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THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS OF THE HISTORY OF THE IGREJA
EVANGELICA LUTERANA DO BRASIL, THE BRAZILIAN
DISTRICT OF THE MISSOURI SYNOD

SHORT TITLE

NO. SYNOD IN BRASIL, FIRST 50 YEARS, Rehfeldt, SM, 1962

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis,
Department of Historical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Sacred Theology

by

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May 1962

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	SHORT TITLE	Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	THE BACKGROUND	7
III.	THE BEGINNING: 1800-1899	31
MO.	MO. SYNOD IN BRAZIL, FIRST 50 YEARS, Rehfeldt, STM, 1962	
IV.	THE FIRST TEN YEARS OF A NEW SYNODICAL DISTRICT: 1900-1914	62
V.	THE FIRST WORLD WAR: 1914-1918	85
VI.	DEVELOPMENTS IN THE TWENTIES: 1919-1930	107
VII.	GROWTH IN PERIOD OF DICTATORSHIP: 1930-1937	142
VIII.	EMANCIPATION AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR: 1937-1945	165
IX.	POST WAR DEVELOPMENTS: 1945-1950	188
X.	CONCLUSION	207
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	212

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Chapter		Page
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	THE BACKGROUND	7
III.	THE BEGINNING: 1900-1904	31
IV.	THE FIRST TEN YEARS OF A NEW SYNODICAL DISTRICT: 1904-1914	62
V.	THE FIRST WORLD WAR: 1914-1918	86
VI.	DEVELOPMENTS IN THE TWENTIES: 1919-1930	107
VII.	GROWTH IN TIMES OF DICTATORSHIP: 1930-1937	142
VIII.	NATIONALIZATION AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR: 1937-1945	165
IX.	POST WAR DEVELOPMENTS: 1945-1950	188
X.	CONCLUSION	207
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	212

On the basis of the sources available in the United States this study tries to answer several questions: Why did the Missouri Synod begin to do missionary work in Brazil? Why was the state of Rio Grande do Sul selected for this venture? How did Missouri Synod missionaries enter

1. G. Palace, *The Building of a Great Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941), pp. 178-179.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of the Study

The present study is an attempt to describe and to analyze the main developments of the work of the Missouri Synod in Brazil during the first half of the twentieth century, from the beginning of its missionary work in Brazil in 1900 to 1950.

The history of the Brazilian District is a significant chapter in the history of the Missouri Synod. Numerically, the missionary work in Brazil was the most successful of the Missouri Synod outside of the United States. The first Missouri Synod missionary arrived in Brazil in 1900. Others followed and in a short time the work there grew so that W. G. Polack speaking of the first decade of the twentieth century writes, "The work in Brazil was the most remarkable development [of the Missouri Synod] of this period."¹

On the basis of the sources available in the United States this study tries to answer several questions: Why did the Missouri Synod begin to do missionary work in Brazil? Why was the state of Rio Grande do Sul selected for this venture? How did Missouri Synod missionaries enter

¹W. G. Polack, The Building of a Great Church (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941), pp. 178-179.

the different mission fields in Rio Grande do Sul and later in other states of Brazil? How did this missionary work develop in half a century? What was the significance of the Seminário Concórdia in this development? What were the steps taken by the Brazilian District during the first fifty years of the twentieth century towards the objective of becoming an indigenous church?

Scope of the Study

The chronological limits of this study are 1900 and 1950. In 1900 C. J. Broders, the first Missouri Synod missionary arrived in Brazil. In 1950 the Brazilian District of the Missouri Synod celebrated the golden jubilee of the Missouri Synod's missionary work in Brazil.

A short description of the German immigration in Rio Grande do Sul and of the religious conditions of the immigrants is given for a better understanding of the people among whom this missionary work was carried out.

Brazilian political history is referred to whenever it influenced the history of the Igreja Evangélica Luterana do Brazil more directly. Special attention was paid to the problem of religious freedom because of the difference between religious legislation in Brazil and in other Latin American countries.

Very little space is devoted to theological problems because no serious theological controversy shook the

Brazilian District from 1900 to 1950. The theological thinking of the pastors of that district was always quite uniform because their training in the Seminaries in Saint Louis, Springfield and Porto Alegre was theologically very similar.

One problem briefly mentioned in this study that deserves further analysis is the relation between the Brazilian District of the Missouri Synod and other religious denominations in Brazil, especially the united church of Lutheran and Reformed elements.

Sources

The main sources for the history of the Brazilian District of the Missouri Synod are the periodicals of that church, the proceedings of its conventions, and the minutes of its Mission Board for South America. A basic source that covers the whole period is Der Lutheraner, which is the most reliable and almost the only detailed source for the first years. The German periodical of the Brazilian District, the Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt fuer Suedamerika is the source that has the greatest wealth of information about the Brazilian District. However, it does not cover the whole period of the study because it was suppressed during both World Wars. It was published from November, 1903 to October, 1917; from October, 1919 to August, 1941; and then from January, 1947 on, without further interruptions.

The English periodical of the Missouri Synod, The Lutheran Witness, does not have much information about the Brazilian District in the early decades of the twentieth century but it is quite valuable for the later periods of the study.

The Proceedings of the synodical conventions of the Missouri Synod from 1899 on, are also basic sources for this study. The Proceedings of the conventions of the Brazilian District are extremely important, however, they were only partially available, from 1905 to 1937. After 1937 they were not printed regularly. The Statistical Yearbook of the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod has the most reliable statistical information for the study. Among unprinted sources, the minutes of the Mission Board for South America contain aspects of the history of the Missouri Synod's work in Brazil not found in the printed sources. However, they were available to the author only from 1930 to 1947.

The Portuguese periodical of the Brazilian District, the Mensageiro Luterano was only partially available to the author but from the issues available it could be surmised that it does not offer the same amount nor quality of information that the German Kirchenblatt offers.

As to secondary authorities no extensive use was made of any because no detailed history of the Brazilian District has yet been written. The only printed histories of the

Brazilian District of some length are popular in character and make very limited use of sources. The best of them is the Fuenfundzwanzig Jahre unter dem Suedlichen Kreuz,² which is a collection of several articles on different aspects of the work of the Missouri Synod in Brazil from 1900 to 1925.

The Luther-Kalender fuer Suedamerika auf das Jahr 1951 relates some interesting incidents that occurred during the first fifty years of Missouri Synod's work in Brazil, but no attempt is made to differentiate significant events from incidental occurrences. However, the roster of pastors and teachers of the Brazilian District placed at the end of this annual is the only one of its kind known to the author and was valuable for this study.

Besides these two works, still worth mentioning is C. H. Warth's article about the Brazilian District in the Enciclopédia Rio Grandense, although it is very short. No others besides these three printed accounts of some aspects of the history of the Brazilian District are available.

More frequent value judgments have not been made to keep the study as objective as possible and also because of possible personal involvements.

²Fuenfundzwanzig Jahre unter dem Suedlichen Kreuz, edited by O. H. Beer (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1925).

Conclusions

An analysis of the first fifty years of the history of the Igreja Evangélica Luterana do Brazil shows that the Missouri Synod's missionary work in Brazil does not have the characteristics of missionary work among heathens but is mainly home mission work among Lutherans and nominal Lutherans, the majority of them of German background.

It shows that the Brazilian District faced serious adversities during both World Wars, especially during the Second, and overcame them.

It shows that after fifty years, the Brazilian District was not yet a totally indigenous church but had already some of its characteristics, indigenous leadership, and an almost completely indigenous ministry; and was striving to become a self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting church. However, the great missionary opportunities that it then faced and that required resources above and beyond those that the district could muster, pushed the day of independence from the mother church farther into the future.

CHAPTER II

THE BACKGROUND

In Brazil

Religious Legislation of Empire

Brazil became independent from Portugal in 1822. Independence brought about also a change in religious legislation. While Brazil had been under Portuguese domination all Portuguese citizens were forced to profess the religion of the State, Roman Catholicism.¹ According to Article five of the Brazilian Imperial Constitution of 1824, which governed Brazil until 1899, the Roman Catholic religion continued to be the religion of the Empire but all other religions were to be permitted, with their domestic and private observance, in houses destined for that purpose, without any exterior form like a church.² This limited religious toleration did not constitute full religious freedom for Protestants. In fact, they could not be elected to several political offices, like that of deputy or representative.³ Even so, imperial religious toleration made

1889

¹J. L. Mecham, Church and State in Latin America (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1934), p. 308.

²Ibid., pp. 307-308.

³Ibid., p. 308.

immigration much more attractive for non-Roman Catholics than did the previous laws.

German Immigration in Rio Grande do Sul in the Nineteenth Century

The new emperor, D. Pedro I, was interested in promoting German immigration. The first German immigrants that came to the state of Rio Grande do Sul, the southernmost state of Brazil, arrived in São Leopoldo on 25 July 1824. About four thousand Germans came to the same region in the following five years.⁴ Large groups came until the 1860s when the Prussian government temporarily forbade immigration to Brazil. The majority of these immigrants was Protestant. When the region of São Leopoldo had been settled, German colonies arose east of São Leopoldo in the Taquara region, north of it, and in the center of the state, in the Santa Cruz area. Also in the 1850s, large German settlements were established in the south of Rio Grande do Sul, around Pelotas and São Lourenço. New groups of immigrants and people from the older colonies started to settle the primeval forests of the northwest and north of the state towards the end of the nineteenth century.⁵

⁴Hundert Jahre Deutschtum in Rio Grande do Sul, Herausgegeben vom Verband deutscher Vereine Porto Alegre (Porto Alegre, Brazil: Typographia do Centro, 1924), p. 62. Hereafter cited as Hundert Jahre.

⁵Ibid., pp. 95, 543-545.

The largest groups of German immigrants were Pomeranians, Rhinelanders, and German Russians.⁶

Economic Conditions

The opening of a new settlement area followed similar patterns throughout the nineteenth century. Almost all of the settlements were in the mountainous forest regions. They were opened to colonization by federal government, state government, or by private companies.⁷ In every case, primitive trails of about eighteen feet wide, connected by crossroads, had to be opened first in the thick forest. Along the trails the colonies⁸ were laid out. Soon after this, the settlers would arrive with their few belongings on their shoulders or on the back of a freight animal: some axes, bush sickles, forest knives, hoes, a few kitchen utensils, and some food. The next step to be taken was to choose a colony, of sixty to about a hundred acres. Once this was done the hard work of making a place for a hut and for a small farm in the semi-tropical forest would begin. The brush was cut, trees were felled. Fire cleared the ground. The farmland was ready. If drought or grasshoppers

⁶W. Mahler, "Unsere Mission in Sued America," Der Lutheraner, LXXI (6 July 1915), 264.

⁷Hundert Jahre, pp. 543-545.

⁸Cf. n. 11, p. 11.

took away the first crop, tragedy was at hand and death by malnutrition or plain starvation was not too uncommon. But most of the land was good and most of the crops did not fail. Every person in the family worked all year long from dawn to sunset. The next year another piece of farm land would be claimed from the forest the same way as the preceding had been. After some years fruit trees could be seen on the farms; some cattle, pigs, chickens would be raised, and in most places hunger would not be at the door any longer. Some became prosperous on the farmland, some even wealthy, but most did not.⁹ Money was very scarce, almost nonexistent in the colonies. Even at the end of the century a newspaper warned prospective immigrants: those who intended to leave their homeland should think twice before doing it; no hardworking person would have to suffer from cold or hunger in Rio Grande, but that he would not find much more than sun and bread there; anybody who could in any way still stand it in Germany should remain there.¹⁰ The main products grown on the colonies were corn,

⁹W. Mahler, "Unsere Mission in Suedamerika," Der Lutheraner, LXXI (31 August 1915), 340-341. Hundert Jahre, p. 188.

¹⁰L. F[uerbringer], "Wie steht es mit unserer Mission in Brasilien?" Der Lutheraner, LKV (24 July 1900), 230.

black beans, sugar cane, mandioca,¹¹ rice, and potatoes. The basic food was rice and black beans.¹²

Political Disturbances

Economic difficulties were not the only ones that the immigrants and their children had to face. In the nineteenth century Brazil took part in four major wars in all of which Rio Grande do Sul and, consequently, the immigrants and their descendents living there, were directly involved. The first one was the war over the Cisplatina, from 1810 to 1828, when both Brazil and Argentina tried to conquer what then became Uruguay. The second was the war against Rosas from 1850 to 1852 involving Brazil and Argentina. The third one was the war against Aguirre, from 1864 to 1865, involving Brazil and Uruguay. The last and most destructive war was the Paraguayan War, from 1865 to 1870, in which the west of Rio Grande do Sul was invaded for a short time, and in which Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina defeated the Paraguayan dictator, Solano Lopez. In all these wars, immigrants or their sons could be found among the Brazilian soldiers.¹³ But a civil war and internal revolutions caused

¹¹Mandioca is an edible root, colonias are the colonization areas or the farms themselves.

¹²W. Mahler, "Unsere Mission in Suedamerika," Der Lutheraner, LXXI (8 Juni 1915), 223.

¹³Hundert Jahre, pp. 127ff.

much more damage to the economic, political, social, cultural, and religious life of Rio Grande do Sul, than all the exterior wars. The civil war, also called the Guerra dos Farrapos, lasted ten years, from 1835 to 1845. The then province of Rio Grande do Sul fought against the rest of the Brazilian Empire under desperate conditions for ten years until it was defeated. In this disastrous war the man, who was probably the only ordained Evangelical pastor in Rio Grande do Sul at the time, was killed. Pfarrer Klingelhoefter was killed on 6 November 1838 near Triumpho when imperial troops had an encounter with revolutionaries.¹⁴ Later in the century a group of German origin formed a religious sect. In 1873 and 1874 the crushing of this religious sect with fire and steel became known as the Muckerunruhen. It was only a local affair.¹⁵ In 1889, through a bloodless military coup of state the empire was overthrown and Brazil became a republic. A very bloody revolution occurred in the state of Rio Grande do Sul soon afterwards. From 1893 to 1895 sanguinary troupes and pillagers crossed the state in several directions. From then on, to the turn of the century there was some tranquility and peaceful progress.¹⁶

¹⁴Ibid., p. 467.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 127ff.

¹⁶Ibid.

Moral and Religious Situation

The first group of immigrants in 1824 brought a pastor along, the Rev. J. G. Ehlers of Hamburg. With another group, a year later, C. L. Voges came, who first signed himself as sacristao, sexton, later on as pastor. Also at about this time came Pfarrer Klingelhoeffler, who was probably the only ordained minister among them.¹⁷ These pastors came on their own. Not one was sent from Germany, either by the State Church or by a Mission Society. The church in Germany did not care at all about the fate of the religious life of the Germans in South America.¹⁸ The immigrants themselves, in the midst of their difficulties, in the very beginning founded church and school congregations. In most places neither pastor nor teacher was available, so the immigrants elected one among themselves to be responsible for their spiritual life. Some of these improvised pastors worked faithfully. Many of them were not qualified for the high calling and did more harm than good. In time religious indifference grew and he who charged less for a wedding or burial was elected pastor.¹⁹ The first pastor officially sent from Germany, Dr. H. Borchard, described

¹⁷Ibid., p. 467.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 468.

¹⁹Ibid.

some of these pseudo-pastors in 1865:

Der eine ist ein fortgejagter Schulmeister aus Deutschland, der als Trinker und Spieler beruechtigt ist, der andere ein durchgegangener Unteroffizier aus Preussen, dem im Trinken keiner gleichkommt, der dritte ein Bierwirt aus Porto Alegre, der dort mehrfach Bankerott machte und, da er seinen Lebensunterhalt nicht anders finden konnte, Pastor wurde, der vierte ein uebel beruechtigtes Subjekt, das weder lesen noch schreiben kann, ein anderer, der nicht geradezu den schlechtesten gehoerte, war Bedienter bei einem Grafen; ein anderer Gehilfe bei einem Feldmesser, und wieder ein anderer seiner Profession nach Schneider.²⁰

Under such spiritual leadership, or lack thereof, religious indifference and a materialistic worldview became prevalent. The fact that only marriages before Roman Catholic priests were valid according to imperial legislation helped to lower the moral standards. Marriages performed by a Protestant pastor were not recognized by the Roman Catholic priests. A man could be married by a pastor and after some time leave his wife and marry somebody else before a priest without any difficulty.²¹ In the second half of the century some ordained pastors came from Germany and from the United States to work in some isolated parishes. The first of these was the Rev. J. P. C. Haesbaert.

²⁰Ibid., p. 470.

²¹Ibid., p. 469.

Rev. J. P. C. Haesbaert

J. P. C. Haesbaert was born in Clevel in the Rhineland. When he was twenty-one years old he immigrated to the United States where he studied for the ministry. He finished his theological studies in 1832 when he received and accepted the call of St. Paul's Church in Baltimore.²² He served that congregation for twelve years. When the Rev. F. C. D. Wynecken, later one of the founders of the Missouri Synod, came to the United States in 1838 he was received in Haesbaert's home. They became close friends.²³ In 1843 Haesbaert met Dr. W. Sihler, who later, in his memoirs, wrote, "Haesbaert impressed me with his seriousness and his sincerity."²⁴ In 1844 Haesbaert resigned from his position in Baltimore and went to New Orleans. Still looking for a milder climate because of a throat illness, he went to Brazil in 1845 and took charge of the congregation of Hamburgerberg, later called Hamburgo Velho, which he served faithfully for forty-one years.²⁵ When he arrived, he was the only ordained pastor in Rio Grande do Sul, because

²²C. H. Warth, Novo Hamburgo e a Igreja Luterana (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concórdia, 1945), p. 12.

²³Ibid., pp. 8-9.

²⁴Ibid., p. 10 quoted from W. Sihler, Lebenslauf von W. Sihler (New York: Lutherischen Verlags-Verein, 1880), II, 12ff.

²⁵Ibid., p. 12.

the Rev. Mr. Klingelhoefter had already died. Haesbaert also served neighboring congregations and visited other parishes to help them to establish a better church order. He died in 1890 at the age of eighty-three.²⁶

The Formation of a United Synod

The Prussian ambassador, von Eichmann, visited the German colonies in 1863.²⁷ The congregation in São Leopoldo asked him to provide an ordained pastor for them because they had none at the time. Von Eichmann contacted the Evangelischer Oberkirchenrat in Berlin, which asked the Rev. Dr. Hermann Borchard to accept the call. He came to São Leopoldo after he had received the promise of support of Dr. Fabri of Barmen, the Mission inspector, who founded the Committee for German Protestants in Brazil and established contact with the Baseler, Berliner and Chrischona Mission Societies, to furnish missionaries for Brazil. They did so and sent a few young men to Brazil in the following years.²⁸ Dr. Borchard tried to found a Synod. He held meetings with other pastors in February 1868 and again in June 1870. But he returned to Germany in 1870 and the Synod

²⁶Hundert Jahre, p. 471.

²⁷Warth, op. cit., p. 15.

²⁸Hundert Jahre, p. 473.

was discontinued.²⁹ In 1874 there were already sixteen ordained pastors in Rio Grande do Sul when Dr. Rotermund took over the congregation of São Leopoldo. He was a prolific writer and a capable leader. He took over the Boten von São Leopoldo, which in 1880 became the Deutsche Post. On 19 and 20 May 1886 he called the pastors together in São Leopoldo and founded the Riograndenser Synod.³⁰ One of the founders, the Rev. J. Brutschin, made the motion that the Synod confess itself as an Evangelical Lutheran Synod. But his proposal was not accepted and the Synod became united in character, more Reformed than Lutheran.³¹

The Rev. J. F. Brutschin

The Rev. J. F. Brutschin, the pastor who had raised his voice in defense of the Lutheran Confessions at the founding of the Riograndenser Synod, was born on 20 January

²⁹Ibid., pp. 474-475.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 476-477.

³¹W. Mahler, "Kirchliche Nachrichten," Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt fuer Suedamerika, I (15 April 1904), 94. Hereafter cited as Kirchenblatt. The 1929 edition of The Lutheran Churches of the World recognizes the united, i.e., non-Lutheran character of this Synod: "There are three synods in Brazil that represent the United (Lutheran and Reformed) Church of Germany. These are the General Synod of Rio Grande do Sul. . . . In these bodies Lutherans are found but their number cannot be ascertained." The Lutheran Churches of the World, edited by A. Th. Jørgensen, F. Fleisch, and A. R. Wentz (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, [1929]), p. 383.

1842 in Dossenbach, near Loerrach in Baden, Germany. He studied theology at the missionary institute at Crischona, in Basel, Switzerland, where he graduated in 1867. The same year he was sent to Brazil by the Evangelical Society of Barmen. The ship in which he was coming sank near the coast of Rio Grande do Sul and the passengers barely saved their lives. Brutschin's first position was that of assistant to Dr. Borchard in São Leopoldo. In 1868 he became pastor at Dois Irmaos, in São Leopoldo County, and there he served as pastor until 1890. Its daughter congregations were: Picada dos Suevos, Picada Verao, do Herval e do Padre Eterno.³² Brutschin was one of the founders of the short lived Synod of 1868, called together by Dr. Borchard. He was again active in the founding of the Riograndenser Synod in 1886. Of his work in Dois Irmaos Dr. Borchard testified that Brutschin worked there with good will and success under God's blessings.³³ In 1890 he resigned from his position in Dois Irmaos, moved to Novo Hamburgo, built a house, and started a private school. It was probably at this time that he left the Riograndenser Synod. The precise motives for this step are not known. Probably he did not want to remain in a Synod that was not Lutheran in

³² Warth, op. cit., pp. 27-30.

³³ Ibid., pp. 29-30. Hundert Jahre, pp. 474-475.

character.³⁴ In 1891 the congregation in Estancia Velha called him. He served Estancia Velha from Novo Hamburgo. In 1894 he also started to serve the congregation that had separated itself from the congregation of Dr. Rotermond in São Leopoldo.

In the last years of his work in Dois Irmaos the Rev. J. Brutschin learned about the work of the Missouri Synod in the United States. A classmate and friend of his from Grischona, the Rev. Mr. Linsenmann, had gone to the United States, when Brutschin had gone to Brazil. There, in the United States, Linsenmann became a member of the Missouri Synod. Brutschin corresponded with him and also with the Rev. Emil Buerr of Wayside, Wisconsin. Through these pastors Brutschin received Der Lutheraner and other publications of their Synod.³⁵ In 1894 one of Brutschin's letters describing the religious conditions in Rio Grande do Sul was published in Der Lutheraner.³⁶ When he decided to go back to Germany because of ill health he desired to hand the care of his congregations to a faithful Lutheran pastor and for this reason he sent a call to the Mission Board for Inner Missions of the Missouri Synod in 1899.³⁷ By this time

³⁴ Warth, op. cit., p. 30.

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 30-31.

³⁶ G. St., "Aus Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, L (30 November 1894), 197.

³⁷ Warth, op. cit., pp. 30-31. W. Mahler, "Kirchliche Nachrichten," Kirchenblatt, I (15 April 1904), 94.

Brazilian religious legislation had changed completely.

Religious Legislation of the Republic

In the 1880s the Republican movement became stronger in Brazil, especially among high army officers. Some of the more prominent leaders of this movement, like Benjamin Constant, were Positivists, followers of the Systema de Philosophia Positiva. Complete separation of church and state, complete freedom of thought, and religious freedom were integral parts of their political program.³⁸ On 15 November 1889 the Empire was overthrown and the Republic was proclaimed. One of the first actions of the provisional government, which ruled Brazil from 15 November 1889 to 25 February 1891, was the decree concerning religion, of 7 January 1890, decree n.119A. Complete religious equality was declared therein. This decree forbade either federal or state authorities to enact laws, regulations, or administrative measures establishing or prohibiting any religion. They were also prevented from creating any distinctions between inhabitants or in the undertakings supported by public funds, on the basis of religious or philosophic beliefs or opinions. Public officers were also forbidden to interfere in any way with the formation of religious societies. It was declared unlawful to stir up religious

³⁸J. L. Mecham, op. cit., pp. 322-323.

dissension among the people. Religious societies were granted juridic personality to acquire property.³⁹ The Republican Constitution, promulgated on 24 February 1891, maintained the principles of religious freedom of the decree of 7 January 1890.⁴⁰ Article seventy-two, section three, of the Constitution reads:

All persons and religious confessions may exercise their mode of worship publicly and freely, forming associations for this purpose and acquiring property the provision of the common law being observed.⁴¹

These principles of religious freedom were repeated in the subsequent Republican constitutions. H. G. James is correct in his evaluation:

It is safe to say that there is no other country in the world where the Roman Catholic faith is the traditional and prevailing faith of the inhabitants where there is a more complete separation of church and state or where there is greater freedom of conscience and of worship.⁴²

This was the kind of religious freedom that Rev. C. F. Broders, the first Missouri Synod missionary in Brazil, found in that country when he arrived there in 1900. Religious liberty reigned in Brazil during the first fifty years of Missouri Synod's work there.

³⁹Ibid., p. 323. H. G. James, The Constitutional System of Brazil (Washington: Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1923), pp. 139-140.

⁴⁰J. L. Meham, op. cit., p. 326.

⁴¹H. G. James, op. cit., p. 141.

⁴²Ibid.

The Background in the United States

Missionary Spirit of Missouri Synod

During the first half century of its existence the Missouri Synod had so much work to do inside the United States, especially among the ever increasing waves of German Lutheran immigrants that it could not do too much missionary work in foreign countries. While Dr. H. C. Schwan was its president, missions among German immigrants west of the Mississippi, Seamen's missions, Jewish mission, Negro missions of the Synodical Conference, Foreign Tongue missions in the United States claimed most of the Missouri Synod's attention in the field of missions.⁴³ Even so, that Synod gave financial support to European Lutheran missionary societies, mainly the Leipzig and the Hermansburg mission societies.⁴⁴ Toward the end of the nineteenth century the missionary spirit inside the Missouri Synod became stronger and the desire to open a foreign mission field was expressed. At the Synodical Convention in St. Louis in 1893 a resolution was passed to begin missionary work in Japan. Circumstances led the Synodical

⁴³W. G. Polack, The Building of a Great Church, second edition, enlarged and revised (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941), p. 162.

⁴⁴Walter A. Baepler, A Century of Grace. A History of the Missouri Synod 1847-1947 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947), p. 179.

officials to change the proposed field from Japan to India where the first Missouri Synod Missionary started to work in 1895.⁴⁵

Preoccupation with the Situation in South America

By this time also, the attention of influential members of the Missouri Synod was being drawn to South America where, in the south of Brazil alone, hundreds of thousands of German immigrants and their descendants, a large number of them of Lutheran background, lived without adequate spiritual guidance.⁴⁶ The fact that only a United Synod and no Lutheran Synod was working among them was deplored.⁴⁷ Satisfaction was expressed when also the Lutheran Gotteskasten of Germany sent a missionary to Santa Catarina.⁴⁸ Dr. Ludwig Fuerbringer championed the cause of the German Lutheran immigrants in South America. Again and again he wrote of their religious conditions in Der Lutheraner. In the late 1890s there is a change of attitude towards their conditions. From an attitude of thankfulness that the conditions

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 179-185. W. G. Polack, op. cit., pp. 165-168.

⁴⁶L. F[uerbringer], "Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LV (30 May 1899), 98-99.

⁴⁷L. F[uerbringer], "Geistliche Noth in Brasilien," ibid., L (2 January 1894), 31.

⁴⁸L. F[uerbringer], "Innere Mission in Sued-America," ibid., LV (7 March 1899), 47.

in the United States were not as difficult as they were in Brazil they changed to an attitude of concern and a feeling of responsibility towards the Lutherans in Brazil.⁴⁹

Also The Lutheran Witness spoke of the religious conditions of the German immigrants in Brazil with marked concern.⁵⁰

As the nineteenth century was coming to its end, a sense of obligation towards these fellow believers in distress increased.⁵¹ At the synodical convention of 1899 the question whether Missouri Synod should start inner mission work in South America was brought up.

The Synodical Convention of 1899

In April 1899 the ninth delegate convention of the Missouri Synod met at Holy Cross Church in St. Louis, Missouri. The president of the Missouri Synod, whose last term ended then, was Dr. H. C. Schwan, who from 1844 to 1850 had been in Brazil and had worked as a missionary, or rather,

⁴⁹L. F[uerbringer], "Geistliche Noth in Brasilien," ibid., L (2 January 1894), 31. G. St[oeckhardt], "Aus Brasilien," ibid., L (30 November 1894), 197. L. F[uerbringer], "Ausland," ibid., LIV (5 April 1898), 62. L. F[uerbringer], "Innere Mission in Sued-America," ibid., LV (7 March 1899), 47.

⁵⁰L., "Church News and Comment," The Lutheran Witness, XV (21 January 1897), 127. "Missionary Department," ibid., XVI (21 January 1898), 123.

⁵¹L. F[uerbringer], Der Lutheraner, LV (2 May 1899), 83. Ibid., LV (30 May 1899), 98-99.

as a tutor of a German family in Leopoldina, near Caravelas, Bahia. It has been said that one of the reasons why the Missouri Synod did not send missionaries to Brazil before 1900 was because Dr. Schwan was against it, for he considered Brazil a barren field because of his own lack of success there.⁵² It has been also said that when the two memorials, one by Rev. R. Kretschmar, president of the St. Louis pastoral circuit, the other by a pastor who had formerly served a congregation in Rio Grande do Sul, urging Synod to begin mission work in Brazil, were presented, Dr. Schwan manifested himself against them in the discussion that followed, and that his opinion was defeated.⁵³ After the discussion about the religious situation among the immigrants in Brazil, in which pertinent facts about the spiritual needs in South Brazil were disclosed,⁵⁴ the convention decided to start home mission work in South America, especially in Brazil and Argentina. It was decided to hand the two memorials over to the General Board for Home Missions and the Board was empowered to act together with the president

⁵²Luther-Kalender fuer Suedamerika auf das Jahr 1951, XXI, edited by A. Lehenbauer and P. Schelp (Porto Alegre, Brazil: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1951), 40.

⁵³Ibid., P. S[chelp], "Doktor H. C. Schwan," Kirchenblatt, XXXVII (15 July and 1 August 1947), 103.

⁵⁴L. Lochner, Karl Schmidt, and C. A. Eseman, "Sollen wir in Suedamerika, sonderlich in Brasilien, Das Werk der Inneren Mission in Angriff nehmen?" Der Lutheraner, LV (28 November 1899), 217.

of Synod, Dr. F. Pieper. The convention furthermore charged the Board with the responsibility of bringing its decisions to the attention of the congregations and of collecting the necessary funds for the new missionary venture, from the congregations.⁵⁵

The Synodical convention decided to start mission work in South America not as a result of a direct call from anybody in South America as C. H. Warth suggests.⁵⁶ There is no evidence to support his statement that the decision of the convention was a result of Brutschin's call.⁵⁷ The convention, rather, acted from a sense of obligation toward fellow Lutherans of German origin in distress. It should not be forgotten that most of the Missouri Synod's members, at the time, were of German origin, and the language spoken even at the Synodical convention, was still German.

The Call from Rev. Brutschin

The evidence available to the writer leads to the

⁵⁵Vierundzwanzigster Synodal-Bericht der Allgemeinen deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt als Neunte Delegatensynode zu Saint Louis, Missouri, im Jahre 1899 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1899), pp. 68, 99.

⁵⁶C. H. Warth, "Igreja Evangelica Luterana," Enciclopedia Rio-Grandense, edited by Klaus Becker (Canoas, Brazil: Editora Regional Ltda, co., 1957), IV, 239.

⁵⁷L. Lochner and others, Der Lutheraner, LV (28 November 1899), 217-218.

conclusion that soon after the Synodical convention of 1899, and not before it,⁵⁸ the General Board for Home Missions received a letter from the Rev. J. Brutschin, directly, or through the pastor to whom Brutschin had written. Brutschin was at the time living in Novo Hamburgo and serving the congregation of Estancia Velha. He had been in touch with two Missouri Synod pastors for a number of years. He received Missouri Synod publications and agreed with its theological position.⁵⁹ Prior to 1899 Rev. Brutschin already manifested the desire to become a member of this synod. In 1899 he decided to go back to his homeland, Germany, because of failing health. He did not want to leave his congregation abandoned, neither did he want to hand it over to the United Synod, the Riograndenser Synod. Therefore, he asked the Missouri Synod for a substitute.⁶⁰ The letter in which he asked for a substitute was sent to the Rev. Mr. Rademacher, pastor in Staplehurst, Nebraska.⁶¹ This letter came into the hands of the General Board for Home Missions. This direct call led the Mission

⁵⁸Ibid. C. H. Warth, Enciclopedia Rio-Grandense, IV, 239.

⁵⁹L. Lochner and others, Der Lutheraner, LV (28 November 1899), 218.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Luther-Kalender fuer Sued-America auf das Jahr 1951, XXI, p. 40.

