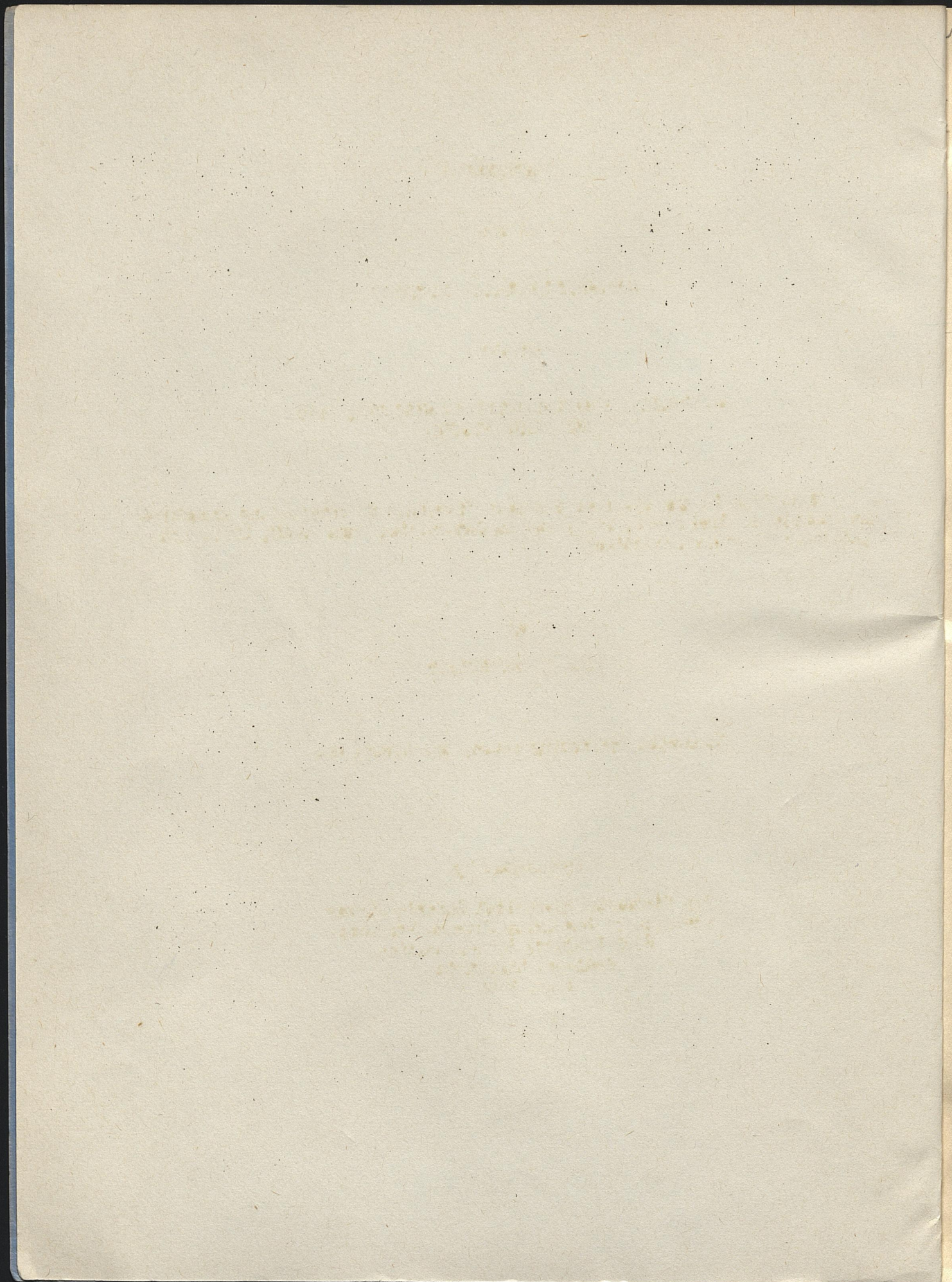
History of the Southern Wisconsin District
of the
Evangelical Lutheran Synod
of Missouri, Ohio, and
other States

Madison, Wisconsin

WISCONSIN HISTORICAL RECORDS SURVEY

1941





HISTORY
of the
SOUTHERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT
of the
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD OF MISSOURI, OHIO
AND OTHER STATES.

Submitted to the Synod of Southern Wisconsin in conventions assembled
in Watertown, June 22-28, 1927, and in Janesville, June 25-29, 1928, and
published at their direction.

by
OTTO F. HATTSTAEDT

Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

Translated by
The Wisconsin Historical Records Survey
Division of Community Service Programs
Work Projects Administration
Madison, Wisconsin
Sept. 1941

The Historical Records Survey Projects

Sargent B. Child, Director
Jacob Hodnefield, Regional Supervisor
J. E. Boell, State Supervisor

Research and Records Programs

Harvey E. Becknell, Director
Mark English, Regional Supervisor
Lowell T. Galt, Chief

Division of Community Service Programs

Florence Kerr, Assistant Commissioner
Helen T. Bundy, Chief Regional Supervisor
Harriet G. Deuss, State Director

Work Projects Administration

Howard O. Hunter, Commissioner
Linus Glotzbach, Regional Director
Mark Muth, State Administrator

* * * * *

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"To bring together the records of the past and to house them in buildings where they will be preserved for the use of men living in the future, a nation must believe in three things. It must believe in the past. It must believe in the future. It must, above all, believe in the capacity of its people so to learn from the past that they can gain in judgment for the creation of the future."

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

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Franklin D. Roosevelt

FOREWORD

As my "History of the South Wisconsin District of the Missouri Synod" was originally written in German and was presented in that language to the synods in session at Watertown and Janesville, it naturally was read almost exclusively by German or German-reading people, or, to be more exact, by those who professed the Lutheran faith, as it was their church that the "History" treated. It was the author's intention to acquaint his people with the history of their church in Wisconsin from the very beginning up until the time the history was published (1928), and he had not the faintest idea that it would also serve another purpose. The "History" came only now, after 12 or 13 years, into the hands of the State Supervisor of the Wisconsin Historical Records Survey, and he at once recognized its value as an addition to the historical knowledge of the State. He had Mr. William H. Lichte render it into English, who at once went to work and with painstaking care furnished a translation which approaches the original as nearly as possible. I have read the translation and my sincerest thanks are due to Mr. Lichte for his fine piece of work. Now that the "History" has become available to the English-speaking public, it is to be hoped that it will be read with some pleasure by at least a few to whom it was not available heretofore.

Otto F. Hattstaedt

Concordia College
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

PREFACE

The Historical Records Survey, under the National direction of Sargent B. Child, is engaged in a Nation-wide survey of the records of State and local governmental units. This work was initiated in January 1936 as a part of the Federal Writers Project of the Works Progress Administration. In Wisconsin the project began operation in February 1936, and on July 1, 1936 the present supervisor was appointed. In August of that year the Survey became an independent part of Federal Project No. 1. Since September 1939 the Survey in Wisconsin has been a State-wide project sponsored by the University of Wisconsin and the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

The objectives of the Survey are twofold. The one is to provide useful employment for unemployed historians, lawyers, teachers, research, and clerical workers. The other object has been the preparation of complete inventories of the records of the State offices, of county, city, and other local governmental units. Besides the preparation of the inventories of the records of governmental units, the Survey is also preparing inventories of the records of the various churches in Wisconsin. This translation of Professor Hattstaedt's history is one of the publications of our church records series.

The Geschichte des Sud-Wisconsin-Distrikts der Ev.-Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten was compiled by Professor Hattstaedt pursuant to a resolution passed by the Synodical Convention in 1922. The final report was submitted to the Synod in the convention assembled in Watertown, June 22-28, 1927, and in Janesville, June 25-29, 1928, and published at the direction of the Synod as a part of the Verhandlungen der zweiunddreissigsten Jahresversammlung des Sud-Wisconsin-Distrikts der Ev.-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt zu Janesville, Wis., vom 27. bis zum 29. Juni 1928. Jahrgang 1928.--Nr. 2. St. Louis, Mo., Concordia Publishing House, 1928. The history was also reprinted by the Concordia Publishing Company and issued as a separate publication. So far as we know, the separate publication is undated.

When the workers on the Historical Records Survey Project were making an inventory of the records of the various churches in the South Wisconsin District of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, we found this history written by Professor Hattstaedt very valuable. Professor Hattstaedt had lived through this period and he knew intimately the development of the churches in the Synod. We found that fully three-fourths of the information contained in this history will be very hard to find elsewhere, and in view of the fact that we were compelled to translate most of the history for our use in the survey, we believed that it would be advisable to translate the remaining portion and thus make the history available to a large number of people who could not read German. We discussed this with Professor Hattstaedt and several other people and they thought it would be a very useful piece of work.

Preface

The original work was published in printed form and in the translation we have not been able to follow the original page for page. Therefore, we have shown the ending and beginning of each page of the original by the number of the page in the left-hand margin. We have included in this translation a copy of the German title page and a translation of Professor Hattstaedt's original foreword. As a matter of convenience we made up a table of contents, which is not found in the original.

Professor Hattstaedt's history was translated from the German by Mr. William H. Lichte, and in its final form was checked by Miss Katherine Hartmann and Mr. Ernst Jung, working under the direction and supervision of Mr. Elmer Plischke. Professor Hattstaedt has also read the entire translation and in many places has made valuable suggestions concerning form and usage. The editors on the staff in the National office have checked this translation and we have profited by their suggestions and criticisms. I wish to thank these people for their cooperation in the preparation of this volume, and the others, especially the typists and proofreaders, who have participated in the preparation of this book.

J. E. BOELL
State Supervisor
Wisconsin Historical Records Survey

September 1941
Madison, Wisconsin

GESCHICHTE

des

"
SUD-WISCONSIN-DISTRIKTS

der

EV.-LUTH. SYNODE VON MISSOURI, OHIO

UND ANDERN STAATEN.

Der in Watertown vom 22. bis zum 28. Juni 1927 und in Janesville vom 25. bis
zum 29. Juni 1928 versammelten Synode des Sud-Wisconsin-Distrikts vorgelegt
und auf deren Beschluss dem Druck übergeben

von

"
OTTO F. HATTSTADT.

Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.

FOREWORD

This history of the Southern Wisconsin District is the result of a resolution passed by the District at its convention in Horicon in 1922. There the question arose whether this were not an opportune time to assemble all available material pertaining to the history of the District, and have it recorded in a coherent manner. Convinced of the importance of the matter, the Synod immediately gave its approval, and entrusted the not exactly easy task to the undersigned.

In order to obtain the essential material, it was necessary first to inspect the material published by the Missouri Synod, and then also, contemporary publications, and these, as well as biographies, various historical works, and other documents, afforded some rather rich source material. Very little that was of any use was supplied by a comprehensive questionnaire which was sent to all pastors of the Synod. The author's great expectations from these were fulfilled only to a very small degree. Also inquiries about things that seemed worthy of note produced but little. Much material has been irretrievably lost. The old-timers, who could have related many things from their personal experiences, have long since gone to their last resting place, and what they did record probably lies hidden or forgotten in the trunks of their descendants. Thus the desired completeness of the contemplated work is impaired. Nevertheless, enough can be found to afford the reader the hoped for satisfying glimpse of the church activities of the District. But it should be said in advance that often it was necessary to go beyond the boundaries of the Southern Wisconsin District, as this has existed as an independent District for only 10 or 12 years.

It is certainly praiseworthy that the District undertook the publishing of its history. As a congregation, at its 50th anniversary, may look back upon its past and cause its history to be published for the use and benefit of all its members in which she says with the prophet Isaiah (Ch. 63: 7) "I will mention the loving kindness of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us according to His mercies and loving kindnesses," so might the District which last year, in some respects, celebrated its 80-year jubilee, cast a glance upon its synodical past, and surely there will be many things that should be of interest, particularly to the younger generation, and if history at large is an instructress, so also is the history of a church body.

O. F. H.

Concordia College
Millwaukee, Wis.

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

5 WISCONSIN AS A HOMESTEAD OF LUTHERANISM IS EVIDENCE THAT GOD LOOKS AFTER THE ETERNAL WELFARE OF HIS CHURCH

It has often been pointed out that hardly 10 years after the birth of the man whom God singled out for the work of the Reformation of His Church in the Old World, a new part of the world was discovered (1492), namely our America.

Naturally, no one surmised that it was God's merciful purpose to open for His renovated Church that was presently to emerge from the rubbish of papistical abomination, a new haven of refuge in case she was to again degenerate and again lose her homestead in Europe. And yet it was so. God had selected this country as a harbor--perhaps the last harbor and place of freedom--for His persecuted Church, where she could build herself up without any hindrance. This was recognized as early as 1756 by the devout Senior of the Lutheran Ministerium at Frankfort on the Main, Dr. Johann Philipp Fresenius, who during this year wrote: "Let us pray for the better colonizing and spreading of God's Kingdom in America! Let us in every possible way help to promote its building up! Let us consider that perhaps this distant part of the world in time to come when God visits His severe judgment upon the European Christians because of their gross ingratitude, could become for the few faithful ones a country of refuge and deliverance." Other devout men also expressed themselves to similar effect, and what they foresaw, even if only vaguely, came to pass. After our dear Lutheran Church, as a result of the rationalism and the ever increasing unbelief, was faced with dissolution, and after her thread of life had finally been tied into a knot through the Prussian Union, God prepared for her here in our America a new home, and, indeed, such a home as she had never before enjoyed.

God ordained that in 1776 the American Sovereign States should free themselves from their English mother country to which they belonged until then, and so directed the hearts of their leaders and directors that they framed a Constitution such as no country in the world up to that time could boast. For while every Christian nation had been either a Monarchistic-Popery (Caesareopapie) or a Papistical-Monarchy (Papocaesarie), in which the government was more or less concerned in the affairs of the church, or conversely, the church more or less concerned in the affairs of the state, our Constitution established the principle of the complete separation of church and state. Absolute freedom of religion and conscience was the sparkling, precious gem in the crown of our Constitution. And behold, the Lutheran Church, which had been persecuted, tormented, and terrified in her native home, could here, under the protection of complete freedom from and independence of the State--a precedent without equal in the entire history of the Christian Church--build herself up on the old foundation without hindrance, gather around herself her pure confession, arrange everything according to God's Word, and at all times organize as her circumstances permitted. Here she could lift up her voice unhampered and fearlessly, in

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the spoken word or in writing, in teaching and protecting, in defense and attack, in doctrine and conduct, as prescribed by God; she could here exercise discipline, and enjoy without limitation all her Christ-given priceless
 6 privileges and rights; she could have her own grade and high schools, and her costly institutions under her exclusive care and supervision; her divine services could be arranged according to the spiritual wants of the people and held undisturbed; she could choose, issue a call to, obligate, and pass judgment on her servants in church and school; and, finally, with the means granted, she is not prevented by any law of the land from expanding. An incomparable boon!¹ Thus the Lutheran Church in our country was spared the misery that is occasioned by the mixing of church and state, and in the shelter of freedom she could enjoy a wonderful growth.

I venture these remarks beforehand so that we might be reminded of God's wonderful disposition in matters of His Church, and so that we may not forget the great things He did for us. Stop and consider, if God had not so mercifully provided for the church of the unfalsified Evangelical Lutheran confession, where would it probably be now? Might one not really say that as an integral corporate body she would no longer exist, or, in any event, would lead only a miserable existence?

Our State of Wisconsin was privileged to share in this boon to our entire country, and here God's wonderful guardianship is even more evident than in the New England States. The latter soon fell into the hands of Protestant England, which in her erroneous attitude towards the divorcing of the church and state, at least in some places, did grant the opposition a bearable existence. However, what was the situation here in Wisconsin? This State, which later became so important for our American Lutheran Church, seemed not to be destined for the seat of Lutheranism, much less German Lutheranism, as from its first discovery by the Europeans this part of the country belonged to the French Catholics. It was a hundred years after De Soto had discovered the Mississippi in April 1541, and laid claim to the entire lower territory in the name of the Spanish Crown, that French Jesuits discovered the upper Mississippi Valley. In 1634 Nicollet came as the first Jesuit to Wisconsin and traversed the country to the Wisconsin River. The Jesuits Raymbault, Joques, Pierrot, Allouez, and Dablon established missions among the Indians. The latter 2 founded the important mission of the Holy Francis Xavier at Green Bay, for spreading Catholicism in Wisconsin, and motivated the large congress of 14 Indian tribes in 1671. The cross was erected and beside it was placed a statue with the Lilies of Bourbon (fleur-de-lis), and every means was used to let the wild men know that they were under the protectorate of the French King, Louis XVI. The cross was carried throughout eastern Wisconsin by Allouez and Dablon, to the Mascoutins on Lake Winnebago, to the Kickapoos on the Milwaukee River, to the Miamis on the south end of Lake Michigan, to the Foxes on the river that to this day bears their name, and thus the whole territory was claimed for the Catholic Church. In 1673 the Jesuit Marquette and Sieur Joliet left Green Bay along the Fox River and by

1. Cf. Walther's Synodalrede (Synodical Conference), 1874, p. 9.

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portage reached the Wisconsin River which they followed to the Mississippi, and 7 years later the Franciscan, Hennepin, traveled north on the Mississippi to what is now St. Paul. Thus the entire State came under the Franco-Catholic domination, and the numerous French immigrants saw to it that Wisconsin was a "Little France," not only in name but also in fact.

- 7 It might well be asked, how could one, conceivably think of establishing the mighty flourishing German Lutheran Synod here in this territory in which the Jesuits and the French held sway? Had it remained that way, Wisconsin would have become a district somewhat like the present Canadian Province of Quebec where French is the universal language and also where papacy rules without restrictions, and for that reason leaves little or no room for the Lutheran Church. But God disposed otherwise. In the war that raged from 1755 to 1763 between England and France, He granted victory to the former, and in the peace treaty at Paris, which ended this so-called French-Indian War, all the territory east of the Mississippi and north of the Ohio River which had been occupied by the French until that time, was ceded to the British, and 20 years later, at the conclusion of the American Revolutionary War, this territory became a part of the liberated United States. Thus Wisconsin was once and for all time liberated from the oppression of papal domination and came under the blessings of our Constitution, to which we have already referred, and the soil was prepared for the planting of a church that otherwise could not have existed here. Let us remember this fact with thanksgiving and praise as we are reminded of the words spoken by St. Paul on the Areopagus at Athens when he brought to the superstitious heathens the name of the true God, namely, "He hath determined the times before appointed and the bounds of their (the generations of man) habitation," Acts 17:26. God in His omnipotence assigns to men and nations their places, and His objective is always the proclaiming of His Gospel and the building up of His Church.

The development of the territory now began, namely through the "Ordinance for the Government of the Territory of the United States Northwest of the Ohio River" which was adopted by Congress on July 13, 1787. Treaties were made with the Indians in which they renounced their ownership of the land, and since about 1816, a stream of American-English immigrants started turning towards Wisconsin. In 1829 the Episcopalians under Rev. Richard F. Cadle established a mission school in Green Bay, and during the same year the first Episcopal congregation west of Lake Michigan was incorporated. Other denominations, particularly the Methodists, followed. Before Wisconsin could really be settled, however, the Black Hawk War of 1832 had to be fought, which removed from the State the last hostile Indian tribe and freed enormous stretches of land. (Friendly and peaceful Indians remained in great numbers, and our first Lutheran pioneers encountered many of them.) The acquisition of land was now regulated, the land was surveyed and mapped, roads were cut everywhere through the primitive forests, and soon many settlements appeared in the southern part of the State.

The first public land sale occurred at Mineral Point on November 10, 1834. Others followed, and so practically all the land in southern Wisconsin was placed upon the market. Even as early as 1836 over 430,000 acres of land were

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8 sold to settlers, and as the Government wisely imposed legal restrictions to curb the speculators' greed and to protect the settler in the possession of his land, it followed as a result that none of the Western States, either before or at that time, was so rapidly settled as Wisconsin. About 1835 two-thirds of the population lived in the southwest corner of the State, in Iowa County (now Grant County) primarily because of the lead mines located there. Most of them came to get rich quickly and then to depart from there. But not a few also came to settle permanently, and these attracted others. Such as were seeking a new home here during the years from 1836 to 1839 turned to the easterly counties, Kenosha, Racine, Milwaukee, Waukesha, Dodge, Jefferson, Walworth, Columbia, and Rock, where all forms of speculations were suppressed and the settlers were permitted a free choice of their land. One needed only to file a "claim," and if the simple requirements with respect to inhabiting and working the land were met, such claim was at all times respected by the Government, and the community of interests and the feeling of equality did not permit these pioneers to be robbed of the fruits of their honest labors.

This too is a matter that should give us Christians food for thought as we see here the blessings of a good and just Government that redounded to the benefit of the church, for wherever Lutherans settled, they were protected in their rights. Their possessions were guaranteed by the Government. They could, therefore, be found by our missionaries and gathered into congregations. In 1838 Congress established 15 postal routes with the result that more roads were built. As the Territory had an established government and its own courts, law and order was maintained. In 1840 Wisconsin had a population of 30,774, of which 5,601 lived in Milwaukee, which because of its advantageous location was rapidly developing into the metropolis of the State. The entire northern half of the State was still an absolute wilderness, and the counties west of the Wisconsin River to the Mississippi were not yet mapped and were very sparsely settled.

THE GERMAN IMMIGRATION

In the thirties commenced an extensive German immigration movement to Wisconsin which almost made this State German, more German than any other. After the political upheaval of 1830 the Germans were affected by the emigration fever; oppression by their governmental officials and hard times made them dissatisfied with their old fatherland, and they left it in large numbers to settle in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri. Soon, however, the attention of the Germans was directed towards Wisconsin. It became known that here much good government land was to be had at very low prices, and this was no longer the case in the enumerated states. And it was of particular importance that the Territorial Government had set aside 4 million acres of school land to maintain schools and the newly founded university at Madison, and this land was sold to the settlers for \$1.25 an acre. At the same time the other advantages of Wisconsin were being extolled. One sang the praises of its favorable location between Lake Michigan and the Mississippi, the many lakes and streams teeming with fish, the fertile soil, the forest riches, the climate which appealed to the Germans, the fine drinking water,

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the wholesome fever-free atmosphere, and all this worked together to direct the steps of the immigrant towards Wisconsin. They came in great multitudes. According to government reports the Erie Canal in 1843 brought 50,000 to 60,000 settlers to Wisconsin, mostly Germans. The land along the lake was the first to be settled by the Germans, and as early as 1847 Milwaukee, because of the large German population, was referred to as the "German-Athens." Until 1844, however, the majority of the Germans in Milwaukee were Catholics, and the Catholics had in Archbishop Henni their German chief. The extent of the immigration is shown by the fact that in 1845 the land office in Milwaukee sold 250,000 acres of land, and incidentally, sold it mostly to Germans. These were from the Rhineland, Saxony, Mecklenburg and Luxemburg. The enormous immigration from Pommerania commenced in 1853 and is attributable to the fact that the later mentioned Pastor Johann A. Grabau, together with Artillery Captain, Heinrich von Rohr, made a trip through Northern Germany that year, and through their reports attention was directed towards Wisconsin. Shortly before this the Germans commenced to occupy the splendid region in Sauk County. This came about through a rather remarkable coincident: A Hungarian fugitive, Count (Graf) August Harassthy, while on the boat, read an account of a trip through Wisconsin from Green Bay to Prairie du Chien which was written with such glowing descriptions that it influenced him to come to Wisconsin, and he settled in the primitive forest in Sauk County. He laid out the village of Sauk and induced others by word of mouth and in writing to settle there. That was the beginning of a large German population settling in this hilly county. As early as 1847 there was also a large settlement of Germans in Grant County, in the southwest corner of the State.

While the Anglo-Americans and the Irish preferred the prairies, where the soil could be easily tilled during the first years, the sturdy, durable, energetic Germans showed their predilection for the wooded regions to establish their homes. Hardships and privations were therefore the lot of these first German settlers. They came from an intensively cultivated country where pioneer work was no longer necessary, where they had homes which met their requirements for conveniences, where the soil had been tilled for a thousand years, where numerous cities were linked together by many good roads, and now they came to a wilderness which to that time had known the tread of only the red man's foot. Woods, nothing but woods, where in fact there was nothing to which they had been accustomed in their old homeland. Is it any wonder that many became victims of the most bitter home-sickness? Yes, undoubtedly many tears were shed. But they did not dare to lose their courage; there was work to be done. The first thing to do was to build a log cabin, consisting in most instances of one room for the family; next, shelter had to be provided for the stock which could, of course, be acquired only later; a well had to be dug; and then a clearing had to be made so that a plot of land could be cultivated. The enormous trees were felled, and since wood was absolutely valueless, the splendid oak boles would go up in flames. Until the first crop could be harvested, privations and the lack of even the most primitive necessities and bread was great. It is true they could get sugar from the maple trees, and wild honey could be had. Meat was supplied by the game which was ample, such as deer, elk, moose, bear, and rabbits, and the streams and lakes supplied fish in abundance, but flour for bread was indeed a rarity. It is a fact that many men carried a sack of flour from the nearest store some 50 miles distant to their home, after carrying on their back a

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similar sized load to the store to be bartered for the flour, for there was very little money. Verily, these Germans showed marvelous tenacity of purpose and energy, and a blessing rested upon their labors. Even after a few years they were pretty well to do and could greatly enjoy the fruits of their arduous labor.

THE GERMAN-LUTHERAN IMMIGRATION

10 Whether there were German Lutherans in Wisconsin prior to 1839 cannot be definitely established. But during this year a large number arrived here in one group. They were Prussian Lutherans. We shall consider their history somewhat closely. When during 1817 the so-called Union was instituted in Prussia, which meant for the Lutherans the sacrificing of their creed and the denying of their beliefs, the gifted, splendid Professor of Theology in Breslau, Johann Gottfried Scheibel, was the first to oppose it, and he preached several strong sermons about the Holy Communion in which he pointed out the impossibility of conciliating the Lutherans with those of the Reformed faith, and officially declined to accept the Union agenda and use it in his church. But in 1830, when the three-hundred-year jubilee of the delivery of the Augsburg Confession was celebrated, a decree was issued by the Cabinet that the breaking of the bread at Holy Communion should be a symbolic indication of the attachment in membership in the Union, and that the distribution formula of the Reformed Church "Our Lord Jesus says 'This is My body, this is My blood'" was to be used when giving the Lord's Supper, and when Scheibel resolutely refused to comply with this edict--he neither took the Lord's Supper nor did he administer it in accordance with the Union rites--he was removed by official orders from his pastoral office. Some two to three hundred families rallied to his support, among them men like the Professors Huschke and Steffens and the Chief Assistant of the Supreme Court, von Haugwitz. Dr. Scheibel organized this group into an independent congregation, and since he himself was still suspended and respected this suspension, he, due to the lack of pastors, had laymen administer the Word and the Sacraments. This put them in conflict with the police and the first persecutions were recorded.

Because of these unbearable conditions, Dr. Scheibel went to Nuremberg where he awakened an interest in this so-called "Oldlutherans," as they called themselves. Huschke, Steffens, and Haugwitz, who had been banned to Berlin in an attempt to rob the Oldlutherans of their leadership, did the same, and thus having directed attention to the worthiness of the Lutheran Confession, separate Lutheran associations appeared in other places, as, for example, in Erfurt where Johann Andreas Grabau, pastor of the local Andreas Church, was a vigorous opponent of the Union. King Frederick William III, who was not long in ignorance of the growth of this separatist movement, soon became concerned about it, and so, in an effort to stop them, on February 18, 1834, he ordered that the foes of the Union must not constitute themselves as a distinct religious association in opposition to the Union. When, in spite of this, the separatists assembled in convention in Breslau during the following month, and declared that they must form a separate church which would administer the rites and affairs of the church without governmental interference, the

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- officials began to treat these resisting Lutherans as agitators. The pastors (Kellner, Berger, Biehler, and others) were dragged into court, deposed, and when they continued to officiate, they were fined and imprisoned. Rev. Kellner served a five-year jail sentence. A well organized system of police persecution of pastors who traveled about the country in various disguises in order to serve the isolated congregations, and also of laymen, especially the lay councilmen of small Lutheran congregations, was instituted.² The property of well-to-do members of congregations was confiscated and they were reduced to a state of pauperism. While holding divine services, the congregation at Hoenigern was dispersed by a group of riders wielding swords, and to break up their resistance soldiers were quartered with them for 4 weeks and they were heavily penalized. May I refer to one case in particular which is of interest to all of us because the persons involved settled near Milwaukee (North Milwaukee) and became faithful members of our congregations. Their numerous descendants are still living in Milwaukee, and it was from one of these, Mr. Freihube, that I received the original documents or authentic copies of them. These now repose in the archives of the Synod in St. Louis.

Because the true Lutherans of Silesia would not approve of the creed-mixing Union, their churches were being pillaged, and so they held divine services, mostly reading services, in their homes. On Easter Sunday, 1837, a group thus met in the village of Juliusburg in the home of the weaver Chr. Biersch, and with them were some people from a neighboring hamlet, namely, Christian Schneider and his wife, Gottlieb Gorseger, Johann Fusch, and Christian Klose. They were going to sing, read an Easter sermon, offer a prayer and conclude with the Lord's Prayer. However, they had hardly commenced their services when a policeman entered, took their names and preferred charges against them, and they were sentenced for participating in unlawful divine service assemblage and fined several dollars. A terrible tyranny! The upper District Court at Breslau confirmed the verdict and assessed the defendants additional costs, and they were exposed to other vexations. On the following Pentecost Sunday the said Mr. Schneider held his customary home devotions. Several people from the neighborhood who were there on a visit were present by chance, as was his daughter who was employed away from home. Schneider had not yet finished the Lord's Prayer when again a policeman entered, made note of the facts of the case, and swore out a warrant, and the District Court imposed a \$4 fine upon Mr. Schneider because through the presence of visitors (note well, this was by chance) the limits prescribed as "home divine services" had been exceeded, and he was fined another \$4 because the policeman caught him in the act of praying the Lord's Prayer and hence he was in the position of having made prayerful intercession for those gathered in unlawful assemblage.

