

LUTHERAN PIONEERS.

I.

*-

Our Pilgrim Fathers.

The Story of the Saxon Emigration of 1838.

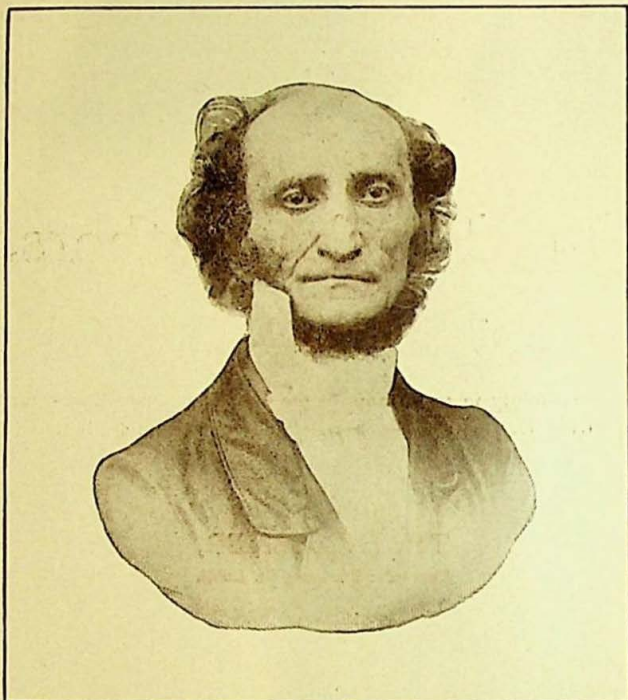
Retold Mainly in the Words of the Emigrants, and Illustrated
from Original Documents Related to the Emigration.

By

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ST. LOUIS, MO.
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1919.



Dr. C. F. W. Walther.

Dr. C. F. W. Walther.

Portrait made in 1857.

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1. Preparations.

In the hotel "City of Hull" in Bremen, Germany, two strangers applied for lodgings, July 14, 1838. They entered their names upon the register, the one in a strong, flowing hand: "Ad. Marbach, Dresden," the other, in more delicate letters, "H. E. Fischer, merchant, Dresden." The "City of Hull" was one of the better class of hotels in the great harbor city. From a receipted bill which is still preserved, we learn that the two guests of July 14 paid the sum of six Reichstaler for lodgings, a comparatively high amount for those days.

"Thank God, a start has been made!"—this thought was uppermost in the minds of the two strangers from Dresden when they composed their members for sleep on that night in 1838. "A beginning has been made, the ships are chartered;

<i>Ordn.</i>	<i>56,274.21 1/2</i>	<i>57,948.21 1/2</i>	<i>Transport.</i>
<i>3.</i>	<i>298.17</i>	<i>511.10</i>	<i>Sp. Pastor Keyl in die N. A. Mission, und Marbach'sche Mission Leipzig'sche:</i>

Record of Rev. Keyl's Payment into the General Fund.

Photograph of original entry.

praise be to God, the faithful Church of the Lutheran confession may build a new home beyond the seas!"

For the story which our little book intends to recall to memory, the visit of Dr. Marbach and Mr. Fischer in Bremen was of the highest importance. On the day before their stay at the "City of Hull," they had paid down as a deposit the sum of two thousand three hundred Taler with an ocean packet company and had chartered five ships for a company of emigrants. On the following day they journeyed by a fast mail coach via Harburg, Hamburg, and Berlin to Dresden, and there made their report to Dr. Vehse, at that time treasurer of the company of emigrants.

"Our time becomes ever more serious and decisive; matters cannot continue in the present state for any length of time. God will bring a decision for His Church, whether she is to continue to exist in Europe or to emigrate to North America." These words Pastor Martin Stephan, preacher of the old-Lutheran congregation at Dresden, had addressed to a friend in 1836. At that time the pure Word of God was rarely heard in Germany. Especially in Saxony un-

belief had penetrated into all classes of the population. Many ministers were rationalists or infidels. Since 1812 a church-book of forms was in use which departed in many points from the Word of God and Lutheran doctrine. A church-government composed of rationalists prohibited the use of old-Lutheran books in public worship, and even the schoolbooks contained religious teachings which were based not upon the Bible, but on human opinion. From the pulpits little else than rationalism, the religious opinions of unconverted men, was preached, and unbelieving teachers in the schools taught their children as "teachings of Jesus" the baldest unbelief. As long as the old church-books, hymnals, and catechisms were still in use, Christian faith continued to exist in certain localities. But finally the dim light of the Gospel was quite extinguished in most places, both in churches and schools, and true Christianity became a thing which was not only rare, but hardly known.

However, the invisible Church of Christ existed even in these evil days. There remained a small group of believing pastors who preached the truth of

26.	176. 16.	Dennis Loeber in d. L. f. m. b. n. g. 22
	351. 8.	Subst. f. m. Pastor Loeber in d. L. f. m. b. n. g. 22

Record of Rev. Loeber's Payment into the General Fund.

Photograph of original entry.

Scripture and of the Lutheran Confessions. Because they pleaded for a return to the teachings of Luther and of the Lutheran Confessions, they were called Old Lutherans. In localities where no believing preachers could be found, the Christians gathered in lay-meetings and read their old postils and books of devotion for mutual edification. Their spiritual hunger and thirst was so great that they would often start on Saturday nights and walk many miles to a place where they could hear a true Lutheran preacher on Sunday. Such preachers, however, were the object of bitter scorn and of actual persecution on the part of the enemies of the Gospel who were in control, and also by the rationalistic preachers round about them. Every possible means was employed to make things disagreeable for these faithful preachers and their flocks.

Among those who sighed for release from the bonds of a State Church governed by rationalistic church-officials, there were many who believed that Pastor Martin Stephan of Dresden was destined to be a leader in the movement for a revival of true Lutheranism. Stephan simply, yet eloquently, set forth the doctrines of sin and grace. He possessed the ability to comfort and strengthen those who came to him with stricken consciences, longing for the consolation of

the Gospel. His activity far transcended the limits of his Dresden parish. A number of pastors who clung to the old Lutheran faith were accustomed to seek counsel with him in their controversies with unfriendly government officials, and they accepted Stephan in the course of time as their spiritual leader.

