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Everette Meier

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, ir_meiere@csl.edu

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THE LIFE AND WORK OF H.C. SCHWAN
AS PASTOR AND MISSIONARY

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
Bachelor of Divinity

by

Everette Meier

June 1950

Approved by:

Aug. R. Schell
Advisor

Bernhard C. Duffel
Reader

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PREFACE

The purpose of this thesis is stated in the title, namely, to present as fully as possible "the life and work of H.C. Schwan as pastor and missionary." The scope of this paper does not permit the very absorbing and significant study of a number of other questions. Such studies would include 1) a detailed account of Schwan's work as member and officer of Synod, 2) an evaluation of his position on the question of unionism, 3) an analysis of his role in the predestinarian controversy with the Ohio Synod, and 4) a comparative and analytic study of Schwan's original draft of the catechism (1893), the committee-revised product of 1896, and the catechism employed by the Missouri Synod today.

To a large extent the material of the present study is taken from primary sources, since, as the late Dr. L.E. Fuerbringer said, "no biography of him [Schwan], not even an obituary, has ever appeared in our church papers or anywhere." Dr. Fuerbringer's book 80 Eventful Years appeared in 1944. The second last chapter of about ten pages is devoted to Dr. H.C. Schwan "an unforgettable character." Shortly after reading this brief account of Schwan's work as president of the Missouri Synod, the writer was privileged to do some translation of German materials for Dr. W.G.

Polack. Among these materials were the synodical addresses of Dr. Schwan. These factors first raised the question in the writer's mind: How is it that no biography of any kind has ever been written about this "unforgettable character" who served his church as president for twenty-one years? A bit of investigation revealed that Schwan had also served as president of his district for eighteen years prior to his service as president of Synod. With Dr. Polack's approval, the writer began work on what was intended to be a complete study of the entire life and work of H.C. Schwan. It soon became evident, however, that such a study was too large for a paper of this nature. With Dr. Polack's approval, therefore, the paper was limited to a brief biographical sketch of Schwan's entire life (chapter one), and a fairly complete study of his life and work as pastor and missionary.

The writer wishes to express his indebtedness to Dr. Polack for his suggestions as advisor and for maintaining the writer's interest in the work. Special acknowledgements are due also to the Rev. A.R. Suelflow, curator of Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, Missouri. Since Dr. Polack's illness, he has served as advisor to the writer. His assistance in locating many of the sources was invaluable, as were also his helpful suggestions as to organization of the material, and his patient proof reading of the script.

CHAPTER I

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

In Germany

Dr. H.C. Schwan was born on April 5, 1819 in Horneburg, Hanover, Germany.¹ He was the oldest of the six children of the Rev. G.H.C. Schwan and his wife Charlotte, nee Wyneken, a sister of the Rev. F.C.D. Wyneken of St. Louis.² They named him Heinrich Christian. Later on, others were to know him in a foreign country by the more affectionate name "der allgemeine Heinrich."³

Heinrich received his first instruction from his parents, followed by elementary education in the village grammar school. His father supplemented this with some private coaching in the ancient languages, and with religious instruction in preparation for his confirmation as

¹W.G. Polack, "Henry Christian Schwan, D.D. (1819-1905)," Walther League Messenger, XXXI (October, 1922), 86.

²Die Abendschule, LI (June 8, 1905), 712.

³L. Fuerbringer, 80 Eventful Years (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1944), p. 239.

Note: The phrase "der allgemeine Heinrich" is an untranslatable pun. The usual signification of "allgemein" is "common" or "every-day." This meaning is very applicable to Schwan, for he was a common man, a man of and for the people. In the Missouri Synod, the word "allgemein" has a second connotation. The president of this body was known as "der allgemeine Praeses" - president of the general body. Inasmuch as Schwan was president of this body for twenty-one years, the term "allgemein" applied to him also in this sense.

well.⁴

Henry, as we would call him in America today, next attended the college in Stade, graduating with highest honors in 1837.⁵ In November of that same year, he enrolled as a student of theology at the University of Goettingen,⁶ the same school which Henry Melchior Muhlenberg, father of American Lutheranism, had attended almost a century earlier.⁷

During the previous month, Goettingen University had celebrated its one hundredth anniversary. It was at the peak of its influence at that time. But when seven of its professors felt constrained to oppose rescension of its 1833 constitution, they were deposed by the nobility and landowners. Consequently a large number of students left "the city of the muses" along with their professors. Among these was Schwan, who now went to Jena University.⁸ Professor L. Fuerbringer, a later contemporary of Schwan, quotes him as saying that while at Jena he had contact with the famous, although rationalistic, church historian Carl von Hase. Although impressed by von Hase's erudition, Schwan was not at

⁴Polack, op. cit., p. 86.

⁵Die Abendschule, op. cit., p. 712.

⁶Ibid., XL (October 26, 1893), 185.

⁷J.L. Neve, History of the Lutheran Church in America (Burlington, Iowa: Lutheran Literary Board, 1934), p. 55.

⁸Die Abendschule, XL (October 26, 1893), 185.

all pleased or impressed by his rationalism.⁹

In July, 1842, Schwan finished his theological studies. Dr. Fr. Koester administered the final examination, and "with great pleasure" granted him the right to preach. For the time being Henry made but little use of this privilege, since he accepted a position as private tutor in Dorum, a small Hanoverian village. He served in this capacity until his ordination on September 13, 1843, when he was commissioned as missionary to Brazil.¹⁰

Dr. William Sihler, one of the "fathers" of The Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, relates that before he came to America, he met Schwan in the home of a certain Rev. Ruperti in Leesum, a Hanoverian village. Sihler received a very good impression of the young man who was about to sail for Brazil. "Already at that time," says Sihler, "he had an earnest Lutheran bent."¹¹

In South America

So far as the writer was able to determine, there is no indication why Henry should wish to go to far away Brazil. It may be that he knew several German merchants who traded in Brazil, and that their stories stirred in him the love

⁹Fuerbringer, op. cit., p. 240.