It seems unbelievable that in the previous century such things could have happened in Germany. Verily, unbidden the thought occurs that the

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2. How far the fanatical Prussian officials went is shown by the fact that they forced parents of children that had been baptized by Lutheran pastors to have these children baptized again by United pastors; they even declared Lutheran marriages as adulterous unions and questioned their legality.

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terrible catastrophe that befell Germany during the World War was also punishment for this abomination of which the Hohenzollerns were guilty. It is not surprising that people who were the victims of such persecutions contemplated emigration to the Land of the Free where they would be able to serve their God without hindrance.

12 And to these persecuted Oldlutherans also belonged Pastor Grabau with whom we are hereafter particularly concerned. When in 1833 he entered upon his ministry at the large Andreas Church at Erfurt, he was instructed by the officials to use the Union agenda, which had all the characteristics of the Reformed Church. He protested and asked that he be permitted to use the old, good Lutheran Wittenberg agenda. This was denied him, and when he remained steadfast he was deposed, was incarcerated for 6 months, and after a brief period of liberty he was again incarcerated. He was then again released on the condition that he leave the country and emigrate. He welcomed this condition and without delay he made preparations for his departure for America. The larger part of his congregation at Erfurt, as well as that at Magdeburg and other places, followed him, and thus occurred the famous emigration of Prussian Lutherans in the year 1839. Pommeranians and Brandenburgers followed, and finally there were 3,000 who left their old fatherland because they justly felt that the King would tolerate no other Protestant Church but the United. One might well say that they were good Lutherans. They had passed through the fire of tribulation and had become firmly set in their Christianity. They had a thorough knowledge of the biblical Lutheran creed, and this explains why, after they arrived in their new home, they were so concerned about, and insistent upon, obtaining orthodox services from their church, even though they were at times obliged to wait for years before obtaining a pastor.

While most of these Prussian Lutherans remained in and about Buffalo with their Pastor Grabau, the others--and they were the more opulent--departed under the leadership of Heinrich von Rohr for Wisconsin, and settled partly in Milwaukee and partly north of it in the primitive forests of Washington and Ozaukee Counties where they established the settlement of Freistadt. This was the beginning of the Lutheran immigration into Wisconsin. The favorable reports of these new arrivals concerning their new home enticed many other Lutherans to Wisconsin. In 1843 a large group came under the leadership of Pastor Kindermann, who likewise dissented from the United Church, and settled partly in Kirchhayn 7 miles from Freistadt, and partly 40 miles west of there, near Watertown, in Lebanon, Dodge County. These settlements soon formed their own congregations, and were served, as far as possible, by Grabau pastors, namely by Pastor L. Krause in Freistadt and Milwaukee, and by Pastor Kindermann in Kirchhayn, and so they earned the honor of being the first organized German-Lutheran congregations in the State of Wisconsin.³

3. Translator's Note: St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Wisconsin Synod, located on Highway #41, 1 mile south of Highway #100, was also organized in 1843, and the present pastor, Rev. Martin F. Plass, claims that their organization was actually completed several months earlier than the above-mentioned churches. W. H. L.

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The further spreading of the Lutherans in Wisconsin has been shown in what has already been said about the German immigration. In the beginning of the fifties they were to be found in considerable numbers in Sheboygan, Manitowoc, Calumet, and Green Lake Counties: They were Holsteiners, Pommeranians, Mecklenburgers, Saxons, and Lippe-Detmolders. In the year 1853, as has already been stated, the large Pommeranian immigration commenced which almost converted the State into a New-Pommerania. In the sixties and seventies these numbers were increased, and the peak was reached in the colossal immigration of 1881 to 1884, which swerved principally to the northern part of the State and turned the primeval forests of Shawano, Marathon, Lincoln, Wood, Taylor, and Price Counties into fruitful acres.

Of course, not all that were called Lutherans were such in fact. Even in the early times many were completely United-minded and had broken with the real Lutheranism.⁴ In spite of this, the number of real Lutherans was considerable and increased from year to year. And here we wish to point out a remarkable fact, namely, that so much Christianity still existed among these people. The Lutherans emigrated during an era when the lamenting over empty churches was heard and irreligion was widespread. One need only read the contemporary reports of the conditions of the German National Church to verify this. And yet these Lutheran settlers had generally not lost their loyalty to the church of their fathers, they detested the name "United," and would belong to no other church but the Evangelical-Lutheran. Our District was built up out of these Lutheran immigrants, and that brings us to our real theme, namely--

4. Cf. Fricke's Reisebericht, ch. 3.

OUR CHURCH ACTIVITIES IN SOUTHERN WISCONSIN

I. THE ORIGIN

We are here occupied with the question: "How did we Missourians come to Wisconsin where already other Lutheran pastors were working, namely, the followers of Grabau, to whom the field really belonged?" The answer is that we did not intrude but were called in. In fact, called in by the Grabau congregations. How this occurred is of such importance to the entire Lutheran Church that we shall dwell upon it in some detail. What permitted us to gain a firm foothold here was that our Synod's position was based on God's Word, over against the false doctrines and teachings of Grabau concerning the powers of the ministry. He wanted to be Pope and ruler. This he proved when those Lutherans who had settled in Freistadt in 1839, and who, being without a pastor, had appointed a Mr. Luck as interim administrator of the pastoral office, for otherwise they would have remained entirely unprovided; he severely reprimanded them for this and denied them the right to act as an independent congregation. He proved it even more in his so-called pastoral edict (Hirtenbrief) which he sent to them towards the close of 1840 in order to subdue their resentment and to regulate affairs in Wisconsin. In this pastoral edict, as in all subsequent expressions, Grabau claimed: 1. That a pastor who did not receive his call in accordance with all the established regulations of the church was not properly called; 2. that the ordination by other pastors was a divine regulation and was essential to the validity of the pastoral office; 3. that God dealt with the congregation only through validly called pastors; 4. that a pastor called by the congregation could not offer absolution, and that that which he distributed during the Lord's Supper was not the body and blood of Christ but merely bread and wine; 5. that the church as a whole, through its synods, constitution, and symbolism, must sit in judgment over doctrine and heresy; 6. that not the congregation but the synod which represents the church as a whole had the superior authority in the church; 7. that the congregation did not have the right to excommunicate; 8. that Christians were bound in all things not contrary to God's Word to obey their pastor.

14 These were clearly false principles that were not in accordance with Holy Scripture, and had they been established in Wisconsin, what would have become of the real Lutheranism? A new papacy under a Lutheran name would have ensued. Fortunately God had already opened the eyes of the Saxons in Missouri about things of the hierarchical-papistical nature within the church, namely, through the disputes with Rev. Stephan, who took a stand similar to Grabau's, for Stephan too wanted to be Pope and conducted himself as one. He taught:

1. That the Lutheran Church was the church outside of which no salvation was obtainable; 2. that the pastoral office was an intermediary office between God and man (he thus denied the universal priesthood of all believers); 3. that the pastor was to be accorded complete obedience in all things that were not in conflict with God's Word; 4. that questions of doctrine reposed entirely in the hands of the pastor, as did all ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

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It was Dr. Walther who with convincing power refuted these heresies, and thereby he also sharpened his weapons against Grabau, who, because the Saxons had not approved his pastoral edict, now accused them of heresy and demanded their recantation, which led to a conflict with Grabau and brought on a heated strife of many years, which by God's mercy ended in victory for the pure doctrine.

Perhaps it would be good and salutary for us to consider the main points of this dispute with Grabau. The matter involved was: 1. Regarding the doctrine relative to the church. Grabau taught: The Lutheran Church is a visible one, outside of which no salvation was possible.⁵ As opposed to that the Missouri Synod took the position that one's salvation was not unconditionally dependent upon membership in any particular church, but to the communion with the invisible church to which was originally given all the glorious promises relating to the church. For God's Word says: "For we hold that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the Law," Rom. 3: 28, and "There is no salvation through anyone else, for there is no one else in the world who has been named to men as their only means of being saved except through the Name of Jesus"--Acts 4: 12. According to this the one and only condition necessary to salvation is the communion with Christ through faith. The maxim "Outside the church no salvation"--"He who has not on earth the church as mother, has not in heaven God for Father," is therefore, true only in the sense that outside of the invisible church there can be no salvation nor a merciful godly childhood; for this can be interpreted no other way than that outside of Christ there is no salvation. Whoever does not stand in inner communion with the believing and the sainted, does not stand in communion with Christ; on the other hand whosoever through faith stands in communion with Christ, also stands in communion with all those in whom Jesus lives, that is, with the invisible church. Whoever, therefore, makes salvation dependent upon the communion with any visible church upsets the doctrine concerning the justification of poor sinners before God except through his faith in Jesus Christ.⁶

15 The second point of contention in the dispute with Grabau concerned itself with the pastoral office. Grabau taught that the church, that is, the universality of believers, was not the incumbent in office which conveyed its powers

5. As opposed to the teachings of the Scriptures of the one holy invisible Christian Church consisting of the congregation of believers scattered over the entire world, to him the church was a well organized external institution. In support of this he referred to those who emigrated with him as "the Lutheran Church which emigrated from Prussia." It should also be noted that after his arrival in Buffalo he commenced his first sermon with the words: "Hail, America! The church comes to you." One historian says: "With charming audacity, with an almost Napoleonic brazenness he hurled these words at the already existing church organizations, who considered it an enormous presumption."

6. Cf. Die Stimme unserer Kirche, 9th Thesis.

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to individual persons for public practice, but that pastors constituted a peculiar profession superior to the common Christian status, and that therefore, they had authority to prescribe commandments and regulations which the Christians, for the sake of their conscience, had to obey. Pursuant to this Grabau denied the Christians the right to exercise their own judgment in conformity with God's Word with regard to the doctrine of their pastors. How Grabau demanded obedience of the audience in all things not contrary to God's Word is shown in the following excerpt from his pastoral edict, page 14: "The pastor through his faithfulness in doctrine and conduct becomes a part of the congregation, and the congregation in its faithfulness and obedience in all things not in conflict with God's Word forms a close tie with him." And again he says on page 55: "The congregation owes obedience to the pastor according to Heb. 13: 17; whether they are able in all instances to do this, for instance in the case of a needed school building, that is a different matter. . . ; but because of this their duty to be obedient is not abrogated." That his hearers of God's Word had no authority to decide matters of doctrine is taught by Grabau in the following words: "What is contrary to or in conformity with God's Word is not to be decided by any individual member of the church, but the church itself, in its symbolisms, church regulations, and synods, decides this."⁷ To support this he writes on page 18, verbatim: "Your teachers are not teachers of a church that is in error, nor are they teachers of a modern tendency, but they are teachers of the true church, as is well known. You laymen can, therefore, take for granted their right knowledge of church teachings, and indeed their having a deeper knowledge than you could possess, for they have studied to learn their own beliefs and to keep you in the right faith, you, however, to believe and to be preserved and sanctified in your faith." Grabau makes the further claim in his Hirtenbrief that if a lone church organization arbitrarily selects one of its members to the pastoral office merely by means of a majority vote and installs him in office, this would, before God, not have the slightest validity, but would constitute pure nonsense.

Opposed to all these papistical, wicked, tyrannical principles, it was maintained on the part of the Missourians that thus the pastoral office was endowed with more power than was justified according to God's Word, and that the spiritual priesthood of the church was being given secondary consideration. The Missourians taught and defended the position on the ground of the Scriptures, first of all upon the Scriptural truth that the congregation was the holder of all authority and power given to her by Christ, according to the words of St. Paul: "Everything is yours," and St. Peter: "You are the chosen generation, a royal priesthood," and so forth. Since, according to the latter, all believers constitute a royal priesthood, set up as a counterpart of the Levitical priesthood of the Old Testament, which was abolished by Christ, so the Evangelical pastoral office is not a position which stands above the Christians, like the priesthood of the Old Testament, and consequently obedience of the congregation was due the pastor only when and if he preached God's Word. If the pastor demanded unconditional obedience concerning

7. Cf. Hirtenbrief, p. 14.

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the question of the building of a school or church, he would undeniably assume something which is not granted, according to God's Word. Furthermore, Grabau said God deals with the congregation only through the pastors because they constitute a peculiar profession, but the Missourians maintained that 16 God did not deal with the people through the external pastoral office, but through His Word; the office, however, was the organization instituted by Him for the dissemination of His Word which could be effective without the public office, and so Scriptures and experience taught, that He, for the purpose of dealing with people through His Word, also availed Himself of the services of people that did not occupy the public office. Likewise, the instituting words at the administration of the Holy Sacraments are not efficacious because of the office, but the Word in itself is efficacious, Heb. 4.-- And when, furthermore, Grabau claimed that the congregation did not have authority to decide and judge matters of doctrine and heresy, the Missourians maintained that this prerogative emanated from the very universal priesthood, which caused St. Paul to say: "I speak as to the wise. Judge ye what I say." Finally, as opposed to the claim by Grabau that the congregation did not have the authority to call its own pastor, the Missourians advanced the Scriptural teaching that while Jesus gave the church as a whole the Office of the Keys, according to St. Math. 18: 18: "Verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven," and while this is no other authority than that which is used in the ministry, the ministry itself, it must necessarily follow that Christ gave His Church the power to call such as will administer this office for them, and therefore, it is He Himself that calls them through the church. It might be added that in the Scriptures the pastors are expressly depicted as servants of the church, for instance, 1 Cor. 3: 5, 21: "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed," "For all things are yours: Whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours."⁸ Consequently it follows very clearly that in His Word God Himself confers the authority upon the church to call pastors, to send them out, and to install them, so that we can have divine assurance that those properly called by the church are in reality called by God Himself.

Thirdly, the doctrine of ordination was an object of dispute. Of this Grabau taught: "The ordination is not an adiaphoron (a thing intermediate between two others) and an unessential thing. It belongs to the commanded divine order and is a divine, apostolic command."⁹ On page 15 it says: "On earth God employs the public office of the church in dealing with us in the matter of teaching, absolving, communing, and so forth. Therefore, the church must have undeceiving evidence that the person administering the office is an official that has, in accordance with divine order, the proper divinely willed doctrine, so that God will through him deal with us." In opposition to this the Missourians held that the ordination was not of divine institution as there was no proof of this at hand, but that it was a commendable and salutary ceremony, accepted from earliest Christian times, and that it has no bearing upon the validity of the office.

8. Cf. 2 Cor. 4: 5; Col. 1: 25; 1 Peter 5: 2, 3.

9. Cf. Hirtenbrief, p. 41.

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Fourthly, it dealt with the question of the ban. Grabau taught: "The highest and final jurisdiction shall not rest with the group constituting the local congregation, but with the group of apostles now represented by those holding the office of preachers."¹⁰ Furthermore, "It is erroneous to say that the congregation, in cases of dispute, is the judge in the matter of using the binding or absolving power of the Keys." As opposed to this 17 the Missouri Synod simply took the position outlined in Math. 18, and pointed out the horrible tyranny which, according to Grabau's teachings, might place a congregation in the position of being obliged to respect a ban when it is not at all convinced of its justice, and that it might possibly be an entirely arbitrarily decreed, false, and unrighteous ban.

It is clear that our Synod had in all instances the Scriptures to support it: Dr. Walther and his fellow disputers renounced all this human speculation and held to the plain word of the Scriptures, and remained steadfast through all attacks made upon them because of this controversy. They remained, in their entire course of action, on the straight highway of truth and avoided two kinds of dangerous courses: The one, that they did not emulate the Roman and the Episcopal Churches in depriving the individual congregation of right to self-government, through such false doctrines, as though the bishopric were a divine and conscience-binding right; and the other, that they did not impair the divine legitimacy of the holy pastoral office by following the example of the local form of civil government as if they who are servants of the church and messengers of Christ, were servants of mankind to be hired and dismissed at one's pleasure.¹¹

The above position of our Synod, which is in accordance with Scriptures, gave it its start in our State, for the people had enough Christian knowledge to recognize the false teachings of their "shepherd," and they gladly associated themselves with those whom they were convinced represented the true doctrine. Just imagine what the poor people had to endure as the result of Grabau's papistical-tinted doctrinal position! What terrible misuse of the ban was being made by him and his associates! I will relate a few instances as they are recorded in the 9th volume of the Lutheraner.

1. When at the time of the emigration some people from Silesia, whose pastor (Rev. Krause) had hurried away to America before them, conceived the idea of emigrating to Australia--a purely private matter to which they had a right in their Christian freedom--Grabau declared them deserters and denied them the Lord's Supper and excluded them from congregational fellowship, even wives who were ill and were about to be confined. That was the first unsound step that Grabau took which brought his papistical-hierarchical turn of mind to light and marked the point at which the blessing and peace of God departed from the church organization at whose head he stood. When in 1845, upon the occasion of the convention of Synod in Milwaukee, one of these Silesians, a Mr. Bierosch, wanted the matter of the ban upon his fellow countrymen investigated, Grabau would not consent, but instead he ridiculed this honest man.

10. Cf. Luth. 9: 82.

11. Synodalbericht, 1849, p. 5.

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2. When in 1844 two men in Freistadt, Johann Suelflow and Joachim Goetsch, who had arrived there from Germany with Rev. Kindermann, a short time before, expressed their surprise at the immoderate, disagreeable invectives and unholy accusations of heresy which they heard from the pulpits, to which they were not accustomed from their Lutheran pastors in Prussia, they were placed under bans by their pastor as being agitators. 3. When in 1845 Grabau sent a letter to Pastor Krause concerning the apostasy of Pastor Ehrenstroem who read it to the congregation, the school principal, Mr. Martin Krueger, could not accord the report full credence and expressed himself to that effect, for which reason he was placed under ban by Pastor Krause. 4. When some members of the congregation questioned the justice of this ban and declared
- 18 that they could no longer accept Pastor Krause as their pastor if he persisted in pursuing this course, they were consigned to Satan as sectarians. 5. When parts of the Freistadt and Milwaukee congregations were greatly offended by the conduct of Pastor Kindermann in 1847, because of which they made representations to the church Ministerium in Buffalo, they were all put under the ban. 6. A married man in Milwaukee had committed adultery. The wife told her mother about it and she told Pastor Krause. The man admitted the fact, but the betrayed girl denied it, and for that reason the mother was placed under the ban as a slanderess. 7. When this woman and her husband and their children joined Pastor Keyl's church, the husband and children were consigned to Satan, for they had no right, it was held, to separate themselves from Krause's (now Mueller's) church.

And that is how Grabau and his associates conducted themselves. How could there be any church discipline when even the pastors degenerated? It has been proven that Grabau banned many persons merely because they could not submit to his authority with a clear conscience, or because they dared to claim that the truth rested on the side of the Missouri Synod.¹²

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12. Cf. Lutheraner, 1853, p. 71 ff. Hochstetter, who was in a position to observe Grabau's doings at close range, writes in his Geschichte der Missouri Synode, p. 197: "If he considered a member of a congregation as having dared to contradict him, he would utilize the first opportunity to place him under the ban. Were one to inquire of Pastor Grabau if the Ministerium, the members of which were versed in matters pertaining to the ban, could not possibly pronounce an unjust verdict in a ban case, he would answer: 'In such cases an unjust ban must, nevertheless, be respected; indeed, the unfortunate victim was to forego partaking of the Holy Communion rather than to seek it in some other congregation, especially of another Synod.'" The crowning act of his despotism occurred in the late fifties when he instituted the so-called penny-bank. In order to assure the Ministerium a firmer hold on the church properties, he wanted to create a building fund, out of which the needy congregations were to receive support. When he ordered a monthly cent assessment, the congregations rebelled, taking the position that such matters should be decided by themselves. One would expect that Grabau would negotiate with these congregations, but he declared that he would rather die than to surrender his authority of issuing instructions to them, and he issued instructions

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As Grabau made the validity of the Word and the Sacrament interdependent upon the office, that is the official, so had he also associated the souls, with their faith and conscience, not with the Word, but with his own personality; and he made salvation, and in fact everything, dependent upon his personality. This gave him the same status as the Roman priests, in fact, the same as the Pope. It was the only way possible for Grabau, in his own circle, to become in fact a pontifex maximus, i. e., high-priest, with all spiritual and temporal powers within his hands. It can plainly be seen that the poor, enslaved people never enjoyed a happy, joyful Christian life, but lived in constant fear, and it was principally through such treatment that the entire doctrine of salvation necessarily suffered. Naturally unrest, disputes, divisions, and separations resulted. How much different it would have been if these honest people, who had gone through so much for their religion, had been treated in a friendly, Evangelical manner. How entirely different would have been the growth of the congregations! Grabau could have ruled unhindered all of Wisconsin if he had been a different man. But he did not consider the fact that the people too had some Christian knowledge and some conception of the Bible, so that they were able to perceive him and his associates in their true state. What a lesson is inherent in this matter!

What was the result of this conduct on the part of Grabau and his associates? Briefly it was this, that Missouri came to Wisconsin. It did not intrude; no, it was called, and in justice to its own conscience it had to come. President Fuerbringer in his first Synodical address in 1855 says: "The Synod from Missouri would never have set foot in Wisconsin parishes, perhaps not even have entered this part of the country, or would not have sent pastors to any of the congregations that had separated themselves from the Buffalo Synod, had not the loveless and quarrelsome, false, legalistic attitude, which demanded acknowledgment and submission under screaming injustices and mistakes, driven them to us with a heavy conscience. . . . These were particularly upright, religious souls who after and in spite of all efforts could find no haven in their own Synod; when the cry went up, they stifled their own sighs, and sent for us. How could we have justified ourselves before God if we had rejected them. No one went to them from us except for conscience reasons, and the cord spun by God must not be undone by anyone."

These are, indeed, weighty words. They show us how Missouri came to Wisconsin. I shall briefly relate the circumstances: After the Oldlutherans

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12. Cont'd, to all pastors to inquire of each one coming to private confession: whether they were satisfied with the idea of the penny-bank, and to deny absolution to anyone expressing his dissatisfaction. As a result, Grabau placed 250 families, entire congregations, such as those at Johannesburg and Wolcottsville, N. Y., under the ban. In his official capacity he also consigned the entire Missouri Synod to the devil. And so he made a clean sweep of it. But such insolence must necessarily ride for a fall. After 25 years of doctrinal dispute with the Missouri Synod came the Buffalo colloquy. And after that Grabau came to the end of his house-keeping.

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who came here in 1839 had been without a pastor for 2 years, so that they had to engage the aforementioned Mr. Luck as interim administrator of the church rites for which Grabau punished them severely, in 1841 Grabau gave them Rev. L. F. C. Krause as pastor, who made his home in Freistadt. Immediately upon his arrival he announced that he could be pastor of only those who agreed to the terms of the pastoral edict (Hirtenbrief) issued by Grabau the preceding year. This caused resentment and a rift in the membership. Those in Milwaukee who bowed to the edict, organized a congregation and erected a small church on Fourth Street between Cedar¹³ and Wells Streets and were served every 6 weeks from Freistadt. Pastor Krause demanded of the congregation that they raise \$90 so that he could procure a horse and wagon. The members declared themselves too poor for this. He severely reprimanded them and said they had made a begging friar of him because they had offered to supply him with transportation every 6 weeks; he even claimed that they had dismissed him from his ministerial office, and that they thought more of the trifling sum than of their salvation. Under these circumstances he could no longer be their pastor. When the congregation answered him in a quiet respectful manner, he delivered a fearful, castigatory sermon because they did not obey him, heaped the coarsest invectives upon them, and announced that all those that had concurred in this decision would not be permitted to receive Holy Communion until they had publicly admitted their sin and begged for forgiveness! This was the treatment that this poor congregation had to suffer from its imperious pastor. The members became constantly more aware that such conduct was the fruit of the false teachings of Grabau and his associates, including Rev. Krause, who always agreed with Grabau. And so the congregation, or at least the greater part of it, separated from him, and upon the advice of Pastor Kindermann turned to the Saxon Pastors Walther, Loeber, Keyl, Buenger, Fuerbringer, and Schieferdecker for counsel. When these together with other Lutheran pastors who had associated themselves with them, met in Chicago in April 1847, to organize the Missouri Synod, the congregations sent 2 delegates, namely Messrs. Bowersdorf and Kauffung, with the proxies of 57 members. These were to inquire whether the congregations at Milwaukee and Freistadt could in all conscientiousness issue a call to a pastor to replace their present pastor, Rev. Krause. After conscientious consideration of all the facts and carefully weighing the documentary evidence that had been presented in the accusations against Rev. Krause, the Synod answered that they had not only the right but that it was their holy duty to avoid Rev. Krause as a dangerous heretic and a hard-headed sinner, and that they should concern themselves with the procuring of a true shepherd as soon as possible. Elated over the decision of the Synod, the people issued a call to Pastor E. G. W. Keyl of Frohna, Missouri, who upon the advice of his colleagues accepted the call, realizing that here in Wisconsin he had a particularly important field of endeavor. It was necessary that peace should here be restored to misled consciences, and that the comforts of the Gospel be brought to them, and to preserve and establish the valuable heritage of our forefathers, not only in the doctrine, but also in the outward structure of the congregations. From the standpoint of church history, the entrance of Rev. Keyl into Wisconsin is therefore important.

13. Transl.: Now Kilbourn Ave.

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Rev. Keyl came to Milwaukee in October 1847. Technically, he was not the first Missouri pastor in Wisconsin. Four years earlier, Candidate Geyer of Missouri had come to Lebanon, near Watertown, to serve the Grabau congregation there. But, since he did not at once apply for membership in the Missouri Synod because of some objections to several points in its constitution, he cannot be considered under the question as to how the Missouri Synod came to Wisconsin, and our entire attention is directed to Pastor Keyl, who was drawn into this field under such remarkable circumstances. But despite the fact that Candidate Geyer's coming to Wisconsin is not to be considered of any consequence in this connection, it was noteworthy for other reasons. The congregation at Lebanon could not be served by the Grabau affiliated pastor, Rev. Kindermann,¹⁴ because of its remoteness--there were no railroads at that time--and since Grabau could not supply them with a resident pastor, Rev. Kindermann himself advised them to apply to the Saxon pastors in Missouri for a pastor. They did this according to the proper procedure, that is, they issued the call in the name of the congregation, and Candidate Geyer was sent to them. Before he arrived in Lebanon, Pastor Kindermann discovered that Candidate Geyer's doctrinal views coincided with those of the Saxon pastors, and so he demanded of the Lebanon congregation that they declare the vacancy still open and call him as their pastor. This they declined to do, stating that they were not in accord with Rev. Kindermann's fundamentals nor with Grabau's pastoral edict, and Candidate Geyer became their pastor. One can picture the indignation of Grabau when he learned of this. He had always specifically denied the individual congregations the right of calling its own pastor. But his raging was of no avail. He lost the congregation, and this constituted the first example, in Wisconsin, of the practical success of a congregation in resisting Grabau's despotism. This incident became important in another respect. Up to now the differences between the Saxon pastors and Grabau had been a private matter. Now, however, Grabau made the matter public by publishing an attack upon the Missourians in his 1845 Synodical report. This forced public recriminations on the part of the Missouri Synod, as it was determined to let the Christian public judge who, according to the Scriptures, was right. This was the beginning of a long controversy, already referred to, between the Buffalo and Missouri Synods, which probably seemed very disagreeable to outsiders, but which brought about a healthier condition in the church.

Let us return to Pastor Keyl in Milwaukee. The great mission that he had to fulfill here was to unfurl the banner of true Lutheranism in the midst of all sorts of enemies; and this he proceeded to do with all seriousness and zeal. Based upon the Scriptures and the Lutheran faith, he built a model Lutheran parish structure here. His foremost concern was the promulgation of sound doctrinal principles. Not only did he preach on the pericopes (Perikopen) each Sunday, but each Wednesday evening he preached a sermon in which he serially explained whole books of the Holy Scriptures. In addition he held a catechetical sermon each Sunday afternoon, followed by an examination of the young catechumens, who were expected to attend until they had reached their majority, though many adults also attended. As leader of his

14. Transl.: From Kirchhayn.

The Origin

congregation he was the very opposite of his predecessor. He was not a master but a servant of the congregation, and so he soon won the confidence of his people. As a result, a spirit entirely different from that which existed earlier under the Grabau satellite permeated the congregation. The congregation's right to run its own affairs remained unimpaired; no unrighteous ban situation came up; discipline was meted out in a Christian manner when it became necessary. Thus Rev. Keyl's pastoral activities proved an evident blessing to the congregation.

Precisely this principle of the Missouri Synod, as exemplified by Rev. Keyl, namely, that the rights and freedom of the congregation must remain inviolate, motivated most of the former members of the Grabau church around Milwaukee to join the Missouri Synod Church; and it must be said to their credit that they permitted nothing to make them dissatisfied with their membership in the Missouri Synod Church. They were, in fact, put to a no mean test, for they had to share the abuse heaped upon their pastors and the Synod. But they were not misled by Grabau's invective. They remained steadfast. They had known the Grabau bunglers too well to be again "converted" to them. Though the open defaming of their good name hurt our forefathers' feelings, they suffered no ill effects from it. On the contrary, Grabau and his consorts only prepared their own doom, and while Missouri flourished, the Buffalo Synod shrivelled up to a small group. Even today they have only about 50 congregations in the entire country.