Board together with former members of the Board and the President of the Synod, Dr. F. Pieper, to reach the decision that the time to begin missionary work in South America had come. Two large pastoral conferences that were consulted on the matter manifested the same belief.⁶² The Rev. Brutschin's direct call led the Missouri Synod to start this work in Rio Grande do Sul rather than somewhere else in South America. Hence, it must be affirmed this was the call for a substitute and not a request of money for a pair of mules because some mules belonging to Rev. Brutschin had been stolen, that led to the decision.⁶³ Rev. Brutschin was a man qualified to extend such a call of help because of his position and his moral stature. Besides the obligation that it felt toward the unchurched Lutherans in South America the Missouri Synod had Rev. Brutschin's call to make the beginning of its work legitimate there.

⁶²L. Lochner and others, Der Lutheraner, LV (28 November 1899), 218.

⁶³Ibid. The story of the stolen mules told in the Lutheran Churches of the World is questionable. It can be traced back only as far as Dr. F. C. Streufert. Hanns Lilje and others, Lutheran Churches of the World (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1957), p. 299. F. C. Streufert, My Trip to South America (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, ca. 1948), p. 7.

The Financial Support for the Beginning

In November 1899 the Board for Home Missions wrote a report in Der Lutheraner communicating the decision of Synod to begin the work in Rio Grande do Sul to the congregations, exhorting them to contribute for the enterprise. The article ended with: "Darum auf, auf zur Mission in Brasilien! Gott gebe seinen Segen dazu."⁶⁴ The response to the exhortation was immediate and above expectations. Before the end of 1899 the treasurer of the Eastern district sent \$2,000 to the Board to start the mission work in Brazil. The name of the donors never became known.⁶⁵

The Prospector

At the same time the Board for Home Missions was looking for a man with the necessary qualifications for the difficult task of surveying the missionary opportunities in Brazil.⁶⁶ This prospector⁶⁷ was found in the person of

⁶⁴L. Lochner and others, Der Lutheraner, LV (28 November 1899), 217-218.

⁶⁵F. P., "Innere Mission in Suedamerica," ibid., LVI (9 January 1900), 7. Karl Schmidt, who was already then a member of the Board for Inner Missions wrote eleven years later, "da gab ein Leser im Osten--ith kenne seinen Namen nicht, Gott kennt ihn! gleich \$2,000.00." Karl Schmidt, "Gute Nachrichten fuer Brasilien und Argentinien," ibid., LXVII (7 March 1911), 74.

⁶⁶L. Lochner and others, ibid., LV (28 November 1899), 218.

⁶⁷His mission was to survey the field, to decide what the prospects for missionary work were, therefore the name.

the Rev. C. J. Broders. The Rev. C. J. Broders was born on 22 November 1867 in New Orleans. He graduated from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, in 1891 and in the same year he accepted the call to Scranton, Mississippi.⁶⁸ In 1898 he served as United States chaplain in the Spanish American War. Broders was stationed in Havana, Cuba, where he also looked for opportunities to begin Lutheran mission work.⁶⁹ He returned to Scranton and in January 1900 he accepted the call of the General Board for Home Missions to survey the missionary opportunities in the south of Brazil.⁷⁰

⁶⁸"Microfilm of record of deceased pastors of Missouri Synod," in possession of Concordia Historical Institute in Saint Louis, Missouri.

⁶⁹L. Lochner, K. Schmidt, and G. Esemann, "Unsere Mission in Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LVII (1 October 1901), 307.

⁷⁰L. Lochner, "Innere Mission in Suedamerika," ibid., LVI (23 January 1900), 23.

CHAPTER III

THE BEGINNINGS: 1900-1904

Rev. C. J. Broders' Survey Trip

In January 1900 the Rev. C. J. Broders accepted the commission from the Board for Home Missions to study the missionary opportunities in Brazil.¹ The congregation of Scranton, Mississippi, which he was serving at the time, gave him the permission to go. When he accepted the commission, Broders told the Mission Board, that, because of family circumstances, he would have to return to the United States after having fulfilled his mission of prospector even if the new mission field proved to be fruitful or promising. He was willing to remain two years in Brazil, if necessary.² He sailed from New York on 19 February 1900. The ship on which he was traveling returned to New York after a week because of damages caused by a heavy storm. After three days of waiting in New York, he again started his momentous trip on 1 March 1900. He arrived in Rio de Janeiro on 21 March, and in Novo Hamburgo, Rio Grande do Sul,

¹L. Lochner, "Innere Mission in Suedamerica," Der Lutheraner, LVI (23 January 1900), 23.

²L. Lochner, K. Schmidt, and C. Esemann, "Unsere Mission in Brasilien," ibid., LVII (1 October 1901), 307.

where the Rev. J. F. Brutschin was living at the time, on 28 March 1900.³ In Novo Hamburgo he was received by Brutschin from whom he learned about the economic, social, and religious conditions of the immigrants. After staying ten days at the home of Brutschin, having conferred with him at length, Broders reported to the Board for Home Missions on 9 April 1900:

Man merkt es ihm [Brutschin] an, dass die Missions-sache hier ihm eine Gewissenssache ist. . . . P. Brutschin ist ein nuechterer Sohn Luthers, der nicht nur unsere Schriften kennt, sondern dieselben auch fleissig studiert und in denselben zu Hause ist.⁴

Broders also reported that Brutschin had decided to join the Missouri Synod on his own initiative. Broders also learned that Brutschin had acceded to his congregation's request to stay in Brazil for another year, to move from

³L. F[uerbringer], "Zur kirchlichen Chronik," *ibid.*, LVI (20 March 1900), 88. F. P[ieper], "Aus unserer Synode," *ibid.*, LVI (1 May 1900), 136. L. F[uerbringer], "Wie steht es mit unserer Mission in Brasilien?" *ibid.*, LVI (24 July 1900), 230. In the Synodalbericht of 1902 the date for Broders' trip is incorrectly given as February 1901. Fuenf-undzwanzigster Synodal-Bericht der Allgemeinen deutschen ev.-luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, in versammelt als Zehnte Delegatensynode zu Milwaukee, Wis., im Jahre 1902 (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1902), p. 68. The date for the beginning of Missouri Synod's work in Brazil is also incorrectly given in the 1957 edition of Lutheran Churches of the World: "The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod traces its entry into South America to the receipt of a letter from a German pastor in Brazil begging for money to buy a pair of mules to replace some that were stolen. That was in 1901." H. Lilje, and others, Lutheran Churches of the World (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1957), p. 299.

⁴L. F[uerbringer], Der Lutheraner, LVI (24 July 1900), 230.

Novo Hamburgo to Estancia Velha to dedicate himself entirely to the pastoral care of that congregation, and to open a parochial school there.⁵

On 10 April Broders preached the Good Friday sermon at Brutschin's church in Estancia Velha.⁶ He felt at home there and had good hopes for a flourishing future for the congregation, although congregational life was still weak. His words about the kind of pastoral work that had to be done in Brazil, were almost prophetic, for later on, in cases where his words of caution were disregarded, more harm than good was accomplished:

Es bleibt noch vieles aufzubauen, zu wecken, zu staerken, zu sammeln und zu unterstuetzen, doch die Leute lassen sich belehren. Langsam voran. War in Sturme die Leute denen bis vor kurzer Zeit nur Stoppeln geboten wurden, in die rechte Praxis hineinfuehren will, wird es hier nur aerger machen.⁷

The Rev. C. J. Broders' analysis of the general conditions of the German immigrants' spiritual life based on Brutschin's information agrees with what observers were then saying in Germany about it. It is a fair description of the conditions that the first resident Missouri Synod missionaries gave of Rio Grande do Sul.

The economic situation was unstable. Bankruptcy was

⁵Ibid.

⁶L. F[uerbringer], "Wie steht es mit unserer Mission in Brasilien?" ibid., LVI (7 August 1900), 244.

⁷Ibid.

common. Brazilian currency fluctuated. It was then worth one-third of its real value. In the colonies the farmers owned their piece of land but rarely saw any money. In 1900 thirty-nine Evangelical pastors were serving ninety-three congregations in Rio Grande do Sul. Many congregations were being served by pseudo-pastors.⁸ In the cities among the Germans, drunkenness and the search for pleasures was all too common. Religious indifference was the rule. Schools were in poor shape; teachers were usually people who had failed in other occupations. Church festivals were characterized much more by dancing, eating, and excessive drinking than by worship.⁹ Freemasons were numerous and influential also among the Germans.¹⁰

In May 1900 Broders made his first missionary trip.¹¹ He visited the São Jeronimo area, which Brutschin had visited six years before,¹² and of which he had reported in Der Lutheraner.¹³ In 1896 the Riograndenser Synod had placed

⁸L. F[uerbringer], "Wie steht es mit unserer Mission in Brasilien?" ibid., LVI (24 July 1900), 230.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹L. F[uerbringer], "Wie steht es mit unserer Mission in Brasilien?" ibid., LVI (17 August 1900), 244.

¹²Ibid.

¹³G. St[oekhardt], "Aus Brasilien," ibid., I (30 November 1895), 197.

a pastor in that area, a fact ignored by Brutschin, so that the people that Broders found to be unchurched there, were the religiously indifferent. His disillusionment was complete:

Kurz, ich sah es den Leuten an, dass ihnen an einer Kirche nichts gelegen war. Aber eins habe ich ihnen auch angesehen, naemlich dass Zuckerbranntwein, Genussucht, Gleichgueltigkeit die Leute beherrschen.¹⁴

Of evils generally found in the colonies Broders mentioned dancing, that in Teutonia there were twenty-two dancing-floors and only one Evangelical congregation, the fact that the Vorstand made the decisions for the congregations without consulting other members, and the influence of freemasonry.¹⁵ After his first missionary trip Broders' verdict was: "Ich kann daher die Provinz Rio Grande do Sul als Missionsgebiet nicht empfehlen."¹⁶

When L. Fuerbringer reported this in Der Lutheraner he added that this was only a provisory report and that Broders would undertake other missionary trips before giving up definitively.¹⁷

Broders did not want to give up his mission without a last attempt. He learned that in the south of the state,

¹⁴L. F[uerbringer], ibid., LVI (7 August 1900), 245.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

in the counties of Pelotas and São Lourenço there was a large German settlement of more than 10,000 people, most of them Pomeranians.¹⁸ They had organized about thirty school congregations that also served as church congregations. There the Riograndenser Synod had not yet started to work. The only spiritual guidance that those people had had was that of pseudo-pastors.¹⁹ Broders went to Pelotas, the largest town in the area. He stayed there a while without accomplishing anything. Then he met a man who had come from the small, out of the way village of São Pedro, to sell his farm products. Broders introduced himself but the man remained suspicious, thinking that he may belong to

¹⁸L. Lochner, "Vorläufige Mittheilung ueber unsere Mission in Brasilien," ibid., LVI (11 December 1900), 389. W. Mahler, "Der Anfang in Brasilien u. Argentinien," 25 Jahre unter dem Suedlichen Kreuz, edited by O. H. Beer (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1925), p. 21.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 23. A typical example of the spiritual situation is the congregation of Bom Jesus, a village in that area. The congregation had been founded by Lutheran Pomeranians in August 1868. From then on: "Bedient wurde sie seit ihrer Gruendung bis zum Jahre 1901 [when it joined the Missouri Synod] von zwolf verschiedenen Maennern, Lehrern und sogenannten Pseudopfarrern, die zum Teil ganz zweifelhafte Charaktere gewesen sein sollen. Etliche waren nur Lehrer, die waren direkt als Pfarrer angestellt worden. Unter diesen befanden sich solche, denen jede theologische Bildung mangelte. Einer war von Beruf Zigarrenmacher, ein anderer Schneider, ein dritter sogar Komodiant und Theaterspieler, und ein vierter had ausgesprochenermassen nicht viel von Religion wissen wollen. Etlichen wenigen ruehmt man Treue und Frommigkeit nach." E. Elicker, "Aus Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LXXXIV (20 March 1928), 126.

some kind of a sect. Back in São Pedro he met a neighbor whom he told that in Pelotas he had met a man who called himself Evangelical Lutheran pastor. This neighbor advised him to take the man, who called himself pastor, to Vater Gowert, who was well read in the Scriptures and more intelligent than the rest of them. Vater Gowert could test the man to see whether he was a real pastor. In this manner Broders was taken to São Pedro. He was examined by Vater Gowert, passed the test,²⁰ and called the families together to organize an Evangelical Lutheran congregation. Four of the families of São Pedro had held services together every Sunday for years.²¹ They became the nucleus of the congregation that was organized on 1 July 1900 with a membership of seventeen families.²² The congregation sent a call to the Mission Board for a resident pastor. Meanwhile the chapel building was finished and dedicated on the eleventh Sunday after Trinity, 1900.²³ Broders started a parochial

²⁰E. H., "Erinnerungen aus der Anfaengen der missourischen Arbeit in Brasilien. Von einem, der als Schulknabe mit dabei war," Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt fuer Suedamerica, XX (1 September 1925), 131. Hereafter cited as Kirchenblatt.

²¹L. Lochner, Der Lutheraner, LVI (11 December 1900), 389.

²²E. Blicher, ibid., LXXXIV (20 March 1928), 125.

²³L. Lochner, ibid., LVI (11 December 1900), 389-390.

school which in October numbered twenty-two pupils.²⁴ His advice about parochial schools, in a report to the Mission Board, became one of the guiding principles of the missionary work of the Missouri Synod in Brazil: "Ja, wollen wir ueberhaupt hier missioniren, so muessen wir besonders die Schule dazu verwerthen."²⁵ One of the first reforms introduced by Broders in the government of the congregation was to have voters' meetings to decide important matters concerning the congregation instead of leaving everything for the Vorstand to decide.²⁶ That year, 1900, Christmas was celebrated in the traditional Lutheran way, with a children's service. People came even from thirty miles distant Pelotas to see the Christmas eve celebration.²⁷

After the Rev. W. Mahler came to take over the congregation of São Pedro, Broders made a third missionary trip. He started out on Good Friday, 1901. With a guide he traveled in the interior of Pelotas and São Lourenço. He held services and meetings in different places. Some congregations called pastors from the Missouri Synod.²⁸ After this trip

²⁴Ibid., p. 390.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶C. J. Broders, "Aus Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LVII (5 March 1901), 69.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 69-70.

²⁸C. J. Broders, "Eine Missionsreise in Brasilien," ibid., LVII (25 June 1901), 195-196.

Broders went back to the United States leaving behind him a gifted leader, the Rev. W. Mahler.²⁹

The Mission Director: Rev. W. Mahler

William Mahler was born on 16 November 1870 at Polkwitz, Silesia. He made his preparatory studies at Kraschnitz, Silesia, and at Kropp, Schleswig from 1885 to 1890. He started his theological studies at the Theological Seminary, Kropp, Schleswig, in 1890 and finished them at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, where he graduated in 1893. In 1894 he married Louise Cattenhusen. He served stations in Nebraska until the end of 1900, when he received and accepted the call of Director of Missions for South America.³⁰

With his wife and four children he sailed from New York on 20 February 1901 and arrived in Rio Grande do Sul four weeks later.³¹ He was installed at the first Missouri Synod Lutheran Congregation in South America, São Pedro,

²⁹W. Mahler, 25 Jahre unter dem Suedlichen Kreuz, Beer, ed., p. 26.

³⁰L. Lochner, K. Schmidt, C. Esemann, "Unsere Mission in Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LVII (1 October 1901), 307. "New Doctors," Lutheran Witness, LXVI (17 June 1947), 197.

³¹L. Lochner, "Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LVII (19 March 1901), 87.

near Pelotas, on Palm Sunday 1901.³² By that time the congregations of Santa Eulalia and Santa Coleta asked to be supplied with pastors.³³

Of the five theological candidates designated for Brazil in 1901, three accepted the call.³⁴ They went to Brazil in September.³⁵ Before the end of the year they were installed by the Rev. W. Mahler in the congregations that had called them: A. Vogel on the first Sunday in Advent in Santa Coleta; H. Stiemke on the second Sunday in Advent in Santa Eulalia; J. Hartmeister on the fourth Sunday in Advent in Bom Jesus.³⁶

The hope expressed by Mahler about the future of the work in the Pelotas-São Lourenço area, where in twenty-five or more congregations there was not a single ordained pastor,³⁷ was never fulfilled.³⁸ Besides those first con-

³²"New Doctors," Lutheran Witness, LXVI (17 June 1947), 197.

³³W. Mahler, 25 Jahre unter dem Suedlichen Kreuz, Beer, ed., p. 27.

³⁴L. Lochner, Der Lutheraner, LVII (25 June 1901), 197.

³⁵L. Lochner, and others, ibid., LVII (1 October 1901), 307.

³⁶L. Lochner, "Brasilien," ibid., LVIII (29 April 1902), 133.

³⁷L. Lochner, and others, ibid., LVII (1 October 1901), 307-308.

³⁸W. Mahler, 25 Jahre unter dem Suedlichen Kreuz, Beer, ed., p. 27.

gregations already mentioned, only in one or another isolated case a congregation of that area asked for the services of the Missouri Synod. Most of the other congregations in that area remained unsympathetic. What happened, in Mahler's words, was that:

Das ganze Heer der Pikadenlehrer machte gegen uns mobil. Durch die unerhoersten Verleumdungen und Luegen wussten sie das Volk so aufzuhetzen, dass sich die Herzen gegen unser Werk verschlossen.³⁹

The Riograndenser Synod, which until then, had not worked in that area started to work there in active opposition. The fact that those immigrants and their descendants had lived there for about forty years without real pastoral care also contributed to the lack of greater success of the Missouri Synod missionaries.⁴⁰ The press in Brazil, in Germany, and even in the United States was used to slander their work.⁴¹ They were accused of being North American agents and spies who came to survey the land in the interest of the United States.⁴²

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 28.

⁴¹Luther-Kalender fuer Suedamerika auf das Jahr 1951, edited by A. Lehenbauer and P. Schelp (Porto Alegre, Brazil: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1951), p. 43, quoted from the Bote von S. Lourenço (2 September 1902), n.p. F. P[ieper], "Unsere kirchliche Arbeit in Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LVII (15 October 1901), 326. L. Lochner, "Warum wir das brasilianische Missionsfeld ausreichend mit Arbeitskraeften versorgen sollten," ibid., LIX (17 March 1903), 84.

⁴²Ibid.

Had the work in the Pelotas-São Lourenço region, the South of Rio Grande do Sul, been exceedingly successful, had it grown without opposition, all the resources and manpower of the Missouri Synod's mission work would have been used there for so long that it would then probably have been too late to start in socially and economically more important areas.⁴³ As things went, Mahler had the time to and did visit other areas of the State, wherever he was called. In August 1901⁴⁴ he made a trip to the center-northwest of Rio Grande do Sul. A member of the congregation of São Pedro had moved to Rincao dos Vales, near Cruz Alta. Finding no organized congregation there he called his neighbors together. They called Mahler to visit them and to provide a pastor for them. On the way to Rincao dos Vales in Santa Maria, Mahler visited Rincao São Pedro where the religious situation was also sad. In Rincao dos Vales the congregation asked him in its name to extend a call to a Missouri Synod pastor. On his return trip home, for the first time, he met the Rev. J. F. Brutschin in Novo Hamburgo. Also in the hotel in Porto Alegre a young waiter took great interest in Navegantes, a workers' district of Porto Alegre, where about half of the

⁴³W. Mahler, 25 Jahre unter dem Suedlichen Kreuz, Beer, ed., p. 29.

⁴⁴W. Mahler, "Aus Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LIX (17 February 1903), 53.

population was of German origin. The waiter's parents said that they would talk things over with neighbors and friends and then send him a written call to start a school and a congregation.⁴⁵ The call with several signatures came to the hands of the Rev. W. Mahler shortly after he had arrived at São Pedro, his home.⁴⁶ Porto Alegre at the time had about 100,000 inhabitants of whom about 20,000 were of German origin. Only one Evangelical United congregation existed in the city.⁴⁷ In January 1902 Mahler made another trip to the west of the state. From Rincao São Pedro on, he traveled with the Rev. A. Zander, the pastor of an independent congregation in Serro Branco, who later joined the Missouri Synod for a while.⁴⁸ As a result of this trip the congregations visited--Rincao São Pedro, Nova Santa Cruz (Wilhelmstal), Jaguari, and Toropi--sent calls for pastors along with the Rev. W. Mahler when he left.⁴⁹ Back in São Pedro Mahler went on fulfilling his

⁴⁵W. Mahler, 25 Jahre unter dem Suedlichen Kreuz, pp. 29-30. Idem, "Aus Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LIX (17 February 1903), 52.

⁴⁶Idem, 25 Jahre unter dem Suedlichen Kreuz, p. 30.

⁴⁷Idem, "Auf Missionswegen im Staate Rio Grande do Sul in Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LVIII (27 May 1902), 164. Idem, ibid., LIX (18 February 1903), 52.

⁴⁸Idem, ibid., LVIII (27 May 1902), 164. L. L[ochner], "Brasilien," ibid., LX (16 February 1904), 55.

⁴⁹W. Mahler, ibid., LVIII (27 May 1902), 164-166.

pastoral duties. The first class of young catechumens was confirmed on Palm Sunday 1902. After Easter Mahler began teaching school with an enrollment of forty-three children. On the second Sunday after Easter he led the voters' meeting. Parliamentary procedures were taught and put into practice.⁵⁰ In September and October four theological candidates, R. Mueller, R. Kern, H. Wittrock, and W. Moeller, and one pastor H. A. Klein, later president of Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, came to serve in the congregations that had sent calls.⁵¹ After receiving the approval of the Board for Home Missions and of his congregation, Mahler left the Rev. R. Mueller to take care of the congregation of São Pedro and went to Porto Alegre to start the missionary work there. According to the information that he had gathered, more than 10,000 of the 20,000 people of German origin living there were without any church connections.⁵² He arrived in Porto Alegre on 29 September 1902. He rented a building in Navegantes and started a school with an initial enrollment of nine. At the end of the first week the number of pupils had grown to

⁵⁰Idem., "Aus Brasilien," ibid., LVIII (22 July 1902), 233.

⁵¹L. Lochner, "Brasilien," ibid., LVIII (20 September 1902), 311. Luther-Kalender Fuer Suedamerika auf das Jahr 1951, p. 148.

⁵²ibid. W. Mahler, Der Lutheraner, LIX (17 February 1903), 52-53.

eighteen. Sixteen adults attended the first service; eighty-four hearers, among them forty-seven adults, the second. A night school was started for young people. The Rev. H. Klein arrived and helped Mahler with the work. After six weeks, on 7 December 1902, a congregation was organized.⁵³ Fourteen voting members signed the constitution.⁵⁴ From then on the headquarters of the Missouri Synod's mission work in Brazil were in Porto Alegre throughout the first half century of its existence. The foundation of a congregation in Porto Alegre was one of the three outstanding events of the period 1900-1904 for the future of the Igreja Evangélica Luterana do Brasil because of the geographic, economic, political, and cultural position of Porto Alegre in the south of Brazil. It was the place from where leadership was naturally expected.

The First Pastors

To help Rev. Mahler three ministerial candidates arrived in Brazil in 1901: A. A. Vogel who worked in Santa Coleta, H. T. Stiemke, whose first congregation was that of Santa Eulalia, and J. Hartmeister who worked in Bom Jesus, all in

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 52.

the Pelotas-São Lourenço area.⁵⁵ Five men started their missionary work in Brazil in 1902: R. Mueller, who became Mahler's successor in São Pedro, when the latter moved to Porto Alegre, in 1903 he also went to Porto Alegre to help Mahler, and in 1904 accepted the call to Dois Irmaos;⁵⁶ R. Kern who started the work in Jaguari in the west of the state, near Toropi where W. Moeller became the first Missouri Synod pastor at the same time; H. Wittrock whose call sent him to Rincao dos Vales (Santa Clara do Ingai); and the Rev. H. A. Klein who in 1902-1903 helped Mahler in Porto Alegre, in 1903-1904 worked in São Leopoldo and in 1904 substituted Brutschin in Estancia Velha when the latter left for Germany.⁵⁷ In 1903 four additional missionaries arrived: E. Schulz, for São Pedro; J. F. Harder, for Rincao São Pedro; P. H. Petersen, for Alto Jacui (Não Me Toque); F. Brandt, for Morro Redondo.⁵⁸ An independent pastor, August Zander, of Serro Branco, joined the Missouri

⁵⁵L. Lochner and others, ibid., LVII (1 October 1901), 307. L. Lochner, "Brasilien," ibid., LVIII (29 April 1902), 133.

⁵⁶Luther-Kalender fuer Suedamerika auf das Jahr 1951, edited by A. Lehenbaeur and P. Schelp, p. 148.

⁵⁷Ibid. L. Lochner, "Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LVIII (30 September 1902), 311.

⁵⁸L. Lochner, "Brasilien," ibid., LIX (15 September 1903), 294. Luther-Kalender fuer Suedamerika auf das Jahr 1951, edited by A. Lehenbaeur and P. Schelp, pp. 148-149.

Synod through a colloquy on 13 November 1903.⁵⁹ The colloquy conducted by the Rev. W. Mahler covered the doctrines of Holy Scripture, the Church, Sin, Grace, Baptism, and Holy Communion, and practical matters.⁶⁰ A similar pattern was followed in subsequent colloquies.

The Congregations

In the period 1900-1904 the Missouri Synod worked in three areas in Rio Grande do Sul: in the South, in the Porto Alegre area, and in the West. In the south, the congregation of São Pedro was organized in 1900, Santa Eulalia, Santa Coleta, and Bom Jesus in 1901, and Morro Redondo in 1902.⁶¹ In the Porto Alegre area the congregation of Estancia Velha had already been served by Brutschin before he joined the Missouri Synod in 1900. The congregation of Porto Alegre was organized in 1902, the one in São Leopoldo in 1903, when also Dois Irmaos received its first Missouri Synod pastor. The third missionary field

⁵⁹L. L[ochner], "Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LX (16 February 1904), 55.

⁶⁰W. Mahler, "Ein Kolloquium," Kirchenblatt, I (1 January 1904), 38.

⁶¹Sechszwanzigster Synodal-Bericht der Allgemeinen deutschen ev.-luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt als Elfte Delegatensynode zu Detroit, Mich., im Jahre 1905 (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1905), pp. 53-59. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1905.

was the center-north-west region where the congregations of Jaguary, Toropi, and Rincao dos Vales (Santa Clara do Ingai), were supplied with Missouri Synod pastors in 1902, Alto Jacui (Nãc Me Toque), and Rincao São Pedro in 1903.⁶²

Missouri Synod's right to supply these congregations with pastors has been questioned. The Rev. W. Mahler and his co-workers were accused of breaking into other pastors' fields to take part of their congregations,⁶³ for political and economic reasons to win them to North American influence. The rumor was spread that they had a propaganda capital of a million dollars at their disposal for this purpose.⁶⁴ In a presidential address Mahler defended the legitimacy of the work of his church, and showed that only when there were legitimate reasons for doing it, a pastor was sent either to organize a congregation or to take care of one already existing. According to the circumstances that resulted in the placement of a pastor in a certain locality he mentioned five classes of congregations that received Missouri Synod pastors before 1904. According to the author his classification corresponds to the facts.

⁶²Ibid., pp. 58-62.

⁶³W. Mahler, "Synodalrede," Kirchenblatt, III (1 February 1906), 19.

⁶⁴L. F[uerbringer], "Ueber unsere Kirchliche Arbeit in Brazilien," Der Lutheraner, LIX (12 May 1903), 152.

1. Without a call they went to places where there were Lutherans but no organized congregation or ordained pastor, ex.: São Pedro.

2. Without being called they offered their services where there had once been a pastor but where there was none when they went there, ex.: Bom Jesus and Jacui.

3. They went to places from where they had received specific calls and where there had been no ordained pastor until then. According to the wishes of the people of such places they organized a congregation. The majority of the congregations belong to this category, ex.: Porto Alegre, Rincao dos Vales, Jaguari, Rincao São Pedro, Santa Eulalia, Santa Coleta.

4. Missouri Synod pastors were called by organized congregations with the approval of their pastors, ex.: Estancia Velha, São Leopoldo, Toropi.

5. They were called by people who had separated themselves from their former congregations and pastors. Before the Missouri Synod pastors started to work among such people they first carefully examined the reasons why they had severed their relations with their former congregations and only when these were considered legitimate they were supplied with a pastor. This was the case of Dois Irmaos, only one of the thirteen congregations supplied with pastors in

the period 1900-1904.⁶⁵ The first step towards serving Dois Irmaos (Baumschneis) was taken by the Rev. H. A. Klein, then pastor in São Leopoldo, only after he had received a request with twenty-two signatures asking him to do so. He preached there only after he had held a meeting with those people and became convinced that their reason for leaving the Riograndenser Synod was legitimate.⁶⁵

Mahler's conditions upon which congregations were accepted were that they promise to obey God's Word and that they compel their pastors to conform to the Lutheran Confessions.

The question of self-support of congregations was taken up from the very beginning. Mahler believed that the prospects for self-support were good, but he also realized that for a long time yet Synod would have to assist them financially because, as a rule, the congregations were small, much poorer than their North American counterparts, and so far had very little understanding of what Christian stewardship meant.⁶⁷ The existing system of church taxes, or better,

⁶⁵W. Mahler, "Synodalrede," Kirchenblatt, III (1 February 1906), 19.

⁶⁶H. A. K[lein], "São Leopoldo," Kirchenblatt, I (1 December 1903), 23.

⁶⁷L. Lochner, and others, Der Lutheraner, LVII (1 October 1901), 308. L. F[uerbringer], "Wie sieht es in unsern brasilianischen Gemeinden aus?" ibid., LIX (10 November 1903), 356.

fees, made this growth in Christian stewardship a very slow and difficult one.⁶⁸ From the beginning Synod did not give financial aid to the pastors but to the congregations, so that these would see the pastors as their pastors and not as foreign envoys of a high-church-council, Oberkirchenrat.⁶⁹

Parochial Schools

The establishment and promotion of parochial schools was one of the main features of the Igreja Evangélica Luterana do Brasil in the first half century of its existence. Broders, the surveyor had founded the first in São Pedro in 1900, and declared: "Ja, wollen wir ueberhaupt hier missioniren, so muessen wir besonders die Schule dazu verwerthen."⁷⁰ State schools were almost nonexistent in the immigration areas. In most cases the only alternative to illiteracy was the establishment of parochial schools.⁷¹ Sometimes groups that were religiously indifferent called the Missouri Synod missionaries to provide instruction for their children. This opened many doors and was one of the

⁶⁸W. Mahler, ibid., LVIII (22 July 1902), 233.

⁶⁹[W.] Ma[hler], Kirchenblatt, I (15 March 1904), 78.

⁷⁰L. Lochner, Der Lutheraner, LVI (11 December 1900), 390.

⁷¹L. Lochner and others, ibid., LVII (1 October 1901), 308.

factors for the fast growth of the Missouri Synod's work in Brazil. But it also made the work of many pastors heartbreakingly difficult. Often was the complaint heard: "Schule haben sie alle recht gern, aber die Gottesdienste werden sehr schwach besucht."⁷² This, however, does not minimize the importance of the parochial schools for the success of the missionary work as can be seen by statements like the following:

Die Schule steht in allen unsern Gemeinden im Vordergrund. Hauptsächlich der Schule wegen bilden sich die Gemeinden. Die Schule ist der Zusammenhalt der Gemeinde.⁷³

In Porto Alegre: "Mit einer Schule musste der Anfang gemacht werden."⁷⁴ The importance of the schools for the future was recognized:

Auch dafuer koennen wir Gott nicht genuech danken, dass alle unsere brasilianischen Gemeinden die Schule hochhalten und lieb haben. Die Schule ist der Mittelpunkt der Gemeinden. In den Schulen aber streuen wir die Saat fuer die Zukunft aus."⁷⁵

At first all pastors taught in parochial schools. Already in 1902 the question was raised in the Synodical Convention whether it would not be convenient to send Synodical teachers to Brazil. The matter was handed over to the

⁷²L. F[uerbringer], "Wie sieht es in unsern brasilianischen Gemeinden aus?" ibid., LVII (10 November 1903), 356.

⁷³W. Mahler, ibid., LVIII (22 July 1902), 233.

⁷⁴W. Mahler, ibid., LIX (17 February 1903), 53.

⁷⁵L. F[uerbringer], ibid., LIX (10 November 1903), 357.