The suggestion that the faithful Lutherans of Saxony might have to emigrate to foreign lands had been under consideration many years. Stephan declares that he had considered this plan as early as 1811. He then had Australia in view. In 1830 he addressed the Rev. Dr. Kurz of Baltimore, requesting information about conditions in America, and Kurz advised settling in Missouri. Kurz had never been in Missouri, but had read a book by a physician of Bonn, Dr. Duden, who had written a book for emigrants in which he highly praised the State of Missouri. About Pentecost, in the year 1836, it was decided, at a meeting held in Dresden, that the oppression which the faithful Lutherans had to endure was

30. | | | 1836. 20. | *O. F. Fierbringer, Cand. Theol.*
 | | | | *mit*
 | | | | *10. Th. f. u. g. Lou. d. a. 673. f. Wz.*
 | | | | *1. u. g. L. u. k. u. a. 10. L. W. a. 673. f. Wz.*

Record of Candidate O. Fuerbringer's Payment into the General Fund.

Photograph of original entry.

fast becoming unbearable, and emigration to a country granting religious liberty was accepted as the only solution.

In the spring of 1838 Stephan declared that further postponement was impossible, and a committee was constituted which drew up a set of "Regulations for Emigrants." The cause, purposes, and aim of the emigration were stated as follows: "After calm and deliberate consideration the emigrants can see no possibility of maintaining their faith pure and unadulterated in their present home, and of preserving it for their descendants. Hence they are constrained in their consciences to emigrate, and to seek a country in which the Lutheran faith is not placed in jeopardy, where they can serve God according to His revealed order of grace, and where they may enjoy, without interference, the means of grace in their integrity and purity, and preserve the means of grace pure and unadulterated for their descendants. These means of grace include: the office of the ministry with full and free exercise of its duties, pure forms of worship, unadulterated preaching of the divine Word, the Sacraments in their original form, and the cure of souls unhampered in its ministrations. A country of this character is the United States of North America, where complete religious and

1838. Datum.	Wahl.		Lebung Cour.		
	fl.	kr.	fl.	kr.	
July					
5.	5867.	23 ²	6000.		Zugewinn Friedrich Poppeitz und Freystruch mit 6000. fl. Cour. à 2 1/4 % Agio.
cod.	747.	74.	764.	9 ²	Zugewinn Johann Schlimpert und Freystruch: 570. 26 — 2 fl. I. 20 fl. Agio mit 357 1/2 fl. Spec. r. Dev. 234. 17 1/2 mit 220. fl. Cour. à 2 1/4 % Agio. etc.
Aug.					
3.	500.		513.	18.	Geyer, Cand. Theol. und 2 fl. Spec. Augustine Joh. Gmündel, Natalis Geyer und Freystruch Zugewinn zur Hälfte.
cod.	97.	7.	100.		Friedrich Gmündel Probst, Augustin Freystruch Zugewinn zur Hälfte, mit 100. fl. Cour. à 2 3/4 %.
cod.	297.	18.	511.	10.	Zugewinn Johann Schlimpert und Freystruch: 215. fl. — 1 fl. 82. 18. — mit 85. fl. Cour. à 2 3/4 %. etc.
cod.	2992.	9.	5129.	16.	Friedrich Gmündel, Schlimpert und Freystruch: 1943. fl. — 1 fl. 903. 9. — Spec. incl. 3. 9. Agio à 3/8 %. 1599. — — — — — Dev. 4. — — — — — 1/2 % 527. — — — — — mit 562. fl. Cour. à 2 1/4 %. etc.
12	291.	23.	300.		Augustin Freystruch Döderlein, mit 300. fl. Cour. à 2 3/4 %
		12,994. 22 1/2	15,319.	5 1/2	Latus.

First Page of Original Record of Payments into General Fund.
Reduced one-third.

civic liberty is maintained in a measure unknown elsewhere, and where such liberty is guarded against foreign interference. These states we have chosen as the goal of the emigration and, hence, as our new home."

Soon after the adoption of this constitution, offices were opened in Leipsic and Dresden for the establishment of a fund out of which the expenses of emigration should be defrayed. Very soon hundreds of applications were received, and in the course of a few months the sum of 123,987 Taler was paid into the fund. The sum of 60,000 Taler was required for transportation and ocean freight alone. It was the intention to purchase out of the same fund a large tract of land in the State of Missouri for colonization purposes.

On July 3 the Messrs. Marbach and Fischer left Dresden with a draft on Bremen for 800 Louisd'or or 4,435 Reichstaler. On the 19th they returned, having accomplished their mission. The first step was taken. Five ships were chartered for the winter 1838—1839. It was an undertaking which is without parallel in the history of emigration, and which must remain forever memorable in the history of American Lutheranism.

2. Farewells.

In God's dear name we wend our way,
His angels lead by night and day,
As they led Israel long ago
From Egypt's shores and Pharaoh.
"Lord, our God, have mercy!"

This ancient hymn rose from the lips of a band of Saxon emigrants on the first Sunday of the trip down the river Elbe. Their leader was young

29.	101.	8.	<i>J. Cand. Brohm ... i.</i>
			<i>2. Ldör à 5¹/₂ B. v. G.</i>
<i>Number.</i>			<i>90. of Couv.</i>

Record of Candidate Brohm's Payment into General Fund.

Photograph of original entry.

J. F. Buenger, candidate of theology. This section of the emigrant host had gone on board the Elbe-berge on the 20th of October. Many inhabitants of Dresden looked curiously on. Some openly ridiculed the "foolish Stephanists." On board ship Buenger conducted daily devotions, and instructed the children in the Catechism. As the boat approached Wittenberg, he told them the story of the Reformation. They visited the Castle Church and Luther's residence. Everywhere men confessed their amazement at the notion of these Old Lutherans, who were now actually at the point of exchanging their Saxon homes for the unknown

Johann Georg.

No.	Name	Stand	Wohnort	Alter
Ladite				
1.	Gnab. W. H. Engl	Kaufmann	Friedberg	35.
2.	Amalie Linnemann	Leinwand Weber	"	22.
3.	Amalie	Kind	"	4.
4.	L. Ludwig Engel	Leinw. u. Webm.	Friedberg	26.
5.	Ann. Kar. Engel	Leinwand Weber	"	23.
6.	Leinwand Weber	Kaufmann	Leipzig	35.
7.	Leinwand Weber	Kaufmann	Leipzig	49.
8.	Leinwand Weber	Leinwand Weber	"	13.
9.	Leinwand Weber	Kaufmann	"	

Part of Passenger-List of the "Johann Georg."
Slightly reduced from original.