22 Rev. Keyl remained in Milwaukee not quite 3 years, when he accepted a call to Baltimore, and his successor was Pastor Friedrich Lochner, who, until then, had been in Pleasant Ridge, Illinois, and who continued the work commenced by Rev. Keyl most successfully. Rev. Lochner was a man imbued with the real Lutheran spirit who would not sacrifice one iota of the Scriptural doctrine, and who at all times rendered a good account of his faith. He was a good preacher and a faithful pastor, and if he perhaps was not quite Rev. Keyl's equal in theological knowledge, he was, nevertheless, his superior in practical matters. In 1850 Rev. Lochner received an efficient associate pastor in Rev. Ottomar Fuerbringer, who until then had been in Venedy, Illinois. Freistadt and Kirchhayn, which had been served by Rev. Keyl as filials¹⁵ desired to have a resident pastor and issued a call to Rev. Fuerbringer, who accepted upon the advice of Dr. Walther, and under the existing circumstances, a more suitable theologian could not have come to Wisconsin. Since Grabau's doctrine and practices had created such confusion and scandal, Rev. Fuerbringer, above all others, was the blessed instrument through which the remaining schisms could be healed and new differences could be averted. During the time of the hottest disputes with Buffalo as well as with his fellow emigrant, Rev. Kluegel, who, with his followers, misused Luther's writings regarding free will to teach coarse Calvinistic predestination theories, and in disputes with many other false spirits, he applied his healing and orderly hand to make way for the Missouriian doctrine and practices. Thus Rev. Fuerbringer's activities in Wisconsin were of great significance. He was a man possessed of a thorough theological knowledge, and was a splendid teacher and counsellor of the people

15. Transl.: Under parochial churches.

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in his charge, as well as his fellow pastors, with whom, when he became president of the Northern District, he was on the most friendly terms, and whom he conscientiously helped in word and deed in all their official tribulations. He got along well with people, had great patience with them, frequently conferring with them until late at night, and knew very well from the Scriptures and doctrinal writings how to settle the matter under discussion successfully. That was the much abused Missourian spirit that came to Wisconsin. In 1858 Rev. Fuergringer went to Frankenmuth, Michigan, after he had rendered splendid services in Wisconsin.

That is how the Missouri Synod gained a firm foothold in a territory which really belonged to another Lutheran body. Those who had always confessed the true Word of God had reasons to thank God for disposing all things in this manner, and our Synod can never be accused of having unjustly intruded here. No, she was called--called by the abused Christians robbed of their rights, and she could not have justified herself before God had she left them in the lurch. And the joining in membership of the first churches in Milwaukee and Freistadt with the Missouri Synod formed not only a bond between it and the first pastors but also between it and the first congregations. Inasmuch as most of the disputes with Grabau concerning such extraordinary, important matters pertaining to the stability of our church occurred here in Wisconsin, and inasmuch as here too the disputes were carried to a decision, Wisconsin will always hold an important position in the history of our church.

II. GROWTH IN NUMBER OF PASTORS AND CONGREGATIONS UNTIL 1873

After our Synod, through Rev. Keyl, had taken root in Wisconsin, she began to spread, and thereafter enjoyed an uninterrupted growth in the number of pastors and congregations. It is true, the growth was slower than one might have anticipated when considering the large Lutheran population in the State. But there were reasons for this. Even without taking into consideration the numerous "United" minded Lutherans, it was, nevertheless, an utter impossibility for us to assemble and serve even the real Lutherans alone. We simply did not have sufficient workers. Where could we have gotten these in the beginning? Our seminaries were attended by a mere handful of students, and the supply of true-confessing, usable men from abroad was limited. In the beginning we would have needed three times as many pastors as we had, but they were not available, and as a result many fertile mission fields had to remain untended.

Nevertheless, in spite of this, one might well ask, could not more have been accomplished? It is true that during the first 15 years--and those are the years we are now considering--our pastors diligently undertook missionary work in their neighborhoods, and that they founded many new congregations; and there were many occasions on which they made longer missionary journeys. But the fact remains, that there were instances in which the approach was not made timely enough. We did not learn until much later how to undertake missionary work in a new territory, such as Wisconsin constituted at that time, namely, that itinerant preachers had to be sent out to search everywhere for the scattered brethren in faith, and to serve them with the Word and the Sacrament. For this reason, the year 1873, when we commenced to perform missionary work in that way, is a turning point in our mission history, as will be related later.

That other mistakes were made cannot be denied. Much as we dislike doing so, we must cite Pastor Keyl as an example. Certainly he was an excellent preacher and a good pastor, but he was only a founder and not a gatherer. Milwaukee numbered many true Lutherans among its 15,000 inhabitants at that time, many of whom he could have won, but because of his unreasonable strictness in the acceptance of new members--it has been said in derision that he only wanted theologians in his congregation--he frightened them away. As a later official of our Synod expressed it, he built a high wall around his church, and it was only natural that people went elsewhere for services. It is this very rigorous strictness of Rev. Keyl's, in which some have read a characteristic of the Missouri Synod, which was used against us throughout the State, and in many instances was the cause of the distaste shown by many toward the "Oldlutheranism," and many congregations were lost to us because of it. This was one of the contributing reasons why the Wisconsin Synod founded at that time, enjoyed such rapid growth. Even if she did not stand with us on the same ground in the beginning, at least in practice, it was, nevertheless, a merciful dispensation of God that she came into being; for she energetically and eagerly took over the mission work in our State, and what we could not do and did not do, she did. What would have happened to the several

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24 hundred congregations of our State which now belong to the Wisconsin Synod if they had depended upon us? Truly, Wisconsin would not be able to boast of so strong a Lutheranism today.

Now let us see how our District gradually spread. From 1847 to 1850 only one pastor, Rev. W. Keyl, and only one congregation, Trinity in Milwaukee,¹⁶ and its filial at Freistadt, belonged to the Missouri Synod. In 1850 the congregation at Lebanon was added by reason of her joining the Synod with her pastor, Rev. Geyer, and in 1851 the congregation at Freistadt with her pastor, Rev. O. Fuerbringer, was added. Pastor Dulitz of St. John's Church, Milwaukee, also joined the Synod this year, making it four pastors and three congregations. These pastors, and also Pastor Lochner, the successor to Rev. Keyl, served other preaching places north of Milwaukee, which thus became a part of the oldest territory in this District. These were the present congregation in the town of Jackson, 7 miles west of Kirchhayn, and the one which was situated on Cedar Creek also in the town of Jackson, in a northerly direction from the last mentioned church, and also the congregation in Mequon, and the one in the town of Granville. The Fredonia congregation in Ozaukee County is also very old. In 1853, as the fourth congregation, the one at Grafton, with her filial at Cedarburg, came in under Pastor M. Guenther, who later became professor of theology in St. Louis. The fifth congregation was Trinity at Sheboygan, under Pastor O. Eissfeldt, and the congregation at Hochheim under Pastor M. Stephan was the sixth. The last named congregation belongs to one of the oldest fields in the District, as in the middle of the forties Pastor Geyer already preached there. From Sheboygan missions were started by the early deceased Pastor Eissfeldt, and his successor, Pastor Steinbach, in the town of Wilson, the town of Herman, and the town of Sherman, and later this work spread westerly to Sheboygan Falls, and also north into Calumet County. The town of Herman became self-supporting in 1857, and from there was founded the congregation at Silver Creek. This, however, later joined the "Union." Also those at Cascade and Batavia were founded from the town of Herman. In 1855 a congregation was founded in Oshkosh. Its pastor, the aforementioned Rev. M. Stephan, did much missionary work in the neighborhood, going, among other places, to Newton and Crystal Lake in Marquette County, where in 1856 he laid the ground work for those congregations. His successor, Pastor Ruhland, a short time later founded the congregation at Bloomfield in Waushara County. In the meantime, in 1854, a new church came into being on the south side of Milwaukee, the St. Stephens, under Pastor Fleischmann. In 1855 the church at Watertown, which had for 3 years been served as a filial by Pastor Geyer, obtained its own pastor in Rev. A. Wagner. He undertook missionary work in the town of Lowell (Reeseville), and his successor founded the congregations in Sullivan and Concord, Jefferson County, while Ashippun was served from Lebanon. In 1857 the District spread into Manitowoc County, where Pastor Jox had several congregations, which we later lost. In 1858 the congregation in Portage was founded, and this by a preacher of the Iowa Synod, and was taken over the following year by Pastor A. Rohrlock who was at that time also an Iowaia. He also served the one founded in 1856 in Lewiston,

16. Transl.: Now at 9th St. and Highland Ave.

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and did missionary work in Caledonia. After his departure, Portage was for 4 years served by pastors of the Wisconsin Synod, and after that the congregation called Pastor J. J. Hoffmann under whom she joined the Missouri Synod in 1867. Pastor Hoffmann industriously performed missionary work in the neighborhood, and founded congregations in Kilbourn,¹⁷ Cambria and Mauston, and even made missionary journeys as far north as Black River Falls, Neillsville, and Eau Claire. The congregation in Horicon was founded the same year, 1858, and this by a Wisconsin Synod pastor, but later under Pastor Berner it joined the Missouri Synod. From here the congregation in Browns Corners was founded in 1866, and that in Burnett Township in 1873. In 1860 we also find a congregation in Mayville. This came into being as an Evangelical-Reformed congregation, but because of opposition to its teachings, it could not exist. In 1871 a small group which professed the Lutheran faith reorganized it as an Evangelical Lutheran Church and it was served by pastors of the Wisconsin Synod. These were later replaced by Missouri Synod pastors, and in 1913 the congregation was received into membership by the Missouri Synod.

In the early sixties we encounter the well-known names of Pastors A. D. Stecher in Sheboygan, F. A. Ahner in Grafton and Cedarburg, G. Link in Lebanon, C. Strasen in Watertown, C. F. Keller in Rockland. Particular mention should be made of the Pastors H. Dicke in Hochheim and J. Strieter in Crystal Lake--these faithful and industrious missionaries, to whom our Synod owes so much--but more will be said about them later.

In 1860 Pastor Dicke founded the congregation in the town of Auburn, Fond du Lac County. From here originated probably half a dozen congregations and preaching places, which, with the exception of the town of Scott and Campbellsport, affiliated with the Wisconsin Synod. In 1862 we gained a foothold in Racine when on the north side of the city a number of families of a congregation separated from the Wisconsin Synod and formed their own congregation, under Pastor Engelbert. In 1863 the congregation at Waterford, Racine County, came into being under Rev. E. Georgii as its first pastor. In 1865 the congregation at Janesville, which together with the one at Whitewater had for over 10 years been served as filials from Milwaukee, became self-supporting, and received her first resident pastor in Rev. H. Ernst, who later joined the Iowa Synod because of the predestination dispute, where he emerged as a bitter foe of the Missouri Synod. From here missionary work was undertaken in Hanover, Beloit, Crystal Lake, Illinois, Clinton, the town of Center, and Afton, Rock County, and congregations were established. In 1866 Pastor G. Prager came to the town of Granville, and during the same year he founded the congregation at Fox Point, some miles north of Milwaukee, and later he laid the ground work for the congregation in North Prairie, Waukesha County. 1866 was the year of the founding of Immanuel Congregation in Milwaukee, after she had for some years been served as a preaching place by Rev. Lochner.¹⁸ At that time she received her own pastor in Rev. G. Reinsch but emulating the St. Louis congregations, for 7 years formed a parish with the Trinity Congregation, and then separated and became self-supporting. At this time the Synod reached its westerly outpost, when the congregation in the town of Westfield

17. Transl.: Now Wisconsin Dells.

18. Transl.: Of Trinity.

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(Loganville), Sauk County, together with her pastor, Rev. A. C. Winter, joined the Synod. In 1866 followed the congregation at Reedsburg, which, from 1869, was served by Pastor A. Rohrlock for about 40 years. Three years earlier the congregation at Berlin, and that at Sheboygan Falls with her filial at Plymouth, were received into membership by the Synod. In 1870, as the fourth in Milwaukee and as an outgrowth from the Immanuel Congregation, the Cross Congregation came into being, headed by Pastor J. H. Werfelmann. Shortly before, another congregation, St. Peter's in the town of Granville, became self-supporting and was served by Pastor J. Rennecke. Other well-known pastors who made their appearance in the middle sixties include: J. List in the town of Sherman, P. H. Wambsgans in Mayville, H. A. Allwardt, who later also proved to be a spiteful opponent of the Missouri Synod, in the predestination dispute in Germania, and, at the close of this era, J. J. F. Leyhe in the town of Grant, Portage County, G. H. Schilling, the so-called "long" Schilling, in the town of Auburn, H. Daib in Oshkosh, Christian H. Loeber in the St. Stephen's Congregation, and G. Kuechle in the Immanuel Congregation in Milwaukee, F. Wesemann in the town of Lowell, Dodge County, H. Rathjen at Mayville, E. G. Markworth, who later did such meritorious missionary work in northern Wisconsin, in Bloomfield, and F. Schumann in Freistadt.

By 1873 the mission field of the present Southern Wisconsin District had spread to 18 counties: Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington, Sheboygan, Fond du Lac, Manitowoc, Dodge, Winnebago, Marquette, Racine, Calumet, Jefferson, Rock, Waushara, Green Lake, Sauk, Adams, and Waukesha. We were not yet represented in 14 counties. In general, the mission field was very much the same in 1873 as that now occupied by the Southern Wisconsin District. The District has not spread north, and only slightly to the south and west. In 1873 the District had 32 pastors and some 50 congregations and preaching places, which, with few exceptions, still belong to this Synod. But at that time there were only 28 congregations which were in actual membership.¹⁹ It was not always possible to induce the congregations to join the Synod so that they might have a voice in the management of the church at large. The people feared that through their formal joining with the Synod they would lose their independence and that they would resign themselves with hide and hair to the dictates of a church super-government. The following serves pretty well as an illustration of their attitude: When the congregation at Fox Point, by a majority vote of the members, had decided to join the Synod, a member called out: "There, now the pastor has placed the noose about your neck."

Not all congregations were able to build themselves up peacefully. In many occurred severe disputes which resulted in extremely regrettable separations. In one instance it would be the private confession, then the misuse by individual members of their Christian freedom, then the doctrinal position of a catechism, then the church building program, then the lodges, then the churchly custom of placing candles and crucifixes upon the altar--and things such as this, which the congregation would tear to pieces. In each instance the "Faithful" part, if one may call it that, would prevail.

19. Transl.: This refers to membership with the Synod.

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It is praiseworthy to note how steadfast and faithfully some of the founders of the oldest congregations held to their religious beliefs, how in many instances they held reading services for years before they had a pastor, how they avoided sermons which they recognized as not conforming to the true beliefs, and how they often traveled long distances to attend divine services, and so forth. A Mr. Ernst Barth, who was the only one in Port Washington confessing the true Lutheran faith and would not join the "Union" congregation, journeyed the long 12-mile distance to Grafton each Sunday for 17 years in order that he might hear a Lutheran sermon. Verily, if the old pastors deserve praise for their faithfulness in their pastoral duties, then the faithfulness and steadfastness of the laymen should also elicit our praise.

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As the pastors and congregations had increased in numbers so that the president could no longer visit each one at least once every 3 years, as required by the by-laws of the Synod, the position of visitor to assist the president was created in 1873. In this year Pastor C. Strasen was appointed visitor for eastern Wisconsin, and Pastor G. Link for western Wisconsin.

III. THE PIONEER WORK OF OUR EARLY PASTORS

We shall now direct our attention to the pioneer work of our early pastors. This is a chapter which deserves full consideration, for here is depicted the manner in which God's Kingdom is erected. Indeed, it is not built up by anyone sitting in a comfortable easy-chair and enjoying happy days. No, it requires painstaking work, self-denial, and renunciation, just as the Lord Jesus told His servants in advance. When the Apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, recites all the tribulations and dangers he had to endure for the sake of the Gospel, he is only drawing a true picture of those who, like himself, are engaged in missionary work in order to win several for Christ. And indeed, the forefathers of our District often had good reason to console themselves with Paul. It is almost unbelievable what some of them had to endure. The present generation, which can enjoy, in peace and quiet, that which our forefathers wrought through painstaking work and privations, might well be reminded of this as a spur to faithful work, which is much lighter than that performed by our forefathers.

It must be said to the credit of our early pastors that they wanted nothing more, nor anything better, than that which their members had. They gladly shared their poverty and got along on very little. Just take a look at the place they called "home." In the cities these probably were a little better, but in the country--? One of the early pastors described his home to us. It was a log cabin containing a living room, a spare room, and a low garret. A small kitchen was added, and the bare earth had to serve for a floor. A hole served as cellar. What pastor in our District would today be satisfied with such a dwelling? And most of the dwellings of the country pastors were, very likely, built after this pattern. And how poor and scanty the furnishings were! Moreover, the pastors had so little actual money that we can hardly imagine how they, with their families, could make ends meet. At times they had to postpone the mailing of a letter for weeks because they did not have the price of a postage stamp. Still, one seldom heard a word of complaint or impatience from them, but they would unswervingly pursue their labors, encouraged by their faithful wives, who are deserving of the highest praise. It was not until the congregations became fairly well-to-do and could have made much better provision for them, that complaints were heard, and these were justified.

28 Truly, this willingness on the part of our early pastors--to endure these privations for the sake of our Lord, when, with their education, they could have fared much better financially in some other vocation--earns for them unspeakable praise. They labored to gain souls for heaven and not for personal gain, and they are, for that reason, a brilliant example. The unselfishness of some of them is well illustrated by the following examples: Pastor Dicke served poor congregations for years gratuitously, and none of them had occasion to complain about being neglected by him. When Pastor Engelbert in Racine required a school teacher, and the people declared that they could not afford to pay him a salary, he said: "All right, you are now paying me a salary of \$150 a year; we will divide this; I'll keep \$75, and I'll give \$75 to the teacher. In this way we will both be provided for. If

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the teacher gets his meals from you, he can get along on that." It is known that many pastors, when offered an honorarium by some poor family for special service rendered it, the pastor would decline it with the remark that the family needed it more than he did. And how poor they themselves were! When pastors act like that, should we not accord them the highest respect?

If the propensity of these early pastors to forego all personal ambitions in order to serve the Lord deserves commendation, then so too does their loyalty and conscientiousness. They remained steadfast, no matter how great the privations, indeed, no matter how aggravating the circumstances under which they had to administer their pastoral office. It was not unusual for them to be exposed to the rudeness of the people, for the people did not always treat them as they, their pastors, had a right to expect to be treated. Also, as might have been expected, they were not always spared various disgusting experiences with their congregations. The difficulties and hardships which they had to face were often unbelievable; for almost all had several congregations and preaching places to serve, and to get there regularly in all kinds of wind and weather over bad roads, with slow transportation facilities, and with uninviting quarters when they arrived to conduct divine services or to teach school, certainly was not a trifling matter. But they made the sacrifice and would not be discouraged, they abided it all with patience until such time as it pleased God to lighten their load. If, however, we want to get some picture of the difficulties and hardships of the early pastors, we must cite some actual instances, and this brings us to the real subject before us--the pioneer work of the missions in our State.

I must first direct your attention to two forerunners of these pioneers. The first is the Candidate, Karl Fricke, or Frincke, as he later called himself, who in 1847, even before we had obtained a firm footing in Wisconsin--the Milwaukee congregation had, indeed, renounced Grabau and approached us, but a call had not yet been issued to Pastor Keyl--journeyed through our State. This came about in the following manner: When in April and May of that year our Synod held its first convention, she also contemplated the work of the Inner Mission in our country. Wisconsin, particularly, was being considered, which, as was said in the beginning, had even at that time a dense German population, and for this reason Candidate Fricke was deputed as a so-called "visitor" with exact instructions, and sent here to make a survey for mission opportunities. Recently, in 1925, and quite by accident, the detailed diary of Fricke was found in far-off California, so that we now know where he went and what he did there. He left Chicago on May 7th (1847) on horseback and traveled by way of Dunkleys Grove and Dutchmans Point along Lake Michigan north to Wisconsin. He stopped at Southport (now Kenosha), Racine, Milwaukee, Mequon, Cedarburg, Grafton, Port Washington, Sheboygan, Sheboygan Falls, Calumet, Fond du Lac, and from there he went south to Cedarburg and Grafton, and then west past Watertown to Nashotah, Delafield, Waterford, and Burlington, and finally returned to Chicago by way of Wheeling. He made inquiries about the Lutheran brethren not only in all towns and villages but right and left along the country highways, and he met many Lutherans both singly and in groups, but they, as a whole, from a church standpoint, were a wretched decadent people. Many were entirely indifferent towards their religion; many others,

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who had been poisoned by the Prussian "unionism," were antagonistic to the true Lutheranism, and he met very few true souls who still were Lutherans at heart. In not a single instance did he succeed in motivating the people to form a congregation and issue a call to an orthodox (Lutheran) pastor. And so Dr. Walther had to complain to the Synodical Convention in 1848 that the hopes based upon the exploration trip of Candidate Fricke's had not materialized. Without a doubt, Candidate Fricke's interesting journey was not in vain as far as church history is concerned. For throughout southeastern Wisconsin, among the preacherless, spiritually decadent people, he spread the news that here in this country still existed the genuine, true Lutherdom which was sincere in its precepts and example, and thus he stirred their conscience, and he undoubtedly paved the way for later mission work, even though concrete evidence of this is lacking.

The other forerunner was a layman by the name of Mr. Pfau. Because Candidate Fricke's journey had produced no practical results, the Synod tried another way to win the people in Wisconsin. She sent Mr. Pfau as a bookseller (Kolporteur), and from the year 1852 he traveled in various directions in Wisconsin. Being an ardent lover of God's Word, this man never got tired of spreading the facts of salvation, and disposed of many good books, particularly Luther's Hauspostille, Loehe's Samenkoerner des Gebets, Walther's Kirche und Amt, and others, and as is categorically related in the 1853 Synodical report and in the Lutheraner, as the result of his activities, the Lutheran brethren in several places requested a pastor and were supplied with one.

That is how the General Synod operated in Wisconsin in the interest of mission work. But the actual work really began when God-inspired men themselves undertook the work in the State. In the first place we will have to mention Pastor H. Dicke. He is the founder of the Inner Mission in our District and deserves therefore, to be first in our memory. He did much. For, whereas until that time other pastors confined their efforts mostly to their own neighborhoods, Pastor Dicke now began making extensive exploratory trips in an effort to find scattered Lutherans. In 1857 he came from Michigan to Wisconsin in response to a call from 3 congregations in Dodge County "because a wolf had invaded that area," apparently a Methodist. He left Milwaukee at the end of February for Theresa, where he preached immediately and served the congregations whose membership, comprising some 200 families, was widely scattered. In the same year, 1857, came letters from Lutherans in Fond du Lac County with the plea that he preach to them, for they would have nothing to do with the Methodist preachers who had come to them and offered their services. Rev. Dicke started out and under great difficulties made his way through the primeval forest, finally arriving during heavy rain storms, completely exhausted, and at his destination he really found the people and preached to them. He repeatedly made this difficult trip, and finally gathered a congregation 11 miles east of Fond du Lac, from where he brought into being several other congregations. In 1862 Rev. Dicke went to Shawano County, where Pastor Ruhland had founded a congregation in Belle Plaine, and Pastor Beyer one in Pella, and from there he developed his greatest missionary activities--hence, in northern Wisconsin. Let me briefly summarize:

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He was an active preacher for 45 years, and for 34 years he performed missionary work; he founded 24 congregations, and with them he always lived the life of a pioneer. For years he served 14 to 16 places, and for over 40 years, besides all his other work, he taught school. During this time he endured untold hardships, especially in the winter and in the spring when everything was flooded. But he was not afraid of hardships, and, for his Lord's sake, he was ready to suffer poverty and privations. His dwelling in Belle Plaine was a very small, low log cabin, which stood for 2½ years before being completed. Rev. Dicke was to receive \$150 salary,²⁰ but he never received more than \$78. The promised provisions also did not materialize. His whole salary was spent on feed for his horse and the cow, and he had to go into debt. Then came the terrible inflation, for it was during war time. Flannel cost 42¢ a yard, flour \$12 a barrel and potatoes \$1 a bushel. But this splendid man did not seek anything for himself in his pastoral office. Right at this time Rev. Dicke received a remunerative call to Indianapolis, but in his conscientiousness he stayed here. Frequently, when the temporal affairs of a congregation founded by him improved so that it could have paid him a decent salary, he would step out in favor of some other pastor, so that it would be well served with God's Word; he was content with the small, indigent congregations, in which neither wealth nor possessions were to be had, and, as stated before, these he often served without any remuneration, and made his living from his farm, which he had obtained cheaply as government land. And in spite of all this poverty he raised a family of 13 children to maturity! Rev. Dicke was, in a way, an unusual personality. He had an iron constitution, was hardly ever sick, had an almost unspeakable capacity for work and enduring privations, and withal he lived to be 80 years old. He was always cheerful and good-natured. He was the Elder and the Chairman at the Wittenberg Conference and as such he gave his fellow pastors much good counsel and encouragement, and he frequently helped them out with an occasional sermon or service. At the close of the conferences he was invariably the jolliest fellow. He had the gift of being able to tell stories in a realistic way. It always brought on much laughter when he told his many anecdotes in his best vein. If Rev. Dicke himself had not been able to laugh, then he would not have been able to accomplish so much. Laughter is also a fine gift of God.

Another pioneer in Wisconsin was Pastor Johann Strieter. He came 2 years after Rev. Dicke, in November 1859, and settled near what is now Germania, in Marquette County. Here he took over the four congregations which had called him, in Crystal Lake, Newton, Mecon, and Princeton, but soon he began making extensive missionary journeys in all directions, and worked in and near Neshkoro, Fairwater, Ripon, Berlin, and Wautoma. His congregations were as much as 60 miles apart. He never preached less than four times and often even nine times each week, and traveled almost entirely on horseback. He covered about 6,000 miles a year. At all places he taught school and instructed confirmation classes. As this left him practically no time to study or prepare his sermons, he would prepare his sermons while astride his horse. He

20. Transl.: Yearly.

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- 31 always carried Luther's Hauspostille with him, or some of Luther's other works, and this supplied the material for his sermons. He would imagine himself in the presence of his congregation, and then would evolve in his mind the thoughts to be presented, from the beginning to the end, and then, having arrived at his preaching place, he would ascend the pulpit. His confessional talks were uniformly based upon the catechism, and he would not only preach, but would ask many questions to see if his audience was following his thoughts or had understood him. With all his work, Rev. Strieter made further exploration tours. From some woman he learned that there were many unchurched Pommeranians near Wausau. They had had a pastor, but he had become a saw mill worker. Rev. Strieter started at once and traveled 120 miles north over unmarked trails and found Lutherans scattered throughout the primitive forests. He came to Stevens Point, Wausau, Eau Claire, Fall Creek, Fairchild, and Tomah, and preached every day and often twice a day. To appreciate the hardships and dangers he faced on his missionary journeys, one should read his biography. What that man had to endure, particularly in the winter with its deep snow and severe cold! Several times he was nearly frozen to death, and only a silent prayer and the thought of his wife and child gave him the strength to stave off the end. And then at times it happened that after laboring through ice and snow in the coldest weather for 15 or 20 miles, no one would be present for divine services! How often he was in danger of losing his life! But God always kept him, His faithful servant, in His merciful care. And how little he thought about himself! What was said previously about Rev. Dicke, also applies to him; even the most abject poverty did not keep him from faithfully serving his Lord in all unselfishness. His dwelling was a hut which had more the appearance of a horse barn than that of a human habitat. His annual income ranged from \$100 to \$175. Surely, when this entire picture is held before our eyes, one must think of such missionary with reverence, and we have good reason to honor him in our memory.

What a contrast between such true pastors and the doubtful characters who infested the country, posing as preachers but in reality being wolves in sheep's clothing. When Rev. Strieter commenced his missionary work in Chippewa Falls he called upon a shoe-maker and introduced himself as a pastor. This man, however, was skeptical and remarked that some other preacher had been there who always demanded 25¢; but the people had refused to give it to him and so this pastor lost interest in them. The shoe-maker had evidently noticed that this preacher was a glutton, and, therefore, he would not aid Rev. Strieter in his efforts to seek out the Lutherans in the neighborhood. When Rev. Strieter came to Reeds Landing to do missionary work there, the first man he met remarked to him: "Well, you see, there was someone here earlier who pretended to be a preacher--he held services and told the people that it cost money to travel and that they should take up a collection. They did this, but lo and behold, he went into the nearest saloon and drank it up. That is how several have done it. And so one no longer has a mind for such things." I shall cite another example which I found related in a church history: This congregation, consisting of a mere handful, was still unsupplied, when it was approached by a so-called itinerant preacher who offered to conduct a service there. When the people had assembled, this person put in his

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32 appearance with his pipe in his mouth, and without following the orderly procedure of opening the services with hymns and prayers, he ascended the pulpit and was ready to start his babbling. This, however, he was prevented from doing.