¹⁰Die Abendschule, XL (October 26, 1893), 185.

¹¹William Sihler, Lebenslauf von Dr. W. Sihler (New York: Lutherischen Verlags-Verein, 1880), I, 157.

of adventure. At any rate, he arrived in Bahia, Brazil, towards the end of 1843. There he got in touch with two Episcopalian ministers, had several services in their church, confirmed a young man, and gave the Lord's Supper to some ten persons. Then he went to Leopoldina in February, 1844. According to Prof. L. Fuerbringer, Leopoldina was a settlement in the neighborhood of Caravellas, in the province of Bahia.¹² There he seems to have spent most of his time as a private tutor in the home of two Bremen merchants who owned a coffee plantation. In addition to his work as tutor, he also served these households as pastor.¹³

In 1849 Schwan married Emma Blum, probably the daughter of one of the two above mentioned plantation owners.¹⁴ Emma Wyneken, daughter of F.C.D. Wyneken, and later a close friend of Schwan's wife while they were living in Cleveland, Ohio, includes this statement in her memoirs:

My father's nephew, Dr. Schwan, was a tutor in Brazil before coming to the United States....While tutoring in a German settlement in Brazil, he met and married one of his pupils. Mrs. Schwan's father, who was a physician, owned a large coffee-plantation in Brazil;....¹⁵

¹²Fuerbringer, op. cit., p. 240.

¹³Sihler, op. cit., p. 157.

¹⁴Die Abendschule, LI (June 8, 1905), 712.

¹⁵Emma Wyneken, "Memoirs of the Wyneken Household," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, XIV (January, 1942), 101.

In America

Upon the urgent request of his uncle F.G.D. Wyneken, Schwan came to the United States in 1850 to help serve the increasingly large number of Germans who were migrating to America.¹⁶ Pastor Schwan's first charge in America was a small, country congregation at Neu-Bielefeld (now Black Jack), St. Louis County, Missouri. Here he was installed September 15, 1850 by the President of The Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States,¹⁷ the Rev. C.F.W. Walther. Pastors Wyneken (Schwan's uncle, then stationed at Trinity Congregation in St. Louis) and Mueller (who had served the Neu-Bielefeld congregation during a vacancy) assisted in the ceremonies.¹⁸ During this rather short pastorate which lasted a little less than a year, Schwan's first son, Paul, was born in the primitive log cabin which served as their home.¹⁹

¹⁶Die Abendschule, XL (October 26, 1893), 185.

¹⁷This rather cumbersome name was recently shortened to: The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod. For the sake of brevity we shall hereafter refer to this church body by the name Missouri Synod.

¹⁸Synodal Bericht der deutschen Ev.-Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio, u.a. Staaten (St. Louis: Druckerei der Synode von Missouri etc., 1850), p. 122.

Note: These Synodical Reports will be cited time and again. We shall in the future, therefore, refer to them by the term Synodal Bericht.

¹⁹"Veterans of the Ministry, Paul F.H. Schwan," The Lutheran Witness, LI (August 16, 1932), 294.

From the moment he began his work in the United States, Schwan took an active part in the affairs of the Church which he was to serve as president for twenty-one years later on. The Synodical Report of 1850 contains the notation that "Pastor Schwan at Neu-Bielefeld near St. Louis" was accepted as an advisory member of Synod.²⁰ Since his congregation was not yet a member of the Missouri Synod, Schwan could not, according to the constitution of that body, hold full voting membership.²¹

Although this first charge was of short duration, the congregation learned to love its kindly and affable pastor. When he received a call to Zion Church in Cleveland, Ohio, some ten months after beginning his work in Neu-Bielefeld, Schwan with a heavy heart followed what he considered the Lord's calling. But it took two outside pastors to convince the people of Neu-Bielefeld that it was their duty to grant their pastor a peaceful dismissal.²²

Pastor Schwan assumed his new duties in Cleveland

²⁰Synodal Bericht, 1850, p. 125.

²¹Handbook of The Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1949), p. 4.

²²H.C. Schwan, "Erinnerungen eines alten Buschpastors," Der Lutheraner, LIII (November 16, 1897), 198.

during the month of August, 1851,²³ and continued to serve this church for the next thirty years.²⁴ Because the Missouri Synod had grown so rapidly and the president's duties likewise had increased tremendously, Synod in 1881 resolved that its president should henceforth no longer hold a full pastorate.²⁵ On May 30, 1881, therefore, President Schwan resigned as pastor of Zion Congregation; but upon the congregation's request, he continued to serve it till 1899 as assistant pastor.²⁶

As previously stated, Pastor Schwan was active in the work of Synod from the time he arrived in America. One of the first things he did upon his arrival in Cleveland was to have his congregation join the Missouri Synod as a member. In this way he also received full voting membership in 1852.²⁷

²³Festbuechlein zum 75-jaehrigen Jubilaeum der Ev. Luth. Zionsgemeinde (n.p., 1893), p. 4. Archives Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, Missouri.

Note: We shall in the future abbreviate this title as Festbuechlein.

According to the Minutes of Zion Congregation in Cleveland (July 2, 1876), he delivered his first sermon on August 31, 1851.

²⁴Synodal Bericht, 1884, p. 29.

²⁵Ibid., 1881, p. 68.

²⁶Minutes of Zion Congregation, Cleveland, Ohio, May 30, 1881 and December 5, 1881. Hereafter we shall refer to this source as Minutes.

²⁷Synodal Bericht, 1852, p. 194.

His abilities as a leader and a clear thinker were quickly recognized by fellow pastors and laymen of the Synod. Already in 1854 he was elected vice-president of the Central District,²⁸ continuing in this capacity until 1857 when he was elected vice-president of Synod.²⁹ After completing the three-year term as vice-president of Synod, his gifts as a moderator³⁰ received recognition in eighteen years of continuous service (1860-1878) as president of the Central District of the Missouri Synod.³¹

By 1878 Dr. C.F.W. Walther's tasks as professor and president of Concordia Theological Seminary in St. Louis had become so great, and his position as editor of Der Lutheraner (official publication of the Missouri Synod) demanded so much of his time that he was forced to resign his position as president of Synod. Synod accepted Walther's resignation, and elected as his successor Pastor Schwan, who had taken

²⁸Ibid., 1854, p. 293.