Board for Home Missions to act at the proper moment.⁷⁶

The school in Porto Alegre, because of its exceptional growth was the first to ask for a teacher.⁷⁷ Teacher H. Wilke accepted the call and was installed in the school in Porto Alegre on the twenty-first Sunday after Trinity 1903.⁷⁸ It was also in the parochial schools that the work in Portuguese, the native language of the country, first began.⁷⁹

The Beginning of the First Lutheran Seminary in South America

The second outstanding event of the period 1900-1904 was the foundation of a Seminary in Bom Jesus, in the Pelotas-São Lourenço area. According to the author of this study it was the first and most important step towards the formation of an indigenous church in the fifty years under consideration. Unlike other events that soon followed it-- the publication of a church periodical and the formation of a Synodical District, that came into existence obeying

⁷⁶Fuenfundzwanzigster Synodal-Bericht der Allgemeinen deutschen ev.-luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt als Zehnte Delegatensynode zu Milwaukee, Wis., im Jahre 1902, pp. 69, 73. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1902.

⁷⁷L. Lochner, Der Lutheraner, LIX (17 March 1903), 85.

⁷⁸W. Mahler, "Kirchliche Nachrichten," Kirchenblatt, I (15 November 1903), 14.

⁷⁹[W.] Ma[hler], "Porto Alegre," ibid., I (1 April 1904), 87.

a Synodical resolution⁸⁰--the foundation of a seminary was an indigenous event, that is, the Synodical Mission Board did not suggest it neither did it offer any help. The idea was born in Brazil and it was carried out with Brazilian resources. It took exceptional courage to begin such a work in that place, at that time, and under those circumstances.

In the first pastoral conference of the São Lourenço circuit, held at Bom Jesus, from 20 to 22 April 1903, attended by the Rev. Messrs, F. Brandt, R. Mueller, H. Stiemke, A. Vogel, and J. Hartmeister of that area, and by W. Mahler, the problem of training a native ministry was discussed.⁸¹ Mahler made the motion to found an Institute to train young Brazilians to become teachers and pastors. The motion was accepted. It was decided to have the Institute at Bom Jesus for the time being.⁸² Mahler remained in Bom Jesus after the end of the conference. He preached on the first mission festival held in Bom Jesus on Misericordias Domini, 26 April 1903.⁸³ After the service

⁸⁰Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1902, pp. 72-73.

⁸¹J. Hartmeister, "The Sowing of a Mustard Seed," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, XXII (January 1950), 167. Hereafter cited as CHIQ.

⁸²Ibid., p. 169. J. Hartmeister, "Ein Institut zur Ausbildung von Lehrern und Predigern," Kirchenblatt, I (1 January 1904), 37-38.

⁸³J. Hartmeister, in CHIQ, XXII (January 1950), 167.

the Rev. J. Hartmeister called a meeting of the congregation to receive the permission to start the Institute there. The congregation was not at all enthusiastic about the idea. Most of the members had grown up under so-called pastors, pseudo-pastors, and some believed that it was nonsense to start an institution just to give formal schooling to future pastors and teachers.⁸⁴ After a heated discussion the opposition was removed and the permission to start the Institute was given.⁸⁵ One end of a barn already existing on the church property was to be rebuilt with bricks to serve as a dormitory and classroom for the future students. Some of the members, fearing that the establishment of such an institution was just a scheme on the part of the Missouri Synod to deprive them of their church property made a campaign against it and even promised to tear down the part of the barn that was being reconstructed.⁸⁶ Two of the three officers of the congregation handed the pastor a petition with several signatures asking for his resignation.⁸⁷ When at a congregation assembly it was decided that the members themselves should pay the small amount that

⁸⁴Emilio Wille, "Nosso Primeiro Seminario em Bom Jesus, São Lourenço," Mensageiro Luterano, XXXII (April 1949), 26-27.

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Ibid. J. Hartmeister, CHIQ, XXII (January 1950), 167-169.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 168.

the rebuilding of the barn would cost, removing their unfounded fears of losing the property, the excitement died down and the work on the barn was completed without further interruptions.⁸⁸ With three students the Institute opened on 27 October 1903.⁸⁹ They were Emil Wille from a neighboring congregation, Heinrich Drews, and Ewald Hirshmann from São Pedro. A few weeks later Franz Hoffmann from Santa Coleta, and finally on 2 March 1904 Adolf Flor, after a two month trip on foot, by horse, and on a ship, joined them. These were the five who studied under the Rev. J. Hartmeister in the Institute in Bom Jesus.⁹⁰

The reasons for the foundation of the Institute as given by Rev. J. Hartmeister in the Kirchenblatt were: many unworthy individuals were holding the offices of pastors and teachers in Brazil; many calls for pastors and teachers came to the Missouri Synod, and few places could receive a pastor because of the great lack of workers; young men in Brazil were just as intelligent and gifted as those in other

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 171. Emilio Wille, Mensageiro Luterano, XXXII (April 1949), 27.

⁸⁹ J. Hartmeister, Kirchenblatt, I (1 January 1904), 37. The year of the founding of the Institute is incorrectly given as 1904 by Polack. W. G. Polack, The Building of a Great Church, (second edition; St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941), p. 179; and by The Lutheran Churches of the World, edited by A. T. Jørgensen, and others (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, [1929]), p. 384.

⁹⁰ J. Hartmeister, CHIQ, XXII (January 1950), 171-172.

countries; trips of foreign missionaries were exceedingly expensive; only with a native ministry would the growth of an indigenous church become possible.

Two different curricula were planned from the outset, one comprising four years for the training of teachers and a longer one for the training of pastors.⁹¹ The five students had a full program of studies and work. They got up at five in the morning. Coffee was served at six, by the pastor's wife, as were all other meals, and was followed by a devotion. From 6:30 to 7:30 the boys studied. They had to work four hours a day on the farm to earn their maintenance, from 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. Dinner was served at 12:00 m. Classes were from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. The program of studies included: Bible History, Catechism, Hymns, and Psalms; German, Portuguese, and Latin; Brazilian History, World History, and Geography; Zoology, Arithmetic, and Drawing; Singing and other subjects.⁹²

The beginning of the Seminário Concórdia in Bom Jesus was justly compared with the beginning of the Concordia Seminary in Perry County, Missouri, by Dr. L. Fuerbringer, for it became just as vital for the future Brazilian District

⁹¹J. Hartmeister, Kirchenblatt, I (1 December 1903), 23. J. Hartmeister, ibid., I (1 January 1904), 37-38.

⁹²J. Hartmeister, "Bom Jesus," ibid., II (15 January 1905), 13.

as that of Perry County for the Missouri Synod.⁹³

The Organization of Conference Districts

Until 1903 the only connection between Lutheran congregations in Brazil was the Mission Director, the Rev. W. Mahler. In 1903 the first steps were taken to organize the Brazilian mission in a higher level than the congregational. In 1903 and 1904 three conference districts were organized. The Southern Conference District was organized at Bom Jesus from 20 to 22 April 1903, with the presence of the Rev. Messrs. F. Brandt of Morro Redondo; R. Mueller of São Pedro, H. Stiemke of Santa Eulalia, A. Vogel of Santa Coleta, J. Hartmeister of Bom Jesus, and W. Mahler the Director of Missions.⁹⁴ The Northwestern Conference District was organized in Jaguari on 9 November 1903 with the following pastors as members: R. Kern of Jaguari, J. Harder of Rincão São Pedro, H. Wittrock of Rincão dos Vales; P. Petersen of Alto Jacui, and W. Moeller of Toropi.⁹⁵ The Porto Alegre Conference District was organized in Porto Alegre on 5 and 6 April 1904 with the presence of the Rev. Messrs. W. Mahler, R. Mueller, H. Frehner, H. Klein, and J. Brutschin. It included the congregations of São Leopoldo,

⁹³L. F[uerbringer], Der Lutheraner, LX (19 January 1904), 22.

⁹⁴J. Hartmeister, CHIQ, XXII (January 1950), 167.

⁹⁵[W.] Moe[ller], "Konferenz in Jaguary," Kirchenblatt, I (1 January 1904), 38.

Dois Irmãos, Estancia Velha, Conventos, Conventos Vermelhos (Roca Sales), and Porto Alegre.⁹⁶ Rev. Brutschin returned to Germany in the same month, April 1904. His successor in Estancia Velha was the Rev. H. Klein.⁹⁷

Das Kirchenblatt

The third outstanding event of the period, 1900-1904, was the publication of a church periodical. The decision to publish a Missouri Synod church periodical in Brazil was taken in the United States by the Synodical convention of 1902, to enable its missionaries in Brazil to present the Missouri Synod's doctrinal position and church practice, to defend the Missouri Synod's missionary work against slanders of Brazilian periodicals, to increase the interest for the mission work in Brazil in the United States.⁹⁸ The Pastoral Conference of the Southern Conference District of 20 to 22 April 1903 decided to act upon the Synodical resolution. The Rev. W. Mahler was chosen to be the editor. The first number of the Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt fuer Sued-America was published in Porto Alegre on 1 November 1903. One of Mahler's aims was to defend the Missouri Synod's

⁹⁶H. W., "Porto Alegre," Kirchenblatt, I (1 May 1904), 100.

⁹⁷W. Mahler, "Pastor Brutschin," ibid., I (15 April 1904), 94.

⁹⁸Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1902, p. 72.

work in Brazil from unjust attacks and from slanders.⁹⁹

Another aim of the periodical was to bring the different Missouri Synod congregations, scattered in different areas of Rio Grande do Sul, into a closer relationship, to make them feel that they belonged together, to enable the other congregations to see whether accusations brought against one of them were true or not, to unite them in a true Lutheran Synod in Brazil.¹⁰⁰ W. Mahler was an able editor and writer who did not fear polemics but who also did not get so engrossed in them to forget the higher aims, the education of the readers in the Lutheran doctrines and church practices.

The Rev. L. Lochner's Visitation

One of the resolutions of the Synodical convention of the Missouri Synod in 1902 was to have a Synodical officer visit the Brazilian mission field.¹⁰¹ The president of the General Board for Home Missions, the Rev. L. Lochner, undertook the visitation trip. He left New York on 5 April 1904. In Rio Grande he was met by W. Mahler. Together they visited the different congregations following the same pattern, a

⁹⁹W. Mahler, "Vorwort," Kirchenblatt, I (1 November 1903), 1-2.

¹⁰⁰Ibid., pp. 1-3. W. Mahler, "Vorwort," ibid., II (1 January 1905), 1-2.

¹⁰¹Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1902, p. 73.

sermon by Lochner, voters' meetings, school visitation. In the South Lochner visited the congregations of São Pedro, Morro Redondo, Santa Eulalia, Santa Coleta, and Bom Jesus. He ended the visitation in the São Lourenço District on 15 May 1904. He then visited the Porto Alegre District, Estancia Velha, São Leopoldo, Porto Alegre. He did not visit the congregation of Dois Irmãos because of the bad condition of the road. On 6 June 1904 he started the visitation of the Northwestern Conference District. There Lochner studied the conditions in the congregations of Rincão dos Vales, Alto Jacui, Jaguari, Toropi, and Rincão São Pedro where the general Pastoral Conference was supposed to meet to see whether the moment for the organization of a new Synodical District had arrived.¹⁰² Lochner's report of the visitation to the next Synodical Convention was:

Das Resultat der Visitation war in allem Gemeinden ein befriedigendes. Sie zeigte, dass Gott die Predigt seines reinen Wortes in dem kurzen Zeitraum von nicht ganz vier Jahren reich gesegnet hat. Gott hat den Gemeinden Maenner geschenkt, die im rechten Sinn und Geist unter viel Selbstverleugnung treu und fleissig arbeiten.¹⁰³

¹⁰²Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1905, pp. 58-64.

¹⁰³Ibid., p. 62.

62

CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST TEN YEARS OF A NEW SYNODICAL DISTRICT

1904-1914

The Birth of a Synodical District

Upon request of the Board for Home Missions the Synodical convention of the Missouri Synod in 1902 decided that, as soon as convenient, the Board for Home Missions together with the president of Synod help the pastors and congregations in Brazil to form a District Synod. Experience in the Missouri Synod had shown that such action would be beneficial for their work.¹

The main objective of the Rev. L. Lochner's visitation was exactly this.² The Kirchenblatt announced that the most important topic to be discussed at the general pastoral conference which would end the Rev. L. Lochner's visitation, would be whether or not the time for the formation of a

¹Fuenfundzwanzigster Synodal-Bericht der Allgemeinen deutschen ev.-luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt als Zehnte Delegatensynode zu Milwaukee, Wis., im Jahre 1902 (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1902), pp. 69, 72.

²"Protokoll der ersten Versammlung des Brasilianischen Synodaldistrikts," Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt fuer Suedamerika, I (15 July 1904), 139. Hereafter cited as "Protokoll" and Kirchenblatt.

District Synod had come.³ Lochner talked of it in almost all the congregations during his visitation.⁴ With an attendance of eight pastors, eight lay delegates, one teacher and the Rev. L. Lochner the General Conference of pastors and lay delegates opened in the church of Rincão São Pedro at three o'clock in the afternoon on 23 June 1904.⁵ The Rev. L. Lochner was elected unanimously to preside over the meetings. In the first session the lay delegates presented their credentials. L. Lochner read the Synodical address. Its theme was, "Warum soll eine Synode bei Jesu Wort bleiben?"

The second session was held on Friday, 24 June 1904. After the opening devotion Lochner was asked to present the reasons for the organization of a District Synod. He did it. The strongest reason in favor of it was the experience of the Missouri Synod itself that having been organized by twelve pastors in 1847 became such a large Lutheran synod. The desire of the Missouri Synod was that the Brazilian Lutherans experience the same blessings. There should be no fear about future relations with the mother church. Relations with the Mission Board would not be

³[W.] Ma[hler], "Die Allgemeine Versammlung," *ibid.*, I (1 June 1904), 118.

⁴"Protokoll," *ibid.*, I (15 July 1904), 139.

⁵*ibid.*, p. 138.

changed and financial support would not stop. Another blessing that would follow would be the closer fellowship between the different congregations in Brazil. Following this exposition by Lochner a debate ensued concerning a request to the mother church about future relations between the new district and synod. A committee was elected to elaborate it.

Then the Rev. J. Hartmeister made the motion that the Evangelical Lutheran pastors and congregations form a separate District Synod of the Missouri Synod. The motion was adopted. The fifteenth district of the Missouri Synod had been born. The election of the officers, president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and visitors, followed. Unanimously were elected, the Rev. W. Mahler for president, the Rev. H. Klein for vice-president, the Rev. R. Kern for secretary, and Mr. Wilke for treasurer.

The subdivision of the new District into three visitation districts, or circuits, was the next step taken. The district president was instructed to take the necessary measures to have the district recognized by the Missouri Synod. The memorable second session ended with the selection of date, January 1905, and place, Jaguari, for the next District convention.

In the third session the visitors, circuit counselors, were elected: H. Klein for the Porto Alegre District, J. Hartmeister for the São Lourenço District, and J. Harder for

the Northwestern District. The Rev. J. Hartmeister then gave his report on the Institute.

In the fourth session, on 25 June 1904 the name of the district was chosen: Der Brasilianische District der deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten. A lay delegate made the motion that a request be sent to the theological faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, to offer an elective course in Portuguese.

The fifth and closing session was on Monday morning, 27 June 1904.⁶ In the closing ceremony W. Mahler expressed the gratitude the new district owed to the Rev. L. Lochner for his guidance and help.⁷

On 7 July L. Lochner left Rio Grande do Sul. He went to Buenos Aires and there took the first ship to London to survey the Missouri Synod's work there.⁸

The objectives of the Brazilian District were stated by W. Mahler, its first president as being: the gathering of congregations and the fostering of inner growth in these

⁶Ibid., pp. 137-143.

⁷J. Hartmeister, "Erste Versammlung des Brasilianischen Districts," Der Lutheraner, LX (2 August 1904), 246.

⁸[W.] Ma[hler], "Visitationsreise," Kirchenblatt, I (1 August 1904), 151.

congregations.⁹ The remainder of this study attempts to analyse how successfully the District met its objectives.

Geographic Expansion

The Southern District, in the Pelotas-São Lourenço area, did not see a noticeable expansion. Where five workers had been before only two remained.¹⁰ Because of expansion in other areas pastors were replaced by teachers in some congregations and the neighboring pastors took care of them.¹¹ The Jaguari area, almost directly west of Porto Alegre also did not develop noticeably. The Porto Alegre district was the only one of the three original conference districts that showed a marked external development. The numerical growth from about four thousand baptized members in 1904¹² to more than fifteen thousand souls in 1914¹³ is

⁹Zweiter Synodal-Bericht des Brasilianischen Distrikts der Deutschen Ev.-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt zu Jaguary, Rio Grande do Sul, Brasilien, vom 28. April bis zum 2. Mai 1905 (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1906), p. 4. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1905.

¹⁰[W.] Ma[hler], "St. Lourenço," Kirchenblatt, II (1 June 1905), 85.

¹¹Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1905, p. 85. W. Mahler, "St. Lourenzo," Kirchenblatt, III (15 February 1906), 29.

¹²Statistisches Jahrbuch der deutschen evangelisch-lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten fuer das Jahr 1904 (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1905), 122.

¹³Neunter Synodalbericht des Brasilianischen Distrikts

due to the fact that congregations in other areas of Rio Grande do Sul asked for Missouri Synod pastors and that the mission work among newly arrived immigrants was successful.

In 1904 the congregation of Conventos Vermelhos, later called Roca Sales, was directed to the Missouri Synod by its former pastor, and sent a call for a pastor.¹⁴ The Rev. H. Frehner who had previously been a pastor of the Riograndenser Synod, and after leaving it had been received into the Missouri Synod through a colloquy, accepted the call to Roca Sales,¹⁵ and also served the congregations of Arroio do Meio, Palmas, and Arroio Augusto.¹⁶ He was installed in Roca Sales on 20 November 1904.¹⁷ This was the first Missouri Synod congregation in the Alto Taquari region which later developed into a large field of several parishes. The Rev. H. Frehner, before a year had gone by, left the Missouri Synod to become a Roman Catholic and was substituted by the Rev. O. von Jutrzenka who also had shortly

der Deutschen Ev.-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt zu Sao Leopoldo vom 14. zum 20. Januar 1915 (n.p., n.d.), p. 9. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1915.

¹⁴[W.] Ma[hler], "Conventos Vermelho," Kirchenblatt, I (1 March 1904), 70.

¹⁵Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1905, p. 83.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷W. Mahler, "Einfuehrung P. Frehners in Convetos Vermelhos," Kirchenblatt, I (15 December 1904), 221.

before had been received into the Brazilian District of the Missouri Synod through a colloquy.¹⁸

In 1905 the pastor of Sitio, in the Santa Cruz area, who belonged to no synod retired because of a throat illness and asked for a successor from the Missouri Synod. The Rev. M. Frosch who had come from the United States in 1904 and was serving as assistant pastor in Porto Alegre accepted the call. He was installed in Sitio on the first Sunday after Trinity in 1905.¹⁹

In 1905 the congregation of Linha 8, Ijuí, in the northwest of the state, asked to be served by the Missouri Synod.²⁰ In November 1905 the newly arrived ministerial candidate, E. Mueller accepted the call to Linha 8, Ijuí.²¹ He was the first Missouri Synod pastor in the northwest of Rio Grande do Sul, about a hundred miles north of the Jaguari area. Ijuí opened the door to the new immigration regions in the northwest: Guarani, Santa Rosa, Santo Angelo, Tres Passos, and even across the Uruguai River into Argentina,

¹⁸Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1905, p. 83. "Protokoll des Kolloquiums zwischen den Pastoren Mahler und v. Jutrzenka," Kirchenblatt, II (1 December 1905), 181.

¹⁹Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1905, p. 83. H. St., "Sitio," Kirchenblatt, II (15 July 1905), 108.

²⁰Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1905, p. 84.

²¹[W.] Ma[hler], "Porto Alegre," Kirchenblatt, II (1 November 1905), 165.

the region where the Missouri Synod made the greatest progress in the following periods.²²

The missionary work of the Missouri Synod was started in Argentina also in the year 1905. The pastor of the La Plata Synod of San Juan, Entre Rios, intended to return to Germany. He desired to leave his congregation to a true Lutheran pastor. In this direction he maintained correspondence with the Rev. W. Mahler. The Rev. W. Mahler went to San Juan. In a congregation meeting on 25 June 1905 the congregation changed its constitution and declared that it was a member of the Brazilian District of the Missouri Synod.²³ The Rev. H. Wittrock accepted the call and went to San Juan, as first resident Missouri Synod pastor in Argentina, in October 1905.²⁴

The first Missouri Synod pastor who started to work east of Porto Alegre, in the Taquara region, was the Rev. H. Gruell, who accepted the call to Alto Rolante in 1906.²⁵

The beginning of the work in two new colonization areas

²²Luther-Kalender fuer Suedamerika auf das Jahr 1951, edited by A. Lehenbauer and P. Schelp (Porto Alegre, Brazil: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1951), p. 89. Hereafter cited as Luther-Kalender, 1951.

²³[W.] Ma[hler], "Ein neuer Erfolg," Kirchenblatt, II (1 August 1905), 115-116.

²⁴[W.] Ma[hler], "Porto Alegre," ibid., II (1 November 1905), 165.

²⁵[W.] Ma[hler], "Porto Alegre," ibid., III (1 December 1906), 180.

deserves to be mentioned. In 1909 the Rev. P. Weber started to serve the Guarani area in the northwest of the state,²⁶ and in 1911 the Rev. J. Busch was installed in the Erechim government colonization area.²⁷

After ten years of development the Brazilian district of the Missouri Synod continued to work in the south of Rio Grande do Sul only in the São Lourenço area. It had extended its work considerably in the northern half of Rio Grande do Sul to most of the areas where German immigration had occurred. Outside the borders of Rio Grande do Sul it had extended its work only to Argentina. There had been opportunities to start the work in Santa Catarina and Parana the states immediately north of Rio Grande do Sul, but neither the necessary manpower nor the financial backing had been available.²⁹ The pastors that entered the Brazilian field in this period, with the exception of the Revs. Messrs. H. Frehner, O. Jutrzenka, and K. Haupt, who entered through colloquies, came from the United States. They were: M. Frosch,

²⁶E. M[ueller], "Guarany," *ibid.*, VII (1 January 1910), 4.

²⁷[W.] Ma[hler], "Ein neues Arbeitsfeld," *ibid.*, VIII (1 August 1911), 116.

²⁸*ibid.* E. M., *ibid.*, VII (1 January 1910), 4.

²⁹J. Busch, "Versammlung des Brasilianischen Distrikts," *Der Lutheraner*, LXIX (8 July 1913), 217.

in 1904;³⁰ E. Mueller, J. Meyer, M. Fleckenstein, and E. Wegehaupt in 1905;³¹ G. Daschner, H. Gruell, and E. Wehrs in 1906;³² P. Rhode and L. C. Rehfeldt in 1907;³³ A. Enge in 1908;³⁴ P. Weber in 1909; W. Pennekamp, A. Heine, who had gone to Argentina in 1907, and A. Flor, a Brazilian graduate of Springfield, Illinois, in 1910;³⁵ J. Busch, E. McMannis, and Th. Strieter in 1911;³⁶ E. Heyner, Th. Gohlke, P. Klein, W. Kemner, and H. Mueller in 1912;³⁷ C. F. Lehenbauer, H. W. Petersen, and A. C. Reimnitz in 1913; W. A. H. Becker, W. L. Schroeter, E. Sprengler, and G. Lehenbauer in 1914.³⁸

³⁰[W.] Ma[hler], "Porto Alegre," Kirchenblatt, I (1 November 1904), 197.

³¹Ibid., II (1 November 1905), 165.

³²Ibid., III (1 December 1906), 180.

³³Ibid., IV (15 November 1907), 172.

³⁴"Versammlung des Brasilianischen Distrikts," Der Lutheraner, LXV (4 May 1909), 133.

³⁵[W.] Ma[hler], "Zwei neue Arbeiter fuer unsern Distrikt," Kirchenblatt, VII (15 March 1910), 45. [W.] Ma[hler], ibid., VII (15 December 1910), 189.

³⁶[W.] Ma[hler], "Porto Alegre," ibid., VIII (1 May 1911), 70.

³⁷"Aus Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LXVIII (23 July 1912), 237.

³⁸Luther-Kalender, 1951, pp. 149-151.

Difficulties and Drawbacks

The greatest hindrance to a faster expansion of the work was the lack of manpower.³⁹ New fields that sent calls could not be served, congregations that had been served for a short while, and when the pastor left, received no substitute for a long time, were lost, smaller parishes were amalgamated, forming larger parishes of several congregations making parish education extremely difficult even though pastors were overworked and some suffered breakdowns because not enough pastors were available.⁴⁰ In many cases this happened because candidates who received calls to Brazil did not accept them.⁴¹ More harmful for the work than the candidates who did not accept the call to Brazil were the pastors who went to Brazil, worked there only a few years, and some even only a few months, and returned to the United States without caring whether or not the congregations they had served would receive a successor or would be lost. With few exceptions the pastors who entered the

³⁹Dritter Synodal-Bericht des Brasilianischen Distrikts der Deutschen Ev.-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt bei Santa Cruz, Rio Grande, do Sul, Brasilien, vom 13. bis zum 18. Januar 1909 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1909), p. 19. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Brazilian District, Proceedings, 1909.

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 19-20. L. F[uerbringer], Der Lutheraner, LXIII (29 January 1907), 38. J. Busch, ibid., LXIX (8 July 1913), 217.

⁴¹Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1909, p. 19.

Brazilian field were young graduates of the Seminaries of St. Louis or Springfield, who had had no ministerial experience. Most of them stayed in Brazil just long enough to gain some experience. They were just starting to understand the situation when they left to be substituted by other inexperienced young men. This also hampered the spiritual growth of the congregations. From 1905 to 1914 twenty pastors left the Brazilian field, most of them to return to the United States, some went to Germany, some just left the ministry. In 1905 they were: J. Hartmeister, after three years; R. Kern, after less than three years; H. Zander and H. Frehner left the Synod. In 1907 the following left: F. Stiemke, after six years; H. A. Klein, after five years; M. F. Fleckenstein after two years. In 1908 W. Moeller left after six years; P. Rohde, after one year; J. H. Meyer, after two years of work in Brazil. In 1910 P. H. Petersen returned to the United States after seven years in Brazil. In 1912, E. Schulz returned after nine years, F. Brandt left the Missouri Synod after nine years of work; E. Wehrs left the Brazilian District after six years, H. Mueller, after a few months. A. Vogel left Brazil after twelve years of missionary work, R. Mueller, after eleven years; O. von Jutrzenka, after eight years; P. Klein after one year, in 1913. In 1914, E. Heyner left Brazil after two years of work, and the Rev. W. Mahler

after fourteen years of missionary work in Brazil.⁴²

A problem that hindered the work of the Missouri Synod in Brazil throughout the first fifty years of its history was the financial problem. Several factors contributed to make this problem a difficult one: the high cost of living in Brazil,⁴³ the instability of Brazilian currency,⁴⁴ the poverty of most immigrants and descendants in Brazil, some of them even suffering hunger,⁴⁵ the lack of education in Christian stewardship, spiritual indifference,⁴⁶ the almost constant debt in the treasury for the Mission in Brazil in the United States,⁴⁷ the very limited

⁴²Luther-Kalender, 1951, pp. 148-150.

⁴³Siebenundzwanzigster Synodal-Bericht der Allgemeinen Deutschen Ev.-Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt als Zwelfte Delegatensynode zu Fort Wayne, Ind., im Jahre 1908 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1908), p. 78. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1908.

⁴⁴W. Mahler, "Die Geldfrage in der suedamericanischen Mission," Der Lutheraner, LXI (5 December 1905), 388-389.

⁴⁵K. S., "Zwei Briefe aus Brasilien," ibid., LXIX (7 January 1913), 5-6.

⁴⁶Achtundzwanzigster Synodal-Bericht der Allgemeinen Deutschen Ev.-Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt als Dreizehnte Delegatensynode zu St. Louis, Mo., im Jahre 1911 (St. Louis, Mo.: Concordia Publishing House, 1911), p. 115. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1911.

⁴⁷L. Lochner, "Unsere brasilianische Mission," Der Lutheraner, LXIV (28 July 1908), 237.

budget of the District Mission Board.⁴⁸

Opposition to their work also made the life of pastors bitter in certain areas. In Germany periodicals equated the Missouri Synod pastors in Brazil with Jesuits.⁴⁹ In the Christliche Welt and in the Evangelisches Gemeinde-Blatt fuer die La Plata Synode the Missouri Synod's work was said to be a result of the Monroe Doctrine having North American industrial and political aims.⁵⁰ The strongest opposition came from the Riograndenser Synod, which tried to hinder the Missouri Synod's work with slander.⁵¹ Opposition from Roman Catholic quarters was less than could be expected in a predominantly Roman Catholic country. The Church of Rome directed its attacks especially against Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, and Episcopalians.⁵² Sometimes it tried to oppose Lutheran schools by placing a Roman Catholic school right next to them.⁵³ Especially from the side of the Riograndenser Synod, already in this period, opposition

⁴⁸K. S., ibid., LXIX (7 January 1913), 5.

⁴⁹L. F[uerbringer], ibid., LXII (4 December 1906), 406.

⁵⁰[W.] Ma[hler], "Verkehrte Gedanken und unnuetze Sorgen ueber die Taetigkeit der Missourier in Suedamerika," Kirchenblatt, II (1 February 1905), 19-21.

⁵¹[W.] Ma[hler], "Institutssache," ibid., II (15 June 1905), 91.

⁵²Idem, "Brasilien," ibid., III (15 January 1906), 14.

⁵³Idem, ibid., IV (15 August 1907), 125.

started to decrease.⁵⁴ An unprofitable strife would have been senseless when still in 1909, in the south of Brazil, of the 300,000 to 350,000 people of German origin, about 100,000 had somewhat regular spiritual guidance, 100,000 only sporadical, and 100,000 none whatsoever, and when in Rio Grande do Sul there were still about 40,000 Germans who had lived forty years without pastors or real teachers.⁵⁵

Not all congregations that asked for the services of the Missouri Synod remained inside that synod. The greatest loss of the period was that of the congregation of Estancia Velha. In 1908 the congregation set up a new congregational order according to which the pastor had to accept anybody for Holy Supper without asking for name or standing. This, and similar procedures that it requested, to which the pastor did not agree, forced him to resign. A part of the congregation did not agree with the new congregational order but they did not want to split the congregation and so the congregation that had called the Missouri Synod to Brazil severed relations with it.⁵⁶

In 1911 the congregation of Rincão São Pedro left the Missouri Synod because for too long no replacement had come

⁵⁴A. V., "Porto Alegre," ibid., V (15 January 1908), 11.

⁵⁵L. P[uerbringer], Der Lutheraner, LXV (27 July 1909), 232.

⁵⁶F. P[ieper], ibid., LXV (23 March 1909), 88. "Kurzer Bericht ueber die Synode in Sitio," Kirchenblatt, VI (1 February 1909), 21.

for the pastor that had left it.⁵⁷ For similar reasons the congregations of Não Me Toque and Kronental were lost in 1913-1914.⁵⁸

The Rev. Artur Enge was the first Missouri Synod pastor who died in Brazil. He died of typhus on 13 April 1913.⁵⁹

The Significance of the Congregation of Porto Alegre

It was the congregation of the president of the District, the Rev. W. Mahler. It experienced a steady growth, external and internal. The other congregations looked upon it for leadership because it was the capital.⁶⁰ The Concordia Publishing House agency was in its midst.⁶¹ In 1906 it already started a youth society, which met every Sunday afternoon and soon became a significant factor in the life of the congregation.⁶² In 1909 a Ladies Aid Society was organized.⁶³ The beginning of the work in Portuguese was

⁵⁷"Versammlung des Brasilianischen Distrikts," Der Lutheraner, LXVIII (1 October 1912), 314. A. Heine, "Synodalbericht," Kirchenblatt, IX (1 March 1912), 34-35.

⁵⁸Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1915, p. 8.

⁵⁹K. S., "Trauerbotschaft aus Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LXIX (10 June 1913), 189.

⁶⁰W. Mahler, ibid., LXV (9 March 1909), 69.

⁶¹Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1905, p. 86.

⁶²[W.] Ma[hler], Kirchenblatt, IV (15 August 1907), 125.

⁶³"Versammlung des Brasilianischen Distrikts," Der Lutheraner, LXV (4 May 1909), 133.

also made there. In 1911 Prof. M. Frosch started to hold services in Portuguese.⁶⁴ In 1914 the first Portuguese confirmation took place there.⁶⁵ The immigrants that came to Rio Grande do Sul entered through Porto Alegre. From 1908 on, the immigrant mission was a major concern of the pastor and professors in Porto Alegre. Through them hundreds of immigrants were directed to the Missouri Synod pastors in the colonization areas.⁶⁶ From 1907 on, the Seminary was also in the midst of the congregation in Porto Alegre.