Rev. Strieter had many contacts with the Methodists and also with the "Albrechts" people. Rev. Dicke, too, had to contend with these, and they were particularly dangerous because they boasted that their services were being rendered without remuneration. In Rev. Strieter's mission territory they made many proselytes among the Lutherans and caused confusion in their minds. On one occasion 3 men came to Strieter and asked him whether or not he was able to determine the exact time and place of his conversion. If not, then he was as yet unregenerated. When they insisted that he was, therefore, unconverted, because their spirit told them so, Strieter conducted them to the door. On another occasion someone asked him whether or not a person, after his conversion, still remained a sinner. Strieter said: "Yes." The other person said: "No, a convert is no longer a sinner." Strieter said: "Would you like to hear what God's Word has to say about this? Read Hebr. 12, where it says: Let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us." The other said: "Even if it said that there 10 times, I still would not believe it." Strieter said: "What! you pose as a person who is perfect in his sanctification and you speak like this? Get out!" and he pushed him out of the door. At another time someone came to him and said: "You have stated that at Holy Communion Christ's body is present within the bread. You will have to prove this to me." Strieter did this, and the other said: "My spirit tells me that that is not so." Strieter's rejoinder was: "Then what your spirit tells you is contrary to God's Word. It is, therefore, the devil that speaks through your lips." He then went away.

Pastor Rohrlack was another ardent missionary who worked untiringly in Portage, in the northern part of the State, and later in Sauk County. I shall relate two incidents in his life which are probably not generally known: At one time he and Pastor Sussner attended a conference at Prairie du Chien. The route from the town of Westfield to their destination was over an Indian trail through the primitive forest. The trip was made by these two men on foot. On their return trip they lost their way. Night was approaching, and helplessly they wandered around. Finally they saw a light, and following this direction, they came to a small hut. They knocked, but received no response, and when they opened the door, the owner met them with a gun in his hands. When they introduced themselves and asked for shelter, the answer was: "I have no room for loafers." For some time all pleas were unavailing, but finally the man took them to an outbuilding and, after they had entered, locked the door from the outside and chained a dog to it with the words: "You watch them." One can well imagine what the state of mind of these two brethren must have been. They considered the possibility of inadvertently having stumbled upon the hide-out of a robber or a murderer, but they comforted each other with the thought that if he had had evil intentions he could have executed them before this. Nevertheless, they had a pretty restless night. In the morning the man came again with gun in hand and said: "Now go your way." The only possible explanation of the man's conduct is that he considered

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these two to be dangerous characters. And it is really not surprising that Rev. Rohrlack, with his giant stature, his big beard and long hair, both of which he wore in his younger days, inspired fear, especially since Pastor Sussner presented a similar picture.

33 While Rev. Rohrlack was pastor at Portage, he made a missionary trip one winter, when the snow was very deep. "Schusters Rappen" was his saddle horse.²¹ He became lost in a swamp, with each step sinking deeper into the morass, his boots freezing as stiff as a bone, and he could hardly feel any life in his feet. He walked around for hours like this, until he saw a light late in the evening, and then he found a friendly welcome in the family circle of an Irishman. Here he was nursed for some time, until his feet, which had been in bad shape, were sufficiently healed so that his host could take him to Portage in a sled. Rev. Rohrlack had evidently, in this instance, experienced God's protecting hand. From this incident one can also see what our missionaries had to endure.

The one pastor of ours who was perhaps the most ardent missionary of all, who attained the greatest results, and whose experiences, if recorded in detail, would fill a book--was Pastor W. C. Schilling, the so-called "small Schilling." But since his missionary activities were confined mostly to northern Wisconsin, principally along the Wisconsin Central Railway line, I shall have to forego telling about it. It must suffice when I say that he was in danger of losing his life so often through water, cold, snow, upsetting of his sled--the latter occurred to him 14 times--that it is one of God's miracles that he came through it all unscathed. Sometimes his experiences were actually humorous. Once he had announced divine services for Sylvester Eve in Almond, 22 miles from Stevens Point. He made his journey on horseback. He was overtaken by a frightful rain storm which soaked him to the skin. Then the wind changed directions and it became icy cold so that his clothing froze so stiff that when he arrived at the home of the councilman he was hardly able to dismount. Since he could not preach wearing his soaked clothing, he had to borrow underwear and other clothing from the councilman, who was a man 6 feet tall. In these clothes, which gave him very much the appearance of a scare-crow, he repaired to the school house to commence the services. Fortunately, for him, no one had come, because of the inclement weather, for otherwise these people would not have been able to refrain from laughter at his ludicrous appearance.

So much then for this theme. That the work of our pioneers produced results is quite evident. They did not labor in vain, and today many flourishing congregations exist which were brought into being by them. Without their faithful work our Synod surely would have lost many of these areas. But it is a pity that not more such missionaries performed such intensive work. Had this been done, the number of our congregations would have been much greater.

21. Transl.: This figurative expression means that he went afoot.

IV. DOCTRINE AND PRACTICES FROM THE BEGINNING

Our early publications plainly reveal the trend of the teachings and precepts of our Synod and of our District from the beginning. The doctrine preached was based on God's Word alone. Indeed, the following is of historical importance: In this State where, until this time, fanatics and frauds had held sway and passed off their babblings as God's truths, where heretic preachers forced their false doctrines upon the people, indeed, where even those who called themselves Lutheran preachers promulgated doctrines that were diametrically opposed to Holy Scriptures; our early pastors for the first time proclaimed the pure and unadulterated Word of God, law and Gospel, and the doctrine of sin and grace. Even if this good news was proclaimed in the most destitute and poverty-stricken log cabin, it still was of great significance, a call to the Gospel, over which even the angels in heaven must have rejoiced. To preach only God's Word--this principle became so much a part of the very being of our forefathers, that they could not even think of dishing out to their audiences things of human origin, or to clutter up their own reasoning with it. They meekly submitted to the Words of the Master, and, driven by the love for their Saviour, in whom they believed with all their heart, and hence also driven by their love for those souls entrusted to their care, they taught and preached only that which served to sanctify the souls of those that heard them. They knew that God's Word alone was the medium to salvation, and so they proclaimed God's Word not only in their public preaching, but their whole pastoral administration was permeated by it. In order to train young and old in the eternal truths of redemption, they diligently gave Christian instructions and conducted catechetical classes. They knew the worth of Christian instructions, and the pastor who would not have given Christian instructions would have been severely criticized by his fellow pastors. Thus they considered it their sacred responsibility to look after the children, and to arrange for schools everywhere, and it is quite touching to read how these precious men, with all their other work, always found time to teach school, yes, found time to teach school in several places, for school teachers were simply not to be had. From the very beginning they conducted thorough confirmation instructions, and differed in this respect from other pastors, who, concerning this matter, took it much too easy. And they practiced real pastoral care. If the right and conscientious pastoral care is a particularly difficult part of the pastoral activities, it was doubly so in the early times, when one considers the depressing circumstances, the impatience that often manifested itself, indeed, the skeptical frame of mind that frequently enveloped the people. It required great ability, and a heartwinning love--briefly, the entire spirit of the Gospel--in order to be able to always hit upon the right solution. Yes, truly, it was precisely in this matter of pastoral care that our early pastors proved their faithfulness, for otherwise they would not have been able to accomplish very much.

So, through the medium of the Word alone our forefathers gathered together congregations and built them up--congregations which had a right to call themselves Evangelical-Lutheran. But what incessant, faithful work had to be done before this was accomplished! For, just consider what type of

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people constituted the membership of our early congregations! How much had to be done to merely bring them out of the "rough"! Granted, that the people were church-minded, and that they considered themselves Lutherans, but how much did most of them know of the real Lutheranism? How infinitesimal was their Christian knowledge! What erroneous ideas concerning doctrine had captured many of them! It was necessary, first of all, to lay the foundation, and it is well known that our early pastors preached mostly didactic sermons in order to acquaint their audience with the teachings of Holy Scriptures. Time and again, at conferences and Synodical Conventions, they would encourage each other with the thought springing from the correct principle that only from knowledge of the doctrine, in which they believed, could the precepts based upon the Gospel emanate.

The people did not only need to learn what the biblical Lutheran teachings were, but also what the Lutheran practices were. They had to learn that their entire church practices and affairs, its arrangements, its regulations, and its ceremonies must conform to the Word of God and the doctrinal standards of the Lutheran Church, that the doctrine expounded to them must be translated into deeds by them as a congregation. A living creed had to be awakened in them; what they, as a congregation, should do or refrain from doing; what they would tolerate and what they must not tolerate; in short, they had to learn what constituted genuine Lutheran congregational conduct. In Germany they belonged to the church of the state, in which citizenship and church membership were considered as being synonymous. There they obtained no conception of the correct form of a parish Lutheran congregation. And now they had been transplanted to America where church and state were separated, where they associated themselves with a parish church that was not sponsored by the state. How did they know how such a church should be constituted? what its right form should be, what responsibilities or privileges it had? All that had to be demonstrated to them. Above all, they had to be taught how to govern themselves, that is, hold congregational meetings to discuss the weal and woe of the congregation, and more particularly, of God's Kingdom. But it seemed that this most important matter was the hardest for them to absorb. One would think that they now, since the congregations were free from the tyrannical, hierarchical yoke that had been laid upon them by Grabau and his consorts, would apply themselves to the leadership of their own affairs. But that was not the case. At the Synodical Convention of 1858, President Fuerbringer voiced bitter disappointment because the congregations made so little use of the right of self-government so recently permitted them, and urged that congregational meetings be attended. "For the first time" he said, "since the early centuries of the existence of the Church of the New Testament the Christian congregations, at least in the New World, are placed in a position where they can enjoy a living, vocal participation in the government of the church as is demanded by the nature of the institution of Grace of Christ, while during the time prior to the Reformation, the growing might of the imperious Bishops, and after that the early usurpation by the exalted sovereign princes, did not permit it. Such freedom, which in accordance with the Gospel, has been dearly bought and given to the Christians, is unanimously granted to them within our Synodical circle, with clearness, earnestness, and gladness. This

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teaching is also found elsewhere, but not as the unfalsified creed of an entire church body. Our efforts are bent towards awakening and promoting a lively, eager attitude for everything that is good, for church discipline, wholesome institutions, and useful arrangements, and oh, "how unappreciated and unsuccessful these righteous efforts remain!" The education of the congregations regarding the nature of congregational meetings and the proper manner of participation was again a subject for discussion the following year, in 1859. In that report it states: "Congregational meetings should be held particularly to engage the personal activities of all congregational members to participate in the governing of the church as a whole, outside of the teaching office. God's commandment, based upon the royal law of love: 'Let everything be done honestly and orderly,' is the standard to be followed, and the command applies to everyone: 'Let no one look upon his own, but upon that which belongs to someone else,' 'Be subject to each other in the fear of God,' 'Do nothing in quarrelsomeness or for idle honour, but in all meekness prefer each other, each considering the other higher than himself;' also the earnest warning, 'If you among yourselves will bite and eat each other, see to it that you yourself are not devoured,' 'See to it that in your freedom you do not give way to the flesh, but in love serve one another.' These citations represent the principle and fundamental points according to which all matters in a congregation are to be judged and regulated. Each member present at the meeting may in a respectful way express his opinions on the question under consideration, and shall in nowise be prevented from doing so, nor shall he by any violence, either apparent or real, be threatened or intimidated. But, in the end, after all the pros and cons have been considered, the minority, in all cases, for the sake of orderliness, and because nothing could otherwise be accomplished, must submit to that which is decided by the majority, unless the majority, in brotherly love, yields to the weaker brethren. Through faith a Christian is master of all things, but through love he is everyone's servant; this the minority should bear in mind and manifest it in their words and actions if the matter concerned is free from scandal, and the pastor, together with all fair-minded members, is to be diligent in his insistence and admonitions that matters are to be decided by a majority vote. It is different in matters about which God's Word expresses a verdict--these must be unconditionally obeyed."

The congregations also had to learn what their attitude should be towards the pastoral office, that, because Jesus gave them the power of the Keys, they had to look after the establishment and maintenance of the pastoral office so that it would be properly administered, that they were to keep vigilance over the doctrine which was taking form in their midst, that they, in any event, were not to tolerate any priestly hierarchy amongst them, but, on the other hand, that they must not treat the pastor as though he were just a hired man, but that, they were to accord him, as a servant and messenger of God, all honour, which God Himself accorded them because of their office; furthermore, that it was their duty to see to it that only such would be permitted to partake of the Lord's Supper as could examine themselves, and held to be Christians, and that therefore, all those who wished to partake of the Sacrament must announce their intention to the pastor. Furthermore, that the children be baptized and later instructed in the pure doctrine, that their

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pastors buried only such as were held to be Christians and brethren, and such other things as were part of the Lutheran practices.

The congregation also had to learn that it was their sacred duty to bear witness against and to oppose all ungodly things amongst them. And this was hard to do. The behavior of the people caused our early pastors much concern. And how they suffered in spirit as well as physically when the people were so indifferent to their teachings and admonitions! Satan really made it difficult for our forefathers to build up genuine Christian congregations which would at the same time serve as a good example to other new congregations. What a lot of complaint there was, the first 10 years, about the quarrelsomeness and the lack of harmony within the congregations! And covetousness was rampant. Of course, at first the people were poor, but as early as 1858 President Fuerbringer, in his convention speech was able to say that the congregations had experienced temporal blessings in abundance, but that the worldly spirit and the idolatrous covetousness had banned from the hearts of many all due acknowledgment of the unspeakable benefits of the pure preaching of the Word of God, so that negligence and indolence resulted in the offerings for the requirements of the congregation and the Synod. Fuerbringer continues: "The blame may, at least in part, be placed upon us pastors, if we are so cold of heart and poor in living our beliefs, that the fire of spiritual love is a stranger to us also. However, whoever is remiss in the fulfillment of the second petition, he will gladly and carefully change, and he will eagerly inquire how he may help in the work of the ministry, so that the consecrated might be prepared for the future glory, and the Body of Christ,²² be built up. Unfortunately, God is witness, that while some congregations did almost more than they could afford, most of the others displayed an irresponsibility and indifference towards the sacrificing loyalty and self-denying work of love with which salvation, which was brought down from heaven, is being preached to them, and is being preserved for their children and children's children and later generations. It is not here a case of coaxing or forcing something more out of the people; the Lord does not need them, but they need Him; out of the super-abundance of His kindness, He offers to them plentifully, pure, and genuine, the oral as well as the written Word, which will bring their soul to salvation, together with the Holy Sacraments dispensed in the fullness of time. His spirit works with unremitting compassion through these precious means of Grace upon many thousands of obstinate souls; from this He expects to see results, based, as an outgrowth, upon the loving acts of our beliefs; if not, His patience will be exhausted, and they will experience bad years not alone in temporal matters but famine will also come over the country, a spiritual drought in which the immortal souls will languish on the final journey to eternity. His Gospel will go elsewhere and seek for itself hearts which are more willing to follow its teachings." These are words that might well be taken to heart for they also apply to our times. In addition, even at that time the complaint was heard that the congregations provided for their pastors shabbily in temporal things, while they themselves increased their fortune. The convention of 1858 again took up the discussion

22. Transl.: Meaning the church.

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of this matter, "since this regrettable fact might prove a grave temptation to pastors in their decisions whether or not to accept certain calls." Though the convention criticized severely the congregations which provided such meager support for their pastors, yet it declared in spite of this that it should not influence a pastor in his decision to accept or decline a call, unless he and his family absolutely could not maintain themselves on the remuneration offered.

Another evil condition which existed even in olden times was that at weddings much dancing and drinking was indulged in. They²³ saw that the finer sense of the sixth commandment was outraged by dancing, and that the drinking caused much that was improper. The latter evil became particularly offensive at the children's picnics (kinderfesten), when by their immoderate beer drinking they offended not only their more decorous fellow church members but also the general public. In one instance the church members objected to receiving into the church treasury the proceeds of such a kinderfest on the grounds that it was sinful money. This drinking evil was aggravated by members operating saloons which were open early and late and invited patronage. In 1875 the Synod took an official stand against this. Read the report entitled Ueber das Halten und den Besuch von Trinkhallen von seiten der Glieder einer christlichen Gemeinde.²⁴

These few instances, to which others could be added, suffice to show the deficiencies in living habits that had attached themselves to members of congregations, and how the flesh came in conflict with the spirit, so that our forefathers certainly did not have an easy time of it. How they had to impose censure (strafend eingreifen), time and again, even at the risk of making enemies for themselves! It is easily understandable that they had to practice some form of church discipline. Yes, church discipline was a particularly difficult element of their churchly activities. For what did their people know about it? Where in Germany was there even a semblance of Scripture-conforming, God-decreed church discipline? But here obedience was to be accorded to God's command: "Remove from amongst yourselves those that are evil," and in Math. 18 was recorded the manner of church discipline which was pleasing to God. That, too, the people had to learn. They had to learn that open, unpenitent sinners simply did not belong in a Christian congregation, and that they would have to be dealt with, and that the congregation itself would have to take the matter in hand.

But now we must cite several special instances in order to demonstrate what the Missouri Synod's practices were. All the early pastors saw to it that the congregations adopted some form of church regulations, and made it a rule that each member must sign it in order to signify his willingness to abide by these rules. This often became an obstacle, as people refused to affix their signature, fearing all sorts of restrictions. In 1859 the Synod

23. Transl.: The pastors.

24. Relating to the keeping and the patronizing of saloons on the part of members of a Christian congregation.

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declared that it would promote peace, orderliness, and the general welfare of the congregations if this signing were not insisted upon, but that oral promises would suffice. Besides, the fact that many members would not sign the congregations's constitution might be the fault of the constitution, as many contained some very strange provisions expressed in the most legalistic manner. The Synod, therefore, suggested in 1855 that extreme care be exercised in the construction of each church constitution, and that before its adoption by the congregation, it be submitted to one or more of the more experienced pastors of our association for brotherly approval, as it is much easier to eliminate from the constitution undesirable features before rather than after its adoption. The Synod also insisted that each congregation, before being admitted into membership with the Synod, submit to the Synod a copy of its constitution for its approval. This became a regular practice, and it continues to this day.

The practices followed in the early days with regard to receiving new members into a congregation is not discernable except in the one instance already cited. What principles should be followed was indicated by President Fuerbringer in his Synodical address of 1859. On the one hand he warns against too strict and rigorous requirements in theological knowledge or living habits through which many, who by tactful leading would become useful members, might be scared away, yes, might be driven into the ranks of the "sects," and on the other hand he warns against being too lax, as this might cause a congregation much unrest, harm, and heartaches. Of course, even with the greatest care some unworthy human beings could be accepted into membership by a congregation, but that would then become God's affair, and would be much easier to bear because it occurred in spite of conscientious efforts having been made to avert it.

In 1883, among other things, our convention again considered in detail this matter and reaffirmed the aforementioned principles. It declared: "Old congregations in particular, which are rich in well-versed members, must be careful not to refuse to take into membership, because of their lack of ecclesiastical knowledge, those that are not so well-versed. It might be necessary to point out to those who insist upon too high a standard of ecclesiastical knowledge in the new applicants for membership, the condition of their own knowledge when first they arrived here from the Fatherland and asked to be admitted to membership; and even now, if they will only examine themselves closely, they will find that they are not perfect in their knowledge and that their presumed wisdom is merely a patchwork. Anyone who knows the fundamentals of the catechism, even though he cannot recite it verbatim, should not be denied admission into a congregation." In connection with this the convention declared that admission was not even to be denied because of some imperfection in the mode of living, former wickedness in conduct, or because of poverty. On the other hand, a genuine Lutheran congregation, which should guard against too great strictness, must also exercise care against too great leniency, and should set aside every worldly consideration, such as might be manifested in too great an eagerness to increase the number in membership in order to decrease the load, so that smaller contributions by individual members might be possible.

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When we review what has been said so far, the following becomes evident: It was a miracle produced by the grace and friendliness of God that, with all the lack in doctrine and manner of living that existed in the congregations, so much was accomplished. That which our congregations had to learn with regard to Lutheran practices in doctrine and manner of living, they learned in due course of time, and they also learned how to practice it. Of course, it meant a continuous battle against everything of an ungodly nature. The pastors had to constantly teach and admonish, warn and discipline, and they dared not let any disappointment or vexation deter them in order to reach the desired goal. And the results followed; the Word proved its strength and developed knowledge. God's blessing is plainly evident in the results of our forefathers' faithful work. Who would deny that they made blunders and mistakes, or that someone under the exigencies of the circumstances might have acted too legalistic? And yet there was not one among them who did not know that above all else, the doctrine of the justification of a poor sinner before God by grace through faith in Christ alone--this major fundamental doctrine--had to be impressed deep in the hearers' hearts in order to bear witness of the real Christendom. Only then did they know that they discharged the duties of their office and were righteous servants of the Lutheran, that is, the genuine Evangelical and orthodox church, when they permitted this article to permeate their entire pastoral conduct and were led and governed by it. And the secret of their success lies in the fact that they did preach this article in all its purity and sweetness. Professor Pieper was right when he remarked upon one occasion: "That the Missouri Synod got so large, is simply attributable to the fact that its pastors were able to assure their hearers that their sins had been forgiven." The congregations which resulted from such preaching by our forefathers and which one can therefore consider the fruit of the Gospel, were such as could, in doctrine and practices, prove themselves to be genuine Christian congregations. Of course, not all attained the desired goal speedily. While some were easily taught and could serve as an example, others were hard to guide and direct, and there are illustrations of congregations which opposed their pastors for a long time, so that the latter had to groan while administering their pastoral office. But finally they prospered and advanced; the congregations constantly increased in ecclesiastical knowledge, and by the grace of God, they remained genuine Christian congregations, in which Christian spirit and understanding ruled. That is the fine heritage which we received from our forefathers.

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We cannot conclude without some reference to other practices of our early congregations. To this belongs the liturgy or the order of divine service. That they conformed with the Word of God and the creed is evident from the beginning. However, they lacked uniformity, as each pastor used the agenda which he had brought from Germany, the old Saxon or that of Loehe, and if he had no printed copy, he would copy for himself the necessary formulas, or he would construct his own order of divine service. Uniformity was lacking until the Synod's agenda came out with the fine well-proven Wittenberg order of divine service. Some congregations were very reluctant to grant the pastor the singing before the altar. This was held to be Catholic. Likewise many congregations objected to the burning of candles upon the altar, and this caused many disputes. Congregational singing was complicated by the fact

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that many different hymnals were in the hands of the members. Each hymn-book had to be taken into consideration when selecting a hymn. And since the melodies were not always the same, further confusion resulted. That is why the early pastors eagerly awaited the coming of our Missouri Hymnal, and it is known that some congregations took instructions in the proper singing of these hymns. In the beginning no congregation except Trinity in Milwaukee had an organ to lead the congregational singing, and consequently the pastor had to lead the singing; due to the untrained voices of the members, this was a strenuous undertaking. Sometimes it happened that the pastor was not so sure of himself (sattelfest), or he would sound the wrong melody which would not correspond with the text. How curious the singing was in some of the early churches was discovered by the author. Forty-three years ago he supplied the pulpit for a pastor and let a hymn be sung according to the melody Es ist das Heil uns kommen her. The congregation rendered this with so many flourishes that it could hardly be recognized. Not until the Brauer Choral Book made its appearance in our churches did our singing improve. Yet the rhythmic hymn was a long time in coming, and is to this day unknown in many of our churches. In this connection we might direct attention to the choir singing in our churches. As early as 1852, Teacher Dietz organized a mixed choir in Milwaukee and a few years later a men's choir appeared. Other congregations followed this example and even quite early many choirs rendered acceptable music, and there is no question but what the choir singing in our churches added considerably to our divine services, especially on the holidays.

In the early days divine services usually lasted much longer than they do today. Not only were the hymns usually sung in their entirety, as is proper, for the hymns represent a whole and should never, unless necessity demands it, be shortened, but the sermons were much longer. Rev. Keyl and Rev. Lochner, for example, always preached for 1 hour or more. Old church members assure the author that at Lochner's, on confirmation day, the celebration started at 9 in the morning and did not end until 2 or 3 in the afternoon. How the pastor, the children, and the whole congregation could endure this, seems incomprehensible to us.

We have already spoken of the Christian instruction (Christenlehre). These were conducted principally for the confirmed young people to keep them at the catechism, and some of our early pastors used to ask the adults questions too. Usually this was preceded by an address, and then two boys or two girls would step forward and recite one of the chief parts of the catechism, in the form of questions and answers, or they would alternately recite the verses of a hymn, and then the examination would follow. But even in the early sixties complaints were made about the poor attendance at these instruction sessions, and complaints did not cease to be heard. With difficulty the sessions continued for a while until finally one congregation after another discontinued them, and introduced the so-called Sunday school in its place, which is held before the main divine services and which follows a plan whereby a group of children are taught, particularly Bible History, by an instructor or an instructress. In some degree the Sunday school is a substitute for the Christian instruction (Christenlehre), and it is in some ways a more advantageous arrangement, for, many outside children attend, who certainly would

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not have come to the Christian instruction sessions. But whether this is comparable to the thorough catechetical instructions given by the pastor himself, is questionable. In order to save the Christian instruction session, the Immanuel Congregation in Milwaukee shifted it to the main divine services, to immediately precede the sermon, and assurance is given that it would not care to discontinue this practice.

In the early days it was a common practice to use the major and the minor exorcism at baptisms. This was the practice of Pastor Kuechle and Pastor Lochner to the end of their ministry. Could it be found anywhere today?-- With regard to sponsors at baptisms, the convention of 1855 expressed the thought that Lutheran parents should select only Lutherans who are members of their church, as sponsors for their children, because only these could properly assume the obligations inherent in the sponsorship office.--On Sundays when the Lord's Supper was celebrated, it was customary in all congregations to have the main services precede the confession. Today only one congregation follows a different procedure. This is the St. John's Congregation in Racine. There the regular service is held first in its entirety. The congregation is dismissed, and only the communicants remain, and then the second service is held with confession and Communion. Thus is averted the disturbance occasioned by the departure of many before Communion, and confession and Communion are continuous. One of our Milwaukee churches, belonging to the English District, has introduced the practice of having its confession and Communion before the regular services. This is not a bad arrangement, for in this manner every communicant naturally remains for the regular services.--In all the early Milwaukee congregations, and probably in many others as well, it was the practice that, for the public confession, all confessors gathered about the altar to receive absolution, and having received absolution, they would pass around behind the altar and there deposit their so-called confessor's fees. These fees were the pastor's and were considered as part of his compensation. When attending Communion the so-called communion fee was placed upon the salver, and later flowed into the congregation's treasury. The presentation of confessor's fees has been discontinued everywhere. There probably are no longer any congregations in which the confessors gather about the altar at the time of the confessional.

We will next direct our attention to the confessional form. In the earliest times our congregations in Wisconsin followed the practice of hearing only private confessions preceding the public administration of the Lord's Supper. These private confessions were held in high esteem by our forefathers, and by them it was much preferred to the public confession. In this they were in accord with the doctrinal standards and with Luther. In the Augsburg Confession it is stated, in the 11th Chapter: "Regarding the Confessional it is taught that in the Church privatam absolutionem (this means, the absolution spoken in the private confession) shall be preserved and not be permitted to decline;" and Luther, who also refers only to the private confession in his Small Catechism, writes in 1533: "Even though thousands and thousands of worlds were mine, I would still rather lose it all than to permit even the smallest detail of this confession to ever get away from the Church." It is for this reason that the private confession is repeatedly extolled in our early writings. For example, in our Synodical report of 1855 it is stated:

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"A precious thing, a rich, blessed promise of God . . . is the absolution spoken separately to the individual. . . . How many hundreds of miles should we be glad to go to hear this Word, and yet it is so near! The copresent power of it, whether publicly proclaimed or to individuals, lies in the faith through which it dwells within those who hear it; but the terrified sinner, in whom only this is possible, is not always certain that the promise to the multitude pronounced from the pulpit is also meant for him. . . . That is why we gladly and willingly seek the secret confession (that is, the private confession)." Thus our forefathers expressed themselves concerning the private confession.²⁵ But they would not consider making the private confession obligatory, for they specifically declared that a Christian congregation should follow the procedure which it considered to be the best.

But in spite of this, in several congregations, the question of private confession caused much wrangling and argument--yes, it even lead to separations and enmity. The outstanding example is the congregation of Pastor Geyer in Lebanon. Since 1844 the private confession had been in practice. Twelve years later, in spite of the advice by the pastor and by the president of the District, serious opposition to it was raised by some members, which resulted in concessions to the "confession stormers," and the introduction of the so-called public confession, in addition to the private confession; otherwise a separation would have resulted. Now, however, because the "confession stormers" continued to incessantly taunt the pastor and the congregation as though, the private confession, due to its previous existence, were coercive, legalistic, and a servile yoke, and because Pastor Geyer demanded that they recant this accusation the opponents of the private confession, abetted by the agitation of the (parochial) school teacher, separated themselves from the public divine services and held services among themselves. They would not enter into any further discussions, severed all connections with the congregation and the Synod, and called a pastor of the Wisconsin Synod, who served them immediately; this was a regrettable mistake, which, because this pastor's action received the official sanction of the Wisconsin Synod, added not a little to the strain in the relationship between the two Synods.

At the same time the congregation at Watertown and the one at Freistadt had to go through a fierce dispute about the private confession, and 2 years later, after the departure of Pastor Dicke, the congregation at Hochheim also. The congregation in Milwaukee too, was not spared, though, fortunately, a separation was averted. There too, from the beginning, some wanted the public confession introduced together with the private confession, for they thought that it would be more in accordance with their Christian freedom, as well as tending to promote the external growth of the congregation, if both forms of confession were instituted, permitting a choice at the individual's option, for to many the private confession, based on their experiences in Germany, was an unfamiliar matter. Upon the advice of the Synod, the congregation retained the private confession, and indeed, exclusively. When,

25. Cf. also Walther's sermon in his Evangelienpostille, p. 318.

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however, the disturbance in Watertown occurred, the opponents of the private confession again became active, and advanced the argument that the much vaunted principle of Christian freedom should be translated into actuality here in this city. Even though an overwhelming majority of the congregation favored the retention of their existing form of confession, they were not indifferent to the taunt that in this congregation the Christian freedom was being curtailed, and their attitude toward those who abstained from taking Communion because of their objections to private confession also created embarrassment. That is why the congregation applied to the Synod for arbitration, and the Synod decided in favor of the retention of the private confession, for they declared that if the private confession had served to help build up the congregation, they should retain it, and that through it the freedom of the others had not been outraged, and that those who, because of the private confession, had absented themselves from the Lord's Supper, had sinned against the love of God, for they disparaged the means of grace because the order of administration displeased them; furthermore, that they had sinned against the love of their neighbor because they did not submit to the orders instituted by the congregation.²⁶ Not until 1866 was the public confession instituted, and today there is only one congregation within the District which has retained the private confession, the one at Ashippun.