²⁹Ibid., 1857, p. 373.

³⁰Dr. Edmund Seuel, a close friend and acquaintance of Dr. Schwan in his later years, told the writer in an interview on October 21, 1949: "Schwan was an excellent moderator, but not a discussion leader. That was Dr. Walther's special talent. Schwan had a wonderful gift for settling disputes between individuals and congregations. I may compare him to Solomon who passed that sage bit of judgment when two mothers came to him to decide who should have the child."

³¹Synodal Bericht, 1860, p. 85. Also the succeeding yearbooks, through 1878.

over the chair while Dr. Walther made his request.³² Despite Schwan's modesty and repeated requests to be relieved of this office, he was re-elected president of Synod for the next seven terms, covering the period from 1878 to 1899, perhaps the most controversial period of Missouri Synod's history.³³

In addition to more than half a century of service in the four capacities just mentioned, Schwan also served in a host of other offices and on numerous committees. To mention only the more significant of these: Board of Control for Fort Wayne College 1854-1857 and 1860-1878;³⁴ Board of Examiners (Pruefungskommission) for Fort Wayne College from 1860 to 1878;³⁵ a special two-man committee appointed to settle a rather bitter dispute that had arisen in a Baltimore, Maryland congregation in connection with the language problem.³⁶ He participated in the Lutheran Free Conferences of 1856 to 1859, serving as secretary for

³²Ibid., 1878, p. 50.

³³Ibid., 1878-1899, passim.

³⁴Synodal Bericht des mittlern Distrikts der Ev. Luth. Synode etc., 1854-1878 (St. Louis: Druckerei des Concordia-Verlags), passim.

³⁵Ibid., passim.

³⁶Minutes, November 16, 1857.

all but the 1858 session.³⁷ He represented his Synod in the Buffalo Colloquy of 1866.³⁸ When the Synodical Conference came into being in 1872, Schwan was one of the members representing the Missouri Synod,³⁹ and in 1875 he served as vice-president of this organization.⁴⁰ A joint seminary for all members of this conference was proposed in 1878. Schwan served on the committee which was to study the possibility and the necessary steps for such a move.⁴¹

Although not a prolific writer, Schwan did make several notable contributions to the literature of his Church. The first of these is a set of "32 Theses Against Unevangelical Practice," presented to the Central District in 1862. These theses are recognized to this day by the Missouri Synod as the official statement of its position on this particular subject.⁴² In 1877 Schwan delivered two sermons

³⁷"Auszug aus den Verhandlungen der freien ev. luth. Conferenz in . . .," Der Lutheraner, XIV-XVI, 1858-1859.

³⁸Protokoll ueber die Verhandlungen des Colloquiums gehalten in Buffalo, N.Y., vom 20. November bis 5. December 1866 (Zweite Auflage. St. Louis: Aug. Wiebusch u. Sohn, 1866).

³⁹Walter Baepler, A Century of Grace (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947), p. 160.

⁴⁰Verhandlungen der vierten Versammlung der Ev. Luth. Synodal Conferenz von Nord-Amerika (St. Louis: Druckerei der Synode von Missouri etc., n.d.), p. 5.

⁴¹Synodal Bericht, 1878, p. 38.

⁴²Fuerbringer, op. cit., p. 246. A translation of these theses will be found in Appendix IV.

on the problem of lodges or "secret societies." These sermons were printed in 1880 by request of his congregation in Cleveland.⁴³ Professor Fuerbringer refers to this tract as "one of the first and best tracts against lodgery, originating in his congregational experiences."⁴⁴ His greatest and most significant literary contribution, however, was a simplified and shortened edition of the exposition of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism. Long dissatisfied with the older and longer and more difficult exposition in the Dietrich Catechism, the Missouri Synod in 1890 appointed President Schwan to produce a better version of this religious text book.⁴⁵ It was finished by the end of 1893,⁴⁶ and after revision by a committee, was adopted by the Missouri Synod as its official catechism in 1896.⁴⁷

Schwan's long and valuable service to his own church body and to other Lutheran bodies in America was formally recognized in 1893, when the Norwegian Lutheran Church - erstwhile affiliate of the Synodical Conference - conferred upon him the honorary degree of "Doctor of Divinity."⁴⁸

⁴³Minutes, December 3, 1877.

⁴⁴Fuerbringer, op. cit., p. 247.

⁴⁵Synodal Bericht, 1890, p. 83.

⁴⁶Evangelisch-Lutherisches Schulblatt, XXVIII (September-December, 1893). The December issue carried the concluding section of the new edition.

⁴⁷Synodal Bericht, 1896, p. 113.

⁴⁸Fuerbringer, op. cit., p. 243.

Before concluding this brief sketch of Dr. H.C. Schwan's life and work, we must at least make mention of one other fact. It was through his activity that the Christmas tree was introduced into church services in the West and Midwest.⁴⁹

Dr. Schwan was a man of wonderful health,⁵⁰ never being seriously ill until shortly before his death on May 29, 1905.⁵¹ He lived in retirement from 1899 until he passed away at the age of eighty-six years. Death came as the result of old age and a stroke.⁵² Funeral services were held on Ascension Day, June 1. Pastor O. Kolbe, close friend and companion of the deceased, spoke in the home. Prof. F. Pieper, Schwan's successor as president of Synod, delivered the sermon in the church. His remains were laid away in the beautiful Lake View Cemetery in Cleveland, where the martyred Garfield also lies buried. A small headstone, with the simple and humble inscription so characteristic of Schwan himself, marks the grave: "H.C. Schwan."⁵³

⁴⁹See Chapter V for a more detailed account of this story.

⁵⁰Statement of Dr. Seuel in previously mentioned interview.