Seminário Concórdia 1904-1914

The Institute begun in Bom Jesus in 1903 was discontinued early in 1905 with the return of the Rev. J. Hartmeister to the United States. In September 1904 the two year old daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Hartmeister died in an epidemic of whooping cough.⁶⁷ It was a hard blow especially for Mrs. Hartmeister, who broke down completely in the beginning of 1905. Hartmeister sent the five pupils of the Institute to their homes and returned to the United States with his family. His successor in Bom Jesus did not

⁶⁴Karl Schmidt, ibid., p. 254.

⁶⁵[W.] Ma[hler], Kirchenblatt, XI (1 May 1914), 67.

⁶⁶"Kurzer Bericht ueber die Synode in Sitio," ibid., VI (1 February 1909), 21.

⁶⁷[W.] Ma[hler], "Bom Jesus," ibid., I (15 October 1904), 188.

continue the work of the Institute.⁶⁸ Three of the former pupils of the Institute taught in parochial schools.⁶⁹ Two of them, A. Flor and E. Wille went to Springfield, Illinois, in 1907 where they studied until 1910.⁷⁰ They went back to Brazil in 1910 when A. Flor became a pastor. Later on, E. Wille also entered the ministry.⁷¹

The idea of having a Seminary in Brazil to train Brazilian pastors and teachers for Brazil did not die with Rev. Hartmeister's return. In the first District Synod of the Brazilian District after its foundation, in Jaguari, from 28 April to 2 May 1905, the problem was taken up. It was decided to reopen the Institute as soon as possible, this time in Porto Alegre. The congregation of Porto Alegre should again call an assistant pastor to teach at the Institute. Board was to be twenty mil reis a month. They were to maintain the Institute in this manner for three years and then ask the Synodical convention of the Missouri Synod to take over the Institute as its institution.⁷²

⁶⁸J. Hartmeister, "The Sowing of a Mustard Seed," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, XXIII (April 1950), 29.

⁶⁹J. Kunstmann, "Seminario Concordia zu Porto Alegre," Kirchenblatt, XII (1 December 1915), 178.

⁷⁰[W.] Ma[hler], ibid., IV (15 August 1907), 125.

⁷¹[W.] Ma[hler], ibid., VII (15 December 1910), 189. Luther-Kalender, 1951, p. 155.

⁷²Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1905, p. 86.

Because of the lack of pastors no assistant pastor was available for Porto Alegre right away, so, the reopening of the Institute had to wait. But the Rev. W. Mahler insistently continued to write about the matter in the Kirchenblatt.⁷³ With him it was a matter of conscience. It was his belief that if he and his companions were indifferent about the education of future pastors for Brazil, future generations would rightly accuse them of serious carelessness.⁷⁴

Finally on 1 May 1907 the Institute reopened in Porto Alegre with two pupils from São Lourenço, one from Ijuí, and one from Porto Alegre. Mahler took care of the teaching and his assistant, the Rev. E. Wegehaupt became the house-father. During the year three more students arrived. A house was rented on the Avenida Pátria for the Institute. In November 1907 Wegehaupt took charge of the Institute, and was elected director in 1908.⁷⁵ That year another house was rented on the Rua Ernesto Fontoura to provide more room.⁷⁶ Few students could pay the board so congregations

⁷³W. Mahler, "Institutssache," Kirchenblatt, II (15 June 1905), 91.

⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 91-92. [W.] Ma[hler], "Porto Alegre," ibid., II (1 November 1905), 165.

⁷⁵Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1909, p. 26. J. Kunstmann, Der Lutheraner, LXXII (14 March 1916), 105.

⁷⁶[W.] Ma[hler], "Porto Alegre," Kirchenblatt, V (1 February 1908), 19.

from the neighborhood of Porto Alegre sent farm products. A special fund for needy students was created.⁷⁷ The Rev. E. Wegehaupt and the parochial school teachers took care of the instruction.⁷⁸ An assistant professor, Prof. E. Boeckel was engaged to teach Portuguese.⁷⁹ The Synodical convention of the Missouri Synod of 1908 did not think it to be the proper time to raise the Institute to the level of Synodical institution but decided to let it remain as a District venture, nevertheless, Synod decided to pay the rent of the provisory quarters.⁸⁰ At the District convention in Sitio, 13 to 18 January 1909, the name of the Institute was determined: Seminário Concórdia.⁸¹ As the number of students reached nineteen in 1909⁸² a larger building was rented.⁸³ In 1910 seven of the twenty-two enrolled students were sent out to teach in parochial schools, some after one, some after two years of study.⁸⁴ In 1911

⁷⁷[E.] W[eghaupt], "Porto Alegre," ibid., V (1 April 1908), 52.

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1908, p. 78. J. Kunstmann, Der Lutheraner, LXXII (14 March 1916), 105.

⁸⁰Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1908, p. 78.

⁸¹Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1909, p. 27.

⁸²[W.] Ma[hler], "Porto Alegre," Kirchenblatt, VI (1 July 1909), 99.

⁸³E. C. Wegehaupt, "Konkordia-Seminar," ibid., VII (1 February 1910), 19.

⁸⁴[W.] Ma[hler], "Aus unserm Seminar," ibid., VII (15 March 1910), 44.

the Rev. M. Frosch was called to replace Mr. E. Bockel who had resigned.⁸⁵ For half a year Prof. Frosch had to conduct the teaching with only the help of instructors because that year president Wegehaupt went to the Synodical convention of the Missouri Synod to present a request of \$25,000 to buy the land and build adequate quarters for the Seminário. The rented building was old, wet, inadequate, and consumed much money in rent. Instead of the amount asked for, the convention voted \$5,000 for that purpose and allowed Direktor Wegehaupt to lecture before congregations in the United States to raise that sum,⁸⁶ in which he was partially successful.⁸⁷ The convention also decided to pay the salaries of the professors from the Synodical treasury.⁸⁸ By that time a joint-stock company had been formed by pastors and laymen in Rio Grande do Sul. They bought a piece of land, 425 x 120 feet, next to the church of the congregation in Porto Alegre at an advantageous price. As soon as the money for the building arrived from the United States,⁸⁹ the shares and the deed of the property were

⁸⁵[W.] Ma[hler], "Porto Alegre," ibid., VIII (1 April 1911), 52.

⁸⁶Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1911, p. 82.

⁸⁷Fr. S., "Unsere Missionen," Der Lutheraner, LXVIII (11 June 1912), 185.

⁸⁸Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1911, pp. 82, 116.

⁸⁹[W.] Ma[hler], "Aus unserm Seminar," Kirchenblatt, IX (1 July 1912), 100.

handed over to the Board of Control of the Seminary.⁹⁰

In April 1912 the first graduation took place at the Seminário Concórdia. Three students: Karl Roll, Friedrich Strelow, and Franz Hoffmann graduated as teachers and received their calls.⁹¹

The money for the building came in June 1912. The construction work was started on 2 July 1912. A special offering was raised among the congregations. The Seminary building, a modest wood building of 40 x 48 feet was dedicated on 29 September 1912.⁹² Vice-president Heine delivered the dedication sermon. The next day, almost ten years after the first Institute students started school in one half of a barn, classes opened in the first Seminary building, built for educational purposes.⁹³ When classes began in 1913, the Rev. W. Mahler was again teaching, to take something off of the load of Direktor Wegehaupt and Prof. Frosch.⁹⁴ That year the Seminary for the first time had a theological class. The curriculum for the theological students was

⁹⁰Idem, "Aus dem Seminar," ibid., XI (1 March 1914), 35.

⁹¹Idem, ibid., IX (1 July 1912), 100.

⁹²Ibid. J. Kunstmann, Der Lutheraner, LXXII (14 March 1916), 105.

⁹³[W.] Ma[hler], "Bericht der Aufsichtsbehoerde," Kirchenblatt, X (1 February 1913), 20.

⁹⁴E. C. Wegehaupt, "Konkordia Seminar zu Porto Alegre," ibid., XI (15 February 1914), 28.

three years of Pro-seminary and three years of theology, and for the normal course, five years altogether.⁹⁵

The End of the Period

According to the author the year 1914, with the beginning of the First World War and consequent interruption of German immigration mark the end of a period in the history of the Brazilian District of the Missouri Synod, and in the history of Lutheranism in Brazil in general. For the Brazilian District, a fact that can be called the closing event of the period is the return of the Rev. W. Mahler, the first resident Missouri Synod missionary in Brazil, its first Missionary Director, the first president of the Brazilian District of the Missouri Synod, and the first editor of the Kirchenblatt. All other pastors that had come to Brazil in 1901 and 1902 had already returned to the United States. The Rev. W. Mahler was president of the Brazilian District until 1910 when he resigned because the strenuous work had impaired his health, especially his nerves.⁹⁶ The Rev. A. Vogel succeeded him as president and was in his turn succeeded by the Rev. A. Heine in 1913.⁹⁷ The Rev. W.

⁹⁵E. C. Wegehaupt, "Konkordia Seminar," ibid., X (15 January 1913), 12.

⁹⁶W. Mahler, "Amtswechsel," ibid., VII (1 February 1910), 19.

⁹⁷Luther-Kalender, 1951, p. 164.

Mahler's family went to the United States in August 1913 because of his wife's illness. When she had to be operated, the Rev. W. Mahler left Rio Grande do Sul for the United States for the last time on 1 August 1914.⁹⁸ Mahler's leadership was one of the outstanding factors under God in the success of the Missouri Synod's mission work in Brazil. When he arrived in Brazil seventeen families belonged to the Missouri Synod, when he left, there were 15,000 baptized members.

⁹⁸Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, p. 9.

CHAPTER V

THE FIRST WORLD WAR: 1914-1918

General Character of the Period 1914-1918

The years 1914-1918 were difficult years for the Brazilian District of the Missouri Synod. Even though Brazil did not enter the war before 1917, the economic effects of the war were felt in Brazil from its beginning. This and other factors made the years of the First World War years of special hardship for the Lutheran pastors and congregations in Brazil. No considerable expansion was undertaken. During the latter part of the period the inner growth of most of the congregations was temporarily checked.

Situation in 1914

During the three years preceding the war the Brazilian District lost eight pastors, one through death and the others due to their return to the United States.¹ This meant that almost one-third of the more experienced missionaries was substituted by inexperienced recently graduated candidates,

¹Neunundzwanzigster Synodal-Bericht der Allgemeinen Deutschen Ev.-Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt als Vierzehnte Delegatensynode im Jahre 1914 zu Chicago, Illinois (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1914), p. 92. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1914.

who first had to learn to know the conditions in Brazil before their work could be fruitful. Some pastors who had resigned were not replaced at all. [In 1913 there were twenty-eight parish pastors in the Brazilian District, in 1915 there were only twenty-six. The number of congregations and preaching stations, however, increased considerably during the same period. In 1914 they numbered seventy-four; in 1915, one hundred and twenty-one.² This resulted in more superficial, sporadic, and inefficient pastoral care and parish education, even though the pastors over-exerted themselves and some had to resign because of impaired health.³ By 1915 the need for more pastors became desperate. The pastors and lay delegates present at the District convention in São Leopoldo in January 1915 sent a petition to the brethren in faith in North America, asking for at least seven new men and the necessary financial backing for their support. A description of the ten places that needed a pastor most urgently was sent along with the petition.⁴ Ten pastors went from the United States to Brazil from 1914 to 1918 and eight resigned from their positions in the Brazilian

²"Denkschrift," Der Lutheraner, LXXI (25 May 1915), 200.

³[A.] H[eine], "Aus Bruderkreisen," Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt fuer Suedamerika, XII (15 August 1915), 124. Hereafter cited as Kirchenblatt. "Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LXXI (27 April 1915), 165.

⁴"Denkschrift," ibid., LXXI (25 May 1915), 200-202.

field in the same period.⁵

Expansion during the Period

In the areas of Guarani and Erechim where the primeval forests had recently been populated by immigrants, the majority of them German-Russians, there was considerable expansion. Several new congregations and preaching stations were started. In the Guarani area the Rev. A. Lehenbauer, who arrived there in 1915, organized his parish in a model fashion. He instructed the lay teachers personally. Their efficient teaching in the several schools of the parish proved fruitful. Near the close of 1915 the Rev. C. Raschke started to work in Cerro Azul, in the same area. In 1919 E. Krieser became the first resident Missouri Synod pastor in Santa Rosa, the town which later became the center of Lutheranism in the northwest of Rio Grande do Sul.⁶ In the north of the state several congregations and preaching stations were founded by the Rev. J. Busch in the Erechim area.⁷ In 1914 he received the help of E. Sprengler and in

⁵Luther-Kalender fuer Suedamerika auf das Jahr 1951, edited by A. Lehenbauer and P. Schelp (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concordia), pp. 148-150. Hereafter cited as Luther-Kalender, 1951.

⁶A. Lehenbauer, Roughing it for Christ in the Wilds of Brazil (Zwickau, Germany: Johannes Herrmann, [1923]), pp. 1-33. We., "Porto Alegre," Kirchenblatt, XIII (15 January 1916), 12.

⁷J. B[usch], "Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LXXI (19 January 1915), 28.

1915 that of G. Wachholz.⁸ In the Alto Taquari area the large parish of Conventos asked for a Missouri Synod pastor.⁹ In 1916 the Rev. R. Gueths was installed there.¹⁰ The congregation of Paraiso, in Cachoeira, that formerly had belonged to the Riograndenser Synod asked for a pastor whom they received in the person of the Rev. W. A. Becker.¹¹

The War: Effects in 1914

The first World War had no direct political effects in Brazil before 1917. For a while it looked as if a revolution would take place because of the desperate economic situation, but none took place.¹² An economic crisis which existed before, became more serious after the beginning of the war; the price of food increased; laborers were dismissed or had their working hours reduced. Most members of the Missouri Lutheran congregations in the towns were wage earners. Missionaries also suffered when they

⁸J. Busch, "Marcellino Ramos und Barro," Kirchenblatt, XII (15 May 1915), 76.

⁹[A.] H[eine], Kirchenblatt, XII (15 October 1915), 157.

¹⁰K. F. Lehenbauer, "Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LXXIII (2 January 1917), 6.

¹¹[A.] H[eine], "Aus Bruderkreisen," Kirchenblatt, XII (15 January 1915), 12.

¹²F. Pf[otenhauer], "Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LXXI (5 January 1915), 8.

received only part of the promised support from the Mission treasury, and none at all for a while.¹³ This, however, did not hinder the external growth, for the number of congregations increased from 1914 to 1915 and again from 1915 to 1916.¹⁴

Prof. Johannes Kunstmann

Two noteworthy events of 1915 were the arrival of Prof. J. Kunstmann at the Seminário Concórdia in Porto Alegre, and the graduation of the first group of theological candidates at the same seminary.

The Synodical Convention of the Missouri Synod in 1914 ordered the establishment of a theological chair at Porto Alegre, as the third professorship of the Seminário Concórdia, at the request of the Board for Home Missions.¹⁵ Prof. J. Kunstmann, who had formerly been a professor in Australia and then president of the Free Church of Saxony,¹⁶ was expelled from Germany when the war began for being a British citizen. He was in the United States at the time

¹³E. Sprengler, "Versammlung des Brasilianischen Distrikts," *ibid.*, LXXI (13 April 1915), 140.

¹⁴*Ibid.* W. Pennekamp, "Versammlung des Brasilianischen Distrikts," *ibid.*, LXXII (12 September 1916), 350.

¹⁵Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1914, p. 96.

¹⁶E. P[ardieck], Der Lutheraner, LXIX (2 September 1913), 283.

when he was elected and accepted the call to the Seminário Concórdia in Porto Alegre.¹⁷ Prof. J. Kunstmann left New York with his family on 6 February 1915 and arrived in Porto Alegre on 3 March 1915. After a few days he started with the instruction of the theological class. He was installed as professor and president of the Seminário Concórdia on 14 March 1915.¹⁸ He made an excellent impression upon the pastors working in Brazil, most of them very young men. He soon became a leader in the district. He was the most prominent figure of the Brazilian district from his arrival until he broke with the Missouri Synod in 1922. Already in 1915 he made trips to different parts of Rio Grande do Sul giving lectures to arouse the interest of the congregations in favor of the Seminario Concordia.¹⁹

The First Lutheran Pastors Who Graduated in South America

Under the competent direction of Prof. J. Kunstmann the first theological students of the Seminário Concórdia completed their studies in December 1915. From 6 to 9 December they had the written examinations. They wrote a

¹⁷F. Pf[otenhauer], ibid., LXXI (5 January 1915), 8.

¹⁸G[raebner], ibid., LXXI (16 March 1915), 104.
G[raebner], "Unsere Brasilianische Anstalt," ibid., LXXI (22 June 1915), 247. V. F., "Porto Alegre," Kirchenblatt, XII (1 April 1915), 52.

¹⁹J. K[unstmann], "Vortragsreise," ibid., XIII (1 March 1916), 28.

sermon, a catechesis, an Old Testament and a New Testament exegesis, a Dogmatics and a Church History essay. On the tenth, the oral examination took place in the presence of several pastors and other guests. The same day the graduation service was held,²⁰ in which the five candidates received their diplomas. What makes this event of outstanding historical significance is the fact that these first theological graduates of Seminário Concórdia were at the same time the first Lutheran theological candidates who received their complete theological training in a Seminary in South America.²¹

The five young men were Evald Hirschmann, Wilhelm Doege, Kurt Raschke, Reinhold Gueths, and Berthold Ergang. Their background was typical of South American Lutherans at this time and shows the variety of background of the people among whom Missouri Synod missionaries worked in Brazil.

Ewald Hirschmann was born on 9 December 1888 at Lodz in Russian Poland. He migrated to Brazil in 1896. He lived in the São Lourenço area where he was a member of the São Pedro congregation. He attended the parochial school from 1900 to 1903. In October 1903 he entered the Institute at

²⁰J. K[unstmann], "Vortragsreise," *ibid.*, XIII (1 March 1916), 28.

²¹J. K[unstmann], "Konkordia-Seminar," *ibid.*, XII (15 November 1915), 172.

Bom Jesus. When the Institute was closed he taught in parochial schools until 1909 when he entered the Seminário in Porto Alegre. He again taught school in 1910-1911. In 1912 he returned to finish his theological studies.

Wilhelm Doege was born on 28 May 1890 in Sitio, Santa Cruz. He attended a private school for three years and was confirmed by a pseudo-pastor in 1903. In 1908, influenced by the Rev. M. Frosch, he entered the Seminário Concórdia. In 1909 he left the Seminário to teach school for two and a half years. Then he returned to complete his studies.

Kurt Raschke was born on 12 April 1889 in Leipzig, Germany. From his sixth to his fourteenth year he attended public school. He was confirmed in 1903 and afterwards attended business school. He migrated to Brazil in 1909, settling in Ijuí. From 1911 to Easter 1912 he served as assistant teacher in Guarani. Then he entered the Seminário to prepare himself for the ministry.

Reinhold Gueths was born on 10 August 1894 at São João, Santa Cruz. In 1900 his parents moved to Toropi. There he attended a private school and for four and a half years Pastor Moeller's school. He was confirmed in 1907. On 20 August 1907 he entered the Seminário. From January 1911 to May 1912 he taught school in the south of the state. Then he returned to the Seminário to finish his studies.

Berthold Ergang was born on 22 May 1894, in Russian Poland. He migrated to Brazil with his parents in 1899 and settled in Ijuí. He attended different schools for three

and a half years and in 1908 the Missouri Synod parochial school. He was confirmed by the Rev. E. Mueller in 1909. In February 1909 he entered the Seminário. In 1911 he taught school in Guarani and then returned to finish his studies.²²

With these five men the character of the Lutheran ministry in Brazil began to change. The ministry of North American pastors was, as a rule, temporary, even provisory, in many instances with the attention turned towards the United States with the idea of returning as soon as possible. Resignations were frequent. Volunteers to serve the church in Brazil were hard to find and harder to retain.²³ As a result, vacancies in Brazilian parishes were frequent and long. These, and too frequent changes of pastors, in many instances prevented a better understanding of the situation on the part of the pastors and resulted in a less efficient parish education. Pastors who had grown up and were trained in Brazil were more reliable. They served the church in Brazil for many more years than the average North American pastor who worked in Brazil, as is shown by the career of

²²J. K[unstmann], "Die Theologische Kandidaten vom Jahre 1915," ibid., XII (1 December 1915), 180-181.

²³Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1914, p. 91. Minutes of the 29th General Meeting of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, being the 14th Assembly of Delegates, and held in the year of our Lord 1914, at Chicago, Ill. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1914), p. 27.

the first five Brazilian trained pastors. B. Ergang received a call to Argentina and in 1950, at the time of the golden jubilee of the Missouri Synod's work in Brazil, was still active there. W. Doege served at Triunfo from 1916 to 1918, at Poço das Antas from 1918 to 1926, and from 1926 on, at Getúlio Vargas where he still was active in 1950. R. Gueths served in Conventos from 1916 to 1945 when he had to resign because of illness. E. Hirschmann served at Santa Clara do Ingáí from 1916 to 1921, at Santa Coleta from 1921 to 1937, at Bom Jesus from 1937 to 1940, and at Ajuricaba from 1940 to 1944, when he died. C. Raschke served at Colonia Pinheiro Machado (Serro Azul) from 1916 to 1946 and from 1946 on, at Ajuricaba, where he was still active in 1950.²⁴ Their entrance into the ministry was an important step taken towards the formation of an indigenous church.

President Pfothhauer's Visit in 1916

During the first fifty years of the Missouri Synod's work in Brazil, the only time that a president of the Missouri Synod visited Brazil was in 1916, when President F. Pfothhauer visited some congregations and attended the District Convention.

²⁴J. K[unstmann], "Jahresbericht des Konkordia-Seminars," Kirchenblatt, XII (15 December 1915), 186-188. Luther-Kalender, 1951, pp. 144, 151.

Several problems faced by the Brazilian District made such a visitation imperative.²⁵ The most serious of these problems had been the incompetent handling of the District treasury, which had brought about a shortage of funds of about twenty thousand mil reis by the end of 1915, according to the revision undertaken by Prof. J. Kunstmann.²⁶

Dr. Pfothenhauer arrived in Porto Alegre on 17 February 1916. There he spent two weeks holding conferences with the District Mission Board, with the District Revision Committee, with the Board of the Book Agency, with the Board of Control of the Seminary, with the Faculty of the Seminary, and with individual pastors. On 3 March he went to Santa Maria,²⁷ and then to Toropi, Sertão, and Vila Clara to visit the congregations in those places. On 11 March he traveled to Ijuí and from there to Sitio, Santa Cruz, to attend the District Convention that took place there from

²⁵Synodal-Bericht der Allgemeinen Ev.-Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt als Fuenfzehnte Delegatensynode im Jahre 1917 zu Milwaukee, Wis. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1917), p. 66. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, German edition, 1917.

²⁶Zehnter Synodal-Bericht des Brasilianischen Districts der Deutschen Ev.-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt zu Sitio, Santa Cruz, Rio Grande do Sul, Brasilien. Anno Domini 1916 (Porto Alegre, Brazil: Carlos Echenique, 1916), p. 35. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1916.

²⁷J. Neukuckatz, "P. Alegre," Kirchenblatt, XIII (15 March 1916), 44.

16 to 22 March 1916.²⁸

Several serious problems faced the thirty-one pastors, three Synodical teachers, and seven lay delegates that met at Sitio. One of the problems was that most congregations were contributing less than they could, or should, for the support of the pastors. Several causes were mentioned, the generally difficult economic situation of the country, the lack of Christian education and understanding on the part of most congregations, the lack of thankfulness for the ministry of the pure Gospel. The single most influential cause for the average low offerings for church purposes was the tax, or fee system introduced in Rio Grande do Sul by the pseudo-pastors, retained by the Riograndenser Synod, and generally accepted before the Missouri Synod pastors introduced free offerings. According to the tax system each house-father (house-fathers were the only contributors) member of a certain congregation paid the same amount that every other family in that congregation paid, whether rich or poor. The injustice of such a system was exposed by President Pfotenhauer, who was very surprised that such a system existed, because he had never before heard anything about this single greatest hindrance for the self-support of the congregations in Brazil. He said that not even a

²⁸Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1916, p. 3.
J. Busch, "Unsere diesjaehrige Synodalversammlung,"
Kirchenblatt, XIII (1 April 1916), 51-52.

government was so unjust to ask the same amount of taxes from everyone regardless of his income. The steps taken by the convention towards solution of the problem was to cut off part of the support of the congregations from which more was expected towards the support of their pastors. It was recognized, however, that many congregations were really poor and that they would have to be supported partially for a long time yet.

Other evils that plagued congregations were also discussed, such as the fact that some congregations refused to introduce communion announcement, and the fact that church attendance and Holy Communion participation were usually very weak. The Seminary and District treasury revealed that there had been a lack of order in the bookkeeping resulting in a shortage of funds equivalent to about \$5,000. Dr. Pfothenauer promised that the Synodical treasury would cover about three-fourths of that amount. A set of regulations was set up to prevent future disorder in the treasury. Dr. Pfothenauer assisted throughout the convention with timely advice and also presented an overview of the Missouri Synod's work in the United States and Canada. Prof. J. Kunstmann, who also presented the doctrinal essay, spoke of the work of the Lutheran Church in Europe, Asia, and Australia. Prof. J. Kunstmann was elected treasurer. The District President, the Rev. A. Heine resigned; the vice-president, the Rev. E. Mueller became president; Prof. J.

Kunstmann was elected vice-president. At the end of the convention Prof. J. Kunstmann, in the name of the Brazilian District, thanked President Pfothenhauer for his visit and for his help in solving the pressing problems. After attending the convention Dr. Pfothenhauer continued his visitation trip to Argentina.²⁹

Back in the United States Dr. Pfothenhauer gave a very favorable report on the work being done in Brazil, to the Synodical convention of the Missouri Synod of 1917:

At Synod's request President Pfothenhauer gave an oral report on his South American visitation. He spoke highly of the self-sacrificing work done by our missionaries in Brazil and Argentina, and declared the blessing of the Lord had rested upon their labors in abundant measure. All the men are overworked and the great need is for more laborers.³⁰

Direct Effects of the European War: 1917-1918

In Porto Alegre the first violent anti-German outbreak occurred on the dark day, 16 April 1917, immediately after Brazil had severed diplomatic relations with Germany. It should not be forgotten that the largest German group outside

²⁹W. Pennekamp, "Versammlung des Brasilienischen Distrikts," Der Lutheraner, LXXII (12 September 1916), 350. J. Busch, Kirchenblatt, XIII (1 April 1916), 51-52. Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1916, pp. 17-35.

³⁰Proceedings of the Thirtieth Convention of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States, Assembled as the Fifteenth Delegate Synod at Milwaukee, Wis., June 20-29, 1917 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1917), p. 38. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, English edition, 1917.

Germany and the United States lived in the south of Brazil. Stores and shops owned by Germans were burned by the mob, windows of houses where Germans lived were broken. The mob passed in front of the Seminário and the Lutheran Church but did not break one single windowpane, even though the lettering in front of the church was in German; a few minutes before this the mob had broken windows of the Methodist Church on the same street which had its lettering in Portuguese. Nothing happened to the Seminário, although the professors had been warned that it was on the black list and would be burned. The mob rule continued into the night. The next day the police took things in hand again.

A pastoral conference scheduled to meet in Porto Alegre on 18 and 19 April was not held. As the pastors arrived they were advised to return home again.

Other violent outbursts did not follow, but laws against the use of the German language were promulgated and enforced.³¹ In October 1917 the Brazilian government forbade the publication of periodicals in the German language and closed the schools where no Portuguese was taught. No sermons were to be preached in German. From November 1917 to April 1918 several pastors could not hold public services. Several

³¹J. K[unstmann], "Porto Alegre," Kirchenblatt, XIV (1 May 1917), 69. J. K[unstmann], "Janresberichte des Konkordia-Seminars 1917-1918," ibid., XV (1 February 1920), 17.

parochial schools were temporarily closed.³² The Kirchenblatt appeared for the last time during the war on the occasion of the Four Hundredth Anniversary of the Reformation, 31 October 1917, but even that number did not reach most of the subscribers because the Post Office by that time started to withhold publications in German. In its place a Portuguese periodical, the Mensageiro Luterano was published with an English supplement; the Portuguese part was edited by the Rev. L. C. Rehfeldt and the English by Prof. J. Kunstmann.³³

At the Seminário, Prof. M. Frosch had resigned at the end of 1916³⁴ but still taught at the Seminário until the end of 1917 when also Prof. E. C. Wegehaupt resigned to return to the United States. To fill Prof. M. Frosch's position the Rev. L. C. Rehfeldt was elected professor. He accepted the call and moved to Porto Alegre in January 1918.³⁵ At least thirty students were expected for the

³²Karl Schmidt, "Nachrichten aus Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LXXV (25 February 1919), 56.

³³J. K[unstmann], "Das Evangelisch-Luth. Kirchenblatt fuer Suedamerika," Kirchenblatt, XIV (1 October 1919), 172.

³⁴E. F. Mueller, "Amtliche Anzeige," ibid., XIV (1 February 1917), 21. Mo. Synod, Proceedings, German edition, 1917, p. 65.

³⁵J. K[unstmann], Kirchenblatt, XV (1 February 1920), 18.

year 1918.³⁶ On 11 January 1918, in the middle of the summer vacation, a piece of paper was handed to Prof. Kunstmann by a military officer with the order:

O Seminario Concordia está fechado de ordem da Polícia Militar, em vista de haver suspeitas de que não é cumprida a lei proibitiva do ensino em allemão. O seu fechamento foi determinado em 10 de Janeiro de 1918.³⁷

The officer who sent the order, General Mesquitas, retired the next day. All efforts by Profs. Kunstmann and Rehfeldt to have the order reversed were in vain.³⁸ The Seminary could not open for the schoolyear 1918. The theological and pedagogical students were sent out to serve temporarily as vicars.³⁹

Pastoral work was seriously hindered by the language laws from November 1917 to April 1918. Preaching in German was forbidden and when pastors tried to preach in Portuguese, churches remained empty because members did not understand it.⁴⁰ Congregational life practically stopped in most congregations for half a year. The pastoral work was restricted

³⁶F. Pfothenhauer, "Aus Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LXXIV (15 January 1918), 26.

³⁷"The Seminário Concórdia is closed by order of the Military Police, because it is suspected that the law forbidding teaching in German is not upheld." J. K[unstmann], Kirchenblatt, XV (1 February 1920), 18.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰F. Pfothenhauer, "Nachrichten aus Suedamerika," Der Lutheraner, LXXIV (26 March 1918), 113.

to visits and house services.⁴¹

The Rev. O. Voss, serving the parish of Rolante, with about one thousand souls, was forbidden to hold services in January 1918; from February to April he could hold only reading services. In May conditions returned to normal.

The Rev. J. Busch in the Erechim area had to close a school because of the language problem. He was permitted to hold only reading services in Portuguese.

The Rev. C. Wachholz in Marcelino Ramos could only hold reading services in Portuguese.

The Rev. G. Lehenbauer in Sitio could hold no services at all and had his school closed for two months. From February 1918 on he could have reading services.

The Rev. C. Lehenbauer in Arroio do Meio preached his last sermon on 4 October 1917 and for almost half a year could only hold reading services.

President E. Mueller, in Ijuí, could have no services at all for three months.⁴²

In Porto Alegre no services at all were permitted to be held from December 1917 to Palm Sunday 1918, from then on reading services were permitted. During the whole year

⁴¹E. M[ueller], "Praesidialbericht," Kirchenblatt, XV (1 January 1920), 5.

⁴²Karl Schmidt, "Nachrichten aus Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LXXV (25 February 1919), 56-57.

1918 Prof. J. Kunstmann took care of the congregation.⁴³

In the northwest of Rio Grande do Sul, a severe draught and a locust plague destroyed most of the crops and at the same time raised the cost of living considerably.⁴⁴

The theological candidates, that were supposed to go from the United States to Brazil in March 1918, could not leave New York because of the war.⁴⁵

From April 1918 on, the prohibition of the use of German was gradually lifted. Pastors could again hold reading services, and, after a while, to preach in German again.⁴⁶

Even the Seminário reopened, although the ordinance that had closed the school was never officially lifted. Prof. J. Kunstmann called back two of the five theological students who were serving as vicars. He started to instruct the two, B. Flor and R. Hasse in his own house from 7 April to mid-September 1918. They covered a year's program on an accelerated schedule. They graduated in September 1918, the second theological class to graduate. The three other

⁴³J. K[unstmann], "Porto Alegre," Kirchenblatt, XIV (1 October 1919), 172.