Under the subject of "practices" we should also consider the attitude of our District towards lodges. The lodge dispute is nothing new, as one might possibly suppose, but as early as 1853, thus over 70 years ago, the Synod expressed itself with regard to lodges. It regretfully noted that many Christians in this country had fallen into the hands of the secret societies such as the Odd Fellows, Free Masons, and so forth, and were still falling into their hands, and it took a position based upon God's Word as recorded in Eph. 5: 11, 12, and John 3: 20, which forbids Christians to associate themselves with those whose acts must be kept a secret; and that in 2 Cor. 6: 14, it was forbidden that we should be hitched to the same strange yoke with the unbelievers, that is, that we must neither travel the same frivolous path with them nor help promote their ungodly activities; and that in Math. 5: 33-37 we were forbidden to swear by any creation of God's or by any other thing; and whoever joined the Odd Fellows or some other secret society must promise upon his honor, not to divulge the secrets of the order, and thus he acted contrary to God's Word; and that Math. 6: 24-34 was violated by everyone who joined the lodges because of their benevolence features, as this was tantamount to declaring that human societies and their mammon and not God provided for him and his loved ones. This was a grave sin against the First Commandment. These teachings of God's Word, it was further stated, to which many others could be added, proved that anyone who joined the Odd Fellows or some other secret society or in any way belonged to them, whether he attended their regular meetings or not, denied God, our blessed Lord, and trampled God's Word under foot. That is why the Synod warned all its members, as well as all Christian people, and particularly

26. Cf. Bericht, 1855, p. 32.

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44 the newly arrived immigrant brethren, against secret societies, and stipulated, as was only natural, that those members of Christian congregations who were identified as being in membership with such secret societies, should be dealt with as directed by our Lord in Math. 18: 15ff. At the same time, however, the Synod made the earnest plea to all its members, and the Christian congregations in particular, to establish within their own organizations Christian indigent and disability benefit plans patterned after those in effect in the early congregations, in order to abate the necessity for resistance on the part of the members to the ever increasing grasping seduction of the secret societies.

It is certainly very significant that the Synod, only 6 years after it came into being, made this declaration public. Our forefathers clearly fathomed the mischief inherent within the lodges, recognized their nature as being contrary to Christian principles and proved it plainly, and easily made out an understandable case against them. There is ample documentary evidence that they were serious in their purpose and did not tolerate lodge brothers in their midst. It is told that Pastor Rohrlack was in imminent danger of being assaulted on the public street with intent of doing him bodily harm because of his opposition to lodges. Pastor Strieter was also in constant conflict with the lodges, and he records in his biography the themes of three sermons which he preached against lodges. Many congregations were subjected to strenuous lodge disputes, and when there was occasion to take to task a lodge brother who was affluent and who had otherwise attained a position of respect in the congregation, this was a severe trial for the congregation. But, God be praised, our Synod never temperized or changed its principles as stated above, but has maintained the same position to this day, although its work was made much more difficult through the activities of the lodges; for it cannot be denied that lodge activities are harassing the congregations much more now than ever before. In the early days they had to contend only with occasional lodges, particularly the Odd Fellows and the Free Masons; but now they have greatly increased in numbers, and with their numerical increase, the temptations confronting a congregational member have also increased. All sorts of lodges, which are fundamentally as bad as those mentioned, because, without exception, they side-track Christ and His precious meritoriousness and hope to effect their own salvation through works, seemed less disreputable to them and many are mislead into joining them because of the temporal advantages which are promised; therefore, possibly without being fully conscious of it, consider the lodge to be a God in whom they place their trust. How difficult it is to get them to drop their lodge membership, especially since they know that there are Lutheran bodies which refuse to take a position against the lodges! Indeed, this gives us cause to pray to God that He give us a strong faith so that we may not cease to earnestly oppose the lodges.

V. DEVELOPMENT OF THE CONGREGATIONS SINCE 1873

In the earliest years all our congregations were small. Some of them also remained small, but most of them could record a healthy growth. Through the immigration from the old fatherland they increased steadily, and many enjoyed a very rapid growth. If one will consider what was said in the introductory remarks, this will be clear. Those immigrants who had retained their Lutheran consciousness and were church-minded, were at once attracted by our German Evangelical-Lutheran congregations and their German schools. They were
 45 happy to find a church in which they could hear sermons offering the right kind of nourishment to their souls, and they joined our congregations in great numbers. The astonishing growth of many of the congregations is typified by Immanuel Church in Milwaukee. In the year 1866 she had a voting membership of 80, and 7 years later, in 1873, the membership had swollen to 401. No wonder the church's facilities became inadequate. As did this congregation, many others grew mightily, such as that in Watertown which already, in 1873, had 380 members, but especially the other Milwaukee congregations, for which reason Milwaukee rapidly became known for its many German Lutherans. This growth continued so that soon one after the other they had to consider the forming of branches. In 1883 Zion Congregation was formed as a branch of Immanuel, and in a short time this became one of the largest churches in Milwaukee; consequently the Nazareth and the Emmaus Congregations had to be formed, which in turn also became large congregations. The large Bethlehem Congregation branched from Trinity Congregation, and the equally large Martini Congregation from Stephen's Congregation, and the Ebenezer from the Martini. Thus new congregations had to be formed constantly to accomodate the increasing population, so that today, including the missions, the Missouri Synod has 26 congregations (in Milwaukee), and about an equal number belong to the Wisconsin Synod. Virtually the same thing occurred in Sheboygan where a large number of Lutherans settled; in the course of time 6 congregations emerged out of the Trinity Congregation. The Racine congregation also founded 3 daughter churches. In other places branches were likewise established. For example, in Adell, where members who until that time had belonged to the town of Sherman, started their own church. In Horicon, Janesville, and Portage the small congregations grew, so that they are now large congregations.

In Milwaukee the church situation is a most peculiar one. Here the Lutheran Churches are probably located closer together than in any other place. Parochial boundaries, which earlier were considered of such great importance, have entirely disappeared. Members can no longer all live near their church, and in most instances the homes of members of various congregations are intermingled. For example, those belonging to the so-called downtown churches have long been crowded out by encroaching business places and the foreign population, and they are now so scattered over the entire city that many probably pass half a dozen Lutheran Churches before they finally arrive at their own church.

The growth resulting from immigration, which was formerly enjoyed by our congregations, continued until about 1895, and then it abated; today it has virtually ceased altogether. There are reasons for this. In the first place, the churchlessness and the unbelief in the German State Church has increased

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considerably in the last several decades; consequently, many people who nominally belong to the state church completely absent themselves from their church, and permit their children to grow up without being baptized or given a Christian training. They therefore revert to heathenism. The people have become satisfied with the existing conditions of their church. The spirit of real Lutheranism has entirely disappeared. Indeed, there exists an almost universal animosity towards it, as can be attested to by our pastors serving the Free Church abroad. The Evangelical-Lutheran Church is considered obsolete, and the congregations do not want to be considered Evangelical-Lutherans but Evangelical-Reformed. Anyone who wishes to be Lutheran is looked upon as being peculiar and out of step with the times. The Union spirit permeates everything. When such people come over here they no longer feel drawn to us, especially since it has, for some time, become the fashion to scorn the Missourians. It is very rare that someone migrates to this country with the desire in his heart to find here an association which accepts the creed of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church without reservation. We, therefore, no longer have the free access to the immigrants which we formerly had. Our congregations have to build themselves up almost exclusively out of their own descendants, and particularly out of the young people trained in our own schools. Yes, where would our congregations have been and where would they be now if we did not have our parochial schools? We seldom win people from other denominations. It is different in places where our church work is being carried on in the English language. Many can be reached through the English language who formerly would not come near us, and it is a fact that we already have congregations which consist of various nationalities, and, without a doubt, in the gathering of such congregations we will have to undertake extensive mission work within this State. God grant that in such congregations no liberal, Unionistic spirit will gain control, but that everywhere the banner of genuine Lutheranism will be held high.

VI. THE SYNODICAL CONVENTIONS AND THEIR CUSTOMARY DOCTRINAL DISCUSSIONS

The District of which southern Wisconsin now is a part originated in the year 1854 and is one of the 4 first and oldest Synodical Districts. It was known as the Northern District and comprised Wisconsin and Michigan. From then on it regularly held its own Synodical Conventions. But even before this occurred, Wisconsin had the pleasure of being host to the General Synod, namely in 1851, 4 years after its organization. The Synod convened in Trinity Church in Milwaukee, which had just been completed. That was the first time that Walther, Craemer, Sihler, Brohm, Schaller, Wunder, Schwan, and other fathers of the Synod came to Wisconsin. In all, there were 26 voting pastors, 11 lay delegates, and 17 associate members present. President Wyneken could, unfortunately, not be present because of the cholera epidemic in St. Louis. Twenty sessions were held in addition to four pastoral conferences. The report of that convention states: "The Synod was amply refreshed and strengthened for its pains and hard work in the unity in creed and in love which was manifested, and through the evident blessings to the church which the Lord bestowed upon their conferences so that many hearts, which formerly were filled with prejudice and misgivings towards the doctrine and practices of our Synod, turned to her in confidence. During the course of their conferences they were pleased to note that the truth was victorious in many hearts, and for that reason, at the conclusion of the convention, every heart was filled with praise and gratitude for the overwhelming evidence of God's grace and love."

47 This Milwaukee convention was important from a church history standpoint for two reasons: First: The Missouri Synod had for some years worked in hearty accord with Pastor Loehe in Neuendettelsau (Germany). Not only had Loehe supplied our Synod with a number of useful men such as Ernst, Burger, Hattsteadt, Craemer, Lochner, Schuster, and others, but he was also the founder of our educational institution in Fort Wayne (Indiana), where the preachers for our Synod were being trained. Then a dispute developed over the matter of doctrine. In 1849 Loehe published an article in which he expressed ideas about the holy ministry which were similar to those held by Grabau. At the same time, in some letters to Loehe from America, the Missouri Synod was placed in a bad light. Consequently, he decided to sever his connections with our Synod. In order to prevent the threatened break with Loehe who had done so much for the Lutheran Church in America, the Synod sent a delegation to Germany for the purpose of restoring peace. The delegates were Walther and Wyneken, the latter being one of the truest friends of Loehe's and particularly suited for this mission. But the mission was unsuccessful. Loehe persisted in his position and founded the Iowa Synod, which will be discussed later.

Second: Since Loehe and Grabau harbored false doctrines in the matter of the church and its holy ministry, and through this jeopardized the unity of the church, the Synod held eight sessions dealing with the theses which Dr. Walther had published regarding this doctrine, and these discussions brought on Walther's epoch-making book, Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt.²⁷

27. Transl.: The Voice of Our Church in the Matter of Church and the Holy Ministry.

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Through its extraordinary exposition this work presented Walther to the world as a sound Lutheran theologian. He was therefore unqualifiedly accepted as the leading spirit of the Lutheran Church in America, and he declared that the Missouri teachings of church and the holy ministry were not a new doctrine, as was claimed here and abroad, but that it was the teachings of the Scriptures, of the symbolic books, and of the most approved theologians of the Lutheran Church. This was done in such a convincing manner that no rebuttal seemed possible.²⁸

The discussions on the said theses did very much to clear the atmosphere in Wisconsin, for many church members, who were particularly interested in this doctrine, attended these sessions, and one entire congregation of Pommeranians, who were formerly part of Grabau's emigrant Lutherans, and who because of Grabau's conduct had become confused about the correct doctrine concerning the holy ministry and had formed a special congregation which they had built up by using only Luther's Postils (Postillen) in their divine services, was convinced of the orthodox position of our Synod and joined Pastor Lochner's congregation. This was certainly a fine blessing resulting from these discussions. In general, all congregations were strengthened and stabilized thereby, and Grabau constantly lost more ground.

The first convention of our District took place 4 years after the convention of the General Synod. It convened June 9-13, 1855, in Milwaukee. There was a total of 38 members present; of these 10 pastors, 5 teachers, and 8 laymen were from Wisconsin. President Wyneken preached the opening sermon and based his text on Is. 51: 15, 16, developing the theme, "How the Lord Himself encourages His people to at all times be of good cheer and happy," after which the convention, together with the school choir, sang the Tedeum Antiphonatum. The sessions commenced in the afternoon. President Fuerbringer read a lengthy, very substantial Synodical address, in which he pointed out the necessity of dividing the Synod into 4 districts, and then he showed what an important position Wisconsin had attained by reason of the disputes with Grabau. "Doctrinal material has accumulated here in great quantities," he said, "such as is hard to find in any other part of the world," and he urged the proper gratitude for the many blessings ensuing from these disputes.

After the address, the rituals for opening and closing the daily sessions were established. The local pastor was selected as chaplain for the opening devotionals, and the president of the District was to offer the closing prayer. The opening services followed the old churchly order of Matins, and were conducted as follows: First, the singing of one of the rhythmic hymns; second, antiphons; third, a psalm sung to one of the eight old psalm melodies; fourth, a Bible selection from the Altenburger Bibelwerk mit Prolog und Summarien; fifth, confession and absolution, the latter according to the fine short form of "Bueghen's"; sixth, singing of several verses of hymns; seventh, collect with salutation and versicles; eighth, benediction; ninth, closing sentence. It can be seen that our forefathers thought more of solemn ceremonials than we do. In the minute book it was stated that this ritual was carried out with the

28. When we speak of historical places, the south-east corner of Fifth and Wells Streets in Milwaukee should be mentioned, for that is where the church stood in which these important discussions took place.

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help of some of the choir scholars (Chorschueler) of the local congregation without any difficulty, and that it served, in no small degree, to buoy up those assembled there.

Ten sessions and three pastoral conferences were held. No doctrinal discussions took place at this first convention, but many other current matters were considered. For example, the matter of the teachers' seminary in Milwaukee which had just been started by Pastors Fleischmann, Lochner, and Dulitz, and the desirability of a closer cooperation with the local Norwegian and Swedish Lutheran Churches in this country, and so forth. We find it peculiarly disturbing now that the St. John's Congregation in Milwaukee was denied admission to the Synod because it would not respect any parochial boundaries. Would we still turn away a congregation for that reason?

Thus concluded the first convention of our District. From that time on we held annual conventions regularly except in the years when the General Synod convened. It is a remarkable fact that during all this time not one convention has been omitted. From 1855 to 1926, 50 conventions have been held. Our District convened 13 times as Northern District (together with Michigan); 5 times as Northwestern District (together with Minnesota); as Wisconsin District, 24 times; and as Southern Wisconsin District, 8 times. The Synod held its convention in Milwaukee 27 times, to-wit: 9 times in Trinity Church (1855, 1858, 1865, 1870, 1873, 1879, 1885, 1897, and 1907); 6 times in St. Stephan's (1868, 1874, 1880, 1886, 1898, and 1916); 6 times in Emmanuel's (1877, 1882, 1888, 1894, 1901, and 1912); 3 times in Zion's (1892, 1900, and 1910); 2 times in Martini's (1891 and 1906); and once in Emmaus (1924). The convention was held in Watertown 5 times (1862, 1875, 1909, 1918, and 1927); in Sheboygan 6 times (1883, 1889, 1895, 1903, 1913, and 1919); in Racine 3 times (1904, 1915, and 1925); in Reedsburg once (1921); in Horicon once (1922); in Janesville once (1928). Besides, the Delegate Synod (the entire body of Synod represented in its delegates) convened in Milwaukee 3 times (1890, 1902, and 1917). The commendable hospitality of the host congregations should also be mentioned, for they always entertained and lodged the conventions gratis. For over 70 years they have always been willing to volunteer this service and it is only recently that the District made the rule that each one attending the Synodical Conventions must make a small offering to help defray the expenses.

That a rich blessing went out from these Synodical Conventions goes without saying. How could our unity in spirit have been maintained, and strengthened, without it? How would it be with the congregations or the mission work? The teaching and doctrinal discussions added much to their importance. That was one of the blessings of the separation of the District when by and by the different phases, in fact all the phases of the teachings of the Holy Scriptures could be treated in detail and through publication, made available to the other Districts. Thus there is gathered in the Synodical reports of our combined districts a wealth of material on doctrine, and I would not hesitate to designate our many Synodical reports, together with all their expositions and theses, as a monumental work of Lutheran theology. Where is anything like it to be found? I would consider it a calamity if our Synod, after it has become entirely English, would cease to read these profound, comprehensive

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expositions of doctrine, for in them God gave the church a treasure which could not easily be replaced. And our District contributed its share to this wealth of material. In our District, too, the pastors and theologians could be induced to serve the church. The expositions contributed by them bear brilliant witness of the spiritual gifts which God distributed in our District. All told, there were some 60 comprehensive expositions contributed by our District; and if one were to read them as they are recorded in our Synodical reports, one could not help being astonished at the Scriptural knowledge, at the excellent manner of presentation, at the fearless opposition to all forms of errors, at the way the doctrine is applied to everyday life--briefly, at the richness in talent which is evidenced here. Truly, God also gave us some splendid men, who, no matter how unassuming they might otherwise have been, were, nevertheless, the special instruments for the development of His congregations and churches, and although they considered their work of no consequence, it now stands out as a monument of their abilities, and they are collectively a testimonial of the type of teaching which was done in our District.

At our first District Convention in 1855 no purely doctrinal matters were discussed. There was no time for it since there were too many other matters of a practical nature which demanded attention. But beginning with 1856 no convention was held at which no matters of doctrine were discussed. For example, in 1858 the divine nature of a call issued by a congregation to fill the pastoral office was treated; in 1859 the subject of Christian freedom; in 1865 the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament, and the divine nature of the Holy Scriptures; in 1870 the good works based upon the doctrine of free-will, predestination, and justification; in 1873 the conversion of man to God. The doctrinal discussions at which Dr. Walther was present were particularly instructive. What a wonderful speaker he was, and how he could shed the necessary light upon the questions under discussion! Indeed, it was at these or at similar discussions that Walther proved himself in an eminent way to be the teacher of the Synod. These doctrinal discussions attained special significance because from 1876 on, all of Dr. Walther's 28 theses on Die Eigenschaft einer wohlgegründeten, wahrhaft lutherischen Gemeinde, nach welcher daher lutherische Prediger mit ihren Gemeinden als ihrem Ziele zu streben haben,²⁹ were thoroughly discussed. Perhaps congregational affairs were never so thoroughly gone into as on this occasion, and these discussions will forever remain a monument to the Synod's aims to conform to God's Word in doctrine and practices. Since these theses occupied the time of the conventions for a period of some 40 years, it was impossible for them to take under thorough discussion many other Scriptural teachings, and there remains, therefore, ample material for future discussions. The fact that other Districts might have covered certain subjects, should not deter them from exploring the same fields, for all pastors of the Synod no longer receive the reports from all Districts, as was formerly the custom, for most of them receive the reports only from their own territory.

29. Transl.: The characteristics of a well-founded, genuine Lutheran congregation, which therefore, Lutheran pastors and their congregations should strive to emulate.

VII. THE PASTORAL CONFERENCES

In addition to annual Synodical Conferences, so-called pastoral conferences had been conducted from the start, that is, meetings of the pastors alone, unattended by instructors or representatives of the congregations. As early as 1848, soon after the founding of the Synod, the first pastoral conference took place in Milwaukee, attended by Pastors Keyl, Selle, and Brauer, who were joined by Pastor Boehm; since then these annual conferences rarely failed to take place. In the beginning all pastors of the District met annually; but as their number increased and the problem of accommodations became more acute, the General Conference took place only in the year the delegates of the Synod met and the District Synodical Conventions were omitted, while during the 2 intervening years many smaller groups conducted their own special conferences.

The purposes of these conferences were: 1. The fostering of brotherly fellowship. Unquestionably, this was accomplished. The pastors met and became acquainted, and learned to know each other better, and to love and respect each other; thus, a closer bond was created by these conferences. How the pastors, especially in the earlier days, enjoyed these conferences! It gave them an opportunity to emerge from their isolation and enjoy personal contacts with their fellow pastors. Their housing was at times rather primitive. Some of the older pastors have told me personally that on occasion the haymow had to serve for a sleeping place, after the pastor's wife had spread a sheet over the hay and supplied blankets. But that was all a part of the bargain. This only whetted the humor of the dear brethren, which also found plentiful expression in other matters. It was salutary; it was a tonic for the pastors, who often had to endure hardships in the pursuance of their pastoral duties. The gentlemen were a happy lot; "hangdog" attitudes were banned. It is also said that Dr. Walther, no matter how austere he might have been on other occasions, was always in high spirits at these conferences and bubbled over with witticisms. But these conferences were not only for sociability; that was merely a by-product. No, the main purpose was:

51 2. The mutual improvement in the knowledge of Scriptural teachings. In these sessions, usually lasting several days, Bible excerpts were subjected to exegesis in order to discover their meaning, and to extract new treasures. Matters of doctrine which could not be treated at the Synodical Conventions were also discussed. There is no question but that much good resulted. What a great number of pastors became better grounded in the Scriptures and gained a clearer understanding of their teachings! How many thus improved their pastoral ability and were therefore enabled to better serve their congregations! To how many this served as an urge to work and study when they had to deliver an exposition! Sermon criticism was also practiced in the early days. Each had to take his turn at constructing a sermon, and this was then subjected to critical analysis by the brethren. There one learned to find the main point, the kernel, of a Bible text, to dispose a sermon and render it capacious so that it would bring something to the listeners--and this served as discipline, improvement, and punishment in a righteous way. In this respect the early pastors held an advantage over the present-day pastors. They were to a very large extent "on their own," for there were very few, if any, sources of help

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such as the Magazine. The reference materials most commonly used were Luther's writings, and they were studied much more than is now the case, for today one has so many other materials to read that there is not time for an intensive study of Luther's works; besides the present circumstances make entirely different demands upon the pastors than was formerly the case. If God would only grant that our pastors could now study Luther as our forefathers did! But another purpose of the Pastoral Conferences was:

3. The mutual exchange of assistance in difficult casual problems (Kasualfaellen). In this respect the Pastoral Conferences proved to be extremely beneficial. Every pastor is at some time or other confronted with a difficult situation, particularly in the practice of church discipline. Involved marriage problems arise, disputes, cases of severe sinning of all sorts, but also things which depress the conscience, controversies, and what not, wherein it is necessary to act cautiously in order to guard against making a mistake. One false move or decision can place in jeopardy the salvation of a soul; indeed, the welfare of an entire congregation might be involved, and also the pastor's productive functioning within the congregation might hinge upon it. How many a pastor has gotten into such grave difficulties that he did not know how to extricate himself! What a boon it was to him to be able to submit the case to his brethren and receive their opinion! Through mutual discussions of such casual problems many a pastor has been enabled to view more clearly a difficult situation, and he was indebted to the conference for avoiding a false step. In this respect the benefits of the Pastoral Conferences also become apparent. If one will now also:

4. Mention the discussion of general church needs, one can also establish the advantages of the Pastoral Conferences in this respect. The history of our Synod shows that many a good idea, which later took form through the District Convention or through the General Convention, originated in a Pastoral Conference.

Dr. Walther once said:³⁰ "The congregations always received a better preacher from the conferences than the one they sent there." In those words he designated the real purpose of these conferences. Everything the pastors have gained from them ultimately redounds to the benefit of the congregation. Just imagine, if you will, the situation if there had never been any Pastoral Conferences, and each pastor would have had to shift for himself. The isolated pastor would never have filled his position so capably; he would have wandered along by-ways, the necessary urge to preach and apply God's Word properly would have been missing, and the lack of supervision--which a pastor also requires, perhaps more than anyone else--would have served to harm him and his congregation. He would especially not have been trained in the proper attitude of meekness, as these Pastoral Conferences demonstrated time and again that no one person was entrusted with all the talents, but that God bestows upon every one some talent which can be used for the benefit of our brethren. Therefore, let us thank God that these Pastoral Conferences were held amongst us regularly!

30. Iowa Bericht, 1879, p. 91.

Pastoral Conferences

Without them our Synod would not have such skillful pastors and preachers. Our congregations have recognized this fact for a long time. When their pastors wanted to attend these conferences, which would necessitate their absence for several days, they offered no objections.

Of course, the Pastoral Conferences have become much larger since we have become a great body. While in the old days a group of 12 was considered a sizable conference, today they are from 4 to 8 times as large, and the complacent ways of the early days have also changed. But, God be praised, even now the Pastoral Conferences are still meetings for earnest work, and the former benefits can be retained if the work is done in all faithfulness. A churchman, who was not exactly friendly towards us, once remarked: "So long as the pastors of the Missouri Synod diligently participate in their Pastoral Conferences for the purpose of constantly discussing doctrinal matters, the backbone of the Synod cannot be broken."³¹ This remains a fact, namely, that the Pastoral Conferences are also a very important medium through which the Synodical fellowship is maintained.

As an historical fact it might be added that in the early days the proceedings of the Pastoral Conferences were subject to approval by the District, that is, they were read at the convention and submitted to the Synod's approval. It was not unusual for the convention to correct errors or to make important additions. This practice has now been entirely discontinued.

31. Dr. Pieper, Allg. Syn., 1905, p. 25.

VIII. THE WORK OF THE INNER MISSION IN OUR DISTRICT SINCE 1873

In the beginning, the Inner Mission in our Synod was entirely different from its present accepted sense. Now the preachers are sent out by the District to locate scattered Lutherans, gather them together and serve them regularly with the Word and the Sacraments, and these missionaries receive sustenance and help for their missions from the District mission treasury. The very first Synodical report reveals the fact that we were conscious of our duty towards our scattered brethren in faith, but the manner in which we could or should discharge this duty, it seems, was not clear to us until Pastor Selle's highly significant address to the Synod in 1857. At that time this important question also came up for discussion for the first time in our District, and it was decided to look over the mission possibilities in the Canadian Province of Ontario, and also in Minnesota. Pastor Ferdinand Sievers was commissioned to undertake a journey of investigation into the last named state, and a beginning was really made there by the founding of several mission posts. For Wisconsin, on the other hand, where there was so much material available, nothing was done. If men like Dicke and Strieter and others had not voluntarily done such splendid missionary work and established congregations, our mission work would have been in a deplorable state.

It was not until the early seventies that the District became conscious of the fact that attention should be given the matter. At this time, in consequence of the building of the Wisconsin Central Railway, thousands of Lutheran brethren settled in the northern part of the State, and in 1875 the District decided to pursue its missionary work there. An executive committee was appointed to organize the work, and it was to have jurisdiction over the mission funds, and two pastors were to serve as an information committee with relation to the Inner Mission, to gather information and report to the executive committees. Without delay Pastor W. C. Schilling, of whom mention has already been made, was sent out as a missionary, and he worked in the area along the railroad with astonishing results; other men supplemented his work, and the founding of numerous congregations was the fruit of these efforts. This mission field reached as far as Ashland and Superior. The District also turned its attention to northern Michigan, and Pastor Schaefer was sent as a traveling preacher into the so-called iron district, and he served nine places. Our missionary efforts were consequently crowned with success from the beginning.

But now began the enormous immigration, which was referred to above; as a consequence our District was constantly confronted with greater demands. More workers had to be employed, and in 1891 there were already 10 in the mission service. All were engaged in northern Wisconsin, and the number of mission congregations increased most gratifyingly. But the southern part of the State, in which much mission material also existed, was not to be neglected; Pastor W. Rudolph of Milwaukee was therefore appointed, and he founded the Bethany Congregation and the preaching place in Whitefish Bay; on the south side of the city the Jehovah's Congregation came into being and was served by Pastor Eggers. In Port Washington, Beloit, Sharon, Big Foot, and various other places missions were also started, and congregations developed everywhere.

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Involuntarily the wish presents itself: Had we but worked in this manner in former days--or had we (at least), been able to do so! Pastor Kuehnert, in his report of 1900, indicates how serious the situation is when people are not sought out and served betimes, when he states: "The report on Big Foot is not a cheerful one. Nineteen families attend divine services, a sad remnant of a large Lutheran population, of whom most have long since joined the Methodists or the lodges, or have entirely lost their church-mindedness."

At this time, 1900, the entire mission field comprised 49 congregations and 24 preaching places, and new places were being added constantly, for instance, Madison, Nekoosa, Waupun, and Bethlehem's Congregation in Oshkosh. All these places had to be supported wholly or in part by the District, and that this was quite a burden is self-evident. Time and again the congregations had to be urged to diligence in their offerings for the mission fund. The building fund treasury, created by the District in 1892, proved of great help, for many deserving congregations were thereby assisted in the building of their churches.