Passagiere auf dem Schiff Republik.

No.	Name.	Stand.	Wohnort	Alter
Erste Ladite				
1.	Goldgold Leinwand Weber	Kaufmann		41.
2.	Leinwand Weber	Leinwand Weber		40
3.	Leinwand Weber	Leinwand Weber	Leipzig	10.
4.	Leinwand Weber			8.
5.	Leinwand Weber			3½.
6.	Leinwand Weber			42
7.	Leinwand Weber	Leinwand Weber	Leipzig	28.
8.	Leinwand Weber	Leinwand Weber	Leipzig	35.

Part of Passenger-List of the "Republik."
Slightly reduced facsimile.

wilds of North America. Few Saxons in those days had emigrated to foreign shores, and it had never happened that any had left for religious reasons.

And yet this, and this only, was the motive which impelled our emigrants to leave pleasant homes, a profitable business, lucrative professions, and civil offices for a most uncertain future in the United States. Most of the emigrants, it should be said, were people in good circumstances, who made great temporal sacrifices by leaving their German homes. Even the artisans, mechanics, and peasants in this company were possessed of considerable property. The 123,000 Taler in the general fund represented only part of the joint wealth of the emigrants. They carried with them a vast amount of tools, utensils, and furniture. Hundreds of bales, chests, and trunks were shipped down the river Elbe and afterwards transferred to Bremen to be stowed in the chartered boats. The Elbe freight, made in three shipments, alone amounted to 19,138 Taler.

At common expense a large theological library had been gathered, and 900 copies of Luther's Catechism had been printed and bound. An entire organ had been built at Dresden, and even a church orchestra was provided, with a full set of instruments—the records still extant report the purchase of a bass-viol, a viola, a cello, seven violins, two flutes, two oboes, two French horns, two trumpets, and one trombone. They were lovers of music, that company of Lutheran Saxons! Several pianos were shipped as freight. Pastor Keyl even took with him his grand piano, on which he later, in a log-cabin built in the Missouri wilderness, played Beethoven and Haydn while the natives stood in open-mouthed wonder at doors and windows, listening to the unaccustomed sounds. For the ocean journey a special collection of songs had been printed, for which the elder Walther (Otto Herman) had composed a number of poems. The collection bore the title, *Songs of the Exiles upon the Sea*.

In large companies and in smaller groups, in squads and singly, the emigrants during the months of October and November gathered in the great North Sea port. They were mainly people from Dresden, Leipzig, Halle, Naumburg, Burgstedt, Frohna, Langenchursdorf, and Braeunsdorf, in all about 750 persons.

Just before his going aboard ship, Pastor Stephan addressed to the friends and relatives, from whom they were parting forever, a "Farewell of the Old-Lutheran Congregation Emigrating from Saxony to North America." The document is dated Bremerhaven, November 18, 1838. It concludes as follows: "Do you, our friends, whom we leave behind, follow us in the spirit; you will see an old-Lutheran congregation sailing the sea under the protection of the Almighty, in five ocean-going vessels. Six ministers with about seven hundred souls, among them 10 ministerial candidates and four teachers, are peacefully journeying to a home where, unmolested, they may preserve, according to their best knowledge and conscience, the faith of their fathers, serve God, and in the same faith make peaceful pilgrimage through this time to e'ernity."

3. The Ocean Voyage.

On the third of November, 1838, the first of the vessels chartered for the Saxon emigration weighed anchor. This was the *Copernicus*. A few weeks later the second ship, the *Johann Georg*, followed, with Pastors Keyl and C. F. W. Walther on board. The *Republik* left Bremerhaven November 12. Pastor Loeber was a passenger on this vessel. The *Olbens* and *Amalia* were still at the docks receiving passengers. The *Olbens*, a beautiful three-mast schooner, was a new boat making its first trip. Of course, compared with modern ocean-liners, this ship was a mere cockle-shell. Besides Revs. Martin Stephan and Otto Herman Walther the *Olbens* carried 193 passengers. One of them, a Mr. Guenther, made entries in his diary during the journey, from which we reprint the following extracts:—

“November 18, at 10 o'clock A. M., the wind being favorable, the *Olbens* weighed anchor. Its journey was so rapid that within forty hours we were outside the Strait of Dover, a rare achievement, as Captain Henry Exter informed us. Seasickness began its ravages and brought a great deal of confusion into the ship. On November 20, death took its first victim among the emigrants. The little son of Dr. M—ch [Marbach], a child of three years, died of heart-failure. Since this was the first death on board the *Olbens*, the captain, actuated also by the official standing of the child's father, made an exception regarding the usual method of burial at sea. The ship's carpenter built a little coffin, and in this the remains of the beloved child were solemnly committed to the dark grave in the waves. Rev. Stephan delivered a touching address. And, indeed, the moment was a heart-rending one as the unhappy parents, gazing after the beloved one into the foaming sea, stood at the balustrade of the ship—they were not even privileged to give vent to their grief at some green mound in the church-yard. The *Olbens* sailed on, and in the evening twilight, like spirit-music, the cradle-song of the exiles was wafted across the waves:

Now rest, my child, and slumber,
No cares thy bed encumber,
But angels undefiled!
Our ship is still a-sailing,
Our Pilot, true, unfailling,
Is Christ, the dear and holy Child.*

“November 21st we had contrary winds, which soon passed into a violent storm. The ship was in the Bay of Biscay, and the passengers for the first time had the perilous experience of a storm at sea. However, no untoward accident occurred. The weather moderated and the sea quieted down. On Sunday, the 25th, the captain pointed out the continual currents from the West, which kept the

* *Tr.*, W. M. Czamanske, 1919.

sea in constant motion and prevented the conduct of divine services. Tuesday, the 27th, the storm again commenced to rage; all hatches were closed up, and no one was permitted on deck. The elements were in an uproar, and at the height of the storm, November 28, two sailors were torn from the wheel and one of them seriously injured. Gradually the sea once more became calm.