⁴⁴F. P[fothenhauer], Der Lutheraner, LXXIV (26 March 1918), 113.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶F. P[fothenhauer], "Nachrichten aus Brasilien," ibid., LXXIV (13 August 1918), 272.

theological students, August Drews, Emil Krieser, and W. Schwalenberg were instructed on an accelerated basis from September 1918 to February 1919, when they graduated. Prof. L. C. Rehfeldt started to instruct the seven students of the advanced Pro-seminary class in the Seminary building on 14 May 1918. They were not disturbed. On 4 November 1918 the Pro-seminary students had to be sent home for the influenza epidemic was starting to rage in Porto Alegre and all schools had to be closed.⁴⁷

The Beginning of the Luso Mission in Lagoa Vermelha

Until 1918 the missionary work of the Missouri Synod in Brazil had been conducted only among people of German origin. The last year of the First World War, however, saw the beginning of a unique development in the first half century of the Igreja Evangelica Luterana do Brazil, the beginning of its only exclusively Luso⁴⁸ Mission, in Lagoa Vermelha, Rio Grande do Sul.

Early in 1918 the Rev. Th. Strieter, of São Leopoldo, met the intendente⁴⁹ of Lagoa Vermelha during a train trip. The intendente became interested in the work and teachings

⁴⁷J. Kunstmann], Kirchenblatt, XV (1 February 1920), 18-20.

⁴⁸Luso-Brazilian, is a Brazilian of Portuguese origin, sometimes with some Indian or Negro blood.

⁴⁹Intendente is the equivalent of the mayor of a county.

of the Lutheran Church and spoke of the dissatisfaction of the people of his county with the Roman Catholic Church. He invited Strieter to give a lecture about the Lutheran Church in Lagoa Vermelha. Strieter and the Rev. E. Mueller, the president of the district, went to Lagoa Vermelha to survey the mission opportunities there, in order to report to the District Mission Board. They found no other Protestant church working there. They were very well received and their lecture was well attended. People showed interest in the work and doctrine of the Lutheran Church. New Testaments were distributed. Strieter and Mueller were invited to come again to start a Lutheran Mission. Later, Strieter, this time accompanied by the Rev. J. Busch, again visited Lagoa Vermelha to prepare the field for the establishment of a mission. The District Mission Board, that met from 12 to 14 September 1918, decided to start the Luso Mission. That same month R. Hasse, a born Brazilian, who knew Portuguese as well as German, graduated from the Seminário. He accepted the call to start the Luso Mission and went to Lagoa Vermelha in October 1918.⁵⁰ The development and eventual failure of that mission belongs to the next period.

⁵⁰H. K., "Unsere lusobrasil. Mission in Lagoa Vermelha," Kirchenblatt, XV (15 January 1920), 9-12. F. Pf[otenhauer], "Nachrichten aus Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LXXIV (13 August 1918), 272-273. L. F[uerbringer], "Aus Suedamerika," ibid., LXXV (16 December 1919), 406.

107

CHAPTER VI

DEVELOPMENTS IN THE TWENTIES: 1919-1930

Survey

The prohibition of the use of the German language from the pulpit and in the schools had been too short to have permanent results. After it was lifted the pastoral work was carried out again almost exclusively in German. Despite the prohibition and the hatred against everything German, no pastor had suffered bodily harm, no church property had been damaged.¹ In 1919 conditions returned to normal. The Kirchenblatt was again published.² In a short time it had more subscribers than it had had before the war. In 1925 its edition reached 2,000.³ But in many parishes half a year without regular services had disaccustomed the members from regular church attendance. To many pastors it seemed that the hard won ground in parish education had been lost

¹Proceedings of the Thirty-First National Convention of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, assembled as the Sixteenth Delegate Synod at Detroit, Mich., June 16-29, 1920. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1920), p. 55. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, English edition, 1920.

²J. Kunstmann, "Das Evangelisch-Luth. Kirchenblatt," Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt fuer Suedamerika, XIV (1 October 1919), 172. Hereafter cited as Kirchenblatt.

³W. Rehr, "Aus Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LXXXII (16 March 1926), 95.

again and that the same hard fight against indifference toward church and communion attendance had to be fought all over again. It seemed that they had to start their work from the beginning again.⁴

The major events in the external development of the period 1919-1930 were, the failure of the Luso Mission in Lagoa Vermelha, and the success in the expansion to the states of Santa Catarina, Paraná, and Espírito Santo. Fruitless meetings about the possibility of church fellowship were held with another Lutheran Synod of Santa Catarina and Paraná in 1920.⁵ The political climate was one of relative unrest during the period. It culminated in a revolution in 1930. This revolution, which resulted in a dictatorship is taken to mark the end of the period.

The Luso Mission in Lagoa Vermelha

In October 1918, the Rev. R. Hasse established residence in Lagoa Vermelha, a town in the north of Rio Grande do Sul, where the German element was almost nonexistent among the population. The mission work was carried out completely in

⁴Einunddreissigster Synodalbericht der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt als Sechzehnte Delegatensynode im Jahre 1920 in Detroit, Mich. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1920), p. 122. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, German edition, 1920.

⁵L. F[uerbringer], "Aus Suedamerika," Der Lutheraner, LXXV (16 December 1919), 406.

Portuguese among Luso-Brasilians⁶ of Roman Catholic background. At first services were held in a movie theater. A mission school was started. The Rev. Th. Strieter was called to be its director in 1919. He stayed there until 1921 when he returned to the United States.⁷ For a while the school had seventy pupils. R. Hasse began to preach in the neighboring towns. For some time he preached in seven different places.⁸ He had high hopes for Vacaria and Bom Jesus. The young mission suffered a very serious blow when in July 1920 a very promising young member was murdered by political opponents while fulfilling his office of subintendente.⁹ The Rev. C. J. Wacholz substituted for Th. Strieter in Lagoa Vermelha in 1921. He directed the school there until 1924 when he returned to the United States. Also in 1921 the candidates C. J. Mundel and Oct. Schueler filled the places of Bom Jesus and Estancia Velha, respectively.¹⁰ The Rev. C. J. Mundel stayed only two years

⁶See Chapter V, n. 48, p. 105.

⁷L. F[uerbringer], Der Lutheraner, LXXV (16 December 1919), 406. A. Kramer, "Aus Brasilien," ibid., LXXVI (27 January 1920), 23.

⁸C. F. Lehenbauer, "Aus Brasilien," ibid., LXXVII (25 January 1921), 20.

⁹Ibid., p. 21. Subintendente was a high county officer.

¹⁰C. F. L[ehenbauer], "Porto Alegre," Kirchenblatt, XVI (1 August 1921), 116. This Estancia Velha is in the Lagoa Vermelha area.

in the Luso Mission and then accepted a call to another parish.¹¹ So, for a while, four pastors were working full time in the Luso Mission when the total number of Missouri Synod parish pastors working in Brazil was thirty-seven.¹²

R. Hasse organized a congregation in Lagoa Vermelha. In 1922 an adequate building was constructed to house the missionaries and the school there.¹³ Until the end of 1924 thirty-nine people, mostly adults had been confirmed, but only twenty-seven of them still belonged to the congregation in October 1924.¹⁴ The optimism that was shown in the beginning faded away. Many times the missionary had to go from house to house to call the people to the services. Services had to be cancelled because no hearers came. From 1925 on the Rev. O. Schueler was the only missionary left at that place, and in 1929 he also left. Since then, until the present time [1962], no Missouri Synod pastor has resided in Lagoa Vermelha.¹⁵

¹¹C. J. Mundel, "Bom Jesus da Vaccaria," Kirchenblatt, XXX (15 August 1935), 124.

¹²Statistical Year-Book of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the Year 1922 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1923), p. 36.

¹³Oct. Schueler, "Lagoa Vermelha," Kirchenblatt, XVIII (15 February 1923), 20. (23)(?)

¹⁴Lbf., "Unsere Lusobrasilianer-Mission," Der Lutheraner, LXXX (28 October 1924), 387-388.

¹⁵O. Schueler, "Lagoa Vermelha," Kirchenblatt, XX (15 May 1925), 77-78. Achtzehnter Synodalbericht des Brasilianischen Distrikts der Ev. Lutherischen Synode von Missouri,

To explain the failure of the Luso Mission in Lagoa Vermelha several causes can be mentioned. The youth and inexperience of most of the missionaries, the opposition of the Roman Catholic Church, the opposition of Freemasons, for even the first president and treasurer of the congregation was lost to the lodge, and similar factors.¹⁶ According to the author of this study one of the main causes was the Revolution of 1923. The whole region was made unsafe by revolutionary groups. The members of the young mission took sides either for the state government or against it.¹⁷ In 1925 R. Hasse reported that the revolution was in its third year and that almost all male members were under arms, that, therefore, church attendance was very poor.¹⁸

In the first fifty years of its history no second attempt was made by the Brazilian District of the Missouri Synod to

Ohio und andern Staaten. Versammelt zu Porto Alegre vom 12. bis 18. Februar 1930 (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1930), p. 97. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1930.

¹⁶Lbf., Der Lutheraner, LXXX (28 October 1924), 387-388.

¹⁷Ibid. Vierzehnter Synodalbericht des Brasilianischen Distrikts der Ev.-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten. Versammelt zu Erechim, Rio Grande do Sul, vom 1. bis zum 7. Mai 1924 (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1924), pp. 56, 65. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1924.

¹⁸Fuenfzehnter Synodalbericht des Brasilianischen Distrikts der Ev.-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio, und andern Staaten. Versammelt zu Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul, vom 22. bis zum 28. April 1925 (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1925), p. 61. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1925.

begin an exclusively Luso Mission in Brazil.

Negro Mission in the South of Rio Grande do Sul--1919

The Rev. August Drews started a much more modest but more successful mission in the language of the country in the Canguçu area in 1919. At first he held services in the house of a negro, Valério Antonio Alves, whose son went to the Seminário Concórdia and became the first colored Lutheran pastor in South America. A mission friend, Mr. Emil Will, donated a well-situated piece of ground on which a chapel was erected. In 1927 the mission numbered five preaching stations and a parochial school with twenty-five pupils. In 1930, at the end of the period, it was still growing.¹⁹

The Beginning in the State of Santa Catarina--1921

In the 1920s the Missouri Synod's missionary work expanded to other states of Brazil. Following several calls from different areas in the interior of Santa Catarina, the Missouri Synod pastors first visited, then settled in Santa Catarina in the early 1920s.

The first regular preaching station in Santa Catarina was in the parish of Marcelino Ramos, Rio Grande do Sul, near the border of Santa Catarina, where the Rev. C.

¹⁹Aug. Drews, "Aus unserer brasilianischen Negesmission," Der Lutheraner, LXXXIII (11 October 1927), 349-350.

Wachholz and after him, W. Rehr worked. Early in 1921 the preaching station Bom Retiro, in the south-central part of Santa Catarina is mentioned as part of Rehr's parish.²⁰

In the southeast of Santa Catarina, in the Cresciuma area, a Mr. Robert Maier had received the Kirchenblatt from friends in Erechim. He maintained correspondence with the Rev. J. Busch in Erechim, telling him that several Lutheran families lived without spiritual care in Cresciuma (Araranguá). This was communicated to the Mission Board in Porto Alegre. In January 1921 the Rev. Messrs, Th. Strieter and O. Voss undertook an exploratory trip by horse from Rolante, Rio Grande do Sul, to Cresciuma, Santa Catarina, about two hundred miles north. They rode on very primitive trails. They found Robert Maier in Cresciuma (Araranguá), and also other Lutherans. They led services there, baptized a child and conducted three marriage ceremonies.²¹ Vicar E. Neuman visited the same area in June 1921. In August 1921 candidate Reinhold Lang, the first Missouri Synod resident pastor in Santa Catarina was installed in Cresciuma (Araranguá).²²

²⁰J. B[usch], "Parochie Marcellino Ramos," Kirchenblatt, XVI (15 May 1921), 78.

²¹O. H. Voss, "Eine Missionsreise," ibid., XVI (15 February 1921), 28-29.

²²R. Lang, "Parochie Cresciuma, Sta. Catharina," Kirchenblatt, XVII (1 July 1922), 104.

The Rev. E. McMannis who was in Marcelino Ramos from 1922 on, undertook several exploratory trips into Santa Catarina, in the Chapecó area, where he found several immigrants interested in forming congregations. In 1925 he traveled through the forest in rain and cold in response to calls from difference places.²³ Later on, several Lutheran congregations were founded in that area. The first Lutheran pastor in the region was W. Kuehn who started to work in Erval in 1925.

A mission friend in the United States called the attention of the Mission Board in Porto Alegre to the fact that several Lutheran families were living in the northwest of Santa Catarina, in the Blumenau area.²⁴ Rehr visited the area in 1925.²⁵ In 1928 W. Wilde took residence in Trombudo Central, as the first Missouri Synod pastor in that area.²⁶

In the extreme southwest of Santa Catarina, in Porto Feliz (Mondai), some Lutherans who had moved there asked for pastoral care. In 1926 the Rev. A. Lehenbauer visited

²³C. F. Lehenbauer, "Aus unserer kirchlichen Arbeit in Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LXXXI (21 July 1925), 238.

²⁴Ibid.

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Luther-Kalender fuer Suedamerika auf das Jahr 1951, edited by A. Lehenbauer and P. Schelp (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1951), p. 154. Hereafter cited as Luther-Kalender, 1951.

the area.²⁷ Two months after his first visit he went there again to stay with those people for three months. A congregation was organized. The first resident pastor, W. A. Becker, arrived there in 1928.²⁸

The Beginning in the State of Paraná--1921

Paraná lies north of Santa Catarina and south of São Paulo. In the south of Paraná the government had opened a new colonization area. Hundreds of German immigrants and also farmers from Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina settled there in the forest. Mr. Joseph Mundel, a member of J. Busch's congregation at Rio do Peixe moved to that region, to Linha da Areia, near Cruz Machado. Together with some neighbors he asked for a pastor. Early in 1920 J. Busch, C. Wachholz, and district president E. Mueller visited the area for the first time. The first church service there was held at Mr. Joseph Mundel's house on 9 February 1920. In September 1921 candidate G. J. Beck was installed at Cruz Machado by J. Busch and so became the first Missouri

²⁷A. Lehenbauer, "Schnelle Ernte," Der Lutheraner, LXXXIII (4 January 1927), 4. J. T. M[ueller], "Unsere Arbeit in Suedamerika," ibid., LXXXII (12 October 1926), 343.

²⁸A. Lehenbauer, "Porto Feliz," Kirchenblatt, XXIII (1 July 1928), 100.

Synod pastor in Paraná.²⁹ G. Wilde succeeded him in 1926.³⁰ Cruz Machado remained the only Missouri Synod parish in Paraná throughout the 1920s.

The Kunstmann Crisis--1922

During the first fifty years of its history no pastor of the Missouri Synod in Brazil, trained at the Seminary in Porto Alegre, or in the United States, left the Missouri Synod to become pastor in another denomination. Only once was there a split involving pastor and congregation of the Missouri Synod. In fact, two pastors with their respective parishes left the Missouri Synod in 1922.

It was the most serious internal crisis that the Igreja Evangélica Luterana do Brasil experienced from 1900 to 1950.

Prof. J. Kunstmann soon after his arrival in 1915 became the outstanding leader of the Brazilian District of the Missouri Synod. He came to Porto Alegre as President of the Seminário Concórdia. Already in 1916, on the occasion of the district convention, he was elected vice-president of the district and treasurer of the district. At the time most of the pastors were very young and ready to follow an

²⁹J. B[usch], "Cruz Machado, Paraná," ibid., XVI (15 October 1921), 156. G. J. Beck, "Cruz Machado und Linha da Areia," ibid., XVII (1 October 1922), 152-153.

³⁰Luther-Kalender, 1951, p. 154.

experienced, intelligent, more mature leader.³¹ At the end of that convention it was Kunstmann who gave the speech of praise and thanks to Dr. Pfothenhauer, president of the Missouri Synod.³² Prof. J. Kunstmann was re-elected vice-president and treasurer of the district in the district convention of 1919. On that occasion he gave a brilliant speech about the beginning, expansion, and work of the Missouri Synod in the whole world.³³ In 1920 he was instrumental in the acquisition of an adequate campus for the Seminário Concórdia. But at the same time he was collecting damaging data which he used in a slanderous manner against most of the Missouri Synod pastors in Brazil. He wrote a fifty-four page letter in a slanderous attack against the pastors to Dr. Pfothenhauer with the date 10 January 1920.³⁴ His personal grudges against the Missouri Synod leaders dated already from his Australian days.

In April 1920 the district president E. Mueller went to the United States and Prof. J. Kunstmann took over the presidency pro tempore. In this manner he became the first

³¹W. Pennekamp, "Versammlung des Brasilianischen Distrikts," Der Lutheraner, LXXII (12 September 1916), 350.

³²Ibid.

³³A. Kramer, "Aus Brasilien," ibid., LXXVI (27 January 1920), 23-24.

³⁴Ibid., p. 23. L. Wentzel, et al., "Bericht ueber den Fall Herrn Prof. Kunstmanns," Kirchenblatt, XVII (15 May 1922), 75.

and only person to exercise the presidency of the district, the presidency of the Seminary and the office of treasurer of the Brazilian District.³⁵ On the occasion of the district convention of 1921 J. Kunstmann acted as president because E. Mueller had not yet returned, and was then elected president of the District.³⁶ An event that took place in St. Louis, Missouri, in April 1921 may have been of importance for the subsequent break of J. Kunstmann with the Missouri Synod. J. Kunstmann's name appeared among the candidates for a professorship at the Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. The professor elected was W. Arndt.³⁷ It is reasonable to conjecture that this was a personal factor that contributed to his attack on the Missouri Synod. Rev. L. Wentzel who had known Prof. J. Kunstmann in Australia came to work in Brazil.³⁸

After the return of E. Mueller from the United States to Porto Alegre, a clash occurred between him and Kunstmann.³⁹

³⁵E. F. Mueller, "Amtliche Anzeigen," *ibid.*, XV (1 May 1920), 69.

³⁶J. Busch, "Versammlung des Brasilianischen Distrikts," *Der Lutheraner*, LXXVII (26 July 1921), 230-231.

³⁷C. C. Schmidt, "Verzeichnis der Kandidaten fuer die neue Professur in St. Louis, Mo.," *ibid.*, LXXVII (5 April 1921), 112. Fr. E. Brauer, "Wahlresultate," *ibid.*, LXXVII (3 May 1921), 144.

³⁸J. K[unstmann], "Ijuhy," *Kirchenblatt*, XVI (1 October 1921), 148.

³⁹L. Wentzel, et al., *ibid.*, XVII (15 May 1922), 76.

On 21 December 1921 J. Kunstmann wrote a letter to Dr. Pfothenhauer requesting "\$20,000, respectively \$25,000" from the Missouri Synod. He believed that the Missouri Synod owed him this amount.⁴⁰ He made several threats against the Missouri Synod at the same time.⁴¹ For a short while J. Kunstmann and E. Mueller were reconciled and both promised, in writing, to resign from their position in the Brazilian District and to leave the country. Kunstmann's written promise carried the date 18 February 1921.⁴² Shortly afterwards E. Mueller called a voters' meeting of Christ Congregation in Porto Alegre and resigned. In the same meeting the congregation called J. Kunstmann to be its vacancy pastor by a vote of twenty-eight against six. He accepted this call and this actually constituted the break. The synodical officers present, including the Rev. August Burgdorf, were not allowed to speak.⁴³

On 10 and 22 March 1921 Kunstmann defended his position and his break with the Missouri Synod in the Neue Deutsche Zeitung. From 1 April 1921 on, he published an opposition church periodical called Evangelisch-Lutherischer Kirchen-

⁴⁰J. Busch, "Praesidiales," ibid., XVII (1 March 1922), 40.

⁴¹L. Wentzel, et al., ibid., XVII (15 May 1922), 76.

⁴²Ibid. J. Busch, ibid., XVII (1 March 1922), 40.

⁴³L. Wentzel, et al., ibid., XVII (15 May 1922), 76.

bote fuer Brasilien.⁴⁴

J. Kunstmann's son-in-law, the Rev. P. Evers who had graduated from the Seminary in Porto Alegre in December 1921,⁴⁵ stood by his father-in-law and left the Missouri Synod with his parish of Linha Brasil, Rio Grande do Sul.⁴⁶

The district convention examined Kunstmann's case for two full days. A special committee, presided over by the Rev. L. Wentzel, presented an extensive report on the case. The committee found J. Kunstmann unworthy of the office of pastor.⁴⁷ This report was unanimously accepted by the convention on 1 May 1922.⁴⁸ About half of the pastors present at the convention had received almost their complete theological training from Prof. J. Kunstmann.

The same convention also decided that from then on no

⁴⁴Ibid. Evangelisch-Lutherischer Kirchenbote fuer Brasilien, I (1 April 1922). According to the author this periodical does not contain significant material for the history of the Igreja Evangélica Luterana do Brasil.

⁴⁵J. K[unstm]ann, "Konkordia Seminar," Kirchenblatt, XVI (15 December 1921), 186-187.

⁴⁶Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1924, p. 10.

⁴⁷L. Wentzel, et al., Kirchenblatt, XVII (15 May 1922), 76.

⁴⁸Dreizehnter Synodalbericht des Brasilianischen Distrikts der Ev.-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten versammelt zu São Leopoldo, Rio Grande do Sul vom 26. April bis zum 2. Mai 1922 (Porto Alegre: n.p., 1922), pp. 53-61. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1922.

Seminary professor could be president of the district at the same time.⁴⁹

The eighteen voting members of Christ Church, who did not agree with Kunstmann's actions and whose protests had not been considered, asked Prof. P. Schelp for pastoral services. They founded a separate congregation. At first they called themselves Die Erste Evangelisch-Lutherische Christus-Gemeinde in Porto Alegre, and soon afterwards, Evangelisch-Lutherische St. Paulus-Gemeinde. Professors P. Schelp and L. C. Rehfeldt served the congregation until October 1922. In June 1922 the congregation called the Rev. W. Rehr, who accepted the call as pastor and was installed on the seventeenth Sunday after Trinity, 1922.⁵⁰ At first services were held in a private home. Soon a church was built. It was dedicated on the eighth Sunday after Trinity, 1924.⁵¹ Under the leadership of able pastors and dedicated laymen St. Paul's congregation became one of the leading congregations in the Brazilian District.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 65.

⁵⁰P. Schelp, Jubilaeumsschrift der Ev. Luth. St. Paulus-gemeinde zum Gedächtnis der 25 Segensjahre Missourisch Luth. Gemeindegemeinschaft in Porto Alegre 1902 (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concordia, n. d.), pp. 32-37.

⁵¹W. R., "P. Alegre," Kirchenblatt, XIX (1 September 1924), 132.

Casa Publicadora Concórdia--1923

One of the noteworthy events of the decade was the founding of a religious publishing house by some pastors and laymen in Porto Alegre, in 1923.

Its beginning can be traced to 1905 when the Concordia Publishing House of St. Louis, Missouri, established an agency in Porto Alegre. The first book agent elected by the district was teacher H. Wilke.⁵² A step forward was taken about 1910 when the Louis Lange Publishing Company, of St. Louis, answering Prof. E. Wegehaupt's efforts, presented a small printing press to the Brazilian District.⁵³ Minor printing jobs were done at the Seminário Concórdia from then on.

The book agency was not financially successful. In 1921 it showed a deficit of three thousand mil reis.⁵⁴ To correct this situation early in 1922 Mr. Guilherme Goerl was nominated book agent.⁵⁵

⁵²Zweiter Synodal-Bericht des Brasilianischen Distrikts der Deutschen Ev.-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt zu Jaguary, Rio Grande do Sul, Brasilien, vom 28. April bis zum 2. Mai 1905 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1906), p. 86.

⁵³P. S[chelp], "Casa Publicadora Concordia," Kirchenblatt, XXV (1 March 1930), 36.

⁵⁴Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1922, p. 62.

⁵⁵J. Busch, "Buecheragentur," Kirchenblatt, XVII (1 March 1922), 40.

On 12 April 1923, on the occasion of the pastoral conference of the Porto Alegre Circuit, some of its members decided to found a Stock Publishing Company.⁵⁶ Slowly they raised the necessary money. Mr. G. Goerl was employed full time. They bought inadequate quarters at first, then more adequate ones, and also the machinery of a typographical house whose owner had died. Soon also a bindery was established.⁵⁷ In 1926 it was printing the Kirchenblatt, the Mensageiro Lutheranano, the Luther-Kalender, a family annual that appeared for the first time in 1925, the Brazilian District Synodal-Bericht, textbooks for the parochial schools, hymnals, tracts, and other publications.⁵⁸

The Jubilee--1925

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the Missouri Synod's work in Brazil was celebrated with special solemnities at the district convention at St. Paul's Church in Porto Alegre 22 to 28 April 1925.⁵⁹ Special services were held in the

⁵⁶E. E., "Einiges ueber die Typographische Aktiengesellschaft und die Casa Publicadora Concordia," ibid., XXVIII (15 October 1933), 155-156.

⁵⁷J. T. M[ueller], "Casa Publicadora Concordia," Der Lutheraner, LXXXVI (6 May 1930), 154.

⁵⁸P. S[chelp], "Casa Publicadora Concordia," Kirchenblatt, XXI (15 February 1926), 26-27.

⁵⁹W. Rehr, "Versammlung des Brasilianischen Distrikts," Der Lutheraner, LXXXI (1 September 1925), 287.

congregations throughout the district. A book describing aspects of the history of the Brazilian District was published with the title Fuenf und zwanzig Jahre unter dem Suedlichen Kreuze.⁶⁰

The Beginning of the Waltherliga--1925.

Very early pastors founded youth associations. The youth association of the congregation in Porto Alegre dated from 1906.⁶¹ In some cases pastors organized church choirs, which developed into youth associations. Until 1925 every youth group worked, worshipped, and played separately. Because of the small number of members and the lack of fellowship with other groups some of the societies became discouraged and stopped meeting.⁶² The first step toward the formation of a wider association that would unite the separate groups was taken on 30 May 1925 when a group of young people of St. Paul's congregation of Porto Alegre went to Harzpikade (Arroio da Bica). Together with the youth group of that congregation they formed a young people's association, for which they chose the name Waltherliga. The first officers elected by the new association

⁶⁰25 Jahre unter dem Suedlichen Kreuze, edited by O. H. Beer (Porto Alegre, Brazil: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1925).

⁶¹[W.] Ma[hler], "Porto Alegre," Kirchenblatt, III (1 October 1906), 148.

⁶²E. Neumann, "Jugendsache in Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LXXXV (12 February 1929), 52.

were the Rev. Karl Rupp, president; the Rev. E. Neumann, vice-president; Mr. Hans Maack, secretary; Miss Leonore Klein, treasurer.⁶³

In 1927 the same two youth groups held their second convention. Rainy weather prevented two other youth groups, those of Moreira and Rolante, from joining them.⁶⁴ On 7 and 8 April 1928 the Waltherliga had its third convention, again in Arroio da Bica. This time four young people's associations were represented. It was decided to publish a youth periodical, the Evangelisch-Lutherischer Jugendbote, with the approval of the district convention.⁶⁵ A constitution was formulated and approved. Article two, on the objectives of the Waltherliga read:

Die Zwecke der Walther-Liga sind: 1. durch die Vereine dazu beitragen, dass die heranwachsende Jugend den Gemeinden und somit der Kirche erhalten bleibe; 2. die christbruederliche Liebe in und zwischen den Vereinen zu pflegen; 3. mit Einwilligung der Gemeinden neue Vereine ins Leben zu rufen und bereits bestehende Vereine fuer die Liga zu gewinnen; 4. sich an den Liebenswerken unserer Kirche zu beteiligen; 5. die Herausgabe besonderer Veroeffentlichung (Publikationen) im Interesse der Ligaarbeit; 6. fuer Belehrungs- und Unterhaltungsstoff rechter Art in unseren Vereinen zu sorgen.⁶⁶

⁶³Wuerfel, "Gruendung eines Jugendbundes," Kirchenblatt, XX (15 June 1925), 92-93.

⁶⁴Hans Maack, "Waltherliga," ibid., XXII (1 August 1927), 117-118.

⁶⁵C. H. Warth, "Walther-Liga," ibid., XXIII (1 July 1928), 85-86.

⁶⁶Ibid., p. 86.

Youth groups of eight different congregations were represented at the convention of 22 and 23 February 1930, a total of 140 members and visitors.⁶⁷

The Beginning in the State of Espirito Santo--1929

During this period work was begun in Espirito Santo. Espirito Santo is a coastal state immediately north of the state of Rio de Janeiro. There, several waves of German immigrants settled from the middle of the nineteenth century on. The main product of the state was and is coffee. At first the Protestant immigrants were served only by united pastors. Desiring to be served by a Lutheran pastor the parish of Sapucaia (Rapadura) called the Rev. Thomas Petersen of the Ohio Lutheran Synod. He accepted the call and worked there until 1924. He established relations with the Gotteskasten, called the German Lutheran Synod in Espirito Santo. This synod took over his parish when he left. The Rev. Leonhard Hoesch of the German Lutheran Synod was his successor.

On 19 February 1925 the United German Evangelical Synod and the ~~Lutheran~~ German Lutheran Synod reached an agreement and established geographic boundaries between their fields of work. The Santa Maria River in Espirito Santo was to be

⁶⁷Aug. Heine, "Versammlung der Waltherliga zu Arroio da Bicca," ibid., XXV (15 March 1930), 44.

the dividing line. All German Lutheran pastors working in the state were to move north of that river and the German Evangelical Synod pastors were to move south of it. The congregations of both bodies north of the river would, from then on, belong to the German Lutheran Synod, and all south of it, to the German Evangelical Synod. Congregations were therefore forced to change Synods and beliefs whether they wanted it or not. The parish of Rapadura did not want to give up its Lutheran position. L. Hoesch had introduced hymnals and catechisms from the Casa Publicadora Concórdia of Porto Alegre in Rapadura. When L. Hoesch left the parish of Rapadura on 22 June 1928 to hand it over to the united synod, the parish members asked the Missouri Synod for a pastor. They had learned to know the Missouri Synod through the publications of Casa Publicadora Concórdia.

In May 1929 the Rev. R. Hasse was sent to Rapadura by the Mission Board in Porto Alegre. He held meetings with the five congregations of the parish. He presented his synod's position in doctrine and practice. The parish of seventy-one voting members and 274 souls accepted his presentation and sent a call for a Missouri Synod pastor.⁶⁸ The call was sent to E. Schmidt who accepted it in September and arrived at Rapadura on 9 October 1929, as the first

⁶⁸R. Hasse, "Missouri in Espirito Santo," Kirchenblatt, XXIV (15 August 1929), 123-125. E. Schmidt, "Sapucaia, Espirito Santo," ibid., XXIV (15 December 1929), 190-191.

resident Missouri Synod pastor in Espírito Santo.⁶⁹

General Features of the Work in the 1920s

In the early 1920s the character of the ministry in the Brazilian District of the Missouri Synod gradually changed from a predominantly North American to a predominately Brazilian-trained ministry. Already in 1922 there were more graduates of Seminário Concórdia, Porto Alegre, working in Brazil than North American pastors. Out of a total of thirty-eight pastors twenty had received their theological training in Brazil.⁷⁰ This contributed to make the ministry more stable and was a step forward in the formation of an indigenous church. The spiritual growth of the congregations, as a rule, was slow in the 1920s. Common were the complaints of poor church attendance and communion participation.⁷¹ Some congregations that had been supplied with Missouri Synod pastors for some years dissolved their relations with this synod. Paraiso was one

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Synodalbericht der 32. regelmaessigen Versammlung der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, versammelt im Jahre 1923, vom 20. bis zum 29. Juni, zu Fort Wayne, Ind. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), p. 99. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, German edition, 1923.

⁷¹J. T. M[uehler], "Aus unserer Synode," Der Lutheraner, LXXIX (29 May 1923), 185.

of them. Maratá, after a long vacancy was lost because the vacancy pastor refused to bury a suicide.⁷²

In some congregations splits occurred and one part left the Missouri Synod. As a rule the more active members were the ones who stayed.⁷³ Long vacancies usually caused by the untimely return of pastors to the United States were harmful for the spiritual growth of several congregations.⁷⁴

From 1921 to 1922 nine pastors resigned from the work in Brazil, most of them to return to the United States.⁷⁵ In 1924 there were twenty calls and only seven candidates graduated at the Seminary in Porto Alegre.⁷⁶ Several pastors had too many places to serve and were overworked. J. Busch, e.g., was serving seven congregations, ten preaching places, was teaching school and was the pastoral counselor of the Northwestern Circuit in 1921.⁷⁷

Parochial schools continued to be essential for the

⁷²E. F. Mueller, "Maratá," Kirchenblatt, XV (15 April 1920), 59.

⁷³Lbf., "Kampf und Sieg," Der Lutheraner, LXXXI (3 February 1925), 36-38.

⁷⁴C. F. Lehenbauer, "Aus unserer kirchlichen Arbeit in Brasilien," ibid., LXXXI (21 July 1925), 239.