Naturally the enlargement of the mission area made the supervision of the work constantly more difficult. The District recognized the necessity of an annual visit and inspection of the field by qualified men, and directed first the "visitors" and then, in 1900, 10 extra "directors," who were appointed for that purpose, to do so. But they, who as pastors had enough to do in their own congregations, could not fulfill the duties for which they had been appointed, particularly with respect to making their annual inspection trips, and for that reason it was decided in 1904 to create the position of mission director who was to devote his full time and energies to the supervising, leadership, and promoting of the mission work. For this, Pastor F. Haeuser in Portage was chosen. But at the end of the year he resigned, and his place was taken by Pastor H. Sieck, who had until then served the English Mt. Olive Church in Milwaukee. Year after year Sieck made many trips, looking up all the missionaries, speaking words of comfort and encouragement to them, and advising them in difficult matters, urging the congregations to increase their offerings (31 congregations and preaching places actually did increase their offerings in 1 year by \$1,440), and encouraged the congregations generally to stand upon their own feet as soon as possible. The arrangement was successful, and Sieck's administration was abundantly blessed. The missionary reports became more and more voluminous, an evidence of greater effectiveness when compared with the way we used to work. In 1907, 37 pastors, 1 male teacher, 1 woman teacher, and 2 students spread the Word of the Saviour in 122 places. During this year Sieck visited 65 congregations and preaching places; preached in German 65 times and in English 8 times; made a house to house solicitation in 3 congregations for the church building treasury; traveled 18,353 miles by rail, 734 miles by vehicle, 48 miles by interurban, and 26 miles by steamboat; and wrote a total of 459 letters. This was certainly a record of extensive activities. The following years Sieck's activities were about the same, and the effectiveness of his work became constantly more evident. He continued to explore new areas, opened new preaching places, and kept the interest in the mission work alive everywhere.

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The District was incorporated in 1907, and with that, some rather extensive changes came about. Until that time, 4 separate committees had operated, each independent of the other. Now the Synod, created a board of directors, which combined this work under 1 heading. In accordance with the terms of the articles of incorporation this board consisted of 11 members, 5 pastors, 4 laymen, and 2 teachers. The president and the treasurer of the Synod were ex officio members. The mission work also came under the direction of this board, and since Sieck participated in all board meetings, he was able to supply promptly all details regarding each mission and preaching place. Thus our mission work proceeded systematically, orderly, and permanently, as was planned in 1904.

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In 1916 the faithful Sieck became the victim of a stroke and was totally disabled, and on September 7th of the same year he died at Tomahawk, Wisconsin, at the age of 66; upon his death the church lost a valuable director of missions. This was coincident with another important event which occurred that year, namely, the division of the District. When the Wisconsin District convened for the first time in 1882, it consisted of 72 pastors and 40 teachers. Now, however, there were about 3 times as many. In 1916 there were 205 pastors, 94 teachers, and 9 professors. The District had gotten too large to effectively discharge its many duties, particularly with regard to the work of the Inner Mission; besides, the problem of housing at the Synodical Conventions became constantly more difficult. For that reason it was decided in 1915, in Racine, to submit to the congregations the question of separation of the District, and when the majority voted in favor of it, the division was officially effected in 1916 in the Stephan's Church in Milwaukee. The boundary between the North Wisconsin and the South Wisconsin Districts, as they were now called, was formed by the northern boundaries of the counties of LaCrosse, Monroe, Juneau, Adams, Waushara, Winnebago, Calumet, and Manitowoc. The North Wisconsin District received 100 pastors and 22 teachers, and the South Wisconsin District 104 pastors, 72 teachers, and 9 professors.

From this time on the North and the South Districts each had to look after its own mission affairs, and since this reduced the number of missions of each District by one-half, the position of 1 of the mission directors was abolished, and for each 2 to 6 or 8 mission congregations 1 mission visitor was appointed who was to supervise his area and report on it. The principal mission field of the combined District had been in northern Wisconsin, and now the South District found itself confined to an old mission field which was "grazed" pretty short, but nevertheless, there was still enough work here. Indeed, our mission work in the extreme southwestern part of the State, where we had nothing, was of no avail. Pastor A. O. Mueller, the appointed missionary, searched there industriously, but found no mission material for us. Comparatively few Lutherans lived there, and they were being served, and aside from that, other sects and the lodges controlled the field, so that this mission work was discontinued. But on the other hand, there were additional congregations founded in Milwaukee; the Luther Congregation in Shorewood, the Zoar, Concordia, and Gospel Congregations, and a mission in Hi-Mount, west of Washington Park, was planned but did not materialize. New congregations were also founded in the State, and in 1918 there were 24 pastors and 3 men and

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women teachers in the mission service in the South-Wisconsin District. In all there were 19 parishes, with 28 congregations and 9 preaching places drawing support from the mission treasury.

Mission work now presented an entirely different aspect from what it did earlier when a stream of immigrants was pouring into the country. Then our brethren in faith often came to us in large groups, and it was a pleasure to work amongst them and gather them into congregations. They frequently brought their children to school of their own volition and would ask for the services of the church, and the number of preaching places and congregations and their membership would increase perceptibly. But it was different later. Southern Wisconsin was now entirely settled. There were almost no new settlers, and efforts had to be expended upon such as had been here for some time, and who had developed more or less resistance to the church during that time, and we had to also extend a hand to such as were originally not Lutherans and were of some other nationality. Earlier the missionaries did their work in the German language almost exclusively, but now, almost without exception, they had to preach in two languages and instruct the children. Even greater obstacles were the sects, lodges, opposition-congregations, and also the worldliness, which impeded the progress of the missionaries. The work now was therefore more difficult and less productive. It was important that we keep an eye on holding what we had, and yet remain alert to new mission opportunities. New doors were constantly opening and are still opening. Our work of the Inner Mission is a long way from being completed. We must bear in mind that we have been consecrated to proclaim the works of Him who called us from darkness to His wonderful light, and, therefore, we dare not pause in carrying on the work assigned to us. There is a probability that we in Milwaukee shall start a Negro Mission, and we shall probably also revive our Polish Mission which was begun by Pastor Mlotkowski in 1913. We shall also probably have to do some work among the German speaking Hungarians and Slovaks of whom Pastor Kempf made a survey in 1913. In other words, we have no thought of standing still in our mission work.

Before we close this subject, we want to mention one mission in particular in our District, namely, the Deaf and Dumb Mission. This was started in 1895 by the sainted Pastor A. Reinke who preached regularly to the deaf-mutes in Milwaukee, and occasionally in Sheboygan. He was successful in organizing a congregation in Milwaukee, which built its own church and parsonage and called its own pastor. This pastor, in addition to serving his own congregation, also served deaf and dumb congregations in the neighboring cities of Racine, Sheboygan, and Manitowoc, as well as Oshkosh, Wausau, Merrill, Delavan, and Madison, and was a blessing to many to whom only by means of the sign language the message of our Saviour could be brought.

IX. OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER LUTHERAN SYNODS

1. Our Relationship With the Wisconsin Synod

The Wisconsin Synod was organized in Milwaukee on December 8, 1849, by Pastors Muehlhaeuser, Weinmann, and Wrede. It is clear that from the beginning she was an opposition synod to ours. The many well established facts leave no room for any other conclusion, and thus the relationship between the two synods was decidedly unpleasant. The Wisconsin Synod wanted to be fundamentally different in type of organization from that of the Missouri Synod. She called herself "Lutheran," but objected to the Missouri type of "Oldlutheranism," and subscribed to a greater liberalism. The strict teachings and disciplinary practices of Keyl, who symbolized the Missouri Synod here at that time, was objectionable to them. Pastor Muehlhaeuser, the first president of the Wisconsin Synod, who, because of his official position, could be presumed to be speaking for the entire Synod, wrote in 1853: "Since I am not pure or 'Oldlutheran,' I can extend the brotherly hand to every child of God and to every servant of Christ across the churchly barrier." And what did he do when in 1849 he founded Grace Church in Milwaukee? He also named it the Evangelical-Lutheran Trinity Church in opposition to the already founded Evangelical-Lutheran Trinity Church of Pastor Keyl's (Missouri Synod). And when 2 years later he dedicated the newly erected church, he let it be done by Reformed pastors. As he personally expressed it in the issue of February 7, 1852, of the Lutherische Kirchenboten where he says: "Since the English churches had a practical part in the building of our church"--he had collected money from them--"they were given an opportunity to rejoice with us, and that is why the divine services were conducted in the forenoon in the English language. J. Miter of the Congregational Church preached, using as the basis for his text, Ps. 84: 1, and Pastor Spencer of the Presbyterian Church led us in prayer." Is it any wonder, therefore, that Grabau's Informatorium, under the caption "A call for help from Wisconsin," carries the comment that the Wisconsin Synod indicated as a synod that it used the name "Evangelical Lutheran" merely as a sign-board to lure people to it. These are some of the reasons why no brotherly relationship could exist between them and ourselves. The Missouri Synod could look upon the Wisconsin Synod no differently than upon other liberal-minded Lutheran synods in the country, with whom they could never consider an alliance.

The defection of the Wisconsin Synod consisted of its leanings towards Unionism and syncretism (intermingling of faiths). It is true, she called herself Evangelical-Lutheran, and any suggestion that she was not just that was branded by them as abusive and slanderous. In 1857 she did in fact embrace all the symbolisms, and it was suggested that the Union and rationalizing Pennsylvania agenda, which had been used by them until this time, be changed, or at least that they work towards that end. But in spite of this, in the course of time her "Union" character became ever more apparent. This could hardly be different, because to a large extent her pastors were sent here from the United Mission Societies at Barmen, Lengenber, Berlin, and Basel, where they did not always imbibe in the pure Lutheran spirit.

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Without making any distinction, her pastors served Lutheran, Reformed, and United congregations. Therefore they could exercise no doctrinal discipline, and they permitted their pastors to promulgate false doctrines. Their pastors would frequently warn the people against the exclusive, rigorous "Oldlutheran" Missourians, and in 1862 the entire synod declared that it would not approve the exclusive leanings of the Missourians, and that it would not impose this spirit upon its future members. Though the Wisconsin Synod denied emphatically the accusations of Unionism, it finally showed its true colors when in 1867 it openly declared its intention to continue its alliance with the United associations and societies in Germany in order to enjoy their continued friendly aid and services.

This being the position of the Wisconsin Synod, the Missourians who denied all synkretisterei (mixing of faiths), and who preserved the unfalsified forms of doctrine and practices in their Lutheranism, were thereby, in justice to their conscience, prevented from recognizing them as a true, righteous Lutheran synod. Even the Iowa Synod, which had sacrificed much of the genuine Lutheranism, took this attitude. In 1863 Pastor G. Fritschel reported that several pastors of the Wisconsin Synod had asked permission of Rev. Loehe to have their preachers trained in the seminaries of the Iowa Synod. Loehe himself had some hope that an alliance between the Iowa and the Wisconsin Synods could be effected. Fritschel writes: "Wisconsin has United leanings. There are some who lean towards the Lutheran practices, but they are isolated cases. The guiding spirit in her is different, as is indicated not only by the official alliance of the Synod with the United German missionary institutions, but also by their local practices. There is no church discipline. A pastor of the Wisconsin Synod is now serving a congregation which separated from us because it would not endure the exercise of church discipline."

On our part, we incessantly opposed the Unionistic practices of the Wisconsin Synod. This was not done to be quarrelsome, but rather to find some ground upon which to base an agreement. How desirable that would have been, if for no other reason but for the sake of peaceful living together! But this was not to be, especially since the Wisconsin Synod time and again permitted itself to interfere in our congregations. Just read the Lutheraner of 1862 and see what is recorded on page 58! Since 1858, when the Wisconsin Synod, without giving our officials an opportunity to mediate the confessional dispute between Pastor Geyer at Lebanon and his dissenting members, and without the right to do so, served them and took a definite position against our Synod, our relationship had been strained, as is plainly indicated by the vigorous protest of our Synod because of this interference of the Wisconsin Synod in one of the Missouri Synod's congregations. When a Wisconsin Synod pastor went so far as to found a congregation in competition with the congregation of Pastor Steinbach, consisting of people who, because of disciplinary measures taken by Pastors Lochner and Steinbach, had disassociated themselves from these churches, our District could no longer maintain silence, but declared: "When a pastor of the Wisconsin Synod will receive those who are banned from our congregations, then he is a creator of schisms with whom one would have as little to do as with a Turk."³² Those were sharp words, but we

32. Bericht, 1867, p. 250.

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thank God and praise Him that this was the last time it was necessary for us to speak this way, for a turn for the better developed. And the Wisconsin Synod itself--to its credit, be it said--took the step which was of the greatest import; she made overtures to the Missouri Synod. In order to properly judge the matter, it must be remembered that, as Fritschel also remarked, there were men within the Wisconsin Synod who were really earnest Lutherans and were energetically working towards a genuine Lutheranism in doctrine and practices. These men were primarily responsible for the growing impression within the Wisconsin Synod that if it wanted to be a real Lutheran synod, it would have to take its Lutheranism more seriously. During the same year, 1867, they dissolved their alliance with the Prussian, United Provincial Church, even though it meant the loss of many advantages, and although it incurred the bitter enmity of their provincial brethren, and sought an alliance with Missouri. Everything pointed in this direction. The faithful, uncompromising tenacity to the truth of the Scriptures, which had been portrayed through the disputes with Grabau, Iowa, and General Synod adherents, and other opponents, must have convinced the Wisconsin Synod that its rightful place was beside the Missourians, and in 1868, hence 1 year after the sharp denunciation mentioned above, she approached us with the request for a conference to discuss the existing differences and our future relationship. This was a cause for great rejoicing on our part, as now it was to be hoped that the unpleasant relationship would be ended. This step was indicative of an honest effort on the part of the Wisconsin Synod to eliminate all improprieties and to prove itself as a real Lutheran Synod. The discussions took place on October 21 and 22 of the same year (1868) in Milwaukee with very satisfactory results. In conformity with a resolution of our Synod, the main discussion was centered upon doctrine so that it might be determined whether we stood on the same ground with regard to creed, and in all points, such as the doctrine of the church and the holy ministry, of the ordination, the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, the millenium and the binding power of the symbols, both sides were in perfect agreement, and the result was that they entered upon a brotherly relationship.

This alliance of the Wisconsin and the Missouri Synods was a highly significant event. Missouri no longer stood alone in its fight for the church of the pure creed--it now had a strong ally.

It is useless to speculate on whether Wisconsin would have gone this far if we had not applied some pressure. It is much more becoming that we should praise the grace of God that befell both sides. We were facing the danger of deteriorating into one of the Lutheran Church's ruinous papal high-church conditions; the Wisconsin Synod on the other hand, was in danger of perishing in its Unionism, which also would have been ruinous to the Lutheran Church. God opened the eyes of both and showed them what was right, and so He conferred upon the Lutheran Church of our State a kindness for which we can never thank Him enough. Imagine, if you can, the resulting deplorable conditions if the Wisconsin Synod, through its position on doctrine and practices, had remained a separate body; thus, working with each other in harmony would have been impossible, and thousands of families would have been split because their

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members belonged to different synods! It is true that there still was much friction between the two synods, particularly because of the continued attitude of the Wisconsin Synod, which was translated into its activities, that the State of Wisconsin was its mission field and that the Missouri Synod should confine its missionary activities to other states. This was a questionable attitude, when it is considered that Missouri was here before Wisconsin, and it was in direct contradiction to the seven-point joint agreement which they signed in 1868, in which it was agreed that neither synod should interfere with the other if it deemed it necessary to found new congregations. In spite of this, we were always brethren, gladly serving each other, and the mixed conferences were always characterized by the best of harmony. Thus it shall remain, God willing, in the future. Close inspection shows that we are heavily indebted to the Wisconsin Synod, and it will never be forgotten how the eminent Dr. A. Hoenecke, in the matter of the predestination dispute, stood so faithfully on our side and helped to bring victory to the right side. Until now the Wisconsin Synod has honestly witnessed and fought for the real Lutherdom, as is evidenced by many splendid articles in its *Quartalschrift*, and it has in many respects supplemented our work. We can with all our heart hope that God will keep the Wisconsin Synod, as well as us, in the pure doctrine, and bless it abundantly. We can no longer do without it.

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Returning to 1868. Since Wisconsin and Missouri by this time were one, it was agreed the following year that the Missouri Synod was to have a professor at Watertown (the locale of the Wisconsin Synod's college), because so many pupils from Missouri Synod congregations studied there, and that the Wisconsin Synod send a professor to St. Louis because of the presence there of Wisconsin Synod students. As a result the Missouri Synod sent Professor Stelhorn to Watertown. But since the Wisconsin Synod had no one available to send to St. Louis, this agreement was abrogated in 1874. Nevertheless, even after this many Missouri Synod pupils pursued their studies at Watertown, and later a great number of Wisconsin pupils received their training in the Missouri Synod's institution in Milwaukee.

Since both synods were of the same faith and creed and it made no difference to the Lutheran Christian to which one he belonged, it was only natural that the question of combining the two organizations should present itself. In 1877 this wish on our part found expression in the form of a resolution to the effect that State Synods be created with one joint seminary. This plan, however, was frustrated when the Wisconsin Synod founded its own seminary. But that did not end the matter. Renewed and strengthened, the plan again made its appearance some 15 years ago (about 1912), and that in the ranks of the laity. The question arose as to why the two synods should exist as separate bodies to follow their own ends. Might not great advantages accrue from a union of the two? Not only would this end all friction and other unpleasantnesses, but as one large body the two synods could accomplish much more. As a result, at the 1913 convention at Sheboygan, a resolution was introduced which was to pave the way for the amalgamation of our District with the Wisconsin Synod. But our District decided that an amalgamation of the Wisconsin District only with the Wisconsin Synod was inadvisable. They decided that efforts should be directed towards the joining of all orthodox

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congregations in one synodical body. At the next annual convention of the Synod the question again came up. But in spite of various discussions, at which, as it seemed, both sides made an honest effort to affect a union, in the end nothing came of it, because, it was said, both synods really had their own history, their own arrangements, and their own institutions; soon nothing more was heard about it. Perhaps it was just as well that no union was effected; for unless both sides enter into it wholeheartedly, such a union would be unhealthy. Unless some outside, urgent necessity welds these two synods organically into one, they will in all probability remain separated, without causing any appreciable damage to God's Kingdom.

2. Our Relationship With the Iowa Synod

We had the good fortune of uniting with one Lutheran synod, namely, the Wisconsin. This was denied us with regard to another which called itself Lutheran. This was the Iowa Synod. The father of it was Pastor Loehe in Neuendettelsau (Germany). We have mentioned earlier that at the end of the forties Loehe took an unbiblical attitude concerning the holy ministry, and that in an effort to preserve our brotherly relationship, Dr. Walther and Rev. Wyneken were sent to Germany by our Synod. Their efforts seemed to have been successful, and Walther submitted an enthusiastic report on it. But it only appeared that way. Loehe did not have the Lutheran fidelity of character for which we had given him credit. Not only did he suddenly submit to the episcopate of the sovereigns in Bavaria, against whom he formerly protested, and thus became guilty of a reprehensible Unionism, but he also instituted regrettable benevolence practices in patterning after the Roman example his Deaconess' institutions and hospitals, hoping thus to win favor in the eyes of the Catholic Church, although he denied this. Furthermore, he wanted to institute as a regular church practice a last oiling of the sick (unction), and in a sermon based on Phil. 3: 10, 11, he propounded the theory that the hope of the church rested in its culmination in the millenium on earth, in which his enthusiasim over the impending conversion of the Jews carried him so far emotionally that he expressed the wish to personally be of that race. The regrettable errors of this otherwise splendid man evoked from Wyneken the anguished observation: "The heart of every Lutheran should turn over within him out of sadness for this dear man." Naturally, under these circumstances, a brotherly relationship between him and ourselves could no longer exist. Walther and Wyneken had hardly made what appeared as an amicable adjustment of our differences, when Grabau, who had in 1853 made a trip abroad for the purpose of winning Loehe to his side, appeared on the scene, and he really succeeded in alienating him from the Missouri Synod. But he would not give himself over to Grabau with hide and hair. Consequently the idea ripened in him to begin his own synod in America, which would pursue, so to speak, a middle course between the Missouri and Buffalo Synods. While Missouri was to represent the American Lutheran attitude, his synod was to represent the German Lutheran attitude, that is, the attitude of the Pastoral Conference in Fuerth, to which Grabau had turned for approval in the preceding year, which took the position that the Lutheran symbols were not in all instances authoritative in the contents of their teachings, and that they were to be considered

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as being Scriptural but that they were not to be looked upon as being the final authority in the matter of doctrine--which was an abominable aberration --for honest Lutherans embrace the symbols because they find in them the Scriptural teachings. This position concerning the symbols was brought here by Loehe's latest envoy, and when the breach occurred, G. Grossman, the leader of the Pilgrim House in Saginaw, Michigan founded by Loehe, and Rev. J. Deindorfer, who was pastor in the Franconian Colony, Frankenhilf, went to Iowa and, with Pastor S. Fritschel and Missionary Schueller, founded a new Synod in Dubuque, in 1854, which, with the aid of Loehe and others, grew into a large organization. In the beginning it assumed the position of a competitor of the Missouri Synod. This was shown in its position on doctrine. The Iowa Synod made a distinction between binding and nonbinding portions of the symbols. The decisions of questions in dispute before or during the Reformation were to be binding. These decisions were to be the sole determining factor in the acceptance or rejection of the symbols. If the symbol did not contain such a decision, it was to be excluded from the creed and from the conscience-binding symbolic doctrine, and was to be considered an open question in the field of doctrinal freedom. All points of doctrine, explanations, and proofs were to be sifted from the only binding doctrinal contents of those decisions as chaff is sifted from the wheat.

Accordingly, Iowa wanted to guard against certain doctrinal principles of the symbols, such as regarding the church, the ministry, church rule, anti-Christ, the doctrine of the Sabbath, and so forth, as not being encompassed in the obligatory teaching contents of the symbols. Since these doctrinal principles were really not intended as a decision of a main question, but appeared only incidentally in an expository and explanatory way, they were not to have binding force as a part of the actual creed. A pastor could take them or leave them. Both opinions were to be equally right.

Since this doctrinal position of the Iowaia, which was equivalent to a betrayal of the Lutheran Church, did not remain without keen opposition on our part, and since the fate of the broken-down Buffalo Synod, which was induced by attacks buttressed by the weight of Scriptural facts, was plain to them, they came to us for a colloquy; and again our State of Wisconsin came into the foreground, for this colloquy was held in Milwaukee in November 1867. There ensued a long disputation on the position of the symbols, on the so-called open questions, on chiliasm,³³ which the Iowaia openly embraced as was shown when they accepted Pastor G. Schieferdecker who had been expelled by our Synod because of this false doctrine, and on the doctrine of the anti-Christ. And although some concessions were made by the Iowaia, no agreement could be reached, much to the regret of Dr. Walther and his associates, and since the Iowa Synod has not changed its stand on these subjects to this day, it is still in the position of being a synod that is in opposition to ours. It still holds to its earlier attitude in regard to the doctrine of the anti-Christ, the impending conversion of the Israelites, the coming millennium

33. Transl.: Pertaining to the millennium.

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and the Sabbath, as not being doctrines on which the church should split, and accuses the Missouri Synod of making articles of creed of matters that are not articles of creed, and thus destroying the unity of creed. Iowa wants to leave these points and doctrines as an optional matter, such as chiliasm, which has been demonstrated to be contrary to the established creed; the doctrine of a future personal anti-Christ, which is fundamentally contrary to the creed; or doctrines which are clearly and unmistakably embodied in God's Word, as that of the Sabbath.

The result of our rugged opposition to the doctrinal position of the Iowaia was that this synod erected competitive pulpits all over our State to the damage of the church and the offence of the world. Throughout the State there stood, and still stand, Iowa and Missouri congregations facing each other in enmity, and as it is in Wisconsin, so it is in the entire northwest. We constantly read in our Synodical reports how our missionary work is being hampered by it, how dissatisfied members of congregations are leaving us and joining the Iowa Synod Churches, how separations occur of which one faction is being served by the Iowaia, and so forth. And how did this all come about? Through the false position taken by one man, who believed himself called for the purpose of placing a barrier in the path of the Missouri Synod.

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Considering the doctrinal position taken by the Iowa Synod, it is not surprising that it should go hand in hand with the Ohio Synod in the matter of the election by grace dispute, and that, contrary to the Holy Scriptures and the symbols, it should teach that a person's conversion, at least in some respects, was dependent upon his own decision. It apparently seems as though the recent, inter-synodical discussions about the doctrine of conversion and election by grace has brought us and the Iowaia closer together, but we certainly cannot be blamed if we have become hesitant about accepting them as brethren, and to this day neither the Iowa nor the Ohio Synods, which are in favor of a union with each other, have officially receded one iota from their false doctrine, which robs God of His honor.

In this connection it might be stated that the election dispute caused our District to become a heavy cosufferer. It was here that we encountered two of our most poisonous opponents, Pastor Allwardt in Lebanon, and Prof. F. A. Schmidt in Madison. When the latter made known his dissension from the report of the Western District in 1873 on the said doctrine of the election by grace, the Vice-president of the Synodical Conference, Prof. Larse, called the theological faculties of the Synodical Conference together for a colloquy, and this significant meeting also took place in Milwaukee, on January 5-10, 1881. It was there that Prof. Schmidt declared he could not agree to the suggestion that both sides observe a truce until another colloquy could be called, for he had been commanded by God to carry on this battle, whereupon Walther rejoined: "Very well. You want war, and war you shall have!" It was here in Wisconsin that Schmidt published his hateful paper Altes und Neues (The Old and the New),

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and thus dragged the dispute into the open and into our congregations. And now raged the controversy which Walther had long foreseen, which, however, had to be fought to the end, so that the teachings of the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran creed, to the last letter, might be proclaimed to the world, and the glorious Soli Deo Gloria defended against all enemies, old and new.

3. Our Relationship With the "Merger"

The United Lutheran Church, briefly called the "Merger," is another organization, calling itself Lutheran, with which we have to contend in Wisconsin. The Merger professes official acceptance of the symbols of the Lutheran Church, and if its confession were sincere and it would really prove itself a true Lutheran synod in doctrine and in practice, we would indeed be happy to welcome it as a faithful helper in building up God's Kingdom here on earth. But we are denied this pleasure, as the Merger is not sincere in its confession, but instead assumes an attitude contrary to Holy Scriptures and the confessions of the church, an attitude that compels us to withhold a brotherly hand. Merger pastors are permitted to expound, without censure, fundamentally destructive doctrines, and place their pulpits at the disposal of preachers of false faiths and even infidels, and work in common with these sects. In its liberalism, the Merger does not even raise its voice against un-Christian lodges, in fact permits its pastors to become members of the same. Should a synod, calling itself Lutheran, not be ashamed to have this said of it? This church association has now gained a firm foothold in Wisconsin and is constantly spreading. Since it has ample means at its disposal it can manage far better than is possible for us. It can immediately erect large, magnificent edifices in favorable locations and lure the people to itself. It is a fact that large congregations are being assembled in this manner, for every liberal Lutheran element is welcome, and since it does not disapprove of lodges, lodge members are joining in great numbers. And so our relationship with the Merger fills us with sadness and misgiving. Not only are our brethren in faith in danger of falling into the hands of wolves in sheep's clothing, seeking to seduce their souls, but the Merger makes it extremely difficult for us to carry out God's command in regard to the preservation of the doctrine and to maintain Scriptural practices, because one of its fundamentals, as expressed by a member, declares the church to be a "hospital," where the spiritually ailing are restored to health. That is why, without any further ado, members banned by us and others not admitted, are accepted into its fold. Certainly, we will not deny that in many Merger congregations God's Word is being preached, but that should not prevent us from branding the Merger as a church association against which we must warn all Lutheran Christians.³⁴

34. Transl.: As an historical fact it should be recorded here that the United Lutheran Church came to Wisconsin, and particularly, to Milwaukee, in response to anguished pleas from Lutheran English-speaking Americans of German descent and the spouses of Lutherans of mixed marriages, for an English Lutheran Church home. The first English Lutheran Church in

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34. Cont'd, Wisconsin was the Church of the Redeemer in Milwaukee, now at 19th St. and West Wisconsin Ave., organized Jan. 5, 1890, by Pastor W. K. Frick at the behest of Dr. William Alfred Passavant. For further details of the establishing of the first English Lutheran Church in Wisconsin and the events that led up to it, the remarks of the author under the caption "Our English Work" on page 67 should be read, where he says: ". . . In 1880 Dr. Passavant of Pittsburgh founded the 'Passavant Hospital' in Milwaukee, and at that time he casually spoke to several Wisconsin Synod pastors about the necessity of establishing an English mission in Milwaukee. But these pastors did not bestir themselves. When Passavant returned here some time later and found that nothing had been done, he said to them 'If you will not start something--and Milwaukee is your territory--then I will.' When still nothing was done, he induced Pastor Frick, a member of the General Council, to come to Milwaukee, and he began the work with great ardor and formed an English Lutheran congregation. This woke us up, and it was the Missourians who recognized the necessity of doing something. . . ."

The Church of the Redeemer, therefore was organized 10 years after Dr. Passavant first called the attention of the then existing German synods to the need of an English Lutheran Church, and 4 years before these synods organized their first English congregation.

Some light on why they did not begin this work earlier is shed by the author's remarks on page 68 where he says: ". . . There was considerable prejudice as it was feared that genuine Lutheranism could not thrive in an English congregation. Prominent people even declared the founding of the (English) congregation as a dangerous thing. Many of our old German congregations had an aversion to them because they had no parochial schools. . . ."

The above historical facts are inserted here to indicate that the United Lutheran Church came to Milwaukee and Wisconsin not as a competitive church to those Lutheran Churches that then existed here, but to serve a field that for too long a time had been neglected by them.