⁵¹Der Lutheraner, LXI (June 20, 1905), 198.

⁵²Die Abendschule, LI (June 8, 1905), 712.

⁵³Der Lutheraner, LXI (June 20, 1905), 198. Cf. also W.G. Polack "Henry Christian Schwan, D.D. (1819-1905)," Walther League Messenger, XXXI (October, 1922, 86.

CHAPTER II

MISSIONARY IN BRAZIL

His Work

For six years Schwan served as "an ardent and successful missionary in Brazil."¹ His success, according to Dr. Edmund Seuel, was due to God's blessing and his wonderful temperament. "Schwan was a joyous Christian. His jovial good humor was one of his outstanding characteristics."

There is some question whether Schwan's work in Brazil can really be termed "mission work" or whether it was primarily tutoring in which he was engaged. Dr. Seuel's statements, quoted above, imply that Schwan was primarily a missionary. In agreement with this opinion is the statement from Die Abendschule of 1893 to the effect that he made little use of his license to preach "until he was ordained September 13, 1843, in order to go to Brazil as missionary."² (Italics are ours.)

Supporting the opposite view, however, is Dr. William

¹Dr. Seuel was a personal acquaintance of Pastor Schwan. Although eighty-four years of age at the time we interviewed him, Seuel's memory was still quite reliable. In judging the value of such evidence, however, it must be remembered that memory is often not reliable when it comes to details.

²Die Abendschule, XL (October 26, 1893), 185.

Sihler's observation that he met Schwan in Germany shortly before the latter's departure for Brazil where he would assume the position of tutor on a plantation, and preach to the household (Hausgemeinde) of the two Bremen merchants who owned the plantation.³ Emma Wyneken, daughter of F.C. D. Wyneken and close friend of the Schwan's during their residence in Cleveland, makes no mention of mission work at all when she reminisces that "My father's nephew, Dr. Schwan, was a tutor in Brazil before coming to the United States...While tutoring in a German settlement..."⁴ (The italics are ours.) The late Dr. L. Fuerbringer substantiates this view when he observes that "he seems to have spent most of his time as private tutor in the home of a German coffee planter..."⁵ (Italics ours.)

On the basis of the available evidence,⁶ therefore, we

³William Sihler, Lebenslauf von Dr. W. Sihler (New York: Lutherischen Verlags-Verein, 1880), I, 157.

⁴Emma Wyneken, "Memoirs of the Wyneken Household," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, XIV (January, 1942), 101.

⁵L. Fuerbringer, 80 Eventful Years (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1944), p. 240.

⁶Dr. Fuerbringer, in the book just cited, says on p. 240: "The only source for this period is a long letter written by Schwan in February 1844, to his parents in Germany and printed in the church paper published by our Brazilian District in 1909." This paper is Das Ev.-Luth. Kirchenblatt fuer Suedamerika, IV (1909), 26. Unfortunately this particular issue is, to our knowledge, not available except in the library of Concordia Theological Seminary in Brazil.

conclude that Schwan's primary activity was in the capacity of plantation tutor, that he also served the personnel of this plantation as pastor, and on the basis of his later work in America we may assume that he engaged in as much mission work on the side as possible.

Pastor Schwan was a man who refused to overwork himself. When work piled up on him so that he could feel the tension, he dropped everything and rested till his nerves were quieted. Usually he did this by taking a quiet stroll through the woods - he was a lover of nature. Or he would delight himself with the music of an opera.⁷ None of this relentless rushing about, so typical of our own day and age. It is possible that he learned this valuable lesson from one Jahan, a German athlete who was a firm believer in the old Latin proverb Mens sana in sano corpore, a sound mind in a sound body.⁸ Or it may be that he learned it by necessity in Brazil where the humidity and high temperatures make it imperative to live at a more leisurely pace. More than likely, however, it was a combination of these factors and his natural temper. At any rate, already in Brazil he was careful of his health. In the province of Bahia where Schwan was working, the hot months are December, January

⁷This information is again taken from the interview with Dr. Seuel.

⁸Ibid.

and February. During these months the heat is "almost unbearable, with no breeze to cool the inferno."⁹ Schwan tells us that every year he spent from four to six weeks of these months vacationing along the beautiful seashore of Caravela. In this way he regained his strength which had been sapped by the work and heat of the preceding year.

A Robinson Crusoe Experience

Schwan's vivid account of one of these vacations will serve to demonstrate his interest in nature, his power of observation and description, as well as to provide us with a good picture of what life was like in mid-nineteenth-century South America.

Transportation to the seaside resort where Schwan spent his vacations was by means of a dugout canoe, forty feet long and five or six feet wide, propelled by six Negroes. Fishermen's shacks served as temporary homes for the large number of settlers who vacationed here, most of them Germans, Swiss and French. Lightly clad in white linen and broad rimmed strawhats, they strolled under the cocoa-nut palms along the beautiful coast which was bounded by a wide strip of solid white sand. Sometimes they rocked listlessly in hammocks slung between orange and mango trees.

⁹This quotation, as well as all the following information about the "Robinson Crusoe" excursion is found in Die Abendschule, XL (October, 1893), 189-192.

The more active bathed in the cool waters, and caught fish, crabs or oysters. When tired of their sport, they glutted themselves on the juicy fruits of this "southern Paradise." In short, "during these happy weeks, they really lived 'the life of Riley' which the inhabitants of hot countries live the whole year round."

Schwan introduces the story of his Robinson Crusoe adventure on one of these vacations with this remark:

Dear reader, you have no doubt read or heard the story of Robinson Crusoe and his desert island. With your permission, I'll tell a similar story, not quite as good to be sure, but one which makes up for that inasmuch as it's true. I experienced it myself.

In the course of this particular vacation, a German doctor suggested to Schwan that they take a cruise to the Abrolbos,¹⁰ several uninhabited islands not far from the coast of Caravellas. This doctor was a taxidermist, spending much of his time stuffing rare animals, birds and fishes which he then sent back to the museums in Germany. His object in making this trip to the Abrolbos was to find more of these rare specimens. "That kind of an excursion," comments Schwan, "was right down my alley. And since I had nothing to lose, I naturally accepted his offer."