⁷⁵C. J. Gundermann, "Synodalversammlung zu São Leopoldo," Kirchenblatt, XVII (15 May 1922), 79.

⁷⁶O. H. B., "Schlussfeier im Seminar," ibid., XIX (15 December 1924), 188.

⁷⁷C. F. Lehenbauer, Der Lutheraner, LXXVII (25 January 1921), 21.

development of the church. From them came the Seminary students and consequently the future pastors. They produced also better instructed and more understanding lay members. But too much school teaching hindered the pastors from exercising a more adequate pastoral care of the whole parish.⁷⁸ In 1923 thirty-one out of thirty-seven parish pastors held school five or six days a week, often in two schools.⁷⁹

The statistical reports from the twenties are not very exact. In 1920 the number of baptized souls was about 16,000.⁸⁰ The Statistical Yearbook gives their number as being 19,844 in 1930.⁸¹

Relations with the Mother Church

On 13 April 1920 the Brazilian District of the Missouri Synod had its constitution filed with the state, adopting the name Sinodo Evangelico Luterano do Brasil. The change of the name was accepted by the synodical convention of the

⁷⁸Bf., "Kirchliches und Weltliches aus Suedamerika," Der Lutheraner, LXXVIII (16 May 1922), 177.

⁷⁹J. T. M[ueller], ibid., LXXIX (29 May 1923), 174.

⁸⁰Bf., ibid., LXXVIII (16 May 1922), 177. The total figure 19,000 includes the members in Argentina.

⁸¹Statistical Year-Book of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the year 1930 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1931), p. 146.

Missouri Synod in 1920.⁸²

The Missouri Synod mission work among Lutherans in foreign countries was directed by a single Board for Home Missions in Foreign Lands until 1923. By then this work had grown so much that the synodical convention divided the board into two, the Board for Missions in Europe, and the Mission Board for South America.⁸³ From then on the Brazilian District was directed by the Mission Board for South America.

In 1920 it was still the synodical convention that established the salaries of the missionaries. The average salary was then risen from \$600 to \$800 a year. The Board for Home Missions in Foreign Lands together with the Brazilian Mission Board were to determine the salary for each individual missionary.⁸⁴ The synodical convention of 1923 decided that each Brazilian parish should establish the salary for its pastor. The parishes that were not yet in a position to support the pastor completely should send a request to the Mission Board for the amount that they could not raise.⁸⁵

⁸²J. Kunzmann, "Registrierung unseres Synodaldistrikts," Kirchenblatt, XV (15 June 1920), 90. Mo. Synod, Proceedings, German edition, 1920, p. 127.

⁸³Mo. Synod, Proceedings, German edition, 1923, p. 106.

⁸⁴Mo. Synod, Proceedings, German edition, 1920, p. 127.

⁸⁵Mo. Synod, Proceedings, German edition, 1923, p. 107.

From the time when the first Missouri Synod missionary started to work in Argentina to the mid-1920s the Missouri Synod pastors and parishes in Argentina belonged to the Brazilian District of the Missouri Synod. The distance made it possible for only two representatives to be sent from Argentina to the district conventions which were always held in Brazil. Not sufficient attention could be given to Argentinean matters at the conventions because of the lack of knowledge of the situation in Argentina on the part of the pastors in Brazil. In the district convention of 1924 it was decided that Argentina should become a separate Synodical District in the near future.⁸⁶ The Brazilian district convention of 1926 sent a memorial to the synodical convention of 1926 asking the convention to approve the separation of the districts.⁸⁷ The synodical convention of 1926 approved it.⁸⁸ The Brazilian district convention of 1927 released the Argentinean pastors and congregations from its membership to enable them to organize themselves

⁸⁶"Versammlung des Brasilianischen Distrikts," Der Lutheraner, LXXX (19 August 1924), 302.

⁸⁷W. Rehr, ibid., LXXXII (16 March 1926), 95.

⁸⁸Proceedings of the Thirty-Third Regular Convention of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States Assembled as the Eighteenth Delegate Convention at Holy Cross Church, Saint Louis, Mo., June 9 to 18, 1926 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1926), p. 97. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, English edition, 1926.

as separate Synodical Districts.⁸⁹

Official Visits from the United States

The Synodical convention of 1920 resolved that a member of the Mission Board should conduct a visitation in the Brazilian District every three years.⁹⁰ The Rev. August C. Burgdorf, a member of the Board, was sent to visit Brazil at the time of the Kunstmann crisis. He left New York on 21 January and arrived in Porto Alegre on 16 February 1922. His assistance and counsel prevented the Kunstmann crisis from becoming more harmful to the district than it was. He held meetings with the different boards, visited several parishes, was active in the district convention. He returned to the United States in June 1922.⁹¹ At the Synodical convention of 1923 he praised the work done by the pastors in Brazil.⁹² End of 1925 and beginning of 1926 the Rev. Leo Schmidke visited Brazil.⁹³ From January to May 1928 Mr.

⁸⁹W. Rehr, "Die Distriktsversammlungen unserer Synode," Der Lutheraner, LXXXIII (19 July 1927), 252.

⁹⁰Mo. Synod, Proceedings, English edition, 1920, p. 55.

⁹¹A. Burgdorf, "Kirchliches und Weltliches aus Suedamerika," Der Lutheraner, LXXVIII (8 August 1922), 78. Idem, LXXVIII (22 August 1922), 295-296. Idem, LXXVIII (17 October 1922), 364-365. C. J. Gundermann, "Synodalversammlung zu São Leopoldo," Kirchenblatt, XVII (15 May 1922), 78-89. P. S[chelp], "Persoenliches," ibid., XVII (1 July 1922), 105.

⁹²Mo. Synod, Proceedings, German edition, 1923, p. 96.

⁹³W. Rehr, Der Lutheraner, LXXXII (16 March 1926), 94.

Henry Horst, a member of the Board of Directors of the Missouri Synod, visited Brazil. He studied the missionary opportunities in Rio de Janeiro. At the district convention he was instrumental in setting up a definite plan for some congregations to become self-supporting.⁹⁴ After his return to the United States of America he continued to create interest for mission work in Rio de Janeiro and paid the expenses of the exploratory trip of R. Hasse to that city.⁹⁵

Seminário Concórdia in the 1920s

The development of the Seminário Concórdia in the 1920s is significant. In February 1919 the school year began at the Seminário Concórdia under normal conditions again, with twenty-four students enrolled, the largest number to that date. New classes were to be accepted only every three years. The professors were J. Kunstmann in the theological department and L. C. Rehfeldt mainly in the pre-theological department. Prof. L. Tietboehl, a born Brazilian, was

⁹⁴Proceedings of the Thirty-Fourth Regular Convention of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States assembled as the Nineteenth Delegate Convention at River Forest, Illinois, June 19-28, 1929 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1929), p. 83. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, English edition, 1929.

⁹⁵Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1930, p. 88.

engaged as assistant professor to teach Portuguese.⁹⁶ On 15 February 1920 candidate Paul Schelp arrived in Porto Alegre to become assistant professor in the pre-theological department to teach Catechism, Bible History, Latin, German, Music, and Drawing.⁹⁷ He introduced basketball at the Seminary and was one of the first to introduce this North American sport in Rio Grande do Sul. On Saturday evenings the student body met for a cultural hour. Speeches in German and Portuguese were held. Prof. Schelp was the counselor of the German program and Prof. Rehfeldt of the Portuguese.⁹⁸

In the year 1920 two extremely important events occurred in the history of the Seminary. The Seminary became a synodical institution and acquired a new campus. The district convention of 1920 sent a memorial to the synodical convention that met in Detroit in June 1920, asking the convention to recognize the Seminário Concórdia in Porto Alegre as a Synodical institution. The convention granted the request.⁹⁹ The Brazilian district also asked for the permission to move the Seminário to a more adequate location

⁹⁶J. K[unstmann], "Jahresberichte des Konkordia-Seminars 1917-1919," Kirchenblatt, XV (1 February 1920), 19.

⁹⁷L. F[uerbringer], "Aus unsern suedamerikanischen Distrikt," Der Lutheraner, LXXVI (19 October 1920), 342.

⁹⁸L. Kaminski, "Konkordia Seminar," Kirchenblatt, XV (1 November 1920), 165.

⁹⁹Mo. Synod, Proceedings, English edition, 1920, p. 28.

and requested \$35,000 to do so.¹⁰⁰ The Seminary Building Committee in Porto Alegre found an excellent location before the synodical convention met. The price asked for was reasonable, 140 contos de reis (ca. \$35,000). Fast action was necessary. Acting on its own authority the Committee paid twenty per cent of the amount from reserve funds existing in the mission treasury and bound itself to pay the remainder within six months.¹⁰¹ The synodical convention approved the purchase and the money was sent in time,¹⁰² On 25 August 1920 the purchase of the land with a mansion and smaller buildings on it was concluded.¹⁰³ The synodical convention also granted the funds for three professors' houses.¹⁰⁴ Every congregation in Brazil raised an offering to pay for part of the new campus.¹⁰⁵

The last ceremony on the campus in Navegantes, which had housed the Seminário Concórdia for eight years, was the closing of the school year 1920 held on 14 December 1920.

¹⁰⁰Mo. Synod, Proceedings, German edition, 1920, pp. 74-76.

¹⁰¹E. Mueller, et. al., "Bericht der Seminarbau-Kommission," Kirchenblatt, XV (15 April 1920), 58-59.

¹⁰²Mo. Synod, Proceedings, German edition, 1920, p. 77.

¹⁰³J. K[unstmann], "Porto Alegre," Kirchenblatt, XV (1 September 1920), 132.

¹⁰⁴Mo. Synod, Proceedings, German edition, 1920, p. 77.

¹⁰⁵J. K[unstmann], "Porto Alegre," Kirchenblatt, XV (1 September 1920), 132.

Prof. L. C. Rehfeldt held the closing address.¹⁰⁶

From 23 to 26 February 1921 the Seminary belongings were moved to the new campus on the Mont Serrat. Prof. Rehfeldt who went on furlough to the United States in April that year, stayed in Navegantes.¹⁰⁷

On 2 March 1921 the school year 1921 began on the new campus with an enrollment of twenty-four students.¹⁰⁸ Prof. J. Kunstmann taught the theological students in the morning, afternoon, and evening in an accelerated curriculum to comply with the wishes of the Mission Board for South America. At the end of July the ten theological candidates passed their examinations, graduated and received their calls.¹⁰⁹

Before the beginning of the school year 1922 Prof. L. Tietboehl resigned because of ill health and Prof. J. Kunstmann resigned because of personal reasons.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ Idem., "Konkordia-Seminar," ibid., XV (15 December 1920), 189.

¹⁰⁷ Idem., "Konkordia-Seminary," ibid., XVI (1 March 1921), 36.

¹⁰⁸ [L. C.] R[ehfeldt], "Feierliche Eröffnung im neuen Seminar," ibid., XVI (15 March 1921), 44.

¹⁰⁹ J. B[usch], "Das Examen der diesjaehrigen Kandidaten der Theologie auf unserem Konkordia-Seminar zu Porto Alegre," ibid., XVI (1 September 1921), 133.

¹¹⁰ Proceedings of the Thirty-Second Regular Meeting of the Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States assembled at Fort Wayne, Indiana, June 20-29, 1923 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1923), p. 30.

Because of the Kunstmann crisis and the delay of Prof. Rehfeldt's return, occasioned by the illness of a son in Rio de Janeiro, the school year began only on 5 April 1922. The number of students enrolled that year, thirty-seven, thirty-three of whom concluded the year at the Seminário, shows that Prof. J. Kunstmann's resignation was not as disastrous for the Seminário as could have been expected. Three of the students had come from Germany during vacation, Theodor Steyer, Adolf Dilley, and Arthur Klaudet.

Prof. P. Schelp was nominated acting president. Two professors' residences were built. The professor called to replace Prof. Kunstmann, the Rev. Mr. Viehweg of Nebraska, did not accept the call.¹¹¹ In 1922 and in the first semester of 1923 all of the teaching was done by Profs. Schelp and Rehfeldt.¹¹²

The synodical convention of 1923 granted the Brazilian District its request to lengthen the pre-theological curriculum from three to four years, and to accept students every two years instead of every three years as had been the case until then.¹¹³ In 1923 twice, the candidate elected for the presidency of the Seminário did not accept the call.

¹¹¹P. S[chelp], "Konkordia-Seminar," Kirchenblatt, XVII (1 May 1922), 69. P. S[chelp], "Jahresbericht des Seminars," ibid., XVIII (1 February 1923), 18-19.

¹¹²Ibid.

¹¹³Mo. Synod, Proceedings, German edition, 1923, p. 107.

Prof. P. Schelp was elected professor of theology that year.¹¹⁴ Professors E. Plass and Alfred O. Meyer arrived at the beginning of the second semester 1923 to help with the teaching. Plass stayed three semesters and Meyer four.¹¹⁵ A third professor's house was built.¹¹⁶ To replace Prof. A. O. Meyer, the Rev. K. Rupp was called as assistant professor in 1925, to start teaching in the second semester that year.¹¹⁷ Finally in September 1925 after a three year vacancy, the presidency of the Seminary was again filled. Dr. J. Jahn accepted the call and arrived in Porto Alegre on 6 September 1925. On 16 December 1925 Dr. J. Jahn, Ph. D., was installed. On the same date the eight theological candidates of that year received their calls.¹¹⁸ The new classroom and dormitory building constructed at the end of 1925 and the beginning of 1926 was dedicated on 14 March 1926.¹¹⁹ The synodical convention

¹¹⁴O. Beer, "Wahl," Kirchenblatt, XVIII (1 June 1923), 88.

¹¹⁵P. S[chelp], "Konkordia-Seminar," Kirchenblatt, XX (1 August 1925), 117.

¹¹⁶Mo. Synod, Proceedings, English edition, 1926, p. 51.

¹¹⁷P. S[chelp], Kirchenblatt, XX (1 August 1925), 117.

¹¹⁸P. S[chelp], "Schlussfeierlichkeiten im Seminar," ibid., XXI (1 January 1926), 3.

¹¹⁹W. Rehr, "Die Einweihung des neuen Seminargebaudes," ibid., XXII [sic] (15 April 1926), 59-60.

of 1926 granted the Brazilian District request to extend the pre-theological course from four to six years but declined the request to establish a pedagogical department.¹²⁰ Also in 1926 services were first held in the Seminary auditorium. This was the beginning of the Concórdia congregation.¹²¹

On 27 October 1928, twenty-five years had passed since the Rev. J. Hartmeister had started the Institute in Bom Jesus. During those twenty-five years thirty-six pastors had received their theological training at the Seminário Concórdia, and of these, thirty-three, all but three, were still serving the Sínodo Evangélico Luterano do Brasil. The other three were H. Quednau who had resigned, H. Roetting who had gone to Germany because of ill health, and the Rev. P. Evers who was serving an independent parish.¹²²

In December 1928 three candidates of the Normal Department completed their studies, after a long interruption of a teaching training program at the Seminário.¹²³

Beginning of 1929 Prof. Francisco Carchia, formerly a Roman Catholic priest, who had become a pastor of the

¹²⁰Mo. Synod, Proceedings, English edition, 1926, p. 51.

¹²¹P. S[chelp], "Gottesdienste im Seminar," Kirchenblatt, XXII (1 February 1927), 20.

¹²²P. Schelp, "Jubilaeumszeit in Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LXXXV (1 January 1929), 3-4.

¹²³Mo. Synod, Proceedings, English edition, 1929, p. 55.

Missouri Synod by means of a colloquy in 1924, was called to be the professor of Portuguese and was installed on Palm Sunday 1929.¹²⁴ Thirty-seven students were enrolled at the Seminário in 1929.¹²⁵

¹²⁴J. N. H. Jahn, "Nachrichten aus dem Seminar," Kirchenblatt, XXIV (15 May 1929), 75.

¹²⁵Proceedings of the Thirty-Fifth Regular Convention of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States assembled as the Twentieth Delegate Convention at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June 15-25, 1932 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1932), p. 62.

CHAPTER VII

GROWTH IN TIMES OF DICTATORSHIP: 1930-1937

General Character of the Period

The year 1930 was the year of the revolution that brought Getúlio Vargas to power. It was the beginning of an era of dictatorship that lasted until 1945. The period 1930-1937 were years of mild dictatorship with little government interference in church, school, or language matters. For the Sínodo Evangélico Luterano do Brasil it was a period of extraordinary numerical growth and geographic expansion towards the central states of Brazil. One of the peculiarities of the period was the beginning of missionary work in large cities, which, with the exception of the case of Porto Alegre, had not been done before. The president of the Sínodo in the 1930s was the Rev. August Heine who had already served the church in Brazil for more than twenty years. He was a dedicated worker. His balanced, kind personality inspired confidence in the missionaries. From 1930 until after 1950 the District's treasurer was L. C. Rehfeldt.

Geographic Expansion

Espírito Santo

E. Schmidt had gone to Espírito Santo in October 1929

to serve five small congregations. From the very beginning they supported their pastor in full. In a short time several other small congregations, scattered over various counties, asked E. Schmidt for pastoral care. Conditions were primitive. Roads in many cases were just narrow trails. Congregations were dispersed over a very large area. Soon the work became too much for one man. In 1932 the candidate who had just arrived from the United States, E. Winkler, took over the parish of Tres Pontões, the second parish organized in Espirito Santo.¹ The difficulties involved in the mission work there can be seen by E. Schmidt's report:

The glorious work in our field is far exceeding our strength. In the past year, in the pursuit of my missionary activities, I traveled 6,000 kilometers by auto, 3,270 on horse-back, 360 by rail, 252 afoot, and 60 in a canoe, a total of 10,142 kilometers. The expenses were over 3,000 milreis (about \$230). In both languages I preached 165 sermons, conducted a day school whenever at home, prepared various adult classes for confirmation, made many visits, comforted the sick, and directed a choir. On my journeys I met with many dangers, suffered hunger and thirst, and have slept in the middle of the road, with the cart deeply sunk into the mud. But in all this the Lord has granted me strength and health in the blessed service. . . .²

In 1933 the first parish north of the Rio Doce was supplied with a pastor, E. Neumann, who stayed in Espirito Santo only two years. In 1934 L. F. Klug substituted E. Schmidt in Rapadura, to be substituted in 1935 by M. F.

¹Emil Schmidt, "Harvest in Brazil," Lutheran Witness, LII (15 August 1933), 279.

²Ibid.

Hofmann, both North Americans, as were also W. Streicher and A. Gruell who started to work in Espirito Santo in 1936.³

In 1937 five pastors, all North Americans were working in Espirito Santo, where conditions were more primitive than in any other area where the Missouri Synod was working in Brazil. It was the only state then served exclusively by North American pastors. They were A. Gruell at the parish of Agua Limpa, with 490 souls; M. Hofmann at Rapadura, with 504 souls; R. W. Streicher, at Piava with 842 souls; E. Winkler at Tres Pontões, with 679 souls; and E. Kruese at Campinho, with 567 souls.⁴ The reports sent to the United States, especially by the wives of these missionaries, about the hardships of their work and life may have contributed to make it harder to find candidates willing to go to Brazil.⁵

Rio de Janeiro

The outstanding feature of the external development in

³E. Schmidt; "Pela Seara," Mensageiro Luterano, XXXII (December 1949), 91.

⁴Statistical Year-Book of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the year 1937 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1938), pp. 30-31. Hereafter cited as Statistical Year-Book, 1937.

⁵"Minutes of the Mission Board for South America" (9 April 1935), II, 104. In possession of the Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, Mo.

Brazil of the period was the establishment of missionaries in three of the Brazilian metropolises: Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Belo Horizonte.

The initial impulse towards these city missions originated in the United States. Mr. Henry Horst, a member of the Board of Directors of the Missouri Synod, on his trip to Brazil in 1928 stayed in Rio de Janeiro for a while to study the missionary possibilities there. He became convinced that Rio was a very promising mission field and offered to pay the expenses for the survey trip to a Brazilian missionary. R. Hasse was sent. On his way back from Espirito Santo, in 1929, he spent some weeks in Rio and São Paulo. He found several people of German extraction interested in listening to the Gospel. After receiving his report the Mission Board for South America in Chicago, Illinois, asked the Mission Board of the Brazilian District to send R. Hasse to Rio as resident missionary.⁶ After some delay, caused also by financial considerations and the shortage of manpower, the Mission Board in Porto Alegre sent R. Hasse to Rio early in 1930. He started his work in three places and soon had some families in his instruction classes.⁷

⁶T. W. Strieter, "Mittelbrasilien erweist sich als ein wichtiges Missionsfeld," Der Lutheraner, LXXXIX (21 March 1933), 96.

⁷"Minutes of the Mission Board for South America," (9 April 1930), I, 2. In possession of the Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis.

R. Hasse arrived in Rio just when thousands of German Russians, fleeing from Communism were arriving in Rio to be placed in the interior of the country by the government. Hasse received permission to see them at the immigrant station on the Ilha das Flores. He found hundreds of families of Lutheran background. He held services there and directed them to pastors of the Sinodo Evangelico Luterano do Brasil. Many of the immigrants were sent to Porto Alegre on a coastline steamer where they were met by A. Heine, the district president or by Prof. P. Schelp. From Porto Alegre they were sent to the border of Rio Grande do Sul and Santa Catarina where they settled in the forest. There, A. Lehenbauer, the first vice-president of the district, lived with them for months in one of their provisory huts to provide pastoral care for them.⁸ Afterwards C. Klich was called to serve them.

Immigrant mission work was always an important aspect of R. Hasse's work in Rio de Janeiro.

After two years of work in Rio a small congregation was organized. In 1933 a certain Dr. E. Menezes, previously a Presbyterian, underwent a colloquy to work in Rio under Hasse's supervision.⁹ In 1935 Dr. Menezes joined a political

⁸Paul Schelp, "Russian Immigration to Brazil," Lutheran Witness, L (26 May 1931), 189-191.

⁹"Minutes of the Mission Board for South America" (9 August 1933), I, 36. In possession of the Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis. Hereafter cited as in CHI.

liberalistic movement, resigned, and later became Roman Catholic.¹⁰

With a generous loan from the Missouri Synod's Church Extension Fund a beautiful church was built near downtown in Rio. After some difficulties in the construction it was dedicated on 12 September 1937.¹¹ In 1937, after eight years of work, the congregation in Rio numbered 126 baptized members, seventy-five communicants, and twenty-five voting members. A school had also been started in Penha, a suburb, to which the Rev. W. Rehfeldt was called in 1937.¹²

São Paulo

Numerically more successful than the work in Rio was the missionary work in São Paulo, the capital of the most populous state in Brazil and the most important industrial center in Latin America.

In May 1929, in his exploratory trip of central Brazil R. Hasse also visited São Paulo and gave favorable report about the missionary possibilities in that city.¹³ After

¹⁰ Ibid. (10 September 1935), II, 16.

¹¹ R. Hasse, "Rio de Janeiro," Der Lutheraner, XCIII (23 November 1937), 389-391.

¹² Statistical Year-Book, 1937, p. 30.

¹³ Achtzehnter Synodalbericht des Brasilianischen Distrikts der Ev. Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten. Versammelt zu Porto Alegre vom 12. bis

he had moved to Rio Hasse went to São Paulo periodically. In downtown São Paulo Mr. Ungefehr, the owner of a hotel, interested in the Lutheran mission work permitted R. Hasse to hold services in the dining hall of the hotel. Hasse also started to look up people of German origin in the suburbs and found Lutherans in Jardim Europa.¹⁴ Early in 1931 the Mission Board for South America meeting in Chicago, considering the favorable reports about the mission work in São Paulo, asked the Mission Board of the Brazilian District to send a missionary to São Paulo. The district convention decided to send two district officials to examine the situation before sending a man. President Heine and Dr. Jahn undertook the visitation and gave a favorable report. When a new ministerial candidate from the United States, H. Klenke, arrived, he was placed in São Paulo. He was installed there on 27 September 1931. On 11 July 1932 a congregation was organized.¹⁵ Klenke held services downtown, in two suburbs, and in four places in the interior of the state. Soon he had more work than he could handle.

18. Februar 1930 (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1930), p. 85.

¹⁴N. Jahn, "New Fields," Lutheran Witness, L (7 July 1931), 236. Neunzehnter Synodalbericht des Brasilianischen Distrikts der Ev. Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten. Versammelt zu Quatorze de Julho, Santa Rosa vom 4. bis 10. Februar 1931 (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1931), pp. 79-80. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1931.

¹⁵H. Klenke, "Aus São Paulo, Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, LXXXVIII (13 December 1932), 408.

The Rev. O. Goerl was sent to help him and take over the work in Portuguese in 1933. O. Goerl opened a school in the suburb of Indianapolis. The school experienced very fast growth.¹⁶ In 1937 it had an enrollment of 120 pupils. The total number of souls of Klenke's and Goerl's congregations was 399 in 1937. Three schools were flourishing by then, services were held in three different sections of the city, and four preaching stations were visited monthly in the interior of the state.¹⁷

Minas Gerais

In 1933 a ministerial candidate in the United States took a unique decision, to pay his own traveling expenses to Brazil and to work there as a missionary at his own expense for a year.¹⁸ At R. Hasse's request the Mission Board meeting in Chicago sent L. F. Klug to Belo Horizonte, capital of Minas Gerais, because German families were

¹⁶Zweihundzwanzigster Synodalbericht des Brasilianischen Distrikts der Ev.-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten versammelt zu Bom Jesus vom 4. bis 9. Maerz 1936 (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1936), p. 60. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1936.

¹⁷Dreihundzwanzigster Synodalbericht des Brasilianischen Distrikts der Ev.-Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten. Versammelt zu Porto Alegre vom 24. bis 31. Januar 1937 (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1937), pp. 45-46, 48. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1937.

¹⁸"Minutes of the Mission Board for South America," (9 May 1933), I, 28, in CHI.

reported to live there. The Brazilian Mission Board had suggested that Klug assist Th. Steyer at Sitio, Rio Grande do Sul, whose health had broken down.¹⁹ In September 1933 L. F. Klug arrived in Belo Horizonte. His survey showed that instead of 350, there were 150 families in the German settlement, most of them Roman Catholic, and most of the others were Reformed who were expecting a Reformed pastor.²⁰ Klug started a school that after a year had an enrollment of twenty children. By then twenty to thirty persons were attending the services that he conducted. He visited another German settlement where prospects were brighter, but his financial resources had come to an end. He requested support from the Mission Board for South America meeting in Chicago but the Board refused to support him because "the financial situation in Synod portends the necessity of another budget reduction for South America."²¹ Klug left Belo Horizonte to become the successor of E. Schmidt in Rapadura, Espirito Santo, in June 1934.²² E. Schmidt had resigned but shortly after accepted a call to Barra do Santo Antonio in Minas Gerais, near the border of Espirito

¹⁹Ibid. (9 August 1933), I, 38.

²⁰Ibid. (10 October 1933), I, 43.

²¹Ibid. (8 May 1934), II, 64.

²²Ibid. (3 July 1934), II, 74.

Santo.²³ Belo Horizonte continued to be served from Rio de Janeiro from time to time.²⁴

In Theophilo Otoni, Minas Gerais, a large number of German families had severed connections with the united German Evangelical Synod. In Rio, Hasse announced Lutheran services in a newspaper. This was read in Theophilo Otoni and late in 1932 a letter was sent to R. Hasse asking him to visit the congregation in Theophilo Otoni.²⁵ Upon President Heine's request he went. During Hasse's visit the congregation directed a call for a Lutheran pastor to the Mission Board in Porto Alegre. Early in 1934 candidate Libório Zimmer was sent and in 1950 he was still serving the parish of Theophilo Otoni.²⁶

Paraná

Throughout the period Cruz Machado continued to be the only parish served by the Missouri Synod in Paraná. Its pastor, H. Rottmann, who arrived there at the end of 1934

²³Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1937, p. 54.

²⁴"Minutes of the Mission Board for South America" (3 July 1934), II, 74, in CHI.

²⁵T. W. Strieter, Der Lutheraner, LXXXIX (21 March 1933), 96.

²⁶"Minutes of the Mission Board for South America" (13 December 1932), I, 9. Statistical Year-Book of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the Year 1934 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1935), pp. 3, 28.

served eight congregations and preaching stations.²⁷

Santa Catarina

The southwest and the northeast were the two areas in the state of Santa Catarina where the work of the Missouri Synod experienced growth in the period 1930-1937. In the southwest, from Mondai, near the Argentinean border, where A. H. Becker served as pastor, to Cruzeiro do Sul, in the center of the state where V. Kuehn was pastor the number of congregations and preaching stations increased.²⁸ In the northeast W. Wilde had already been serving Trombudo Central since 1928. Early in 1930 members of the congregation of Estrada Schroeder, in the northeast of Santa Catarina, who had separated themselves from a parish served by the Gotteskasten, asked V. Kuehn for pastoral care. He visited the congregation together with A. Lehenbauer, then the first vice-president of the Brazilian District. An agreement in matters of doctrine and practice was reached and a call was sent to the Mission Board in Porto Alegre. Candidate E. Rheinheimer was called, who shortly before the end of 1930 arrived at Estrada Schroeder. Similar conditions existed at Estrada Santa Catarina nearby, where candidate

²⁷O. Krueger, "Hands Across the Seas," Lutheran Witness, XLIV (28 August 1935), 305.

²⁸Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1937, pp. 45-55.

F. Arndt was installed in 1931.²⁹ The conference circuit of northeast Santa Catarina was organized on 1 September 1933 at Estrada Schroeder with the presence of G. Wilde of Cruz Machado, Paraná, E. Rheinheimer of Estrada Schroeder, F. Arndt of Estrada Santa Catarina, and W. Wilde of Trombudo Central.³⁰ In 1934 G. Wilde accepted the call to Presidente Getulio and in 1937 R. Hasz accepted the call to Ribeirão das Pedras both also in the northeast of Santa Catarina.³¹

Rio Grande do Sul

Yet during the period 1930-1937 the bulk of the members, congregations, and pastors of the Brazilian District of the Missouri Synod were still in Rio Grande do Sul. The increase in members and congregations during the period was greater in Rio Grande do Sul than the total in all the other states, where the Missouri Synod was working. In

²⁹Neunzehnter Synodalbericht des Brasilianischen Distrikts der Ev. Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten. Versammelt zu Quatorze de Julho, Santa Rosa vom 4. bis 10. Februar 1931 (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1931), pp. 92-93.

³⁰[E.] Rheinheimer, "Konferenzbildung in Santa Catarina (Nordosten)," Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt fuer Suedamerika, XXVIII (1 November 1933), 165. Hereafter cited as Kirchenblatt.

³¹Luther-Kalender fuer Suedamerika auf das Jahr 1951, edited by A. Lehenbauer and P. Schelp (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1951), pp. 155-156. Hereafter cited as Luther-Kalender, 1951.

1930 thirty-six parish pastors were working in as many parishes in Rio Grande do Sul. In 1937 forty-eight parish pastors were serving fifty parishes in the same state. The largest increase was seen in the northwest of the state.³²

Statistical Totals of 1930 and 1937 Compared

In 1930 forty-three pastors were working in Brazil serving 19,844 baptized souls, of whom 9,743 were communicant members. In eighty-one parochial schools 2,410 children were instructed.³³ In 1937 sixty-seven parish pastors were serving 35,932 baptized souls of whom 18,124 were communicant members. In 140 parochial schools, 4,184 children received their instruction.³⁴

The Ministry

Throughout the period the majority of the parish pastors were graduates of Porto Alegre. Most of them were born in Brazil. The result of this was that parishes no longer suffered as greatly from a too frequent change of pastors,

³²Statistical Year-Book of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States for the Year 1930 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1931), pp. 36-37. Hereafter cited as Statistical Year-Book, 1930. Statistical Year-Book, 1937, pp. 30-31.

³³Statistical Year-Book, 1930, p. 146.

³⁴J. T. M[ueller], "Von B. nach A.," Der Lutheraner, XCIV (7 June 1938), 204.

as had usually been the case while the majority of the pastors were North Americans. At one time, in the early thirties, there were only three North American pastors in the Brazilian District, but because of the rapid expansion of the work North American candidates were called again, for the Seminary in Porto Alegre could not meet the ever increasing demand for pastors.³⁵ Because too few candidates from the Seminaries in St. Louis and Springfield were willing to go to Brazil, the Mission Board for South America got in touch with the Lutheran Free Church of Saxony to see whether any candidates of Sehlfendorf would be willing to go to Brazil.³⁶ So it happened that K. Fiedler, Th. Reuter, and A. Gedrat went from Germany to work in the Brazilian District in 1932.³⁷ With the depression it became easier again to find candidates for Brazil in the United States so that after those first ones no other German theological candidates were called to Brazil. From 1930 to 1937 a total of eighteen North American candidates accepted calls to Brazil and worked there. This was the last period in which North American ministerial candidates went to Brazil regularly, or in large numbers.