X. OUR ENGLISH ACTIVITIES

For too long a time we in Wisconsin were not conscious of the fact that it was our duty as Lutherans in this land where English is the official and commercial language of the country, to also function in this language in our church affairs. Our ancestors were thoroughly German, isolated themselves from Americans, and confined their entire activities to their German congregations. For 40 years our District also was entirely German, public divine services were conducted in German, as were the ministerial acts, the Synodical Conventions, and the majority of the schools, and only in very few cases did our pastors officiate in English. I will not undertake to speak of the many sins of omission we have been guilty of. But it was thus in our entire Synod, which called itself the German Ev.-Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States. But a change was coming on. The time had come when our pastors had to more and more resort to the language of the land, when we had to think about not only founding entirely English congregations, but also about introducing English in our old German churches, so that we might retain our own Americanized members, and also to make available the Word of God to English newcomers. The story of the beginning of the first English (Lutheran) congregation in Wisconsin is a remarkable one. In 1880 Dr. Passavant of Pittsburgh founded the "Passavant Hospital" in Milwaukee³⁵ and at that time casually spoke to several Wisconsin Synod pastors about the necessity of establishing an English mission in Milwaukee. But these pastors did not bestir themselves. When Passavant returned here some time later and found that nothing had been done, he said to them: "If you will not start something--and Milwaukee is your district--then I will." When still nothing was done, he induced Pastor Frick, a member of the General Council, to come to Milwaukee, who began the work of forming an English Lutheran congregation (Redeemer) with great ardor. This woke us up, and it was the Missourians who recognized the necessity for doing something, for we already had English people in our congregations, and there was the danger that these might leave and join with Frick. The signs were present. But how should we go to work? It so happened that a man by the name of Bertram, who had an English wife, came to Milwaukee at that time. He had been a member of the congregation in Baltimore of which Rev. Dallmann was pastor, and when he left, Pastor Dallmann made him promise to use his influence and efforts to establish an English congregation in Milwaukee, so that he and his wife and others like them could be properly served.

Bertram kept his promise and interested Pastor Schlerf and others in the matter. At this time a Mr. Buchholz, who had married an English woman, requested a transfer to Frick from Immanuel Church. Then old Pastor Kuechle realized that something had to be done, and the result was that on February 5, 1894, the Mt. Olive Congregation was founded by five men in Pastor Schlerf's home.

35. Transl.: Now the Milwaukee Hospital.

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That was the beginning of our English work in this District. This small congregation called Rev. Martin Luecke for its pastor. Six months later, however, he accepted a call to Pennsylvania, after which Pastor Heinrich Sieck of Winfield, Kansas, took over the leadership of this congregation. In the beginning services were conducted evenings in various churches in the city, and later, mornings in the schoolroom of Immanuel Church. Then the congregation bought a small church, belonging to the Episcopalians, located on Fourth Street, between Walnut and Sherman Streets, and thus it had its own House of God.

It cannot be said that the English had an easy time of it. There was considerable prejudice, as it was feared that genuine Lutheranism could not thrive in an English congregation. Prominent people even declared the founding of the (English) congregation as a dangerous thing. Many of our old German congregations had an aversion to them because they had no parochial schools. It was said, perhaps not without some justification--and this occurred time and again--that when members of congregations asked for their release to Mt. Olive, they did so because they considered the English superior and because they did not wish to send their children to parochial, but to public schools. On the other hand, it was not to be denied that a great number of other people were induced to join Mt. Olive--Catholics, Presbyterians, and others, and also Swedes and Norwegians--which we otherwise never would have won for our church. Thus, this congregation grew larger and stronger; it was able to build a new church in 1904, and under Pastor Dallmann, who in 1905 had replaced Pastor Sieck, it was finally in a position, in 1922, to erect a magnificent edifice on 54th Street and Washington Boulevard.

Pastor Dallmann was not only a zealous worker in his own congregation, but he also founded several other English congregations. At first he took over the Hope Congregation which in 1906 had been started by Pastor Sylvester. In 1907 he founded the Faith Congregation on the South Side, and after that, in 1909, the Charity Congregation on the North Side, which was then left to the Wisconsin Synod. He also participated in the founding of Pastor Olsen's congregation. In 1924 the greater portion of the Hope Congregation united with the Mount Lebanon Mission of the Wisconsin Synod to form the Sherman Park Congregation, so that Milwaukee now had five entirely English Missouri congregations. Outside of Milwaukee Pastor Dallmann also took in hand the English work and in 1909 he brought to life the St. Mark's Congregation in Sheboygan. With the exception of Hope, all these congregations belong to the English District of our Synod.

When we speak of the English work that was done in our District, the foregoing merely touches the subject. For what is the establishment of these few entirely English congregations, compared to the enormous amount of English work that had to be done in our German congregations? As long as these were 100 percent German, our pastors could serve them in the German language exclusively. But they did not remain German, and it was especially the younger people, who in time became estranged from the mother tongue so that many could no longer understand it, much less speak it. Mixed marriages also became more

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frequent as young people married into English families. Thus the English work in our congregations had to be started, and since 1904 our District was earnestly occupied with the question of how it could best serve its English-speaking members. At first we thought of separate English congregations which were to be under the supervision of the Mission Commission, and the first to be formed under this plan was the Trinity Congregation in Racine. But later we were convinced that it would be far better to permit the German congregations to do their own English work within their circles, especially because it would also save expense. This plan was now followed in a limited way. But then came the World War. When, during the first years, the Germans waged the war with such great success, many were inclined to believe that German influence would be strengthened in our land, but when in 1917 the United States declared war against Germany, these hopes were suddenly shattered. Since everything German was unjustly outlawed in this country, and even the German congregations became the victims of fanatic, public hatred, many of our members forgot that they were German, and coupled with the fact, already stated, that many people in our congregations no longer mastered the German language, it followed that most of our churches were compelled to conduct English services, and the congregations were split into two factions, the one German and the other English. Our pastors, who never in their lives had preached in English, suddenly had to become bilingualists. Younger pastors, already favoring English tendencies, did not find this particularly difficult, but the older gentlemen were saddled with a heavy burden, which, however, they had to bear if they wished to remain in the ministry. Many were compelled to prepare an English and a German sermon every Sunday, which meant conducting two services instead of one. Furthermore, the entire work with respect to young people was obliged to be done in English, as the youthful element shed its German with astonishing alacrity. Much of the ministerial business was transacted in English, and frequently an English and a German obituary would be requested.

67 Those were the great changes wrought in our District by the World War. But did this happen by chance? Certainly not. Many old members deplored and are still deploring these changes. They cling too much to the German sermon, the glorious German hymns, the German Bible, and to the German religious books, and can only with great difficulty become reconciled to the idea that God can build His Church in English as well as in German. We are living in an English country. What would the future of our church have been, had God not forcibly driven us into this English work? Our youth of today is English, or soon will be; how can we draw it to the church if we do not preach God's Word in the tongue it understands? Indeed, what would become of all our congregations with the old folks dead and gone? Oh, there is no doubt that God, in His wisdom and kindly counsel planned and ordained things in this way, and purposely gave us the English language as a medium for carrying on the work of our salvation in the future, indeed, perhaps even to enlarge on it in some unsuspecting manner. Now that the Protestant sects in this country, through their lamentable modernism, are becoming increasingly more disintegrated, perhaps many sincere souls, concerned about their salvation, will come to us for refuge. We may regret that here and there some of our large churches, formerly filled to capacity with church-goers, now have many empty pews, simply because the congregation is split into a German and an English faction; we may also regret that our well-preserved Wittenberg order

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of service has been replaced by a different one in our English services; we may regret that our old, excellent church hymns with their incomparable melodies, to a large extent, are being replaced by English hymns, which do not and cannot compare favorably with the German because they all are of more recent date; but all this does not prevent us from seeing, in the transition from the German to the English, plain evidences of God's great concern over the propagation and maintainance of His Church on earth.

What the present status of the use of the English language in our public divine services is, may be seen from the following comparison: According to the Statistical Yearbook of 1926, the latest at hand, our District consists of 143 congregations and preaching centers. Of these, 14 are entirely English; 18 are entirely German, including several large congregations; German and English is preached in 102 places, in equal percentage in 54 of these, more German than English in 38, and more English than German in 10 of these places. The information is missing on 9 congregations. According to this compilation there is still a preponderance of German used in the public divine services of our District, and our pastors will have to avail themselves of the German language for years to come.

XI. OUR PAROCHIAL SCHOOL SYSTEM

The beginning of our parochial schools dates back to the beginning of our church activities in southern Wisconsin. That could not be otherwise, for to be Missourian was synonymous with providing for the Christian training of the children. In the same year that Pastor Keyl came to Milwaukee, 1847, the first Synodical Convention also took place in Chicago, and it was so imbued with the importance of Christian school training for children, that the provision for it by the congregations was made a condition to admission to membership in the Synod, and for the retention of good membership standing.³⁶ The Synod instructed its president to take particular notice of the conditions of the schools when making his annual visits to the congregations and to observe particularly what the situation was with reference to: 1. The method of teaching; 2. Whether special stress is placed upon the teaching of the catechism and Bible History; 3. The attendance; 4. The maintenance of school discipline. The Synod also encouraged its pastors to erect schools in their congregations, and if necessary, to teach school themselves.

The Synod could not have expressed itself more clearly as to its attitude toward the Christian school training of its children. It made it a holy obligation of each congregation to build and maintain schools, and emphasized the necessity of not only instructing the children daily in God's Word, but that all so-called secular subjects should likewise be taught in a Christian spirit. What induced our fathers to assume this attitude was the unmistakable command of God that parents should rear their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, which accounted also for their strong aversion to the godless public schools, where children hear nothing of God's Word, where they might be inoculated with all kinds of false ideas inimical to God, and where they really were being so inoculated, as can readily be proven. Besides, there came the conviction that Christians of sound judgement, who were well indoctrinated in Lutheranism and were Lutherans with heart and soul, as well as discerning congregations, could only be successfully developed through the medium of a thorough Christian doctrine in the schools; and sound judgement was what a congregation needed if it planned to use its God-given privileges in all respects, and perform the duties the Lord had imposed on it. Our fathers wanted to create a synodical structure that was to be completely permeated by the Holy Spirit, ruled by God's Word, and governed throughout by a true, living Christianity; and the parochial school was to serve in the attainment of this goal.

The fact of the matter is that not only the fathers and founders of the Synod proceeded in accordance with this principle, but also the pastors who later joined the Synod; and wherever new congregations arose, Christian schools were founded and parents were advised, admonished, and encouraged to send their children to these schools; and it shall be to the everlasting credit of those old pastors that they did not shirk the sacrifice of teaching in the schools themselves, to the extent that they were able; for trained teachers were rare

36. Constitution, ch. 2; 6.

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in the early days of our Synod, and many congregations were so indigent and so small that they could in no event have engaged one. Only gradually, when the congregations had become larger and more affluent, and the Synod had established a teachers' seminary in which teachers were trained to serve competently at the side of the pastors, did conditions improve. It need hardly be said that the parochial schools were an unspeakable blessing to the Synod. It was chiefly through them that the congregations were built up, which, in turn, served to strengthen the Synod. From our parochial schools also came the students for our colleges and seminaries, and we could never have trained so many pastors and instructors without parochial schools. When some years ago a high official of a sectarian association was visiting Dr. Pieper in St. Louis and expressed his surprise at the large number of theological students and asked where we got them, Dr. Pieper replied (in English), pointing to the nearby Cross School: "That is the source,"--the parochial school is the answer.

To return to our subject after this digression--this position of our Synod at its first convention, relative to the parochial school, soon benefited our State. When Pastor Keyl came to Milwaukee in 1847, he at once concerned himself with the arranging and building of a congregational school. He and his congregation took it for granted that the children of the congregation were to receive systematic, Christian school instructions, and wherever new congregations were subsequently founded in Milwaukee and elsewhere in the State, it was also taken for granted that parochial schools were to be started. They simply knew no differently, and the congregations of old, which did not provide for the Christian school instruction of the children, could not belong to the Synod. That was the Missourian sense and spirit of the day. Since then times have changed, and the paragraph of our constitution providing that admission to membership be conditioned upon the erection and maintenance of a parochial school, is only significant insofar as it is accepted in principle. In practice it is often circumvented or entirely disregarded.

In the beginning school conditions were naturally very inadequate. Only the Trinity Congregation in Milwaukee had a systematized school and a teacher. In other localities the pastors, themselves, taught school, and usually had to divide their time between two or three congregations. How meager was the equipment of these schools! And how shabby were the rooms and the desks! School books, charts, writing materials, and other things were lacking, so that the pastors certainly must have had their troubles in teaching their children. The main thing however, was to instruct them in God's Word, and this was done. In 1856 the number of teachers had increased to 6: Chr. Diez in Milwaukee, A. Lemke in Freistadt, G. Dreyer in Theresa, Ch. Luecke in Sheboygan, J. Wallschlaeger in Mequon, and Ph. Wetzel in Lebanon. Naturally, with the growth of our District the number of teachers increased until in 1916 they numbered 94 in the entire State. Our Southern-Wisconsin District has at present 108. The equipment of the schools kept pace with the increase in the number of teachers. Our large congregations now have very presentable school buildings, and some might even be said to be imposing.

Thus our parochial school system showed a gratifying upward trend. The congregations willingly and eagerly assumed the burden of providing their own schools, in spite of the burdensome taxes that had to be paid towards maintaining the public school system, and as we prospered, the number of teachers was

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increased whenever the number of school children demanded it. Without a doubt, the Teachers' Conferences played an important part in the growth of our school system. The first Teachers' Conference--and this was the first in the Synod--took place in Milwaukee in 1857, and President Wyneken was so enthusiastic over it that he referred to the same in his Synodical address as the dawn of a better era. Teachers' Conferences were conducted periodically after that, simultaneously with Synodical Conventions, at which time the teachers were granted a particular afternoon for their sessions.

70 That our parochial schools were also mission institutions in the best sense of the word, is evident by the number of outside children that attended. For example, in 1854, Pastor Lochner, successor to Pastor Keyl in Milwaukee, reports that in addition to 38 children of their own, 82 outside children were in attendance; thus 82 children that did not belong to the congregation, had the opportunity of receiving instructions in the saving message of the Scriptures in this school. Were these instructions not to bear fruit? Here also the Word of God applies: "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud . . . So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: It shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."³⁷ As was the case in this Milwaukee parochial school, so also most of the others were attended by outside children, as is shown by the school statistics in the Synodical reports.

As has been noted, the conditions today, with regard to the parochial school, have changed. The old Synodical congregations without exception still have their parochial schools, and are carefully administering them, and treasuring them as precious gems. Many of the new congregations, however, have no parochial school. A glance at the statistics is instructive. According to the 1926 report we have 115 pastors in our District. Deducting from this number the 7 so-called assistant pastors and 3 others who have special assignments, there remain 105 pastors who are at the head of congregations. There are 143 congregations and preaching stations; 64 have systematized schools with sessions from 8 to 10 months of the year. There are, therefore, 79 congregations and preaching places in our District having no parochial schools, which means that these children attend the irreligious public schools and must be satisfied with the religious instructions they receive in Sunday school, on Saturdays, or in the confirmation class. One might rightfully ask: What is the cause of this? Is it the pastors' fault because they shirk the work of teaching school? Is it due to the indifference of the congregations? Are conditions to blame? These questions have often been aired at Synodical Conventions and we need not go into them now. But the fact remains, we have a great many congregations and preaching stations which are without parochial schools. One reason may be that schools were not started in the beginning. One pastor who had for years tried to induce his congregation to establish a school writes: "If the first generation did not learn to make sacrifices to secure for itself a parochial school, and was not reared to appreciate its necessity and its splendid advantage, nor

37. Is. 55: 10, 11.

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to enjoy and value it, then it is extremely difficult to win the following generations for a parochial institution of that kind. They hastily draw the conclusion: If we have gotten along without the parochial school thus far, we can continue to do so."

71 But the fact also remains that in those localities where parochial schools exist, not all the children of the congregation attend the school. For even in our congregations there are people who look upon the parochial school not as a precious gem, but as a superfluous institution, and therefore send their children to the public school. The number of children of school age in proportion to the number of voting members in our congregations is far too small, even when we take into consideration that many voting members of our congregations are still single or are too old to have children of school age. Much as we are pleased with the many parochial schools we still have, we should, nevertheless, give serious thought to increasing their number. This might, with the present State laws, be coupled with difficulties, but with a united effort certainly much could be accomplished. Real, earnest Christians should find it repugnant to place their impressionable children, their most precious treasures, into the care of totally godless, unbelieving persons for training, --yes, even scoffers and also Romanists, from whom they will never hear the sweet words of our Saviour, and who might even poison their hearts with teachings inimical to God. It is deplorable enough when members do this, but it is far worse for pastors to commit an act like this and thus set a bad example. For that reason one might view with alarm the future, when the transition to the English has been accomplished. Will the attitude of our English brethren influence the position taken by our entire Synod and church with regard to the parochial schools? That is the alarming question. Our English brethren--we deeply regret to say--take a different attitude towards parochial schools than we do. They are perfectly willing to enlarge their own membership by drawing to themselves religiously trained members from old German congregations, but with few and diminishing exceptions they make no pretense at erecting parochial schools and thus attract a membership that is rich in Biblical knowledge (erkenntnisreich). They are satisfied with Sunday schools, and pastors as well as members send their children to irreligious public schools throughout the week. That they intend to continue to do so can be seen everywhere; their large, and in some instances, stately churches make no provision for a school building site. Compare with these our German congregations!

I am gradually approaching the sunset hours of my life. But ere my life span ends, I wish to publicly announce as the conviction of my heart that the gracious Lord, in the parochial schools of our Synod, has bestowed upon us a precious gift, a means through which thousands and hundreds of thousands of our children learned to know and love their Saviour, and thus not only themselves grew up as Christians, but also led others to the salvation they, themselves, experienced. Therefore, I beseech the Synod: Hold on to what you have, and that is not only your knowledge of salvational truths, but also the mediums through which you have acquired them, and these include the Christian congregational school. Dr. Walther says: "God grant that our German Lutheran Church may retain the gem, its parochial school! For most assuredly, humanely speaking, above everything else, the future of our church in America is dependent upon it. As all churchly associations, from the moment they permitted the

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state to provide for the education of their children, have been working for their own dissolution, so the further careful fostering of our parochial schools is and will remain, after the public divine ministry, the principal means of our existence and continuance." Let us mind these words well! If we permit the parochial school to perish, then the prime of our existence will be in the past. Our parish school has made our Synod great. We owe our growth primarily to it. And thus our future strength will lie in the parochial schools, and those opposed to them are the enemies of our church, though they will not admit it.

72 And now an historical addition. It is self-evident that our Christian congregational schools were a thorn in the eye of a godless world from the beginning. As the world hates God's Word, so it also hates the places where it is disseminated. But for 40 years the State placed no impediments in the way of the parochial school, and it could build and grow in peace. But at the end of the 1880's there arose a dangerous spirit against it in this country. A so-called "Committee of 100" met in Boston, Massachusetts, for the purpose of attacking the congregational schools through the legislatures of the various states. (It was not a coincidence that at the same time a movement for the obligatory reading of the Bible in the public schools was begun. This was to supply the counterbalance against parochial schools.) They were a group of fanatics who were bitter enemies of the Christian schools, particularly the German schools. They first directed their attention upon Illinois and Wisconsin, and so it happened that in these two states--other states, Nebraska, the two Dakotas, and others, followed--bills were simultaneously introduced in the legislatures, which bills eventually were to inflict the mortal wound on congregational schools.

In Wisconsin the start was made on February 13, 1888, when Senator Pond introduced a bill which provided that an annual, written report be made by the principal of the parochial school to the superintendent of the respective public school districts regarding attendance, enrollment, curriculum, and especially whether classes were conducted in English or in some other language. (It must be remembered that our schools at that time were still principally German, and for that reason called German weekly schools.) This proposed bill represented the first step in the history of our State's unheard of innovation. Our parochial schools, which up to now had existed free from guardianship of the State, should suddenly have this freedom curtailed or perhaps even abolished. They were to be subject to the supervision and control of the State and its officials and politicians, and all this without having committed a single offense against the State, or without any other basis for such regulation.

We Lutherans noticed at once that a principle was involved here, the changing of the existing conditions between church and state, and as there were unmistakable signs that this bill was merely the entering wedge to pave the way for more important laws that would grant the State Superintendent of Schools extensive authority to vex the onerous parish schools with all kinds of hindrances and finally to get rid of them entirely, such an energetic protest against the proposed law was lodged, that it was actually withdrawn. But what happened? Within a few weeks the same legislature pell-mell considered another

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proposed bill more drastic than the Pond Bill, and even passed it; this was the Bennet Law, which was rightfully referred to as a murderous weapon against parochial schools.

73 Indeed the sponsors of this law designated it as the product of the best political wisdom and called all those that opposed it numbskulls, who did not know how to provide for the welfare of their children, and furthermore liars, distorters, and enemies of American institutions; and yet it was nothing but a product of innate malice to do away with the parish schools, particularly the German schools. To realize this it was only necessary to scan the first section (of the law) which provided that each child in the city, town, or district must attend the school in the area in which his home is located. As our children came from 4, 5, 6, 10, and even 13 different school districts, it was clear that the parochial school hereafter could not continue to exist. However, the main objection to this law was that the so-called State had permitted itself an un-American trespass upon the rights of the parents and at the same time upon the rights of the church. This was simply not in accordance with the rights guaranteed us in the Constitution with regard to freedom of conscience and religion, because parents were compelled to deny their children daily instructions in God's Word, yes, were compelled to place them in the hands of heterodox or even unbelieving teachers. It was also in direct violation of the Constitution of Wisconsin, which provides: The right of everyone to worship God Almighty according to the dictates of his own conscience shall not be violated. Also no control in the rights of conscience or interference in the same shall be permitted.

It was, therefore, not surprising that this law caused mighty agitation in the State. Our District Convention that year, 1889, immediately took a position against it and adopted the following Declaration of Principles: "1. It is the natural right of parents to provide for the rearing of their children. 2. All parents have, therefore, the duty and the right, concerning the rearing of their children, to select such schools as in their judgment best serve the welfare of their children. 3. In case the parents fail in this duty, the State has the right through proper laws to force them to fulfill their duty. 4. If the State without reason assumes this right, this becomes a trespass upon the natural rights of the parents. 5. In this instance the State also acts contrary to the Federal and State Constitutions, for freedom of conscience and religion, which is proclaimed therein, is not only abolished by compelling one to do what is contrary to one's religion and conscience, but also when the free exercise of his religion and his conscience is interfered with in any manner, except when in so doing one offends the public rights and morals. 6. This recently enacted compulsory school statute in our State is in conflict with the natural rights of parents, as well as with the constitutional guarantees of free exercise of religion and conscience; for: a. Sections 1, 2, and 5, taken as a unit, renders the parents subject to punishment upon the exercise of their natural rights in determining for their children the school age, the duration and place of attendance, as well as the matter and means of teaching. b. Sections 1, 2, and 5 offend against freedom of conscience and religion in that they eventually are a hindrance to the parochial schools, and force the parents to send their children to such schools as are contrary to their conscience, entirely aside from the fact that Section 2 renders both parents and children subject to the tyrannical caprices of the State school officials."

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The seventh point deals with the regulations which are to be effected at the pending election, and the eighth with the position of the Lutherans in relationship to public schools.

Our church here clearly emphasized the natural parental rights over the artificially assumed State rights in the bringing up of children, when the State discarded the principle that the individual had no voice in the matter but was to be ruled by the majority. Clearly and unmistakably our church also emphasized the fundamental principle of conscience and religious freedom: the separation of church and state. Both were heard all over the country, the former to the chagrin of the pseudo-patriots, the latter to the chagrin of the sects, particularly the Episcopalians. Pastor Frederic Edwards of St. James Church, Milwaukee, some years later delivered a public address in the Pabst Theater against the private schools in which he characterized them as a menace to democracy.

In order to effect the repeal of this offensive statute through the election the following year, an agitation committee was appointed, consisting of Professors Huth and Mueller, Pastors Schlerf, Herzer, Wesemann, and Seuel, Teacher Bartelt and Mr. G. Wollaeger. At the same time committees were appointed by the Wisconsin, Iowa, and Buffalo Synods and by the German Evangelical Synod of North America. On June 4, 1890, a large mass meeting was held in Milwaukee, which was attended by representatives from all over the State, and a platform which left nothing to be desired in clearness was adopted. Now agitation started in the entire State. In order to proceed in a systematic manner, the State was divided into districts, so that each city, village, hamlet, and township could arrange meetings and provide speakers. The speakers were to a large extent our pastors, who had probably never dreamed of being thrown into politics like this, but also included were able laymen and particularly professors from our Milwaukee College. It was a peculiar coincidence that early in October, the institution was quarantined for 4 weeks because of a diphtheria epidemic, so that the professors were free to apply themselves to this worthy cause. As election time drew near, the favorable sentiment of the citizens became more apparent, and when the election battle was over, the Republican Party, which was responsible for the enactment of the Bennett Law, suffered such a devastating defeat that, as one paper put it, not even a Republican coronor was elected to conduct a post mortem over the remains. Unless one lived through this period, one cannot appreciate the jubilation in our congregations, and when the new legislature convened, its first act was the repeal of the Bennett Law. Thus God had given us a glorious victory, and our congregational schools could continue to grow undisturbed.

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In order to prevent the passage of any other laws inimical to our parochial schools, our District created a School Committee, which was to scan all future legislation. This School Committee--called Legal Committee since 1918, when its authority was extended to represent the District in all matters of interest to the District in its relationship to the State--on many occasions rendered valuable services. It successfully opposed the Gorecki Bill in 1913 which contained some provisions similar to the Bennett Law, and also several others, and never again has the legislature passed any law which threatened the existence of our parochial schools. Even during the World War, when everything was

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so antagonistic toward us, we were not molested. This was not only because the politicians remembered the election of 1890, but also because our schools in their curriculum more clearly paralleled that of the public schools and ceased to be German parochial schools, since the English language gradually replaced the German as the medium for instructions. Thus it came to pass that many of our schools were accredited by State officials, that is, were recognized as fully worthy, and our pupils, after completing the eighth grade, were admitted to the public high schools without examinations. An important step in raising the standards of our schools was the appointment in 1919 of a State School Superintendent who was to visit all schools and consult with them regarding the raising of their standards and to work towards general improvement. That this arrangement proved of great benefit, is beyond question. In the same year, 1919, it was decided by our District that our School Committee, together with that of the Northern Wisconsin District and that of the Wisconsin Synod, should work hand in hand with respect to raising the standards in our school systems and its representation on the outside. The following year a universal teaching plan was adopted for our schools, a special training course for women teachers was arranged in Milwaukee and Sheboygan, regulations for the school board were adopted, and an annual District Teachers' Convention was inaugurated, which was also to be attended by the women teachers; and the congregations were encouraged to reimburse their teachers for their traveling expenses. In 1921 all pastors who were teaching school were obligated, if possible, to conduct school as many days during the year as was conducted in the public schools.

From this may be seen how highly our District valued our parochial schools, and how everything was done to raise their standards and to insure their future existence, and most assuredly God will not withhold His blessing. This hope should encourage us to renewed efforts on behalf of our school system.

XII. OUR HIGHER EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

We will now also speak of the higher school system of our Synod. That our District had a distinct part in developing it, is plainly to be seen. First we will try to trace the origin of our two great teachers' seminaries in Wisconsin. During the first 10 years our Synod had two institutions, the one in St. Louis consisting of the seminary and the gymnasium,³⁸ and the practical preacher seminary in Fort Wayne. We did not have a teachers' seminary, though parochial school teachers were urgently needed, if the Synod were to remain true to the principles set forth in its constitution, namely, that each congregation was to provide for the Christian training of its children. It was Pastor F. Lochner, who for many years faithfully served Trinity Church in Milwaukee as pastor, who conceived the idea of creating a teachers' seminary, and no sooner was the idea born when it took concrete form, inasmuch as he, with Pastors Fleischmann and Dulitz and Teacher Diez, opened a private teachers' seminary in Milwaukee on New Years 1855. This was the beginning of that blessed activity in our Synod, of training the necessary teachers for its congregations, for this creation of Pastor Lochner was continued in Fort Wayne and later in Addison.

76 Soon thereafter, the high school system, now flourishing in the various localities of our Synodical territory, was begun in Wisconsin. When the teachers' seminary could not remain in Milwaukee, the thought presented itself of erecting a progymnasium which was to serve as a preparatory college to the gymnasium at Fort Wayne, and in 1867 Pastor Lochner submitted a resolution, embodying this objective, to the convention of the Northern District. The Synod was enthusiastic over the idea, the importance and necessity of which was apparent to everyone, but expressed the wish to combine this progymnasium with a technological high school for such boys not wishing to devote themselves to theological pursuits. The three congregations of the Synod in Milwaukee became busy at once and appointed Pastor August Crull director of the new institution, and the following year the Synod decided to take over this institution which consisted of a progymnasium and a polytechnic school. It appointed a committee to draft a constitution, and approved the existing appointment of Pastor Crull. But difficulties developed. A short time after the founding of this institution another high school was created by the so-called "Evangelical Lutheran School Association of Milwaukeeans, belonging to congregations of the Wisconsin Synod," which was begun under the leadership of Dr. Hermann Duemling on May 1, 1868. But it was soon evident that two institutions, pursuing almost identical aims, could not thrive side by side in the same city, and so on December 1, 1868, the two schools merged, with the members of the Missouri congregations retaining supervision of the merger. Crull was elected director of the joint institution, and he and his colleague, Dr. Duemling, worked zealously in brotherly unity for the upbuilding of the institution.