¹⁰Abrolbos means "Thue die Augen auf!" (Beware!). The chain of islands was so named because of the rugged cliffs and huge, white coral reefs which surrounded it, and made sailing near it an extremely hazardous undertaking. The largest of these islands had an elevation of one hundred to two hundred feet above water level.

Arrangements for the excursion included hiring a medium sized sailboat, a skipper, a crew of about six men, food for a month's stay, cooking utensils, and - of course - the equipment of the taxidermist-doctor. The party set sail shortly before noon one day after all the preparations were complete. Just before nightfall they reached the main island, and since there is no dusk below the equator, they landed quickly with a canoe, taking with them only the first things they could lay their hands on. The party that went ashore included the doctor; Joao, a Brazilian youth of about sixteen years; Delmira, the colored cook of the doctor; and Schwan himself. The rest of the crew and the baggage was to remain on board the boat till the next morning.

Joao, who was somewhat familiar with the island, showed them the cave which would be their home for the next several days or weeks. Their first task was to build a fire in the mouth of the cave, not so much as a protection against cold or to drive away wild animals, as to prevent entrance of the uninvited mosquito-guests.

While discussing their proposed adventure, they discovered that they were not the only occupants of the cave. A huge and happy company of rats came scurrying from every crack and corner. At first the rodents' antics were amusing, but when they began to run roughshod over the beds and bodies of the adventurers, these would gladly have paid "a ton of gold for a cat." Schwan says he himself would have

been willing to chip in, if only to see what a cat would do amongst such a horde of rats. The doctor, who hated rats anyway, was particularly upset, especially when they began waving their scaly tails in his face. But like the rest of the party, he finally fell asleep, still cursing the impudent little beasties.

Some time later they awoke to the howling of a raging storm. Undoubtedly all their companions had been lost, for their small boat could never weather such a storm. And if the boat was lost, then also all the food and water was gone! Their situation seemed desperate although they were temporarily safe inside the cave. Realizing their plight, Joao and the maid Delmira invoked every saint on the roster; the doctor, who had forgotten all about rats and mice, was quiet as a mouse; and even Schwan was worried.

Joao first regained his wits, and pointed out that they must find some other place of refuge because their fire would be sure to go out since the wind was lashing water into their present cave which faced south. By means of glowing sticks they found such a cave farther back. Here they rebuilt their fire.

After the storm had abated somewhat, they went out to search for their boat. Despite the brilliant light of almost continuous lightning flashes, they found no trace of it nor of the rest of their party. So they retired to their cave to wait till morning. When dawn finally arrived,

their worst fears were confirmed: the canoe was smashed to bits, and there was no sign of the boat. It must have suffered the same sad fate as had the fragile canoe. They were marooned! And to make matters worse, the doctor was seriously ill with a fever and chills that made his teeth chatter so badly that he couldn't talk.

Joao and Schwan set out to explore the entire island immediately after sun-up. By noon the sixteen year old Joao was discouraged. Schwan urged him on -- "just one more cliff to the north - then we can see the north side of the island too." When they finally reached the top of this peak, their eyes almost popped! There, to the north, was their boat, floating quietly on the waters. As they discovered later on, the captain had awakened just in time to bring the boat around to the shelter of the north side - the wind blowing from the south.

Schwan and Joao rushed back to tell the good news. But their troubles weren't over yet. Now they all suddenly felt hunger pangs, and began to look over their stock. What a supply! Two suits of clothes apiece, a glass, tub, pocket-knife, several bottles of wine, a sack of "farinha" (flour made from mandioka roots), and several bunches of bananas which the rats had spared. They would have to be very sparing indeed, for they couldn't hope for the wind to die down for at least several days, and until then it would be impossible for any boat to land on the treacherous shore.

Now they also noticed something else. The fire was getting low, and they had no more wood! After several hours of back breaking labor, Schwan and Joao finally managed to bring a huge beam into camp. This had to be split into kindling - with a pocketknife! To make matters still worse, the cave was so damp that it dripped steadily. But dead tired from the day's work, they slept soundly despite the inconvenience.

The second day passed in much the same way as the first one had. They did manage to catch two native birds in the course of the day. Schwan roasted his share of the meat till it was brown or black, and then by holding his nose with one hand, pushing the meat with the other, and closing his eyes; he was able to swallow at least a little of the unsavory stuff. Joao had a sweet tooth for such things as starfish, polyps, squids, etc. either raw or cooked. The doctor liked a certain kind of mussel. And Schwan supplemented his own diet with fish and dry flour.

On the third day the rain stopped, but a new problem threatened disaster. Water. They placed their little containers where the dripping of the cave was steadiest. But the doctor's fever had by now made him so thirsty that he consumed every drop as quickly as they could gather the precious liquid. They spent most of this day searching for a larger supply of water. After a long search, they finally found it in a cave that strangely resembled a gothic

church. In the far end of this cave was a rock, which, with a few additional touches, would have served admirably as an altar. To one side of the "altar" stood a hollow sandstone which Joao identified as the basin of holy water, but which Schwan took for a baptismal font. In the center of this stone was an almost perfectly circular depression, as though formed by a bullet. While marveling at this phenomenon, Schwan spied another stone on the ground, one which fitted the depression in the basin. Now they noticed many of these holes scattered all over the cave. And each one of them was filled with rain water! They drank their fill and still had plenty for a several day supply.

On the way back to camp they found quite a number of rare birds, including several gorcinas (birds with long, black tail feathers much like a peacock) which the doctor stuffed and later mounted for Karlsruher Museum.