"On December 4 a favorable wind filled the sails of the *Olbers*, and on the same day the ship passed from the Bay of Biscay into the Atlantic Ocean. The crew had stored the casks of drinking-water in the lower hold of the ship, and since fresh water was now needed, all freight stored in the steerage had to be moved, which caused considerable annoyance to the passengers. Wednesday, December 5, when we were in a dead calm, Rev. Walther commenced Advent devotions. In the evening there was a song-service with prayer. This became the regular order of the day. The old Chemnitz and Breslau Hymnals, and also the *Songs of the Exiles* were used. On special occasions Pastor Walther composed suitable poems. As the number of hymnals did not suffice, the minister would read to the congregation the verses to be sung. Whenever the weather was moderate, the services were conducted on the upper deck, a suitable place for these solemn acts, as there was nothing to distract the attention of the congregation.

"Provision was made for the schooling of the children. They were instructed almost every day by one or the other of the ministerial candidates.

"On December 13, in the afternoon, a general calm was followed by a violent thundershower; but the wind became so favorable that the *Olbers* in four hours covered more than fifty English miles. On Sunday, December 16, Pastor Walther conducted services on the deck. His subject was: 'Why have we emigrated?' but his sermon was soon interrupted by a sudden squall of wind and rain. Everybody hastened into the steerage, and Pastor Walther concluded his sermon at evening prayers.

"Wednesday, December 19, the two-year-old boy of the miller Zeibig died of teething trouble, and the remains of the child were committed to the waves the same evening. The burial services were conducted by Rev. Walther.

<i>1st Cabin</i>		
1. <i>John Pastor Stephan</i>		62.50
2. <i>Wendel</i>		16
3. <i>Advent-Markardt</i>		10
4. <i>Madame</i>		36
5. <i>Spillius</i>		10
6. <i>Silman</i>		6
7. <i>Reuter</i>		5
8. <i>Wendel</i>		2
9. <i>John Dr. Vohre</i>		35
10. <i>Wendel</i>		9
11. <i>Franzmann Fischer</i>		10
12. <i>Madame</i>		30
13. <i>John Pastor Hallher</i>		29
14. <i>Mrs. Weger</i>		38
15. <i>Cand. Brohm</i>		30

Partial List, First Cabin Passengers of
the "*Olbers*."

Reduced one-half.

"Tuesday, December 25, on Christmas Day, we had very warm weather. While in our childhood home frost was painting his flowers on the window-panes, a sultry summer heat prevailed on the *Olbers*. On the following Monday, New Year's Eve, after evening devotion, Rev. Walther conducted a meditation on the turn of the year. The hope that on the first day of the new year the eagerly desired coast of America would come into view gave new strength to the hearts of the emigrants. . . . On Wednesday, January 2, we were becalmed. On the 4th we caught a distant view of the island of Porto Rico, but could make out no detail. At midnight we had another violent thundershower accompanied by much wind. At two o'clock in the morning Sunday, January 26, the *Olbers* approached the coast of San Domingo. The storm still interfered with conducting religious services, and the ship sailed so close to the shore that the passengers could tell apart the various trees. Everybody reveled in the privilege, so long denied, of seeing land. Unfavorable winds caused the captain to tack (sail a zigzag course) for three days, but on the 10th, in the afternoon, a more favorable wind filled the sails of our schooner. San Domingo disappeared, and on the northern horizon the island of Cuba arose in majestic splendor. The *Olbers* sailed closer and closer, and soon the glorious landscape with its fertile plantations and romantic mountain ranges was revealed to the gaze of the astonished passengers.

"Sunday, January 13, the *Olbers* passed into the Gulf of Mexico, and our motion became rapid and agreeable.

"Friday, January 18, the *Olbers* approached the mouth of the Mississippi. The ship had, however, outrun its schedule for the day, and had to retrace its course in order not to run any danger, since there was not yet a pilot on board. At last, at nine o'clock in the morning, a boat with the pilot came alongside. He leaped into a small boat, and the oarsmen, all of them negroes, quickly brought him to the *Olbers*.

"On the 20th day of January, 1839, a marvelously sun-bright day, we sailed up along the shores of the Mississippi, here beautifully adorned with plantations of sugar-cane, cotton, and tobacco, and filling the mind with the highest expectations concerning America. Thus we entered the great commercial port of New Orleans, and made harbor among a forest of more than a thousand great seagoing vessels and river steamers that lay here at anchor."

4. The "Amalia."

On the last day of the year the *Copernicus* arrived in New Orleans. The *Johann Georg* entered the harbor January 5, 1839, the *Republik*, January 12, and the *Olbers*, January 20. The smallest of the vessels, the *Amalia*, had left Bremerhaven in company with the *Olbers*, but she never made harbor. It is

almost certain that she went down with all on board, probably in a collision with a larger boat, in the storms which swept the shores of France November 28 to 30.

During the anxious days of waiting for her arrival, Pastor Otto Herman Walther composed the following beautiful poem:—

AMALIA.

Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus, the ship has not come,
The ship named *Amalia* is missing!

When wilt Thou, O Pilot, convey her back
home

From the storms that are howling and hissing?

Have we, Lord, been favored Thy mercies to share?

Was their ship too small for Thy kindness
and care?

Lord Jesus, come, still all our yearning,
And hasten *Amalia's* returning!

I granted her prayer

For kindness and care.

She was not too small

For tempest and squall.

My love went with her a-sailing,

My power and presence prevailing.

My sheep, neither hopeless nor craven,

Were led to a beautiful haven.

Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus, where dost Thou
abide?

And where are the people we cherish?

Oh, help us, dear Savior, in Thee to confide,

Renewing our hope, lest it perish!

We thirst for our brethren, to see them we
long,

And walk to the temple together in song.

Lord Jesus, come, still all our yearning,

And hasten *Amalia's* returning!

Away with all fear!

Thy Lord is still near!

The lilies at morn

With dew I adorn.

I feed all the birds of creation;

My children shall see My salvation.

My sheep, neither hopeless nor craven,

Are led to a beautiful haven.

Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus, oh, point out, we
pray,

The course where her banners are flying!

If she has succumbed to the storms on her
way,

Then help us remember her dying!

Has she been devoured by the waves of the
sea,

Like Pharaoh's hosts of antiquity?

Lord Jesus, come, still all our yearning,
And hasten *Amalia's* returning!

She was not forsaken;

Her people were taken

By Love's own behest

From toil unto rest.

No anger has dashed her to pieces;

But homeward her voyage now ceases.

My sheep, neither hopeless nor craven,

Have entered a beautiful haven.

Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus, oh, do not be grieved,
That we are still crying and weeping.

Thy Word has assured us, and we have be-
lieved

Thy loved ones are safe in Thy keeping.