38. Gymnasium in Germany is a high school, preparing students for the university. It is herein used in this sense.

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The beginning looked promising, for early the following year, 1869, the school already had enrolled 24 pupils, many of whom contemplated entering the service of the church. But as was the case with the school teachers' seminary, founded in 1855, the existence of this institution was to be of only short duration. The two organizations simply could not agree and within a year the school was closed. Dr. Duemling accepted a call to Addison, and Pastor Crull left for Grand Rapids, Michigan. But the fact remains that here in Wisconsin our high school, as an institution, had its beginning, and a high school, in fact, was started again in Milwaukee a few years later, which is in existence today, and is currently enjoying pronounced prosperity.

When 4 years later the question of separating the practical and the theoretical departments of the seminary in St. Louis came up, strenuous efforts were made by our District to have the practical preachers' seminary established in Milwaukee. But Springfield won out, and our hopes of obtaining a Wisconsin (Synod) institution of learning for Milwaukee were shattered.

But the wish of the Milwaukee congregations to have in their midst an institution of learning, nevertheless, finally was granted. An institution came into being that really had stability--it was our dear Concordia College. How did this come about?

In reality the hope of establishing an institution of learning in Milwaukee never slumbered since the closing of the high school, and at the end of the 1870's when the German immigration was increased enormously and the dearth of preachers constantly became more perceptible, this hope was more and more audibly expressed, especially when the pupils from Wisconsin at Fort Wayne were suffering severely from a raging fever there, and it seemed strange indeed that so few Wisconsin pupils should complete their college courses there.

The 1881 Synodical Convention drew closer, at which the question of how to provide more preachers would undoubtedly come up; a few months prior to the same, the idea of establishing an institution of learning here again came up. In small circles, at conferences, in conversations with congregation members, the plan was evaluated by the pastors, and to the gratification of its sponsors it found such favorable reception that it was agreed to present the same to larger groups at the approaching Synodical Convention. This was done. The entire delegation from the Northwestern District was called in conference for a discussion of the matter, and as it was known from the start that the creating and maintaining of the projected progymnasium would overtax the ability of one District, it was decided to include the delegates from the Illinois District. Pastor Wunder, president of the Illinois District, immediately expressed his willingness to ask the delegates from his District to join the delegates of the Northwest District for a common cause, and since everyone realized that establishing more institutions of learning for the Synod was by this time an absolute necessity, the delegates gladly gave their unanimous consent when it was proposed that such an institution be established in Milwaukee. The necessary arrangements were hastily made to present a definite plan to the convention, and with happy hearts, particularly

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because only recently the Synod, by an overwhelming plurality, had decided to retain the old Lutheran confession with regard to the teachings of predestination; the resolution presented by the two Districts was approved, and they were urged to begin the work immediately, with the proviso that the institution be placed under the supervision of the president of the General Synod.

While the convention was still in session a board of directors was elected consisting of Pastors Strasen, Wunder, and Loeber, and the Messrs. C. Eissfeldt and J. Fritzlaff. After the founding of the institution was announced in the Lutheraner, a teacher, Candidate C. Huth, was called, and on September 1, 1881, the institution was opened with 13 scholars.

Thus originated our Milwaukee Concordia College. Further detailed historical facts concerning it we will pass by. We will permit ourselves only a few remarks. Its astonishing growth should first be emphasized. No other institution of the Synod did in so short a time approximate it. In the fourth year of its existence it had already become one of the greatest in the Synod, and in its fifth year it surpassed Fort Wayne. That was simply astonishing, especially when one takes into consideration the fact that the Milwaukee institution had some bitter opposition in the beginning, as in certain quarters it was considered a competing institution to the one at Fort Wayne; indeed, some even saw in it a menace to the Synod. It therefore occupied a difficult position and could not, like many other gymnasiums founded at that time, grow in tranquility and peace. Besides, it was afflicted with great poverty. The necessary means for conducting the institution were always lacking, and repeatedly the question would arise whether it was able to continue its existence. But it continued to exist, and grew and prospered, and the hostility it had faced produced one good result, namely, since it had to compete with Fort Wayne, it strove to the utmost to give its students the best training possible. Evidently God's blessing also rested upon the institution, which is apparent from the fact that since its founding almost 900 preachers, teachers, and professors have been produced by it.

Furthermore, the following is pointed out: It was of great significance to the District, that Wisconsin had an institution of learning in its midst. In a certain sense, an entirely new element came to Wisconsin with this institution. An increased interest in the affairs of God's Kingdom was manifest, particularly inasmuch as so many students from the State devoted themselves to the studies offered by Milwaukee Concordia. A total of 1124 students from Wisconsin have attended it to date. One might well ask: Would nearly as many students from our State have attended college if it had not been erected? Furthermore, the welfare work of our congregations was stimulated through our institution. One might also well ask: Would our congregations without it have thus manifested their love for God's Kingdom? Thankfully it must be acknowledged that our congregations did very much for the institution, and precisely through this learned to be more mindful of their duty toward God's Kingdom. It can also be pointed out that our District itself derived great benefits from the institution, inasmuch as professors were

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continually available for services, and it was particularly the larger congregations in Milwaukee that derived this benefit, for they would have had great difficulties if our professors had not served them as assistant pastors.

Thus the Milwaukee institution proved to be a boon to the District in various ways. In 3 years, in 1931, it will celebrate its 50-year jubilee, and this should be a feast of rejoicing for us. We have ample cause for praise and for thanksgiving.

XIII. SPECIAL MISSION WORK WITHIN THE DISTRICT

The special mission enterprises must have a chapter of their own devoted to them. These are, indeed, within the District but are not exclusively the affairs of the District, for they are either sponsored by us jointly with the Wisconsin Synod, or by congregations belonging to both synods, or by private societies. Some of them are of an unusual type, as they are combined with welfare institutions and so provide simultaneously for the temporal as well as the spiritual welfare of their charges. These special missions are:

1. The City Mission in Milwaukee; 2. the Student Mission in Madison; 3. the Children's Friends Society (Kinderfreundgesellschaft); 4. the Institution for the Feeble Minded and the Epileptics in Watertown, and the Deaconess' School connected with it; 5. the Home of the Aged (Altenheim) in Wauwatosa; 6. the two Walther League Hospices in Milwaukee.

1. The City or Institutional Mission in Milwaukee

This mission was founded 27 years ago (1901). The incentive was not only the example set for us by our brethren in faith in other large cities, but the personal conviction that we dared not lay our hands in our lap when God had, so to speak, placed this great mission opportunity at our very door; for there were thousands of poor, unfortunate humans in the city hospitals, asylums and prisons to whom no church services were available, or only to a very limited extent, and were they to be left to perish in their spiritual misery? Might there not be many among them who would gladly embrace the message of the Saviour of sinners if it were brought to them? As a result, representatives of practically all congregations belonging to the Synodical Conference³⁹ met on May 6, 1901, and being convinced of the necessity of this step, resolved to undertake the work of the City Mission in Milwaukee without delay. Most of the congregations soon made the affair their personal business so that funds to carry on the work were assured, and in the person of Pastor Enno Duemling, who then served the Emmaus Congregation in Detroit and at the same time was in the service of the Deaf-Mute Mission, the first city missionary was appointed, and on May 4, 1902, he was inducted into office. In the meantime Pastors W. Rader and W. Rudolph had begun the work in the poorhouse, the county hospital, and in the insane asylum, but only with the arrival of Pastor Duemling, who could devote his entire time to the matter, was this work really started. He was successful in gradually gaining entrance to all public institutions, and without hindrance was able to begin his splendid work everywhere. He could look up individual inmates and render them pastoral services, or conduct divine services at regular intervals, and so bring the message of the cross to thousands who had never heard it, or at least, had not heard it for a long time; thus he could be their guide to everlasting life. How his work gradually spread can be seen by the facts that now such mission

39. Transl.: Missouri and Wisconsin Synods.

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work is being conducted in 12 public institutions and that in the course of 25 years 278,054 persons have attended these divine services, 30,853 sick received pastoral services, 8,001 received Holy Communion, 413 were baptized, 148 confirmed, and 365 received a Christian burial. These are figures that speak for themselves. This precious work had grown to such an extent that additional help had to be supplied. Teacher Joseph Klug took over the large Sunday school of the Mission, and Pastor Helmes was made assistant missionary. Without question, the City Mission in Milwaukee is one of the finest branches of our mission work rich in blessings, and we may well heartily rejoice over it. We are now stretching out our hands as far as the State Prison in Waupun, and the establishing of the Milwaukee City Mission has served as an incentive for undertakings in mission work elsewhere in the State, within both state and city institutions.

2. The Student Mission in Madison

The creation of this mission was occasioned by the fact that the many hundreds of Lutheran students who attended the State University were almost without any provision for their spiritual needs, and were in danger, under the influence of their totally irreligious instructors and in their intercourse with those of other faiths or their unchurched comrades, of suffering damage to their own souls. Consequently Pastor Robert Kissling of our mission board was sent to Madison in 1901 for the purpose of founding a congregation there and taking the Lutheran students under his guidance. But he remained only 3 years. Under his successor, Pastor Konrad Martens, a church was built about 2 miles from the university, and the students were invited to attend. But it soon became evident that the church was located too far from the university to assure success among the students, especially when the General Council built a large church in the immediate vicinity of the university and attempted to attract the students of our sphere. To meet this situation, our District Synod in 1919 decided to appoint a special student-pastor, and happily the Wisconsin Synod decided to participate in the work and share one-half of the expenses. Pastor Ad. Haentzschel was appointed, who assumed his duties in 1920. He contacted the Lutheran students as much as possible and conducted divine services in a rented hall regularly every Sunday. The attendance at the first service numbered 35, and this increased to 125 in the course of the following year. Since the services had to be conducted under such unfavorable circumstances and the results of the work were questionable, the 2 synods in 1922 decided to build their own church to serve the students. A suitable site was bought near the university and a fine church was erected with rooms especially designed for social gatherings, and a parsonage. The total cost was about \$137,000. Since the dedication of the church on September 26, 1926, its attendance has more than doubled. It is evident that a task both urgent and rich in blessings, is being accomplished here. Over 400 of the 1,200 Lutheran students, attending the university at present, came from the districts of the Synodical Conference, and even if not all attend the church, most of them come under the influence of the Gospel and thus will be retained for God's Kingdom; and also those of other faiths have been won for the Lutheran Church, and even a lodge member, on

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hearing a sermon, was converted from the error of his position. Thus others might be won, who would otherwise remain outside the church of true knowledge, and like the City Mission in Milwaukee, so the Student Mission in Madison is a splendid branch of our united mission work.

3. The Children's Friends Society

What led to the founding of the Children's Friends Association⁴⁰ was the unfortunate fact that our Lutheran orphanages were unable to receive and care for the many abandoned and orphaned children within and outside the sphere for which we, in our Christian love, felt in duty bound to provide. The idea of erecting another orphanage within our District was conceived. As this could be done only at a great cost the thought of placing children in Lutheran private homes for adoption and rearing occurred to some. In this manner these children would receive better care than in an orphanage, and at the same time the danger of their being sent to a public institution where they would grow up without any religious instructions was obviated.

This idea met with approval, and in June 1896, the Children's Friends Society was formed in Milwaukee, consisting of pastors, teachers, and members of congregations, whose objective was to provide, in the prescribed manner, for such abandoned and orphaned children as were put under their care. An agent, Mr. G. Steuber, an ex-teacher, was engaged to look up such children as were being considered, bring them to the Home which had been rented, and entrust them to the families applying for the custody of a child.

The arrangement was successful from the beginning. The number applying for the custody of orphans was gratifying. It far exceeded the number of available children. The number of contributing members, which was about 200, in the beginning, increased considerably, and the contributions from the congregations were so plentiful that a fine Home could be bought in Wauwatosa, and finally, in 1925, the magnificent brick building, familiar to us all, could be erected. This society has now existed for 32 years, and has provided for a total of 1,891 children. When we consider that for many of these a home was provided where in most cases they certainly enjoyed more comforts than they could have elsewhere, and that above all else their spiritual welfare was and still is being cared for, then we must designate the Children's Friends Society as an organization that is richly blessed. To what extent our State, Wisconsin, has become an example in this respect, is demonstrated by the fact that from time to time 12 states have formed similar Children's Friends Societies.

In some respects the following is a branch or offshoot of the work of the Children's Friends Society:

40. Transl.: Now commonly referred to as "The Lutheran Children's Home."

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hearing a sermon, was converted from the error of his position. Thus others might be won, who would otherwise remain outside the church of true knowledge, and like the City Mission in Milwaukee, so the Student Mission in Madison is a splendid branch of our united mission work.

3. The Children's Friends Society

What led to the founding of the Children's Friends Association⁴⁰ was the unfortunate fact that our Lutheran orphanages were unable to receive and care for the many abandoned and orphaned children within and outside the sphere for which we, in our Christian love, felt in duty bound to provide. The idea of erecting another orphanage within our District was conceived. As this could be done only at a great cost the thought of placing children in Lutheran private homes for adoption and rearing occurred to some. In this manner these children would receive better care than in an orphanage, and at the same time the danger of their being sent to a public institution where they would grow up without any religious instructions was obviated.

This idea met with approval, and in June 1896, the Children's Friends Society was formed in Milwaukee, consisting of pastors, teachers, and members of congregations, whose objective was to provide, in the prescribed manner, for such abandoned and orphaned children as were put under their care. An agent, Mr. G. Steuber, an ex-teacher, was engaged to look up such children as were being considered, bring them to the Home which had been rented, and entrust them to the families applying for the custody of a child.

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5. The Lutheran Home of the Aged, in Wauwatosa

The impetus for founding the Lutheran Home of the Aged (Altenheim) was supplied by Mr. G. Steuber, who during his travels in the interest of the Children's Friends Society had ample opportunity to observe the misery and want of old, helpless brethren in faith. He brought up the question of building a home and since Mr. John Pritzlaff, while still living, had had in mind some such plan, four members of the Pritzlaff family, namely, Mr. John Koch, his wife, Mr. August Luedtke, and Mr. Friedrich Pritzlaff, carried out the wish of their forefather, and each donated \$5,000 towards the founding of an old peoples' home. With this \$20,000 the present splendid site in Wauwatosa was purchased and the house on it remodeled, preparatory to receiving the inmates.

In May 1906, the friends caring for the old folks held their first meeting, organized the Lutheran Home of the Aged Society (Altenheimgesellschaft), of Wisconsin, elected a board of directors, consisting of 15 members, and received their charter from the State of Wisconsin. The first inmates entered a few months later, and the Home was soon occupied. But the number of inmates increased to such an extent that in spite of an addition to the building, the facilities were still inadequate, and for that reason the present brick structure was erected in 1911 which is without doubt the most magnificent Home of its kind in our entire Synod.

In 1925 an extensive addition was built so that the institution can now accommodate 150 inmates. The considerable costs of maintaining the institution are met partly by the payments of the inmates, but principally by voluntary gifts of the members of the Society and by friends of the institution. Since the inmates are constantly under pastoral supervision, and as divine services are conducted at regular intervals in the institution, this, too, may be considered a mission work whose blessings cannot fail.

6. The Two Milwaukee Walther League Hospices

83 The Walther League, which is also very well represented in Wisconsin, has as its purpose the establishing of hospices in the larger cities, and are to provide safe lodgings for those young Lutheran brethren in faith who come there as strangers to find work. The Walther League has created two such Hospices in Milwaukee; one for girls, opened 12 years ago, and one for young men, in existence for 3 years. Here young people can obtain food and lodging at reasonable rates, and can enjoy a home with all the conveniences and comforts that could be expected. Here also, they are under Christian influences, for they not only have regular devotional periods and prayers at meal times, but receive the benefits of pastoral guidance. Here they are sheltered from the temptations of the large city, particularly those which might threaten them, were they obliged to live with irreligious, or even godless people. Thus a mission work is conducted among the young people which should not be underestimated, and hundreds will gratefully remember the kindnesses they enjoyed within these Hospices.

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From these facts it can be seen how far-flung is the combined welfare and mission work of our District. There is scarcely another District wherein anything like it can be found, and what is recorded here by no means covers all activities, for here and there in the State other organizations may qualify under this heading. As an example, there is in Milwaukee a so-called Relief Society, an association of Lutheran women who interest themselves in all types of unfortunates. What rich opportunities our Christians in Wisconsin have to support the work of the church and thus manifest their faith in Love! And how much has already been accomplished! Without it, surely, this noble work could not endure.

In conclusion might also be mentioned:

The American Luther Association. Quite early our District was concerned with the question of what could be done to prevent our young people from patronizing saloons, theaters, and other worldly amusement places. It was a matter as might easily be imagined, which caused our fathers much uneasiness, for it was evident that advice alone was insufficient. When in 1868 the matter again came up at the convention, it was suggested for the first time that each congregation, wherever possible, provide its young people with quarters, equipped with recreational and reading rooms, open every evening, where, besides reading useful books and enjoying friendly companionship, the young people could after a day's work find recreation in permissible games like king and queen⁴¹ (Schach und Dame). The result of this discussion was that the congregations now began to provide such quarters in their schools for their young people, and as the congregations prospered, many provided a larger social hall with stage, bowling alleys, billiard halls, and the like.

But about 10 years ago a new idea was conceived in Milwaukee. It was the question whether more could not be done for the young people than was being done in the individual congregations for a more intimate association of all young people, and thus exercise a greater influence upon them. At the same time, the question arose as to whether a closer social association of all Lutherans would not redound to the welfare of the church. In Milwaukee approximately 50 congregations belonged to the Synodical Conference. All members were of one faith, belonged to the same church, and yet were strangers to each other. Therefore, should not something be done to bring these closer together--these people already joined spiritually by the common bond of faith, should they not also become more closely united through an external bond? Could the common church interests not also be thus promoted? Would it not be particularly effective in counteracting the influences of the lodges which were, unfortunately, encroaching upon many of the congregations? These thoughts induced five men, Th. Dammann, Th. Hoffmann, E. H. Karrer, Wm. Pieplow, and Adolf Schwefel, to found the so-called American Luther Association on April 1, 1917, to enable Lutherans of all congregations to unite, and especially to provide for the young people. The small association, which at first

41. Transl.: Not a game of cards, but probably similar to chess.

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conducted its meetings in the school auditoriums of the various churches, grew perceptibly, and already during the year of its founding, bought the magnificently located property at 11th and State Streets from Mr. Aug. Luedke, for \$19,000, and 5 years later erected the large structure which with furnishings cost \$325,000. In this association Lutherans have a meeting place, a joint home so to speak, whose rooms with all appointments are at their disposal. Everything is offered to enable them to spend their evenings in an agreeable manner; there are bowling alleys, billiard tables, and other amusements, and ample provision is also made for the presentation of lectures, musical programs, and the like. Members of the various Lutheran congregations meet, learn to know one another better, and discuss matters of mutual interest. Here, too, the financial welfare of the members is cared for by securing employment for those who are out of work. The less fortunate are remembered at Christmas time, and other welfare work is undertaken. For these reasons the A. L. A. is a praiseworthy organization. Mistakes in its administration have been made, and unfortunately, offensive incidents have not been lacking, but the management has been open to suggestions, and it must be said that the A. L. A. has rendered many services to the church.

At the present time the association has 1,183 members--so-called seniors and juniors. Besides, it sponsors a Girls' Club with a membership of 263, and a Ladies' Auxiliary with a membership of 282 from various congregations, which thus also accomplishes the aim of bringing together the women of the various congregations. Incidentally it might be mentioned that an A. L. A. has also been organized in Sheboygan.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

A GLANCE AT THE PAST

85 Exactly 81 years have passed since the beginning of our church work in Wisconsin. In some respects our District has existed for 81 years, although it was not organized as a separate Synodical District until 1854 (together with Michigan). In retrospection over this long period, what is it that presents itself as of the greatest importance? It is this, that through our church activities the church of the Reformation, the Evangelical Lutheran Church's pure doctrine, was enabled to flourish in our State. Yes, the important and noteworthy thing is that Wisconsin as other districts in the United States, also became a place of pure Lutheranism. This occurred because God gave us his precious Word; and truly He gave it to us not sparingly or piecemeal, but abundantly and in all its purity. The founders and fathers of our District were servants and messengers of their Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, who proclaimed only what He inspired them to proclaim. Free from all human interpretations, they preached Christ, without whom there is no salvation, since they were concerned solely about assuring their hearers of the forgiveness of their sins through the grace of God in Christ. And they remained steadfast in the teachings of Christ in spite of all attacks from within and without, because they knew that the foundation of the church, which is the true doctrine of the justification of a poor sinner before God by faith in His Grace, would be endangered if they wavered even in the smallest degree from this course. As the aged Pastor C. Strasen said at the convention in 1885: "Nothing would have been more terrifying to us than to think that even one word of the Scriptures was against us." That was the position taken by the founders and fathers of our District; thus they here erected a church professing the pure doctrine and creed; thus one door after the other opened to them, thus our District developed solely through the preaching of Christ. It is true that we do not lead numerically; for some churches, confessing false doctrines, have had a greater growth than we, and in deep pain we deplore the fact that the preaching of the Gospel did not touch much greater numbers and bring them into the fold of our church. But when we reflect upon the fact that the Scriptures themselves speak of the church of those who wholeheartedly believe in their Saviour as a little group or a small flock, the number of God's children who were joined together here in our Synodical association, always was considerable. How many thousands and thousands have found their salvation here through our preaching! Imagine, if you can, what would have become of these people if God had not used us as His instrument to proclaim His Word to them.

Let us consider the congregations. Out of one lone church and its filial in 1847 there have by and by sprung up here in southern Wisconsin some 140 churches. And how did they originate? Not through force, nor through promises of temporal advantages, or through the application of other objectionable means, were they gathered together and built up, but through the preaching of the Word alone. And the Word never ceased to bear fruit. It brought knowledge of salvation; it brought about the doctrine of genuine Christianity

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86 of the heart, and in spite of the weaknesses and defects that developed in the congregations, it retained its mastery. Whenever contentions against God threatened or actually broke out, they submitted themselves to God's Word and were governed by its teachings. Whatever could not be reconciled to God's Word would of its own accord separate itself from us and become of no consequence. Our congregations did not oppose the preaching of the law; they did not put up with any open, unrepentant sinners in their midst; they remained free from all unionism, and they would never permit anyone expounding false doctrines or any doctrine which differed materially from their own to occupy their pulpits; they opposed lodges and in fact all manner of worldliness; they confined themselves to the Word and the Sacrament; they insisted upon the confessional and the advance announcement of intent to partake of the Lord's Supper so that none would receive the Sacrament unworthily; they at all times engaged in benevolences, and they kept matters pertaining to the Kingdom of God uppermost in their mind, though in spite of this, much more could have been done; they provided for the Christian instruction of their children; they ruled themselves in accordance with their self-imposed rules, and kept a watchful eye upon the doctrine which was unfolding itself in their midst. All this was the fruit of the Gospel which had been preached to them.

Since our District remained steadfast in God's Word, it also stressed the pure doctrine at its Synodical Conventions and defended it against all errors. In its Synodical reports our District contributed its share to exposing and spreading the teachings of the Holy Scriptures, and it never neglected to justly apply God's Word to its doctrine, its discipline, its improvement, and its correction, and even at the risk of incurring the hatred of its opponent, it nevertheless would unflinchingly raise its voice against all twisting and falsifying of the teachings of the Bible. So, with praise and gratitude, we can acknowledge that our District, from its very beginning, proclaimed God's Word and has unswervingly held fast to it, and that as a result, it has abundantly experienced God's blessings.

A SURVEY OF THE PRESENT

And now, after having glanced at the past, when we survey the present, what is the situation? Above all, it is this, that we still represent the real Lutheran institution, as was the case from the beginning. It would be terrible if this were no longer the case. No, by the grace of God, we are still just that. Of course, one hears much at the present time about the retrogression of our Synod, and that we no longer are what we were. Well, it cannot be denied that many things are now different from what they formerly were. The former Sunday Christian instruction classes have been almost entirely discontinued, for our Christian people have, unfortunately, lost their desire for that type of instruction in the precious teachings of the catechism. The former custom of conducting family altar devotionals, in which the head of the family, mornings and evenings would gather about himself the members of his household, read to them a verse from the Bible or from some other devotional book, after which all would join in prayer, has been generally

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discontinued by families, since it is claimed that there is no time for this. Various divine services, the omission of which would earlier have been regarded as a sin, such as, for example, the afternoon services on important holidays, are no longer held because of the lack of attendance. That and many other things indicate the changes that have taken place since the days of our forefathers, and should cause us to pause for introspection and induce in us sincere penitence.

Yet, does this justify talk of decline? I would not risk going that far. I would speak of an actual decline only if proof were at hand that our Christian population, or at least a great portion of it, were inwardly deteriorating, or if the Christianity of our people were merely an exterior garb, and if the sincere believing with all their hearts had been replaced by mere intellect and lip service, or briefly, if the relationship of our Christian people with their God in heaven were disintegrating. But who would attempt to prove this? I submit that we would be guilty of gross ingratitude toward God if we did not cheerfully acknowledge what we still are and have. For it is a fact that there still exists among us much sincere Christianity. God's Word, pure and unfalsified, is still being preached in our churches, and the Gospel, that precious Word of Him who converts the godless, is still proclaimed among us and is proving itself as a godly power capable of working salvation in all who will accept it; our church services are still well attended, which is an indication that people love God's Word; the people are still diligently partaking of the Lord's Supper; they are still manifesting their faith in deeds of benevolence; God's Word is still paramount in our congregations; our church practices are still in conformity with God's Word; strict doctrinal discipline is still being exercised and all worldliness is being discouraged; and it can still be said that Walther's 28 theses on the "attributes of a well-founded, genuine Lutheran congregation, which it should set as its goal," prevail in our congregations. Should not this be sufficient reason to evoke our praises and gratitude? Yes, of course, there exist, to be sure, sufficient imperfections within our congregations. But this was also the case in olden times, and if one supposes that things were so much better in olden times, then one is mistaken. The so-called good old times were in fact also bad old times. Our forefathers made the same complaints about all kinds of congregational evils as we do. The facts are simply this: So long as there is a church on earth, it is and will remain imperfect. All we can do about it is to warn against the evils as they become apparent, and to guard against all defections in their incipency, and steadfastly to heed our Lord's command to preach the Gospel, and to leave the rest to God.

VIEWING THE FUTURE

What does the future hold in prospect for us? Well, so far as the immediate future is concerned, we are justified in hoping that it will not be much different from the present and the past. The entire congregation organization and the Christian habits in our District are such that they will not immediately completely reverse themselves and degenerate. But we must

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also look beyond the immediate future into the more distant future. We have descendants, yes, children of a tender age, who, if God grants them a normal life span, will later be as far removed from us in space of time as we are from our forefathers and the founders of this District. There surely is none amongst us who does not desire with all his heart that our children and children's children might have preserved for them the full measure of spiritual treasures enjoyed by us and our forefathers. In other words, that our Christian people here in Wisconsin might persevere in their genuine Lutheran doctrine into the far distant future. But how can this be accomplished? The answer can be drawn from the above. The only way is to resolutely and faithfully hold fast to God's Word. If this is not done, then the view into the future becomes indeed a sad one. Of this the history of the church, and particularly the Lutheran Church, is for us authentic proof. Why has the apostolic and post-apostolic church, which once flourished so gloriously, been so miserably corrupted by popery? Because it did not hold fast to God's Word. Why is it that after Luther's death the Lutheran Church, which had stood as a magnificent temple of God, so woefully disintegrated and fell to pieces to such an extent that the crypto-Calvanistic foes were already intoning the victory cry: "The Lutheran Church no longer exists"? Because they did not hold fast to God's Word. Why was it that later pietism could make such inroads, followed by the destructable rationalism which nearly wrecked the Lutheran Church? Because they did not hold fast to God's Word. If we want to be saved from this evil, we have only one remedy and only one thing that can save us, and that is faithfully holding fast to the Word of God. That is our greatest, and of course, constantly more difficult, obligation; for experience has proven conclusively that the longer the Church is in possession of the jewel of pure doctrine, the greater is the danger of losing it. Until now the devil has not been able to rob us of the pure doctrine--over 80 years he has been compelled to let us retain it; but this will not cause him to rest. On the contrary, his efforts to cause our apostacy will be redoubled. He will exert every effort to cause us to abate our zeal for God and His honor; he will constantly and increasingly tempt us to become less exacting in our precious doctrine regarding God's Word; and how easily he might succeed to lead us into destructive by-ways! It behooves us then to remain wide awake, so that we will retain and not lose that which, by the grace of God, we now have. Watchfulness is particularly needful on the part of our young pastors, for the danger with which they are threatened in the transition from the German to the English is this, that they might permit the Calvinistic spirit, which dominates our country, to influence them. The signs are ominous. One occasionally hears sermons which no longer have the old Biblical, truly Lutheran ring, but touch on subjects which do not belong in the pulpit, against which our old congregations would have vigorously protested. The admonition of Holy Scripture which is directed to every pastor applies here: "Continue reading," that is, continue studying the Holy Scriptures. Yes, these should be studied by our pastors. They should dig into them in order to bring out the gold of doctrine, which alone serves for the edification of their hearers, and this only should they preach. It is for this reason that Paul admonishes Timothy: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." If the preachers in the future will thus strictly heed the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures and will not fear to proclaim the entire Word of God for the

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salvation of their hearers, all will be well. Then, also, will the future of our Church in our State be assured. May God mercifully grant this.

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