³⁵O. Krueger, "Hands Across the Seas," Lutheran Witness, LI (20 December 1932), 442.

³⁶"Minutes of the Mission Board for South America" (10 November 1931), I, 2, in CHI.

³⁷Luther-Kalender, 1951, p. 155.

Whereas the number of pastors increased considerably in the period, the number of souls per pastor also increased as did the average number of preaching stations per pastor. There were parishes like that of Tres Forquilhas, Rio Grande do Sul, where the pastor served more than twenty different places, among congregations and preaching stations.³⁸ Sometimes the work was too much and pastors had to resign because of breakdowns or impaired health as three of them did in the end of 1934.³⁹

For a pastor to teach school five or six days a week, in many cases in the morning and in the afternoon, was the general rule. In 1937 fifty-six of the sixty-six pastors were conducting a day school.⁴⁰

During the period 1930 to 1937 the work in Portuguese increased, but slowly. In 1938 about eighty-five per cent of the sermons were still preached in German and only about fifteen per cent of them in Portuguese.⁴¹

³⁸Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1936, p. 65.

³⁹"Minutes of the Mission Board for South America" (10 December 1934), II, 34, in CHI.

⁴⁰P. Schelp, "Sunday on Horseback--Monday in School," Lutheran Witness, LVI (5 October 1937), 337.

⁴¹P. S[chelp], "Bemerkung zu der Statistik unseres Distrikts," Kirchenblatt, XXXIV (1 March 1939), 37.

Spiritual Growth

In the Brazilian District Proceedings reports of spiritual growth, of increasing church attendance and communion participation, became more frequent in the 1930s especially in 1936 and 1937. Some parishes made a great effort to become financially self-supporting. Some achieved it. Others had their financial support cut off. In such cases self-support was attained at the pastor's expense. During the depression years, the early 1930s, the financial situation of the pastors became acute. In 1932 a twenty per cent reduction in salaries was effected.⁴² The Brazilian Mission Board made strenuous efforts at rigid economy and of encouragement towards self support of parishes.⁴³ On one occasion in 1933 the Board simply withdrew the subsidy from six parishes which they had been receiving.⁴⁴ In 1935 there were eleven self-supporting parishes in Brazil.⁴⁵ By 1936 salaries had been reduced to actual privation,

⁴²"Minutes of the Mission Board for South America" (14 November 1932), I, 6, in CHI.

⁴³Ibid., (10 January 1933), I, 14.

⁴⁴Ibid., (9 August 1933), I, 38.

⁴⁵Proceedings of the Thirty-Sixth Regular Convention of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States Assembled at Cleveland, Ohio as the Twenty-First Delegate Synod June 19-28, 1935 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1935), p. 150. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1935.

according to a letter from the District treasurer to the Mission Board for South America.⁴⁶ Although a raise was requested it was not granted to keep the budget low.⁴⁷ Although the immediate requirements for 1937 were \$30,450, only \$23,000 was granted, whereas for Argentina, with about only one-third of the number of workers the budget was almost as large.⁴⁹ One-fourth of the money sent from the United States was annually consumed by the urban missions in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.⁵⁰ At the end of 1937 a bonus was granted to all pastors to help them out of their difficulties.⁵¹ Financial difficulties were part of the reasons why many North American pastors left Brazil a short time after they had started to work there.

Aside from financial difficulties the church work was carried out undisturbed in these seven years of mild dictatorship. The number of parochial schools increased from

⁴⁶"Minutes of the Mission Board for South America" (1 December 1936), II, 104, in CHI.

⁴⁷Ibid. (22 April 1936), II, 82.

⁴⁸Ibid. (11 August 1936), II, 90.

⁴⁹Ibid., (11 March 1937), II, 119.

⁵⁰Ibid. (15 September 1936), II, 91.

⁵¹Proceedings of the Thirty-Seventh Regular Convention of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States Assembled at St. Louis, Mo. as the Twenty-Second Delegate Synod June 15-24, 1938 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1938), p. 170. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1938.

eighty-one to one hundred and forty.⁵² The youth work made good progress. New youth societies were organized in several congregations. Several of them joined the Brazilian Waltherliga, which held annual conventions. The youth periodical Der Waltherliga-Bote appeared regularly.⁵³ A typical meeting of a youth association was opened with a hymn and a prayer, followed by a Bible lesson with discussion after which there were games and other entertainment.⁵⁴

Some provisions were made for orphans. A committee was elected at the district convention in 1934 to look for families that would like to receive orphans in their homes.⁵⁵ The committee found six such families but no homeless orphans until the beginning of 1936.⁵⁶

Midway in the 1930s a school periodical, Unsere Schulen, was published provisorily. The district convention of 1936 changed it into a theological and pedagogical journal, Wacht und Weide in Kirche und Schule. At first it came out

⁵²Cf. notes 33-34, chap. VI.

⁵³J. T. Mueller, "Der Waltherliga-Bote," Der Lutheraner, LXXXVI (15 July 1930), 233.

⁵⁴O. Krueger, "Hands Across the Seas," Lutheran Witness, LIII (21 November 1933), 397.

⁵⁵P. S[chelp], "Waisekinder," Kirchenblatt, XIX (15 April 1934), 61.

⁵⁶Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1936, p. 81.

five, afterwards six times a year.⁵⁷

District President A. Heine undertook a visitation trip to the different parishes in the different areas of Brazil to encourage them in their objectives, orienting them towards self support, in 1927. He went from parish to parish addressing the congregations in special meetings, stressed the importance of the church, tried to impress upon the minds of the members what they could do to support their local work and every new undertaking within the local parish.⁵⁸

The year 1937 marked the beginning of a new missionary venture in Brazil, the Lutheran Hour, the use of the radio to aid the preaching of the Gospel. The beginning of regular transmissions was made in Porto Alegre on Radio Farroupilha on 14 March 1937.⁵⁹ It was completely supported by local members. From March to December 1937 fourteen sermons were broadcast. Prof. P. Schelp was the speaker.⁶⁰

At the end of 1937 one of the most dynamic leaders of the Brazilian District, the Rev. A. Lehenbauer, accepted the

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 80. Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1937, p. 67.

⁵⁸"Minutes of the Mission Board for South America" (10 August 1937), II, 154, in CHI.

⁵⁹Hugo Wagner and G. Goerl, "Hora Lutherana," Kirchenblatt, XXXII (15 April and 1 May 1937), Beilage zu Nr. 8.

⁶⁰Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1938, p. 170.

call to the presidency of the college at Crespo, Argentina. When he left Urwahnfried, in the northwest of Rio Grande do Sul, several flourishing parishes were in the area where he had started the work in 1915.⁶¹

The Seminary

The Seminário Concórdia, on the Mont Serrat hill, overlooking the city of Porto Alegre and the wide Guaiba River, continued to be vital for the work of the Brazilian District. Dr. Paul Schulz, a member of the Board of Directors of the Missouri Synod, and the only official North American visitor in the period, wrote about the location of the Seminary campus in 1936:

Hoch oben auf der hoechsten Huegelkette liegt unser Seminar; es hat eine ganz vorzuegliche Lage, und ich weiss von keiner andern Lahranstalt in unserer Synode, die so schoen gelegen waere.⁶²

In 1930 the Seminary was connected with the city water and light system, which improved living conditions considerably.⁶³

⁶¹F. Otten, "Abschiedsfeier zu Urwahnfried, Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, XCIV (29 March 1938), 110.

⁶²Paul Schulz, "Ein Besuch in Suedamerika," Der Lutheraner, XCII (23 June 1936), 211.

⁶³Proceedings of the Thirty-Fifth Regular Convention of the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States Assembled as the Twentieth Delegate Convention at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June 15-25, 1932 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1932), p. 62.

The period 1930 to 1937 was a relatively uneventful period in the history of the Seminary. The teaching went on undisturbed. The faculty was stable, headed by Dr. J. N. Jahn, a dedicated man, a stern disciplinarian.

In 1931 Prof. K. Rupp, until then assistant professor, was called as professor of Greek, Latin, and German. He had been born in Germany, received his college training in Halle, Germany. After some time in Brazil he had entered the seminary in Porto Alegre, where he had received his theological training. After half a year in the ministry he was called as assistant professor of the Seminary in 1925. He was an exceptionally thorough scholar who maintained a high standard in the teaching of the classical languages.⁶⁴

The physical plant remained the same during the period. No buildings were erected because of the financial situation of the Missouri Synod.⁶⁵

The sports' field was improved. A basketball court, a track, and a soccer field, were built by the students themselves under the competent direction of Prof. K. Rupp.⁶⁶

⁶⁴J. N. H. Jahn, "Aus unserm Seminar zu Porto Alegre," Kirchenblatt, XXVI (1 April 1931), 52-53. J. N. H. Jahn, "Installation of New Professor at Concordia Seminary, Porto Alegre," Lutheran Witness, L (12 May 1931), 172.

⁶⁵Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1935, p. 78.

⁶⁶K. A. Rupp, "Auf diesen Bildern," Kirchenblatt, XXXI (15 December 1936), 187.

During the period 1930-1937 members of the faculty held summer courses for pastors and teachers. In 1935 a summer course was conducted in Erechim by Professors Schelp and Rehfeldt.⁶⁷ In January 1937 sixty persons, pastors, men and women teachers, attended the summer course in Porto Alegre, conducted by professors Schelp, Rupp, and Rehfeldt, and pastors Lehenbauer, Mueller, and Heine.⁶⁸

The only remarkable events of the period were the graduations. As students were accepted only every two years, candidates graduated only every other year. In December 1930 six graduated, one of them João Alves, the first colored Lutheran pastor in Brazil.⁶⁹ In December 1933 eight theological candidates and five teachers received their diplomas. Of the eight theological candidates four had come from the college at Crespo, Argentina, and returned to Argentina after completing their studies in Porto Alegre.⁷⁰ In December 1937 seven candidates graduated, three of them from Argentina. For the four Brazilian candidates there

⁶⁷O. Krueger, "Hands Across the Seas," Lutheran Witness, LIV (7 May 1935), 177.

⁶⁸G. Wilde, "Sommerkursus in Porto Alegre," Der Lutheraner, XCIII (30 March 1937), 120.

⁶⁹J. N. H. Jahn, "More Laborers for the Lord's Vineyard in Brazil," Lutheran Witness, L (17 March 1931), 100.

⁷⁰J. N. H. Jahn, "Mehr Arbeiter im Weinberg des Herrn," Kirchenblatt, XXIX (1 January 1934), 5.

were eighteen calls.⁷¹

Ill and exhausted from his strenuous work Dr. J. Jahn went on furlough to the United States in January 1937.⁷² G. Mueller went from the United States to Brazil to teach at the Seminary during the absence of Dr. Jahn.⁷³ Dr. Jahn was to come back after more than a year of furlough but only to stay for a short time so that 1937 in fact marks the end of Dr. Jahn's period of direction at the Seminary.

⁷¹Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1938, p. 92.

⁷²"Minutes of the Mission Board for South America" (11 February 1936), II, 67, in CHI. Mo. Synod, Brazil District, Proceedings, 1937, p. 67.

⁷³P. S[chelp], "Hilfe fuer Seminar," Kirchenblatt, XXXI (15 November 1936), 173.

165

CHAPTER VIII

NATIONALIZATION AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR

1937-1945

Political Background

Since the Revolution of 1930 Getulio Vargas had governed Brazil. A presidential election was supposed to take place in 1937 but on 10 November 1937, in the middle of the heated political campaign in which Integralists, Frente-Unitists, Liberalists, Nazis, Communists, and Fascists were fighting for power, Getulio Vargas declared the Estado Novo, that is, the New State. He decreed that he would remain in the presidential chair for another seven years to liberate, perfect, and strengthen the New State. The nation was declared to be in a state of siege. Press and mail were censored. Getulio organized a social and political police. He produced and enforced decrees of strict nationalization. Some say that Vargas directed the attention of the country against the Germans, Italians, and their descendants, to divert the attention of the people from his coup d'état.¹

¹Paul Schelp, "Things are Happening in Brazil," Lutheran Witness, LVIII (19 September 1939), 327.

The School Problem

The nationalization was to affect the total life of the citizens, even the life in the home. In primary schools all teaching, also the religious instruction had to be done in Portuguese, the principals of schools had to be born Brazilians, no building that also served as church could be used for school purposes. All schools and teachers had to register with the state and were subject to rigorous federal inspection.² No other language than Portuguese could be spoken on the school grounds, not even during intermissions. In vast areas of the states Espirito Santo, São Paulo, Parana, Santa Catarina, and Rio Grande do Sul, the only language spoken in the rural areas was either German or Italian, also in the schools.³ Even though the school laws were not directly aimed against private schools nor had specific religious connotations, their effect was tragic for the Sinodo Evangelico Luterano do Brasil as it also was for other religious bodies. Within the period of one year, 1938, the Missouri Synod had to close twenty-four of its 139 parochial schools, most of them in Espirito

²C. F. Lehenbauer, "Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, XCV (1 August 1939), 263.

³P. Schelp, Lutheran Witness, LVIII (19 September 1939), 327.

Santo and Santa Catarina,⁴ usually because the pastors or teachers who had taught in them were not born Brazilians.⁵ These school laws did not affect only the Missouri Synod schools but all private schools in Brazil. Alone in the Cruz Machado area, in Parana, where Mr. A. Elicker, a born Brazilian taught in H. Rottmann's school which, therefore, was not closed, twenty-one other schools, attended by twelve hundred children were closed in 1938.⁶

In 1939 again several parochial schools had to be closed because of stricter federal decrees. In 1940 the total number of Missouri Synod schools in Brazil decreased to ninety-nine and in 1941 to ninety-one.⁷ The total number of pupils enrolled in parochial schools decreased from 4,159

⁴P. S[chelp], "Statistik," Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt fuer Suedamerika, XXXIV (15 February 1939), 29. Hereafter cited as Kirchenblatt.

⁵Proceedings of the Thirty-Eighth Regular Convention of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States Assembled at Fort Wayne, Ind. as the Twenty-Third Delegate Synod, June 18-27, 1941 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941), p. 174. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1941.

⁶J. T. M[ueller], "Unsere Arbeit in Suedamerika," Der Lutheraner, XCIV (24 May 1938), 187.

⁷P. S[chelp], "Kirchliche Nachrichten," Kirchenblatt, XXXVI (1 and 15 February 1941), 25. Statistical Yearbook of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the Year 1941 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1942), p. 175. Hereafter cited as Statistical Yearbook, 1941.

in 1937 to 3,554 in 1941.⁸ The loss in the number of pupils was not so large because the schools in larger towns and cities, that could comply with the laws and decrees, prospered. But where the schools were closed they were not replaced by any public schools. Not only religious education but all education suffered and illiteracy closed in again in those areas.⁹

The Language Question

In the first years of its work German was the only language used by the Missouri Synod missionaries in Brazil. For a few months during the First World War the use of German had been forbidden to a certain extent. When the prohibition was lifted, most of the church work was carried out in German again. Still in 1938 when some nationalization laws, that gradually suppressed the use of German in Brazil, came out, eighty-four per cent of the sermons preached by Missouri Synod pastors in Brazil were preached in German and only sixteen per cent in Portuguese. The reason for this was that the majority of the Brazilian

⁸ Statistical Yearbook of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the Year 1937 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1938), p. 146. Hereafter cited as Statistical Yearbook, 1937. Statistical Yearbook, 1941, p. 175.

⁹ Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1941, pp. 215-216.

Lutherans did not understand Portuguese.¹⁰ In the states Santa Catarina and Parana, where seven Missouri Synod pastors were working, the decree was promulgated that all sermons had to be preached first in Portuguese and then they could be preached again in another language. A similar decree was soon afterwards enforced in Rio Grande do Sul. The decree showed no religious preference. The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Rio Grande do Sul felt himself compelled to admonish all priests to always preach in Portuguese first and then translate the sermon into German or Italian, if the majority of the parishioners did not understand Portuguese.¹¹

In 1939 German was completely forbidden in some parishes. The first parishes affected were Toropi, Rio Grande do Sul, and Cruz Machado, Parana.¹² From July 1939 on, the first page of the Kirchenblatt, the German official periodical of the Brazilian District of the Missouri Synod, was printed in Portuguese.¹³ Near the end of 1939 all German preaching was forbidden in the towns of Rio Grande do Sul,¹⁴ only

¹⁰Paul Schelp, "Aus der lutherischen Kirche suedlich vom Aequator," Der Lutheraner, XCV (12 September 1939), 313-314.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²P. S[chelp], "Kirchliche Nachrichten," Kirchenblatt, XXXIV (15 June 1939), 93.

¹³"Angustia," ibid., XXXIV (15 July 1939), 105.

¹⁴C. F. Lehenbauer, "Kurze Nachrichten aus Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, XCVI (2 January 1940), 8.

liturgical services could be held in German.¹⁵ The Kirchenblatt was suppressed in September 1941,¹⁶ as were all periodicals printed in Brazil in foreign languages. The annual Luther-Kalender, and the Andachts-kalender for 1942 could also not be printed. The total edition of these three publications had been 12,000 the year before. The consequence was that thousands of Christian homes could no longer receive spiritual edification through Christian literature in a language that they could understand.¹⁷

After Brazil Entered the War

When Brazil declared war on Germany in August 1942, after some Brazilian ships had been sunk, there was a day of mob rule in Porto Alegre. The same night a group tried to break into the Seminary, threw rocks at a professor's house, cried out threats against Germany and Germans but did no more damage.¹⁸

In Santa Ana, Vila Freire, in the south of Rio Grande do Sul a mob, mounted on horses, broke into the newly built Lutheran Church at night, destroyed the harmonium and the

¹⁵P. S[chelp], "Unsere deutschen liturgischen Gottesdienste," Kirchenblatt, XXXVI (30 August 1941), 131.

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Paul Schelp, "Aus Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, XCVIII (10 February 1942), 37.

¹⁸The author was in that house that night.

furniture, exploded the tower with dynamite, burned the church, arrested the church officers, tortured them to confess that there had been ammunition and weapons hidden in the church, and killed one of them. The leaders of the mob, several of them Roman Catholics, were discovered, but nothing was ever done to them.¹⁹

By that time Dr. F. C. Streufer, the executive secretary of missions of the Missouri Synod, visited Brazil. His report to the Mission Board for South America is a fair statement of the tribulations and perils faced by the Brazilian District from 1942 to 1945.

As time went on in Brazil it became more difficult to carry out the survey as planned. I knew that I was constantly under surveillance and that the Secret Service Department had their eyes fixed on me. Going from place to place I deemed it a wise move to first present myself to the Praefeto and Delegado--heads of the Police Department--and told them of my plans.

By law all services must be conducted in the Portuguese language. All our churches complied at once.--But what a blow it was for our churches, inasmuch as many of the older folks cannot at all understand the Portuguese language. Church attendance has suffered. Members are downcast, pastors are conscience-stricken because they cannot adequately minister to the flock given under their spiritual care. But more than this --These are perilous days, days of sore distress. Never in the history of our church of the Missouri Synod did our Christians anywhere, at any place, suffer greater hatred, antagonism, animosity, persecution, than our churches, pastors, and fellow-Christians in Brazil at the present time. [Italics by the author.] The old evil foe now means deadly woe. It seems as if now when the present war feelings also enveloped

¹⁹R. Hasse, "Pela Seara," Mensageiro Luterano, XXXII (February 1949), 13.

Brazil and nearly all other nations of South America, save Argentina and Chile, all the foes have joined hands in open attack on the church holding up the banners of the true Gospel. And that just at a time when we were getting a real foothold, when our messengers were successfully pressing forward, when our Christian Day Schools in Brazil were regained and filled to capacity. Both Brazil and Argentina are in the throes of Catholicism. Their motto is printed in bold headlines in the daily newspapers, one country--one language--one religion. And they are stepping a lively gait to live up to this motto.

Brazil according to the letter of the law guarantees religious freedom. But think of the brazen audacity of a Roman Archbishop in Brazil. In an open letter to the American Consulate he demands that he (the Consul) appeal to the U. S. A. to decree that the Protestant churches be prohibited to send more missionaries to Brazil.

In a little town one of our pastors was called upon by the civil authorities, the police department, to bring the children of his school to the Catholic church, to join the children of the Catholic church in a civic demonstration under the leadership of the priests. Our pastor refused, but it meant hatred and animosity for him and his church. . . .

The government is altogether under Roman influence and now that Brazil severed diplomatic relations with the Axis powers everything is done to hinder the work of the Church. In spite of the fact that in a "fifth column" investigation, in the "Denuncio," it is definitely stated that we are not to be confounded with "the Rio Grandenser Church" which was supported by Germany and which is justly charged with pro-Nazi activities, and in spite of the fact that the investigators speak in glowing terms of our schools as being nationalized already years ago, and in spite of the "convenio," and agreement between the Department of Education and our Synodical District concerning our schools, an unfounded accusation made by an unknown enemy may bring the pastor or his members before court and into jail.

One of our pastors is in prison, confined on a solitary island, since the early days of January. No one dares to visit him. One pastor felt constrained to inquire at police headquarters concerning a member who had disappeared many days ago. It was, however, believed

that he might have been arrested. The pastor came to inquire. Thereupon the pastor was imprisoned, placed into a room, without a bed or chair, or bread or water. After 24 hours he was again released. Two pastors were relieved of all of their books. It is believed that they were destroyed. One pastor under many threats was forbidden to preach in his church. He was, however, permitted to preach in the homes of members, but no more than twenty dare be present at one time. Another was forbidden to preach in the homes, but the stations all being new mission-stations he had no churches where he could preach.--One pastor is compelled to reduce religious instruction in his school from six hours to three hours per week.

Pastors are conscience-stricken. On Maundy-Thursday a group of 13 elderly men and women came to the pastor and pleaded with him to give them a German Communion service since they could not at all understand the Portuguese. He complied. When the service came to a close a police squad compelled all to ride 25 miles on horseback to headquarters. They were jailed. After five days, however, they were again released. Another pastor was ordered to appear before the Police Magistrate. He was accused of conducting a German service on the previous Sunday. He denied. "But we have six witnesses to prove this," said the Police Chief--and that was all. The Board of Elders came to disprove the accusation made. "We have six witnesses." That's all. Your pastor is prohibited to preach, and to teach.--Another pastor came to get his son from college. Before leaving by train both entered a restaurant. Upon leaving the restaurant both were arrested. They were charged with speaking German. "But what did we say?" asked the pastor. The officer said, "You said, Ja." It meant seven hours in jail.

That parsonages and libraries are investigated is an every-day occurrence. --A truck load of German Bibles were gathered by the police department at the Casa Publicadora Concordia (our Brazilian Publishing House) and carted away to be destroyed. A few hours later they were returned. A promise, however, had to be given that the Bibles would not be sold. . . . When the brethren met me at the airport their haggard and worried look already indicated to me the gravity of the situation. Our Christians stand in silence. They know not what the future might bring. It is a crime to receive a German letter. One member was jailed because of this. . . .

None of our pastors can write about the trials that have come on them. May the Lord have mercy on them.²⁰

In some cases private pastoral counseling in German led to imprisonment and an injunction not to preach even in Portuguese. Seven pastors were forbidden to preach at all. Nineteen pastors were arrested and spent a longer or shorter time in prison. Fourteen pastors had their libraries taken away and burned because some of the books were in German. None of the pastors arrested during the mob rule was found guilty and they were all released.²¹

A member of the Lutheran church who was serving in the army asked for spiritual guidance. The Rev. A. Heine visited him. At the time some revolutionary activity was taking place in the army and A. Heine, the president of the Brazilian District, was accused of being involved. He and the Rev. G. J. Beck were arrested. In some German circles there had been some pro-Nazi activities. The government was looking for scapegoats. Unrelated fragments of circumstantial evidence were the basis for the prosecution. The military tribunal declared the Rev. Messrs. Heine and Beck guilty of subversive activities. A. Heine was given twenty years

²⁰"Minutes of the Mission Board for South America," "Report of Dr. F. C. Streufert, Exhibits I and II," IV, 226. In possession of the Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis.

²¹C. F. Lehenbauer, "Neuere Nachrichten aus Suedamerika," Der Lutheraner, IC (30 November 1943), 373.

and G. J. Beck thirty years of imprisonment. An appeal was made to the Supreme Court of Brazil but no further action was taken during the war.²²

R. Hasse, the first vice-president of the Brazilian District, substituted for A. Heine as president.

The years 1942 to 1945 were the most difficult ones of the first half century of the Brazilian District. Very little regular work could be done in the parishes. Church attendance, contributions, communion participation dropped considerably. In one case a pastor and a teacher were deposed because the congregation did not want to give up German even though it was forbidden by law.²³

What made life more difficult for pastors and congregations was the inflation that at times raced unchecked. In ten months in 1943, prices of articles of first necessity rose 250 to 400 per cent. At other times it was milder but salaries were never raised in proportion. Some articles like gasoline were not to be had at all.²⁴

Nevertheless some expansion was undertaken. Several parishes in the state of Parana that had formerly belonged to the Gotteskasten, after having been without pastors for

²²"Minutes of the Mission Board for South America" (13 June 1944), IV, 269. Ibid., (18 July 1944), p. 274, in CHI.

²³Ibid., (7 May 1940), 102.

²⁴C. F. Lehenbauer, Der Lutheraner, IC (30 November 1943), 373.

years, asked to be served by pastors of the Missouri Synod. In 1941 Bitu Mirim (Bom Jardim), in 1942 Papagaios Novos, in 1943 Imbituva joined the Missouri Synod and were supplied with pastors.²⁵

In 1944 Dr. W. Kunstmann, pastor of Christ Church, Porto Alegre, and his brother-in-law the Rev. P. Evers, pastor of the parish of Linha Brasil, who had left the Missouri Synod in 1922 during the Kunstmann crisis, reestablished altar and church fellowship with the Missouri Synod and soon thereafter became members of the Missouri Synod again, ending the only major split of the Missouri Synod in Brazil.²⁶

The Role of Casa Publicadora Concordia in the Period of Nationalization

The Casa Publicadora Concordia was one of the major factors that made the transition from German to Portuguese as church language as effective as it was, softening the blow and damage to church life caused by the overnight change in language. Founded in 1923 the Casa Publicadora Concordia had been printing and publishing church and school literature both in German and in Portuguese, but mainly in German. Besides Catechisms, Bible Histories, tracts, and

²⁵ibid.

²⁶"Minutes of the Mission Board for South America" (29 September 1944), IV, 284, in CHI.

school books, in 1939 it printed the Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt fuer Suedamerika, the Evangelisch-Lutherischer Kirchenbote fuer Argentinien, the Waltherliga-Bote, the Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kinderblatt, the Jungbrunnen, the Bibellektionen, the Der Konkordianer, the Wacht und Weide, the Luther-Kalender. In two years all German publications had to be discontinued and the need for Portuguese school material, Bible Histories, Catechisms, Liturgy, and periodicals forced the Casa Publicadora Concordia to work overtime to meet it.²⁷

Early in 1939 the Casa Publicadora Concordia came very near to being closed. Its manager, Mr. G. Goerl, was arrested by the secret police on account of an unsigned denunciation that said that a communist tract had been printed there. Mr. G. Goerl spent a night and half a day in prison, while the police searched the Casa Publicadora. Nothing irregular was found and the religious character of the publishing firm was explained to the police. After apologies the police released Mr. Goerl and the work of the Casa Publicadora went on undisturbed.²⁸

Early in 1940 the Portuguese Lutheran Hymnal was published. Its first edition was sold out almost immediately.

²⁷"Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, XCV (1 August 1939), 264. C. F. Lehenbauer, "Under the Southern Cross," Lutheran Witness, LVIII (18 April 1949), 143.

²⁸Ibid. P. Schelp, "Kirchliche Nachrichten," Kirchenblatt, XXXIV (1 February 1939), 19.

When Prof. P. Schelp showed an advance copy of the hymnal to the Mission Board in the United States in 1939 he remarked that the Lutheran Church was the only one that had a Portuguese hymnal.²⁹

In 1940 the German youth, children, and theological periodicals were replaced by the Portuguese: O Jovem Luterano, O Pequeno Luterano, and A Igreja Luterana.³⁰

The next year Porto Alegre suffered the worst flood of its history, in May 1941. 40,000 of its 400,000 inhabitants had to flee from their homes. The whole section of the city where St. Paul's Church and the Casa Publicadora Concordia lay, was under water. In the Casa Publicadora the water reached five feet high. The damage upon stock and machinery was considerable.³¹ Shortly after the flood, with some help from the United States, the Casa Publicadora Concordia started to print again, and soon it was printing more than before the flood.³²

²⁹F., "Kirchliche Nachrichten," ibid., XXXV (1 April 1940), 55. "Minutes of the Mission Board for South America" (12 December 1939), IV, 85, in CHI.

³⁰J. T. M[ueller], "Vierzig Jahre kirchliche Arbeit in Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, XCVI (2 July 1940), 234.

³¹Paul Schelp, "Grosse Ueberschwemmung in Brasilien," ibid., XCVII (17 June 1941), 194.

³²J. W. Behnken, "Versammlung des Board of Directors," ibid., XCVII (12 August 1941), 251.

The Lutheran Hour

A voice of comfort and encouragement that was never silent during the dark years of the war, even though it did not reach everywhere, was the Lutheran Hour. In 1937 the Lutheran Hour was broadcast in German and Portuguese on the strongest station of the state, in Porto Alegre, twice a month.³³ In 1938 the broadcasts in German had to stop but the Portuguese broadcasts continued regularly.³⁴ Also in Rio de Janeiro Portuguese broadcasts were made.³⁵ Until 1944 the Portuguese Lutheran Hour, completely supported by the Brazilian District, was broadcast twice a month from Porto Alegre and once a month from Rio. In 1944 the Lutheran Laymen's League in the United States started to support the Rio broadcast which enabled R. Hasse to broadcast every Sunday from the nation's capital.³⁶

³³Hugo Wagner and G. Goerl, "Hora Lutherana," Kirchenblatt, XXXII (15 April and 1 May 1937), Beilage zu Nr. 8.

³⁴J. T. Mueller], "Unsere Arbeit in Suedamerika," Der Lutheraner, XCIV (24 May 1938), 187.

³⁵Theo. Schmidt, "Aus unserm Brasilianischen Distrikt," ibid., XCVI (2 July 1940), 228.

³⁶Proceedings of the Thirty-Ninth Regular Convention of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States Assembled at Saginaw, Michigan as the Twenty-Fourth Delegate Synod June 21-29, 1944 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1944), p. 173. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1944.

Relations with the Mother Church

During the period 1937-1945 the shortage of pastors was deeply felt. In December 1937 the Seminario Concordia had graduated four ministerial candidates for Brazil while eighteen calls were waiting for them. The synodical convention of the Missouri Synod in 1938 expressed the necessity of sending more men from the United States to Brazil because the Seminary in Porto Alegre was not yet able to supply the demand.³⁷ In 1938 two North American candidates were sent to Brazil, M. Helmer and A. W. Schneider. Upon their arrival in Brazil they received only provisory visas for six months. The same happened to Dr. J. Jahn, who also had returned to Brazil at the close of 1938. Dr. J. Jahn had to leave Brazil again after one semester.³⁸ M. Helmer and A. W. Schneider received their permanent visas after a long bothersome process and great expense.³⁹

³⁷Proceedings of the Thirty-Seventh Regular Convention of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States Assembled at St. Louis, Mo. as the Twenty-Second Delegate Synod June 15-24, 1938 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1938), p. 172. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1938.

³⁸C. F. Lehenbauer, "Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, XCV (1 August 1939), 263. P. S[chelp], Kirchenblatt, XXXIV (15 October 1939), 156.

³⁹Luther-Kalender fuer Suedamerika auf das Jahr 1951, edited by A. Lehenbauer and P. Schelp (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1951), p. 156. Hereafter cited as LuthereKalender, 1951.

No other born North American candidates were sent to Brazil in the half century covered in this study. In 1940 a ministerial candidate who had been born in Brazil, but had grown up in the United States, V. C. Lehenbauer, was sent to Brazil. A similar case was that of E. Reimnitz who finished his theological training in Porto Alegre in 1942.⁴⁰ He was the last man sent from the United States in the period.

From 1938 to 1945 four men were sent from the United States to Brazil, whereas during the preceding seven years seventeen men had been sent.⁴¹

The Brazilian District Placed on the Same Basis with the Subsidized Districts in the United States

In spite of the fact that conditions in Brazil were completely different from those in the United States, the synodical convention of 1941 passed the resolution to place the Brazilian and Argentine Districts on the same basis with the subsidized districts in the United States. This was done to enable the South American districts to be recognized as local churches and organizations. The South American districts were granted a greater degree of self-government and authority. The supervision, direction, and development of the missions in South America were transferred to the

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 157. No. Synod, Proceedings, 1941, p. 215.