For they who are steadfast in trials and
shame

Shall meet there in heaven, proclaiming Thy
name;

To Jesus, our Savior, returning,

His welcome shall still all our yearning.

My grace e'er shall be

Sufficient for thee.

Though darkness be here,

There, all shall be clear;

And faithful my promise believing.

The crown of salvation receiving,

My sheep, neither hopeless nor craven,

Shall enter the heavenly haven.*

* Translated by W. M. CZAMANSKE, June 19, 1919.

By a wonderful interposition of Divine Providence one emigrant booked for passage on the *Amalia* was preserved from a watery grave. The young preacher Carl Ferdinand W. Walther arrived a few hours too late in Bremen to take passage on the *Amalia*; the complement of the little boat—it was able to accommodate only about fifty passengers, a mere nutshell on the waves!—was filled. Walther sailed on the *Johann Georg*. Thus the Lord of the Church preserved the life of the man who was to become the real leader of

the emigrants, and from whose life and work have flowed such inestimable blessings unto the Lutheran Church in every part of the world.

5. St. Louis.

In four Mississippi steamers the Saxons continued their journey to St. Louis, Missouri. We quote the following particulars from the diaries of Doctor Vehse and Herr Guenther:—

“Saturday, January 26, at nine in the morning, the Steamer *Selma*, one of the 500 floating palaces that ply the Mississippi, had docked next to the *Obers*. On Thursday we commenced the up-river trip. Nothing untoward occurred until we reached the bar at the mouth of the Ohio. Here the steamer was unable to make headway on account of the low stage of the river. The passengers went on shore and made small excursions into the forests close by.

Near the shore there was situated a large and beautiful farm. We made the acquaintance of the proprietor, who gave us one of his blacks as a guide. Some of us hunted a small species of parrot, of which many were killed. They made a savory dish. About three miles from the wood the ground became marshy, and the black guide told us that in the summer this morass was infested by many wild animals. We did not approach it closely.

“Thursday, February 14, an attempt was made to continue the journey. Things went fairly well, but when we had gone five miles up-stream, the vessel again ran aground, this time with such force that one of the stokers was hurled down a hatch and picked up unconscious, and the nine-year-old boy of Tax-reviser Barthel was thrown over the low balustrade into the river, from which

Amalia

4. J. G. G. G. G. G. G. G.
6. Domschke
5. Ehrenhaus
1. Löge
4. Hofmanns. J. J. J.
7. Himmelmann. K. K. K.
2. Heiler. M. M. M. M.
5. Hubert. J. J. J. J.
2. Heyne. B. B. B. B.
4. Fosing
3. Kobrasch
4. Kotsch. K. K. K. K.
3. Meister. L. L. L. L.
4. Nibel. G. G. G. G.
7. Weinkolbe. J. J. J. J.

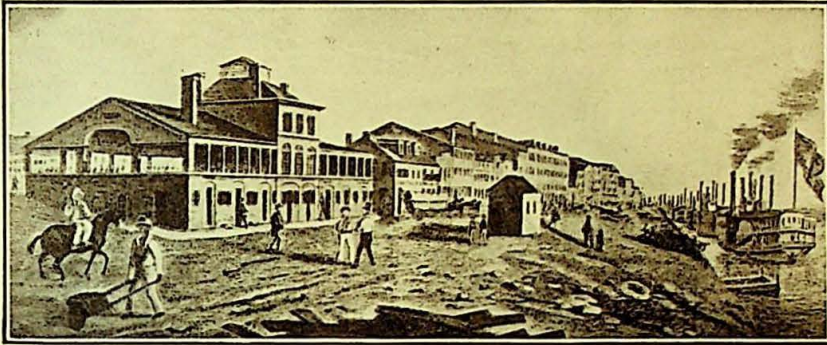
55. Prof. J. J. J. J.
1. Erker. G. G. G. G.

Passenger-List of the “Amalia.”

he was rescued by a deck-hand who sprang after him. Had he been thrown in front of the paddle-wheel, he would have perished instantly.

"The journey was soon continued without further delays, and every one looked forward with delight to the arrival at St. Louis, where three other boats, bearing members of the Saxon congregation, had already arrived. The *Selma* made port on February 19, at one o'clock in the afternoon. We here rejoined the passengers who had preceded us, and the German population of the city, who had long expected us, looked on with open-eyed wonder.

"The passengers were distributed in rented lodgings, always a few families or six to eight single persons living in the same quarters. The rent for these dwellings amounted to five or six hundred dollars a month." St. Louis was at that time a city of 20,000 inhabitants.



St. Louis River Front 1840.

From Collection of the Rev. W. Koepchen.

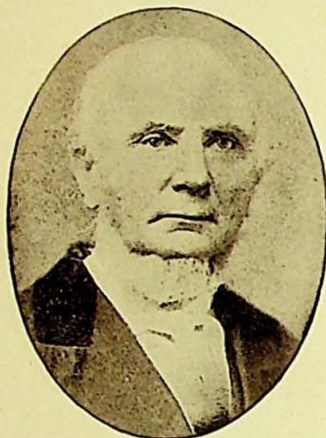
The desire of the immigrants to conduct divine services once more in a church edifice was soon satisfied. Soon after the arrival of the Saxons a contributor to a daily paper had suggested that the churches of the city be opened to the new arrivals for the conduct of divine services, and it was reported that the Episcopal bishop was willing to permit the Saxons to worship in his cathedral. Dr. Marbach was commissioned to make the proper arrangements, and the church was opened with great willingness for the use of the Saxon congregation.

6. Days of Tribulation.

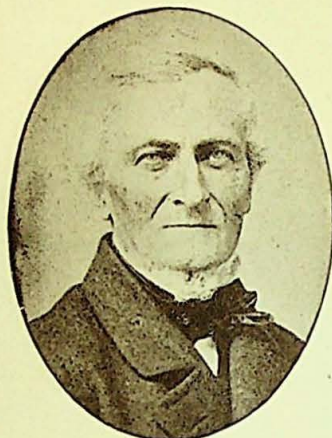
"The first great mistake"—Dr. Vehse applies this term to the failure of the immigrants to purchase a tract of land on Meramec River, about twelve miles south of St. Louis. This tract, embracing about 15,000 acres, was the property of the Gratiots, an old French family, and was offered to the immigrants on very favorable terms. But Stephan had fixed his intentions on

a tract situated about 100 miles south of St. Louis, in Perry County. So great was the influence which Stephan wielded over the immigrants that his wish prevailed, and a committee was sent to Perry County to make preparations for the purchase of about 4,440 acres. The transfer was made April 8, 1839, at a purchase price of over \$10,000. The terms were cash, and the money was paid out of the common fund of the immigrants. In quality this tract was not equal to the Gratiot farm.