By the beginning of the fourth day after the disaster, the sea had become quiet enough for the party on the boat to attempt a landing. It was an unsuccessful attempt however. The skipper of the boat, an Englishman, redeemed the situation by performing a dangerous feat - swimming ashore through the shark infested and craggy waters. He supplied the marooned party with a basket of food in return for several flasks of wine. Before leaving, he promised to take the castaways aboard as soon as the weather permitted. To ensure the rescue, the doctor kept most of the wine,

promising delivery of the same as soon as they were taken aboard the boat.

The following day, the fifth, was Sunday. Early in the morning they washed their clothes in true Robinson Crusoe fashion. Schwan had a Portuguese copy of the New Testament and the Psalms. From this he read a selection and conducted a short service. Joao begged permission to keep this book. The poor fellow had never learned anything of God's Word except the Ave Maria and the Lord's Prayer! Expecting the promise that he would really learn to read, Schwan gladly granted the boy's request.

To make a long story short, the specimen-seeking doctor and his party spent a total of seven days on the island before they were safely aboard the boat once more. Then the sailors demanded that they stay for several days of fishing, and so it was almost ten days before the group set sail for Caravellas. When they finally landed, Schwan had the same hard luck that Robinson Crusoe had when he lost all his gold while landing. Schwan had gathered a large number of novelties and put them into a canoe to be taken ashore, but before they got there the canoe capsized, throwing both Schwan and all his trinkets into the sea. Being an excellent swimmer, Schwan was able to bring himself ashore, but the treasures he had so painfully gathered were lost forever.

Safely ashore, their friends all wanted to hear of

CHAPTER III

HIS FAMILY

Emma Blum - Mrs. Schwan

One of the points which we wished to emphasize with the preceding summary of Schwan's account of one of his vacations in Brazil is that he took sufficient time off from his official duties in order to maintain his health. We also have evidence showing that he did not permit devotion to duty to interfere with his social life. He knew how to combine pleasure with duty. According to Emma Wyneken, he met Miss Emma Blum for the first time as one of his pupils in Brazil. Her studies under his able tutorship led to an MRS. degree.¹ They were married some time during the year 1849.²

Mrs. Schwan's father was a rather wealthy physician. He owned a large coffee plantation, and consequently Mrs. Schwan was reared in luxury, doing little or no house work since these menial tasks were all done by slaves. In view of this, one might have expected Mrs. Schwan to be a sophisticated and elegant lady, unwilling to dirty her hands with the every-day duties of house work.³ That was not the

¹Emma Wyneken, "Memoirs of the Wyneken Household," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, XIV (January, 1942), 101.

²Die Abendschule, LI (June 8, 1905), 712.

³Emma Wyneken, op. cit., p. 101.

case. According to Dr. Edmund Seuel, her influence on her husband's career was quite positive. "So far as her personality is concerned, she was perhaps a little less jovial than Schwan himself, although she too had a very pleasant personality."

It is probable that Mrs. Schwan was rather sickly after she went to Cleveland, Ohio, with her husband in 1851. Apparently the unaccustomed cold and dampness of the climate along Lake Erie made her susceptible to colds and asthma. Pastor Schwan, in a letter dated April 7, 1881, writes to his good friend Dr. William Sihler of Fort Wayne, Indiana: "My wife seems to be recovering slowly. If only this frightful winter were over!"⁴ In the same vein is this excerpt from Dr. C.F.W. Walther's letter to Schwan. "I was very happy to hear from Griese⁵ that the unfavorable climate is not having such an adverse effect on your dear wife's physical constitution any more."⁶

The Children

Pastor and Mrs. H.C. Schwan had five children: four

⁴The original of this letter is in the archives of Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, Missouri. A complete reproduction of the letter is found in Appendix III D.

⁵Mr. Griese was one of the members of Pastor Schwan's congregation.

⁶L. Fuerbringer, editor, Briefe von C.F.W. Walther (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1915), I, 200.

sons, Paul, Ernst, Immanuel and George; one daughter, Emma. They were all born in America.⁷

Emma, the only daughter and youngest of the five children, married Mr. Gustav Kuechle of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Mr. Harold Kuechle, a IV year student at Concordia Theological Seminary in St. Louis, is one of her grandchildren. According to Harold, she is at the time of this writing about eighty-three years old, making her home with her children in the city of her childhood, Cleveland, Ohio.

Paul was the oldest of the five children, born in a log cabin at Black Jack, Missouri in 1851. He followed the steps of his father in the ministry. On the second Sunday after Trinity in the year 1873 Paul was ordained as assistant to his father in Zion Congregation, Cleveland, Ohio.⁸ In addition to his missionary duties as his father's assistant, Paul taught a parish school for five years.⁹ Through the combined efforts of father and son, the congregation grew so rapidly in size that by 1880 it became necessary for that part of the congregation which lived in East Cleveland to found an independent church.¹⁰ Quite fittingly, this

⁷The Lutheran Witness, LI (August 16, 1932), 294, gives the obituary of "Paul F.H. Schwan...born...1851..., eldest child of the sainted Dr. H.C. Schwan."

⁸Synodal Bericht des mittlern Distrikts (St. Louis: Druckerel des Concordia-Verlags, 1873), p. 12.

⁹The Lutheran Witness, LI (August 16, 1932), 294.

¹⁰Minutes, March 1, 1880 and December 16, 1880.

new church called Paul Schwan as its first pastor and adopted as its name "St. Paul's Congregation." This new body was blessed with the continuous services of its first pastor until his retirement. In 1923 they celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination into the ministry.¹¹

Paul's courtship and early wedded life with Marie Hemy were marked by pronounced "in-law" difficulties which may have been partly responsible for her relatively early death in 1914. They had four children: three girls, and one boy who died of pneumonia in an army camp in 1918.¹²

Paul's "in-law" difficulties occurred during the first year of his father's presidency of the Missouri Synod, 1878. These difficulties constitute what was probably one of the most trying and saddening experiences of either father or son. The story of these difficulties takes up most of the pages from fifteen to one hundred in volume four of the Minutes. Chief figures in the story are Schwan's son, Paul; Miss Marie Schnadt and her father; Miss Marie Hemy and her parents. The reader will recall that Paul Schwan was called as assistant to his father in 1873. He began his work as an unmarried man. After about two years, his parents suggested that it might not be a bad idea if he started looking around for a suitable young lady to grace

¹¹The Lutheran Witness, LI (August 16, 1932), 294.