⁴¹Luther-Kalender, 1951, pp. 155-156.

Mission Boards in Brazil and Argentina. Nevertheless, the Mission Board for South America still continued to function as before.⁴²

Visitation

The synodical convention of 1941 also decided to send a Synodical officer to South America to study the situation. This visitation was carried out by the Executive Secretary of Missions, Dr. F. C. Streufert, in 1942.⁴³

District Conventions and Relations Between the Mission Boards

In the period 1937-1945 District Conventions were held only in 1940, in 1943, and in 1945. In other years they had to be cancelled because of unsafe conditions.⁴⁴

Relations between the Mission Board for South America in the United States and the Brazilian District Mission Board were somewhat disturbed by the poor postal service and censorship of the time.

⁴²Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1941, pp. 218-221.

⁴³Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1944, p. 148. His analysis of the situation in the days of persecution in Brazil, cf. note 20, was the fullest that the author found. Brazilian pastors did not dare write about it because of mail censorship.

⁴⁴Luther-Kalender, 1951, p. 162.

War clouds, war measures, war hysteria, censorship, delayed and lost mail, . . . cast their shadows upon, and handicapped the work of Synod's Board for Missions for South America.⁴⁵

Nevertheless, both mission boards worked together as smoothly as conditions permitted, cooperation and understanding between them were excellent.

Seminario Concordia

With the national attitude of suspicion towards foreigners, with the prohibition of the use of the German language, with the practical impossibility of the entrance of foreign pastors into the country, the vital role of the Seminario Concordia for the church work in Brazil became even more evident than before.

When the new laws of nationalization in the realm of education were promulgated in 1938 there seemed to be the danger that the Seminary would have to close. It did not fit into the classification of schools made by the government because of its theological character. A state professor, Dr. J. C. de Lemos, was furnished by the government to see to it that the nationalization program was carried out in the Seminary. After some years of anxiety an agreement was reached with the government, a convenio, by which the danger of closing passed.⁴⁶

⁴⁵Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1944, p. 171.

⁴⁶Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1941, p. 90.

With the abrupt change of language the problem of textbooks arose. The only Portuguese theological literature useful for a Lutheran Seminary that was available were the Bible, Bible History, Luther's Small Catechism, and the hymnal. All theological courses had to be taught without the aid of textbooks. For a while the instruction suffered because of it.⁴⁷

After two years of furlough, the president of the Seminary, Dr. J. Jahn took over again the presidency in 1939, but because only native Brazilians could occupy such a position, the Rev. C. H. Warth was nominated president pro-tempore. Dr. J. Jahn returned to the United States for the last time in October 1939.⁴⁸

The Rev. O. A. Goerl was elected president of the Seminario by the Mission Board for South America on 28 November 1939, the first born Brazilian to be elected for that position. He was at the same time the first Brazilian elected professor of the Seminary.⁴⁹ He was installed on 10 March 1940. Prof. F. Carchia was granted a furlough on account of illness in the second semester of 1940. The

⁴⁷"Minutes of the Mission Board for South America" (12 December 1939), III, 85, in CHI.

⁴⁸Ibid. (11 April 1939), III, 51. P. S[chelp], Kirchenblatt, XXXIV (15 October 1939), 156.

⁴⁹"Minutes of the Mission Board for South America" (28 November 1939), III, 82. H. Helmer, "Seminario Concordia," Kirchenblatt, XXXV (15 April 1940), 62.

Rev. O. Schueler became assistant professor to supply his vacancy.⁵⁰ He remained after the return of Prof. F. Carchia and was elected professor in 1943. In 1944 Carchia retired.⁵¹

Already in 1938 conditions were crowded at the Seminary in dormitory, classroom, and dining hall facilities. The synodical convention that met in that year granted the permission to build and referred the entire matter to the Board of Directors because of the unsafe conditions in Brazil.⁵² The synodical convention of 1941 granted it again and voted the necessary funds.⁵³ Finally in 1942 the second wing of the main dormitory and classroom building was erected as was also the chapel. The chapel was dedicated on 29 November 1942, the new section of the main building shortly thereafter.⁵⁴

New classes of students were accepted every two years. In 1939 the enrollment was fifty-six of whom five graduated and entered the ministry, two of them in Argentina. The enrollment was seventy-four at the end of 1940. Six of

⁵⁰Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1941, p. 90.

⁵¹C. F. Lehenbauer, Der Lutheraner, IC (30 November 1943), 374. Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1944, p. 105.

⁵²Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1938, p. 92.

⁵³Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1941, p. 94.

⁵⁴C. F. Lehenbauer, "Gottes Walten in Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, IC (12 February 1943), 6.

those graduated into the ministry. In 1942 seven ministerial candidates graduated, five in 1943, and three in 1944.⁵⁵

Until 1941 the Seminary in Porto Alegre served all of South America. In 1942 the Seminary in Buenos Aires was opened and the one in Porto Alegre from then on prepared pastors and teachers only for Brazil.⁵⁶

Numerical Increase

Considering the difficulties and tribulations that pastors and congregations lived through during the period 1937-1945 the numerical increase in membership is surprising.

In 1937 the number of parish pastors working in Brazil was sixty-seven. They were serving a total of 274 congregations and preaching stations, with a total membership of 39,932 baptized, 18,124 communicant, and 5,773 voting members. In 139 parochial schools 4,158 children were instructed.⁵⁷

In 1945 after seven years of irregular work due to nationalization and war ninety-five pastors were working in Brazil, serving 440 congregations and preaching stations,

⁵⁵Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1941, p. 91. Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1944, p. 105. Luther-Kalender, 1951, pp. 157-158.

⁵⁶F. C. Streufert, "A Visit to Our Churches in the Argentine," Lutheran Witness, LXI (7 July 1942), 244.

⁵⁷Statistical Yearbook, 1937, p. 146.

with a total of 49,961 baptized, 28,012 communicant, and 8,768 voting members. Though many parochial schools had been closed, the number of parochial school pupils was 4,106, almost the same as that of 1937.⁵⁸

With the prohibition of the use of the German language and the exclusive use of Portuguese in church, school, and home for five years, a painful but important step was taken by the Igreja Evangelica Luterana do Brazil towards becoming an indigenous church.

⁵⁸Statistical Yearbook of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the Year 1945 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1946), p. 140.

CHAPTER IX

POST WAR DEVELOPMENTS: 1945-1950

Situation in 1945

Besides the consequences of the war, the fact that several pastors had passed through afflictions and dangers, that some had lost their libraries, that several had been in prison or had been forbidden to preach for a long time, and that two pastors remained in prison, several misfortunes overtook the Brazilian District ministry early in 1945. The house of a pastor burned down with all his belongings. One of the leaders of the district, who had served twenty-nine years as pastor and twenty years in the Brazilian Mission Board, developed leprosy and was interned in a leper colony. While the district convention was meeting in 1945 a telegram arrived, saying that Rev. A. H. Becker's wife had been bitten by a snake and had died before her husband, who was attending the convention, had arrived home. One of the Seminary professors who had worked for thirty-eight years in Brazil developed skin cancer. Another pastor had a physical breakdown and had to resign. One of the first graduates of the Seminary of Porto Alegre died. Two other pastors resigned.¹

¹F. C. Streufert, "Truebsale und Leiden," Der Lutheraner, CI (7 August 1945), 245.

Dr. F. C. Streufert, who visited the Brazilian District in 1945, after returning to the United States reported:

Never before did I hear of so many trials, of so many afflictions and hardships, persecutions, that had come upon a group of Christians, crowded into such a comparatively short time, as during my stay in Brazil. It was not that anyone had taken time out to compile the roster of misfortunes. . . .²

Restoration of Democracy in Brazil

The end of the war, the restoration of democracy in Brazil, and the consequent extinction of the ban upon the German language lifted the spirits of pastors and laymen. Lay members had suffered even more than pastors in the persecutions during the war. Some of them even died in prison.

The new Brazilian Constitution, promulgated in 1946 reiterated the basic principles of total religious freedom that had marked the previous republican constitutions:

Chapter II
Individual Rights and Guarantees.
Article 141.

The Constitution assures Brazilians and foreigners residing in the country the inviolability of the rights respecting life, liberty, individual security, and property in the following terms:

- §1. All are equal before the law.
.....
- §7. The liberty of conscience and creed is inviolable, and the free exercise of religious sects assured, as long as they shall not be contrary to public order or

²F. C. Streufert, "Lutheranism in Brazil," Lutheran Witness, LXIV (17 July 1945), 231.

good morals. Religious associations shall acquire juridic personality in the form of the civil law.

§8. No one shall be deprived of any of his rights by reason of religious, philosophic, or political conviction, unless he shall invoke it to exempt himself from any obligation or duty required by the law of Brazilians in general, or shall refuse those which the same law may establish as substitutes for those duties in order to meet a conscientious excuse.³

On 2 December 1946 the Rev. G. J. Beck and on 6 December 1946 the Rev. A. Heine were freed, after they had suffered four years of imprisonment even though they were innocent. Heine returned to serve his congregation, St. Paul in Porto Alegre, and Beck accepted a call to Entre Ijuis in the northwest of Rio Grande do Sul.⁴

The Kirchenblatt returned to circulation on 1 January 1947 after more than five years of ~~suppression~~. After a short time it had again more subscribers than any other Brazilian District periodical, due to its able editorial staff.⁵

The period 1945-1950 may be summarized as being a return to normal conditions of undisturbed external and spiritual growth, after serious perturbations and adversities.

³Amos J. Peaslee, Constitutions of Nations (2nd ed.; The Hague: M. Nijoff, 1956), I, 234-235.

⁴P. S[chelp], "Pastoren Heine und Beck," Evangelisch-Lutherisches Kirchenblatt, XXXVII (1 January 1947), 5. Hereafter cited as Kirchenblatt.

⁵P. S[chelp], "Keine Heckensaat," ibid., XXXVII (1 January 1947), 1. P. S[chelp], "Kurze Nachrichten," ibid., XXXVIII (15 April 1948), 62.

Politically the government of President Eurico Dutra was one of the most uneventful and normal periods in Brazilian history.

Major Developments

Several major new developments took place in the Brazilian District in the period 1945-1950.

Orphanage

Already in the 1920s the necessity of an orphanage was felt. The district convention of 1924 elected a committee to study the possibility of founding an orphanage.⁶ Nothing positive resulted.

In 1932 the Rev. A. Gedrat received in his home a child whose parents had separated and abandoned it.⁷ In 1938 already fifteen children had found shelter at Gedrat's home in Moreira. The number of children increased; however, the help that Gedrat had received from relatives in Germany stopped with the beginning of the war, so he applied for assistance to other pastors and the Mission Board in Porto

⁶Vierzehnter Synodalbericht des Brasilianischen Distrikts Der Ev. Lutherischen Synode von Missouri, Ohio, und andern Staaten. Versammelt zu Erechim, Rio Grande do Sul, vom. 1. bis zum 7. Mai 1924 (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1924), p. 71.

⁷F. C. Streufert, "Das Waisenhaus in Moreira," Der Lutheraner, CIII (27 May 1947), 180-181.

Alegre in 1940. Several pastors and congregations became interested in the work and started to support it.⁸ The district convention of 1943 made the orphan problem a District matter. A Society of Orphans' Friends was founded that year to provide the funds for the care of the orphans and abandoned children within the Brazilian District and to call the attention of all Lutheran congregations in Brazil to this work of charity. In 1944 forty hectares [1 hectare=2.471 acres] of land were bought. In 1945 the first provisory orphanage was built. It was dedicated on 5 August 1945. The thirty children who until then had lived at the parsonage moved to the new building.

In December 1946 the Society of Orphans' Friends became the Associação Evangelica Luterana de Beneficencia, with juridical stature. The orphanage was rebuilt in 1948 on newly acquired land and additions made, permitted it to lodge one hundred children together with the Rev. A. Gedrat and his family in 1950. Most of the food needed was grown on orphanage property. Contributions from the different congregations in Brazil supported the venture.⁹

⁸Ibid., p. 181.

⁹C. H. Warth, "Igreja Evangelica Luterana," Enciclopedia Rio Grandense, edited by Klaus Becker (Canoas, R. G. S., Brazil: Editora Regional Ltda, co., 1957), IV, 263-264.

Parochial Schools

After the war, parochial schools flourished again. The number of pupils taught in them, from 4,106 in 1945 increased to 5,990 in 1950 when the total number of schools was 128.¹⁰ To raise the scholastic standards of the schools, a District Counselor of Schools was appointed.¹¹

Ginasio Concordia

During this period, for the first time, the Brazilian District had a high-school, besides the prep-school of the Seminary.

When the Rev. P. Evers and Dr. W. Kunstmann reestablished altar and communion fellowship with the Missouri Synod together with their congregations on the occasion of the district convention of 1945, Christ's Church high school, founded the year before, became the first Missouri Synod Lutheran high school officially recognized by the

¹⁰ Statistical Yearbook of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States for the Year 1945 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1946), p. 140. Hereafter cited as Statistical Yearbook, 1945. Statistical Yearbook of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod for the Year 1950 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1951), p. 151. Hereafter cited as Statistical Yearbook, 1950.

¹¹ Proceedings of the Forty-First Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod Assembled at Milwaukee, Wisconsin as the Twenty-Sixth Delegate Synod June 21-30, 1950 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1950), p. 431. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1950.

government. From 1945 to 1950 the total enrollment in its various departments, elementary school, business school, and high school, varied between six and eight hundred pupils. Dr. W. Kunstmann was the principal. The district convention of 1948 decided to have the District participate actively in the administration of the Ginasio Concordia. Plans were made to build a dormitory to enable pupils from out of town to study in a Lutheran high school. The first resident pupils were to be accepted in 1950.¹²

Seminario Concordia

The Seminary in Porto Alegre was as important as ever for the missionary work from 1945 to 1950. Several changes made during the period improved the efficiency of the Seminary, buildings were added, the curriculum was lengthened, the faculty became more numerous.

Dr. José Lemos, who had been placed at the Seminary during the time of nationalization resigned in December 1945 and died in 1946. He had been an efficient Portuguese instructor.¹³

¹²F. C. Streufert, "Lutheranism in Brazil," Lutheran Witness, LXIV (31 July 1945), 347. Werner K. Wadewitz, "Convention of the Brazil District," ibid., LXVII (23 March 1948), 95. Elmer Reimnitz, "Golden Jubilee of the Brazilian District," ibid., LXIX (4 April 1950), 109.

¹³Proceedings of the Fortieth Regular Convention of the Ev. Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States Assembled at Chicago, Illinois, as the Twenty-Fifth Delegate Synod July 20-29, 1947 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House,

In 1946 the construction of the second large building, the one that was to have classrooms, dormitories, library, and laboratory, was begun. Also in 1946 a graduate of the Seminary, the Rev. L. Krey, after the usual entrance examinations, received admittance to the State University, on account of his Seminary credits, without having to go through the three years of colegio. After Krey, other Seminary graduates and students made use of the same advantage to take up additional studies.¹⁴

Until 1946 new classes of students were accepted every two years. From 1947 on, new students were accepted every year. This made the number of students increase considerably in the following years. Thirty-one new students were admitted in 1947; thirty-six in 1948; twenty-nine in 1949; twenty-six in 1950. In 1947 the total number of students was eighty-two, in 1950 one hundred sixteen.¹⁵

The Rev. W. K. Wadewitz was elected professor in 1947 who after a year's furlough started to teach in 1948.¹⁶ Near the end of 1948 the newly elected professor of theology,

1947), p. 135. Hereafter cited as Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1947.

¹⁴P. Schelp, "Passing a Milestone in Porto Alegre," Lutheran Witness, LXV (18 June 1946), 212-213.

¹⁵Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1947, p. 143. Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1950, p. 132.

¹⁶J. T. Meuller], "Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, CIII (24 June 1947), 210.

Prof. M. Strassen, arrived with his family to start teaching in 1949. Also in 1949 former instructor G. Thome was elected professor. Theological students and candidates helped out as instructors as the number of classes increased.¹⁷

In 1950 the faculty was: L. C. Rehfeldt, D. D., professor since 1918; Dean P. W. Schelp, D. D., professor since 1920; Dr. K. A. Rupp, since 1925; President O. A. Goerl, since 1940; Dr. O. Schueler, since 1942; G. Thome, since 1946; W. K. Wadewitz, since 1948; M. W. Strassen, since 1948; Instructors: A. Schueler and M. C. Warth; Athletic Director, part time, H. Fruestoeckl; Mrs. W. K. Wadewitz, music.¹⁸

The request to increase the curriculum by one year, in order to have four years of high school, three years of college, three years of theology, and one year of vicarage between the second and third year of theology, was granted, but the third year of college had not yet been added in 1950.¹⁹

The new classroom, dormitory, laboratory, and library building was dedicated in 1948.²⁰ The construction of a

¹⁷Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1950, p. 132.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1947, p. 136. Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1950, pp. 132-133.

²⁰Ibid., p. 133.

duplex house was concluded in 1949, to serve as residence for two professors' families.²¹

Sixteen ministerial candidates graduated during the period, B. Krebs, W. J. Krebs, J. Raschko, R. A. Warth, and G. Scholze in 1947; G. G. Beck, E. W. Bergmann, W. Becker, M. Doege, A. Fitz, N. Neumann, Arn. Schueler, F. Seide, M. C. Warth, E. Welzel, and G. R. Wentzel graduated in December 1949.²²

Expansion and Plans

A new and promising mission field was opened in the late 1940s, the North of Parana, the new coffee area where many farmers, also from Rio Grande do Sul were then settling. Among them were Lutherans. In 1947 vicar M. C. Warth served the area of Mandaguari. In 1948 his brother, the Rev. R. Warth, began to serve the eight congregations and preaching stations of the parish of Mandaguari.²³ After 1950 several other parishes were organized in the area.

In 1950 the Rev. M. L. Hasse moved to Curitiba, capital

²¹Th. Reuter, "Konkordia Seminar," Kirchenblatt, XXXIX (1 April 1949), 53.

²²Luther-Kalender fuer Suedamerika auf das Jahr 1951, edited by A. Lehenbauer and P. Schelp (Porto Alegre: Casa Publicadora Concordia, 1951), pp. 158-159. Hereafter cited as Luther-Kalender, 1951.

²³R. A. Warth, "Bilder aus der Mission Norte do Parana," Kirchenblatt, XXXVIII (1 and 15 October 1948), 152-153.

of Parana and organized a congregation there.²⁴

In the same year the Rev. L. Bohn, a pastor who belonged to no synod, asked to join the Missouri Synod because he was getting along in years and wanted a Lutheran pastor to help him with the pastoral care of his huge parish of Candelaria, the baptized membership of which numbered more than 5,000 souls. C. Mundel accepted the call as associate pastor of Candelaria early in 1950.²⁵

The external growth in this period was characterized much more by the acceptance of whole congregations of Lutherans, or at least, nominally already Lutherans, into the District than by conversion of single individuals. The total number of adults baptized or confirmed by pastors of the Brazilian District was 202 in 1950.²⁶

In 1950 the plans to send the first missionaries to the northeast of Brazil, to Salvador and Recife, were completed. In 1951 the first Missouri Synod missionaries started to work in Bahia and Pernambuco. Bahia is the state where the Rev. H. C. Schwan had been ninety years before.²⁷

²⁴Luther-Kalender, 1951, p. 157.

²⁵M. L. Hasse, "Pela Seara," Mensageiro Luterano, XXXIII (March 1950), 19. P. S[chelp], Kirchenblatt, XL (15 March 1950), 44-45.

²⁶Statistical Yearbook, 1950, pp. 167-169.

²⁷Statistical Yearbook of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod for the year 1951 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1952), pp. 168-169.

Motorization

From 1945 to 1948 eight North American pastors returned to the United States and none went from the United States to Brazil. The men who left were: E. Winkler and W. Otten in 1945; H. Klenke, M. Hofmann, E. Kruse, Th. Schmidt in 1946; M. Helmer in 1947; and W. Streicher in 1948.²⁸ In some cases, to supply pastoral care for the parishes that they had left vacant, parishes had to be consolidated. Fifteen vacancies existed in 1948. That then a pastor had to serve eight or more congregations and preaching stations was rather the rule than the exception.²⁹ Up to that time pastors had to travel from station to station almost exclusively on horseback. To improve the efficiency and to spare the health of the pastor motorcycles and jeeps were provided by the Mission Board through a Motorization Fund. This fund helped the pastors who needed faster transportation most critically. In 1948 the first four motorcycles were bought.³⁰ By 1950 ten pastors had jeeps or cars and fourteen had the use of

²⁸Luther-Kalender, 1951, pp. 155-156.

²⁹Statistical Yearbook, 1950, pp. 167-169. F. C. Streufert, "Missions in South America," Lutheran Witness, LXVII (2 November 1948), 355.

³⁰"Convention of the Brazil District," ibid., LXVII (9 March 1948), 76.

motorcycles. But fifty-eight parish pastors did not yet have the use of motorized transportation.³¹

The Lutheran Hour

From its beginning in 1937 until 1947 the Lutheran Hour in the Portuguese language was broadcast from Porto Alegre and from Rio de Janeiro. With the financial support of the Lutheran Laymen's League of the United States it started to be broadcast from ten different stations. The Lutheran Hour was broadcast from Recife--Pernambuco, Rio de Janeiro, Juiz de Fora--Minas Gerais, Curitiba--Parana, Joinville--Santa Catarina, Salvador--Bahia, Porto Alegre, Passo Fundo, and Pelotas in Rio Grande do Sul. In 1948 fifteen different stations reaching most of Brazil were broadcasting the Lutheran Hour.³²

Youth Work

After the war youth work was again carried out with new vigor. Regional youth conventions had been held regularly from the mid-1920s until the War. During the War little more than local work could be done. It was in 1950 that thirty-four delegates from young people's associations

³¹E. Reimnitz, *ibid.*, LXIX (4 April 1950), 109.

³²"Hora Luterana," *Mensagem Luterana*, XXX (May 1947), 40. "Hora Luterana," *ibid.*, XXX (June 1947), 43.

of different states held a two day convention in Porto Alegre. They organized the Juventude Luterana do Brasil, a nationwide Lutheran youth association. Alfons Krick was elected president, Ilse Evers, Secretary, and Elizabeth Petzhold, treasurer. As to specific tasks of the association, the members pledged themselves to support the cause of needy students at the Seminary, and of the Ginasio Concordia, then the only Lutheran high school in Brazil.³³ At the time eighty-two congregations of the Brazilian District had a young people's association. The total membership in those associations was 2,817.³⁴

Portuguese Religious Literature

Also during the period 1945-1950 the Portuguese official church periodical, the Mensageiro Luterano, appeared monthly, the theological journal Igreja Luterana was published regularly, the youth and the children's periodicals also came out in monthly editions. The annual O Lar Cristão, that had been published for the first time in 1938, came out every year. Important new productions of the period were the Portuguese Sunday School leaflets translated from

³³M. L. Hasse, ibid., XXXIII (March 1950), 20. "Brazilian Walther League Resurrected," Lutheran Witness, LXIX (13 June 1950), 189. George Mueller, "Unsere Jugend in Brasilien haelt Versammlung," Der Lutheraner, CVI (20 June 1950), 198.

³⁴Th. Reuter, "Unsere Jugendvereine," Kirchenblatt, XXXVII (1 June 1947), 81.

the English by the Rev. Messrs. Paulo and Martinho Hasse, and the translation of Dr. J. T. Mueller's abridgment of Dr. F. Pieper's Christian Dogmatics into Portuguese by M. L. Hasse, which, however, was not yet ready in 1950.³⁵

General Aspects of the Work

When the German language could be used again, part of the work was again done in German. Portuguese, however, continued to be used in the majority of the services. Eight years of suppression of German had the effect that the younger generation forgot most of the German that it knew and used Portuguese exclusively. Portuguese was used exclusively in sixteen parishes; German was used exclusively in only one parish; in the other seventy-one parishes both languages were used in 1950.³⁶

After the war, to replace the theological libraries of those pastors who had had theirs burned by frenzied mobs during the War, mission friends in the United States sent nearly a ton of used theological books to Brazil.³⁷

Another aspect of the church work in the period is the improvement in the houses of worship. Several congregations.

³⁵Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1950, pp. 433-434.

³⁶Statistical Yearbook, 1950, pp. 167-169. F. C. Streufert, "The Church Moves Forward in Latin America," Lutheran Witness, LXVII (20 April 1948), 130.

³⁷Mo. Synod, Proceedings, 1947, p. 374.

built churches or chapels with their own means in the five years after the War.³⁸

The question of self-support again became crucial during the period. Because of the critical conditions prevailing during the war, some parishes that had attained self-support before, had to ask for some support from the Mission Board again. By the end of 1945 only three parishes were self-supporting. In 1946 seven more reached financial independence. Until 1950 several other parishes had taken the necessary steps to attain self-support.³⁹

Excepting sporadic adverse statements by Roman Catholic clergymen and isolated cases of disturbances caused by unchurched elements, no noticeable opposition against the Missouri Synod missionary work was felt in the period.⁴⁰

The main hindrance to a better extensive and intensive missionary work continued to be the insufficient number of pastors. No replacements came for the North American pastors who left. New mission fields could have been opened if the man power had been available. Calls came from several areas. In 1950 the lack of pastors was as critical as it

³⁸P. S[chelp], "Kurze Nachrichten," Kirchenblatt, XXXVII (15 March and 1 April 1947), 37.

³⁹K. Fielder, "Aus Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, CII (19 March 1946), 84. F. C. Streufert, ibid., CII (29 October 1946), 349.

⁴⁰P. S[chelp], "Kurze Nachrichten," Kirchenblatt, XXXVIII (1 August 1948), 117. R. Hasse, "Joaseiro," Mensagemiro Luterano, XXX (May 1947), 37.

had ever been before. In December 1949 there were eight ministerial candidates for forty-one calls.⁴¹

The role played by the missionaries' wives, not only in the period 1945-1950, but throughout the first fifty years of the Missouri Synod in Brazil deserves to be mentioned. In many cases the success, failure, or resignation of a missionary depended upon the efforts and sacrifices of their wives. As a rule they had to live under very primitive conditions, in lonesomeness and danger when their husbands were away on long trips to the different preaching stations. It is the author's belief that they deserve the title given them by Dr. F. C. Streufert, "the unsung heroines" of the Brazilian mission.⁴²

Numerical Increase

In 1945 ninety-five Missouri Synod pastors were working in Brazil. They were serving 440 congregations and preaching stations. The total membership then was 49,961 baptized and 28,012 communicant members.⁴³ In 1950 eighty-eight Missouri Synod pastors were serving 539 congregations and

⁴¹Hans Rottmann, "Fuenfzig Jahre treulutherische Kirche in Brasilien," Der Lutheraner, CVI (9 May 1950), 153. M. L. Hasse, "Pela Seara," Mensageiro Luterano, XXXIII (March 1950), 20.

⁴²F. C. Streufert, My Trip to South America ([St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, ca. 1948]), p. 12.

⁴³Statistical Yearbook, 1945, p. 140.

preaching stations in Brazil with a total of 65,280 baptized and 36,832 communicant members.⁴⁴ The increase of 15,000 in five years accounted for the fastest rate of increase in membership in the first half century of the history of the Sinodo Evangelico Luterano do Brazil.⁴⁵

Jubilee

The Golden Jubilee District Convention was held at the Seminario Concordia in Porto Alegre from 22 to 29 January 1950. The North American representative of the president of the Missouri Synod, H. A. Mayer, preached the sermon at the opening service. Seventy-six pastors, twenty-six synodical teachers, and forty-eight lay delegates took part in the deliberations.

The convention was brought to an end with the Jubilee service at the Teatro São Pedro where over a thousand Lutherans gathered to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Missouri Synod's missionary work in Brazil, in the morning of 29 January 1950. District President R. Hasse preached

⁴⁴J. T. Mueller, "Die Lutherische Kirche Brasiliens," Der Lutheraner, CVII (11 September 1951), 301.

⁴⁵Ibid., The official name of the Brazilian District of the Missouri Synod was changed from Sinodo Evangelico Luterano do Brasil to Igreja Evangelical Luterana do Brasil in 1951. Ibid.

the jubilee sermon based on Psalm 126:2,3.⁴⁶

Situation in 1950 and Prospects

In 1950 the Brazilian District was the largest District of the Missouri Synod outside the United States. It was facing tremendous missionary opportunities and was hampered by the lack of missionaries. It was in the process of becoming an indigenous church, but the day when it would be completely self-governing and self-supporting was not yet near. However, the necessary elements for it were already present, a Brazilian ministry and Brazilian leadership.

⁴⁶M. L. Hasse, Mensageiro Luterano, XXXIII (March 1950), 19-20. H. Rottmann, Der Lutheraner, CVI (9 May 1950), 152-153.

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

The Missouri Synod began missionary work in Brazil in 1900. The motive for this step was a feeling of responsibility towards fellow Lutherans in distress. The Rev. C. Broders, the first Missouri Synod missionary that went to Brazil, started his work in the state of Rio Grande do Sul because a direct call for help had come from a pastor of that state to the Missouri Synod.

The missionary work of the Missouri Synod was carried out among Lutherans of German origin who called the Missouri Synod pastors or who had no pastors to serve them. The missionary work did not have the character of missions among heathens, but among Lutherans and people who called themselves Lutherans but who, after years of very deficient, if any at all, pastoral care, were Lutherans in name only. The opposition that the Missouri Synod pastors had to face in the first years, caused by a united synod, subsided with the time.

The objective to form an indigenous church, self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting was in the minds of the first missionaries, especially in the mind of the Rev. W. Mahler, the first resident mission director. To achieve this objective a Seminary was founded in 1903, even

though the circumstances for such a step were not favorable at the time. The Seminary became a vital factor in the growth of the Igreja Evangelica Luterana do Brasil. Twenty years after its foundation already more than half of the pastors of the Brazilian District of the Missouri Synod were graduates of that school.

Very early the Brazilian mission field became a District of the Missouri Synod, though the Board for Home Missions of the Missouri Synod continued to govern it.

A period of trials and forced language change came during the First World War but it was too short to have lasting effects. Before 1917 almost all the church work was carried out in German. For a while in 1917 and 1918 part of it had to be done in Portuguese. But after early 1918 most of the work was done in German again.

From 1918 to 1929 an attempt was made to conduct missionary work exclusively among Luso-Brazilians in one area of Rio Grande do Sul, but the attempt failed. No second attempt was made in the first half century of the Missouri Synod's work in Brazil.

From 1920 to 1930 the Missouri Synod's missionary work in Brazil experienced great geographic expansion. Following direct calls for pastors, missionary work was begun in the states Santa Catarina, Parana, and Espirito Santo in the 1920s. In 1930 missionary work was begun in the two great metropolises of Brazil, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.

In the early 1920s a significant change occurred in the character of the ministry of the Brazilian District. Until then the majority of its pastors had been North Americans who generally stayed for too short a time in Brazil to work effectively. From 1922 on, there were more graduates of the Seminario Concordia of Porto Alegre working in Brazil than North American pastors. This made the ministry more stable and more effective, because Brazilian pastors normally worked for many more years in the Brazilian District than North Americans.

In 1923 a religious publishing house was founded by members of the Brazilian District. This furnished the necessary literature to aid the proclamation of the Gospel in Brazil.

In the 1930s the Brazilian District experienced a marked numerical increase even though Brazil was under a dictatorship.

The Igreja Evangelica Luterana do Brasil lived through severe trials from 1937 to 1945. It came through the adversities stronger and nearer the objective of being an indigenous church than it had ever been before. The forced change in language from German to Portuguese had lasting effects. Even after the ban on the German language had been lifted, most of the missionary and church work continued to be done in Portuguese, the language of the country. During the period of trials the leadership of the district

passed from the hands of leaders trained in North America to Brazilians. In 1940 a Brazilian was elected president of the Seminario Concordia. In 1942 a Brazilian became president of the district.

After half a century of existence the Igreja Evangelica Luterana do Brasil was not completely self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting, that is, a totally indigenous church, but it was marching in that direction with firm steps. It continued to receive financial aid and counsel from the mother church in the United States. Part of the church work was yet being done in German, although most of it was already carried out in Portuguese. The pastoral work was still short of the ideal. Parishes were too large. Parish education in stewardship and evangelism was still weak because pastors were overworked. The shortage of pastors was greater than ever. Missionary opportunities were also greater than ever before and the Igreja Evangelica Luterana do Brasil was willing to face them. In that direction, the first two Missouri Synod pastors were sent to the northeast of Brazil one year after the half-century covered in this study, in 1951.

The bulk of the members was of German origin in 1950 but in towns and cities also people of other national backgrounds were being received into the church in ever increasing numbers.

In the year when this study was written, 1962, the

district convention of the Igreja Evangelica Luterana do Brazil asked the synodical convention of the Missouri Synod to grant the Brazilian District the status of sister church for 1965.

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