After these transactions were completed, part of the Saxon congregation at once moved to Perry County in order to prepare the land for colonization. With them went Pastor Stephan, Pastor Otto Herman Walther, and Candidate of Theology Theodore Brohm.



Rev. J. Fr. Buenger.

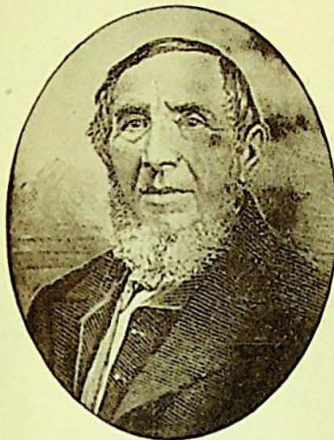


Rev. Theodore Brohm.

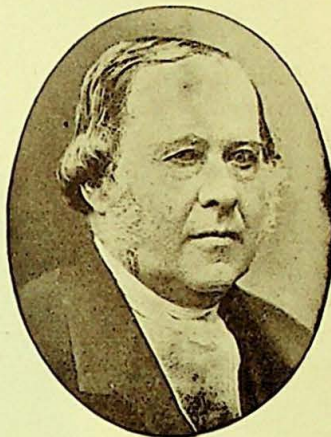
In more than one respect the tract of land purchased by the Saxons proved a sore disappointment. It had, indeed, the advantage of possessing a fine landing-place on the Mississippi, hence was assured steamer connection with the growing metropolis, St. Louis. But the soil was generally of a poor quality, much of it hilly and hard to work. These drawbacks were, indeed, as time passed on, overcome through the thrift and energy of the pioneers. The descendants of those first settlers have since become well-to-do, and recognize the goodness of God which is able to bring prosperity and happiness out of much human error and folly.

The sufferings which so soon were to afflict the congregations in Perry County were occasioned partly by the unfavorable climate and the poor soil. But all their troubles are not thus to be accounted for. It soon became evident that the leadership of Martin Stephan was an unsound foundation for the

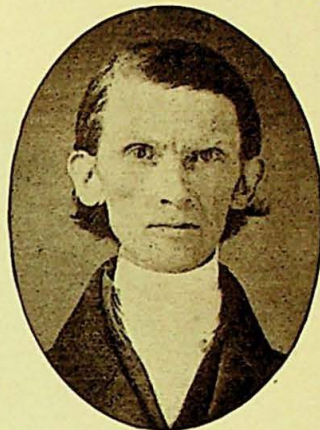
development of the colony. A tyrannical strain had appeared in the character of Stephan even during the voyage across the sea, and possibly earlier. Gradually he assumed the rôle of a master whose commands were to be obeyed without question, and when on board the *Selma*, he had prevailed upon most of his fellow-passengers to sign a document which bound them to obedience in all religious matters and even in the business affairs of the immigrant community. He made free use of the funds in the common treasury, and in St. Louis he had lived on a very expensive scale. Soon after his arrival in Perry County, Stephan made preparations for building a large episcopal palace for his own use while the colonists had to dwell in open huts and tents. Instead of directing their energies to the construction of suitable dwellings, he caused



Rev. E. G. W. Keyl.



Rev. Ottomar Fuerbringer.



Rev. G. H. Loeber.

the men to expend much of their strength on building a system of roads and bridges and on other unnecessary tasks. They lacked skill and experience in these matters, and it would frequently happen that a sudden downpour of rain would sweep away the bridges built with so much effort. Many valuable belongings of the settlers were rendered unfit for use through exposure to the weather. Worse still, many of the settlers fell sick and became victims of climatic fevers. But even this was only the beginning of the troubles in store for the colony.

In the week preceding Pentecost, Pastor Ferdinand Walther, accompanied only by one other man, a cobbler's apprentice, suddenly and unannounced appeared among the colonists at Wittenberg, Perry County. He was the bearer of tidings which at first were received with incredulity, and which spread dismay among the members of the congregation when they were forced to accept

the correctness of the information. Pastor Walther was commissioned to bring to the knowledge of his brethren in Perry County the contents of a document which accused the leader of the emigration, Pastor Stephan, of shocking misdeeds committed by him when in St. Louis and, it seemed, also in an earlier stage of his career. Several members of the St. Louis congregation, greatly troubled in their conscience, had confessed to their share in the guilt of Stephan, had committed their confession to writing, and this document was now, after consultation of the pastors who had remained in St. Louis, submitted by Walther to his brother, Otto Herman, to young Brohm, and to the Jurist Marbach, who burst into bitter tears when the shame of their leader stood revealed. There could be no question any longer, the leader of the emigrant band had fallen into grievous sin, had led a life of shame and vice, and had now brought terrible disgrace to the people who had followed his leadership so unquestioningly.

After performing his difficult task, Pastor Walther returned to St. Louis and reported the plight of the colonists. Soon after, the majority of the Saxons who had remained in St. Louis took passage for Wittenberg, accompanied by Pastor Walther. On the very next day Pastor Stephan was visited by a delegation of the congregation and was immediately, since there could be no question of his guilt, deposed from office. He was placed aboard a skiff and was transported to the opposite (Illinois) shore of the Mississippi. Pastor Loeber and Candidate Brohm, some time later, visited him and endeavored to bring him to repentance, but in vain. Stephan died in the year 1847, not far from the place where he had been landed on that fateful day in 1839.

One may well conceive that confusion reigned in the colony after this terrible series of events. The immigrants realized that they were covered with shame in the eyes of the world. Those especially felt the disgrace who had yielded such unlimited homage to their former leader. All their plans were demolished like a house of cards. The disillusionment was terrible.