¹²Loc. cit.

his parsonage. Paul did. His fancy lighted on one of the girls in his confirmation class, a certain Miss Marie Schnadt. On April 6, 1876,¹³ "Paul did a very foolish thing." The confirmation class had just finished its last lesson and was saying goodbye to Pastor (Paul) Schwan.¹⁴ It so happened that Marie was the last one to leave the room. Pastor Schwan called her back, congratulated her on her fine work, and concluded with the remark that she might become his wife when she was 17 years of age, provided she was willing to wait that long.¹⁵ Naturally she was very receptive to his advances. For two or three months they were quite intimate, but a trip to Germany brought Paul to the realization that it was an unrealistic relationship. He spoke to Marie about his change of heart, and they mutually agreed to let the affair be a thing of the past. So after a few months, Paul considered it a dead issue, especially since the entire affair had been a matter just between the two of them. Neither of their parents had known about

¹³Minutes, January 27, 1879.

¹⁴For the sake of clarity we shall refer to Paul Schwan as "Pastor Schwan," and to his father as "President Schwan," since he was president of the Missouri Synod during the time that this story takes place.

¹⁵The actual words which he employed were, "Marie, halt dich brav. Wenn du 17 Jahr alt bist, kannst du vielleicht meine Frau werden." This statement was the center of much dispute three years later, but was attested as being correct by Marie herself (p. 43) and by Mr. G. Melchior quoting Mr. Schnadt (p. 24), as well as Paul himself.

it.¹⁶

A year passed. Then, early in December 1877, President Schwan paid Mr. Hemy, one of his members, a visit. In the course of the conversation, he told Hemy, "My son Paul seems to have taken a liking to your daughter Marie. Do you as father have any objection to the marriage of our children?" Mr. Hemy said he had none. President Schwan asked whether he might perhaps like to see his daughter married to someone in a different profession, one who had a better income. He also reminded Hemy that if he wanted his daughter to aim for a higher status in life, now was the time to say so, since nothing had been done yet; if he had any objections whatever, then the status quo would be maintained. But Mr. Hemy raised no objections. Schwan then inquired about Mrs. Hemy's position. Mr. Hemy said he didn't know, but that he would ask her. A week later he reported that his wife had no objections either.

Another week passed, but Paul made no advances. At church that morning, President Schwan asked Hemy not to think that the matter had been dropped just because nothing had been done yet. Hemy replied, "Oh well, there's no hurry."¹⁷

¹⁶Except for the date under footnote 13, all the information of this paragraph is taken from the Minutes, December 30, 1878, p. 22.

¹⁷Minutes, December 30, 1878, p. 16.

Since Paul was the bashful type, or perhaps because his previous affair with Marie Schnadt had made him more cautious, he hesitated to approach Miss Hemy. Therefore President Schwan took the initiative. He visited the Hemy's again, and told Marie about Paul's interest in her. He asked what she would say if Paul were to try to win her hand. She answered, "I wouldn't say 'No,' but I couldn't say 'Yes' right away either."

Some two weeks later, President Schwan asked Marie not to keep Paul in suspense if, after more intimate association with him, she could convince herself to become engaged. As he had fully expected, she gave him no definite answer. After this President Schwan didn't speak to Marie about the matter until December 1878.¹⁸

Now Paul finally got up enough courage to go to Mr. Hemy and tell him, "I've heard what you and my father discussed. Would you be so kind as to tell your daughter Marie of my intentions?" He replied, "Are you courting me? Ask her yourself!" Paul didn't get a chance to speak to her that night, but after a while he did become better acquainted with her. It wasn't long before they were visiting relatives and friends together. Finally he was an almost daily guest

¹⁸When Marie came in to announce for Communion that month, President Schwan broached the subject again since she was in serious straits because of her parents' attitude. He spoke to her about the Fourth Commandment and what her attitude must be over against her parents in the light of this Commandment.

in the Hempy home, and was always given a friendly reception.¹⁹

That's how things continued until they exchanged engagement promises on July 23, 1878. Immediately they asked Mr. and Mrs. Hempy for their parental blessing, but Marie's father acted very much surprised. He asked, "Do you want an answer today already?" Paul was very much taken aback, but managed to say, "Well, I can come again." When he did return two days later, only Marie and her mother were home. Mrs. Hempy told him, "It's a good thing my husband isn't home. He's very angry, and won't hear of it. Of course, he has nothing against you personally; but our daughter has been raised too luxuriously to live on six hundred dollars among the Pomeranians on the wrong side of the tracks (unter den Pommern im Bohnenviertel). It's true, my husband said he had no objections, but he thought Marie would have sense enough to say 'no.'" Paul didn't say a word. Marie called to him from the next room. Mrs. Hempy refused to let them talk to each other, but Marie said, "Mother, if you don't let Paul come to me, you'll be sorry later on." So Paul forced his way past Mrs. Hempy into the next room. Marie was crying. Both Paul and Marie felt that there was nothing wrong with their engagement, and so they mutually promised not to let themselves be separated.²⁰

¹⁹Minutes, December 30, 1878, p. 17.

²⁰Ibid., p. 18.

Naturally Paul now talked the matter over with his father. The latter wanted to be absolutely sure that he would handle the case correctly, so he wrote to Dr. C.F.W. Walther, president of Concordia Theological Seminary in St. Louis, for an opinion. Schwan mentioned no names, but described the case in detail, and asked these two questions: 1) Is this a valid engagement? 2) If it is, dare the couple break the engagement? To the first question Dr. Walther answered with an unqualified "yes." To the second he answered "no." In order to be doubly sure of doing the right thing, President Schwan also consulted other pastors. All of which finally made him determine that Mr. Hempy must justify his stand or give his consent to the engagement.²¹

Marie, however, asked President Schwan to wait because she hoped that if she treated her parents kindly and obeyed them in all other things, that she would finally win their consent. Instead of getting better, however, matters only went from bad to worse. They told her that Paul was only after her money; told her to think of what a situation she was getting into, etc.