The congregation of about 100 souls which had remained in St. Louis with Pastor Buenger recovered quickly and soon entered upon a season of considerable prosperity. But the colonists in Perry County were plunged into the misery of extreme want. Pastor Koesterling says, in his story of the settlement in Perry County: —

“All was confusion. Even shelter was lacking for so many people; there were only a few large barns, called ‘camps,’ in which the families dwelt together as well as circumstances permitted, even during the following winter. Land had been purchased, but no one held title to any part of the tract so that he could call it his own. Even those who had been possessed of some wealth were exposed to the sorrows of poverty. Climatic fevers, the unaccustomed hard work, the lack of proper shelter, the want of common comforts and necessities,

and the hot climate brought intense suffering. Death claimed a heavy toll among the strongest and ablest of the little host, others lay without proper care in the delirium of fever, since those who would have gladly nursed them were themselves prostrate with disease. I well remember the days when in a frame structure, on the banks of the Mississippi, not only the lower floor, but also the hot attic was filled with fever-patients. I remember that in the season of autumn there was not one of the log-houses, hurriedly constructed, which did not contain one or more colonists down with the dreadful fever. The settlement was one large hospital, and even the most necessary care for the patients was wanting."

On June 15 a St. Louis paper contained the following report on conditions in Perry County: "News of a deplorable character is reaching us from the 'old-Lutheran' settlement in Perry County. The greater part of the immigrants are still without shelter; 150 people are huddled together in a shed which is no protection against storm or rain. Their property is soaked through with moisture, and they themselves frequently have no change of dry clothes for days in succession. Diseases are making their appearance, and some of the patients are believed to be past recovery. Withal, there is no leadership and no means to keep this crowd of people wholesomely employed. They tried to put up log-houses, but they lacked draught animals to haul the logs. They tried to pull the logs by man-power, but gave up the attempt without building a single house. Then, at this season of the year, they try to clear the forest. On account of the heat and humidity, those who made the attempt were prostrated. Only 80 acres of land are under cultivation. Money is becoming scarce; how shall these unfortunate ones be fed? There is much despondency on every hand."

June 29 the same paper said: "Of the 500 persons some are dwelling in farmhouses, by far the greater number in tents, or in open sheds, or under shelters made of branches and foliage. The families live on rations, mostly limited to rice and bacon. Such of the men as are able to work try to clear the ground and build fences, but succeed rather poorly because there is no experienced direction and they lack draught-animals. There is general dejection, and many are prostrated by the combined influence of the unaccustomed labor, the strange climate, the scantiness of food, poor shelter, humid weather, noisome insects, and the foot-rash."

However, even in these dark days, examples of God's gracious interposition were not lacking. Rev. Koestering relates the following incident:—

"A family of eight persons, consisting of a widow and her seven children, was without food, and had not even enough money to buy flour for baking bread. When the pangs of hunger became unbearable, one of the children said, 'I have been told that one can eat roasted grains of Indian corn; we might try that.' The children roasted a quantity of corn and filled their pockets, while

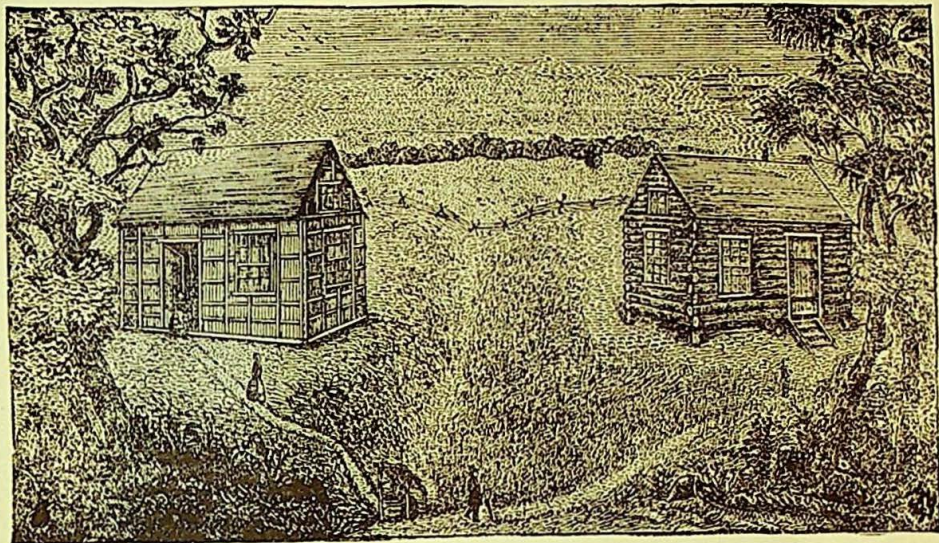
tears of compassion coursed down the cheeks of the mother. One of the children then remarked with some diffidence, 'If we must live on such poor fare, we cannot do any hard work.' Another replied, 'Well, we must not lose faith in God; He will give us bread again, in due time.' Nor did they wait long for the fulfilment of their prayers. That same day an English-speaking gentleman came that way on horseback, with a sack of flour strapped behind his saddle. He rode straight to the house of the widow and asked whether she did not need some flour for bread. The answer, of course, was, Yes; but the stranger was informed that, unfortunately, they had no money to purchase flour; however, if he would trust them to that extent, they would accept the flour and pay some time later. Undoubtedly this promise was honestly made, and still the flour was never paid for. Why not? Because the man, who had indeed been a good angel for this family in days of sore distress, never returned, and in spite of all inquiries his residence was never discovered. May we not truthfully say that 'the Lord provideth for His own'?

"All these tribulations," continues Pastor Koesterling, "had the blessed result that these dear people learned to put their trust in God and not in man. Their tribulations were great indeed, and they often suffered hunger; yet their faith was not made ashamed, they experienced the truthfulness of the saying that the Lord, who giveth meat to the beasts of the field and to the young ravens who cry unto Him, will not suffer the righteous one to perish nor his children to go after bread."

7. The Dawn of a New Day.

In that year of tribulation 1839 many of the colonists were laboring under doubts and uncertainties which were harder to bear even than the bitterness of poverty and the ague which racked their poor broken bodies. They began to ask: Can the blessing of God rest upon an undertaking begun under such unholy leadership? They realized that they had submitted too unquestioningly to the authority of a spiritual tyrant. They had been misled into grave error regarding the power of the ministerial office. Some began to say openly: "We are no longer a church, we are only a rabble." Some went so far as to say that the curse of the Almighty rested upon the colony because its foundations had been laid in so much sin and error. They questioned the validity of the Sacraments dispensed by their clergy, and held that their worship must be displeasing to God. Many withdrew from divine services. Some, like Mr. Fischer and also Dr. Vehse, returned to Germany. One of the pastors, Moritz Buerger, resigned his office. The other pastors, Loeber, Keyl, and Walther, tried to sustain the spirits of their people. These conflicts lasted through the entire year and even longer. The question which agitated all minds was this: Is the

true Church of Christ among us, or is it not? Some answered, Yes, some said, No. Finally it was agreed that each party should offer proof from the Scriptures for its position. A public debate was arranged, in which Pastor Walther, Pastor Keyl, and Pastor Loeber upheld the opinion that the Christian Church was still represented in the colony, while the lawyer Marbach led the opposition. By the grace of God the discussion ended with the victory of those who held the Scriptural view. Especially clear and convincing were the statements of Rev. Walther. He proved from Scripture that the Church may be very corrupt and yet be a Church if the essentials are there—the Word and



The College at Altenburg. (Building to the right.)

Reproduction of a wood-cut made in 1866.

the Sacraments. The opponents confessed themselves vanquished, and now admitted that the Church was among them, that their ministers were rightfully called, and their official acts (Baptism, absolution, Lord's Supper) were valid.

Pastor Schieferdecker, who attended this meeting, said some years later: "More was not needed to take the pressure off our conscience and to revive faith in the hearts of those who had all but despaired. It was the Easter morn of a severely stricken congregation. Many are present here who remember that day with tears of gratitude toward our dear Lord." And Pastor Loeber writes: "The truth was now understood that the performance of the ministerial office belongs to every congregation of believers, and that the congregations owe

allegiance to no man, but are the property of Christ alone." It has been truthfully said that this disputation at Altenburg, Mo., was as important for the development of sound Lutheranism in America as the Leipsic Disputation (Luther with Eck) was for the founding of the Church of the Reformation. May the Lutheran Church never forget what she owes to that great man of God, C. F. W. Walther, who was the principal instrument of God at this turning-point in the history of American Lutheranism.

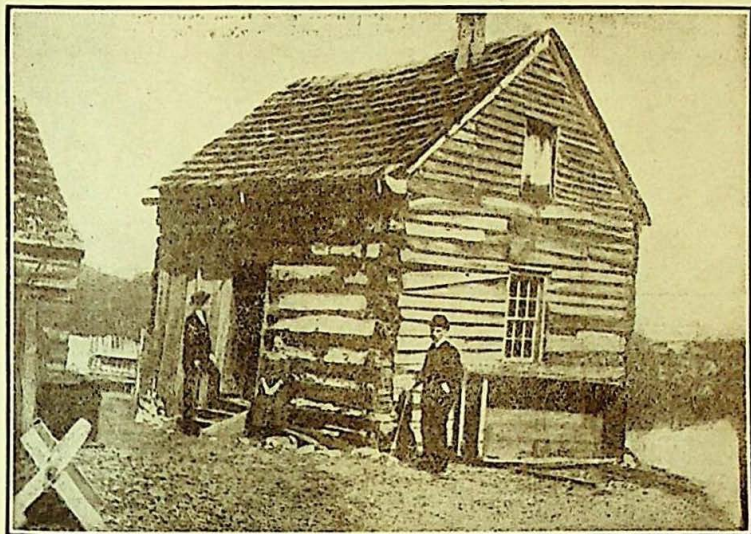
Quiet days of development and growth followed. The climatic fever returned, but did not claim as many victims as in 1839. The entire colony had, soon after the arrival at Perry County, been divided into five small congregations, served by the following pastors: Keyl (at Wittenberg and Frohna), Loeber (Altenburg), Buerger (Seelitz), and C. F. W. Walther (Dresden). May, 1839, a colony of 95 souls, emigrants from Prussia, had arrived under the leadership of Rev. Oertel. And just before Christmas, 1839, Rev. C. F. Gruber arrived with 141 Lutherans from the German principality of Altenburg.

An important undertaking remains to be recorded before we close our narrative. During the first months of colonization, when the sufferings of the immigrants were at their height, several of the candidates of theology residing in Perry County resolved to build a school for the education of ministers. The candidates who fostered and carried into execution this ambitious plan were Brohm, Fuerbringer, and Buenger. In collaboration with Pastor Walther they founded a theological seminary in the forest primeval. They resolved to build a log-cabin in order to house the institution. They went to work, practically unaided, cleared the ground, broke it with a hoe, and planted a little corn and a few potatoes. Then they felled trees for the log-house, dragging them to the clearing by main strength. Often their hands were bleeding at the end of a day's work. They had no horses or oxen to do the work. Another day all their efforts were spent upon digging a cistern for the purpose of assuring a supply of drinking-water. They suffered thirst and hunger, and were, besides, weakened by the unaccustomed climate. But in spite of all difficulties they finally succeeded in completing their log-house, consisting of one room only, an Evangelical Lutheran Seminary building such as Germany had never seen.

Then they commenced the work of instructing "the boys." Pastor Walther and young Buenger soon were called to pastorates in St. Louis, and so Fuerbringer and Brohm continued the work alone, without compensation, spending their time and strength on an undertaking which most men would have called absurd and hopeless, for a period of two years. Then Fuerbringer received a call into the ministry and Brohm continued the college all by himself until he was afflicted with a violent fever which almost ended fatally. He was cared for by the family of Pastor Loeber, and when he was restored to health, Loeber took over several classes. For several years the two, Brohm and Loeber, worked

side by side, nursing the little sprout of a College and Seminary. Then Candidate Brohm accepted a call into the ministry in the city of New York, and now Loeber conducted the school alone, aided only by Pastor Keyl, whose parish was the adjoining Frohna.

A few years later the congregation at St. Louis donated several acres of ground as a building site, subscribed over \$2,000 in cash donations, and assigned to the College profits from her hymn-book and from her cemetery. Building operations soon commenced, and on the 8th of November, 1849, the



The First Concordia College.

Photograph taken in 1890.

corner-stone of the College building was laid. At this time Pastor C. F. W. Walther was called as professor of theology.

This is the end of our story. Out of the log-cabin in the forest of Perry County the great Concordia Seminary at St. Louis, in which now more than 400 students are enrolled, and a large number of preparatory colleges, has developed. And from the seed planted with so much sorrow in St. Louis and Perry County the great tree has come forth which we call the Missouri Synod, numbering 2,436 pastors and 3,244 congregations.

SOLI DEO GLORIA!