Paul corresponded with Marie only occasionally, and saw her personally on but very few occasions. His father let things ride this way from July until October, when he had to leave on an inspection tour of Synod's institutions.

²¹Ibid., p. 19.

Not wishing to leave the matter undecided, he spoke privately to both Mr. and Mrs. Hempy. The interview with Mr. Hempy lasted for some three hours during which they discussed, among other things, the question: What constitutes a valid engagement? Hempy raised many objections, but they all boiled down to this one: he thought it too much of a loss of family prestige for Marie to marry a man with the lowly salary of six hundred dollars per year. President Schwan reminded him that this had no bearing on the validity of the engagement since he had raised no objection when the matter had first been spoken of in December of the previous year (1877).²²

Hempy admitted that he and his wife had not objected at first, and then said that it was his wife who had first changed her mind. Since it seemed that it was chiefly Mrs. Hempy who was dissatisfied, President Schwan called on her. At first she wouldn't talk, but finally she said, "If only my husband would give his approval, then I'd be satisfied." So Schwan left on his tour, feeling very much relieved since he thought everything was now straightened out. Things were not as rosy as he imagined them to be however.

Two days after he left, Mr. Hempy came to Paul, accused him of having stolen his daughter, insisted that he should and must give her up. When Paul reminded him of what he had

²²Ibid., p. 20.

so recently admitted to President Schwan, he denied it all. When he left Paul's place, he went directly to his daughter who was now living with her relatives in Vermillion because it was unbearable at home. He stormed at Marie, demanded that she renounce Paul, accused her of disgracing the family, told her that she would be responsible if her mother ended up in the insane asylum. Finally he told her not to come home again till she had broken off relations with Paul. If she did come home, he would take that to mean that she was through with Paul. But if she continued her relations with him, then he would disinherit her. She wouldn't get a red cent!²³

Marie's situation was desperate. Her father even went so far as to say that if she went out with Paul again, he would beat him up. "It'll only cost me ten dollars!"²⁴ When President Schwan returned from his trip, he wanted to call Mr. Hemy to account immediately, but Marie and her relatives restrained him. They said it would be useless, and it would only make him even more obstreperous.

That's how matters stood until Monday, December 23, 1878. Up till that time Hemy hadn't been able to produce any valid objection to the engagement. But on that day he

²³Ibid., p. 21.

²⁴This statement is authenticated by the testimony of several witnesses in the Minutes of January 6, 1879, p. 37.

learned of something that he thought would stand up.²⁵

At this point we have to go back to Paul's "foolish" courtship of Marie Schnadt. As previously stated, they had mutually agreed that their affair was a closed issue. Then, about July 1878, Paul received a threatening letter from Marie Schnadt. She demanded satisfaction. When he ignored the letter, she sent several more of an increasingly threatening nature. Finally, on December 23, 1878 Mr. Schnadt came to President Schwan saying that Paul had promised to marry his daughter Marie. President Schwan was dumbfounded at first. After a few moments he told Schnadt that he would have to talk this over with Paul first, since this was the first time he had heard anything about the affair. He also inquired whether perhaps something more serious than the alleged promise had transpired. Mr. Schnadt said, "No, that is all." President Schwan requested Schnadt not to speak to Mr. Hemy about this most recent development until the matter could be investigated. Schnadt promised to do so, but broke his promise the day after Christmas, Thursday, December 26. Now Hemy thought he could really pin Paul down.

When Paul returned from a service in St. John's Congregation the next day, he met Mr. Hemy and Mr. and Mrs. Schnadt on the street in front of his brother's home on

²⁵Minutes, December 30, 1878, p. 22.

Case Avenue.²⁶ It was apparent to Paul that they wanted to see him about some urgent business, so he invited them into his room. Then, apprehensive of what might happen, he asked permission to have his brother Ernst sit in on the discussion, but Mr. Schnadt objected, saying that Ernst was a lawyer. Paul asked why he hadn't brought his daughter along. Schnadt replied that that was his own business. Thereupon they told Paul that they had come to admonish him according to Matthew 18. He asked what it was that they had against him, but they insisted that he tell the entire story of his relations with Marie Schnadt. Paul refused, saying that this seemed to be a strange kind of admonition, more like the third degree (das nenne man Ausforschenvollen). At this Mr. Hempy jumped forward, beat and pushed Paul around so violently that Ernst Schwan heard the rumpus downstairs and came up to see what was going on. Before Paul's "guests" left, he pleaded with Hempy to confess his wrong before leaving, but Hempy answered, "No!" and walked out.²⁷

All of Hempy's relatives reasoned and pleaded with him, declared him to be all wrong. They even arranged for a meeting with the Rev. J.H. Niemann, but Hempy didn't show up for the meeting. In the meantime, President Schwan asked

²⁶Paul was at that time rooming with his brother Ernst.

²⁷Minutes, December 30, 1878, p. 24.

Mr. G. Melcher, a relative of Hempy, to arrange for a meeting with Miss Schnadt before the Church Council and Paul.²⁸

Mr. Melcher reported that Miss Schnadt had agreed, on the condition that her father would permit it; but he refused. Therefore that meeting didn't take place either.²⁹

On Saturday evening, December 28,³⁰ Mr. Hempy came to Paul to ask forgiveness for having beaten him. Paul was glad that he had realized his wrong, and immediately urged him to straighten out the rest of the whole mess too. The blows which he had received on his body, he added, weren't nearly as painful as the inward blows of Hempy's previous conduct, and for this reason he pleaded with him to confess that he had grievously sinned against him in other ways. Hempy said, no, he wouldn't do that, and that was final! Then, answered Paul, it would be pointless to forgive him for the beating, since the reconciliation would be mere hypocrisy.³¹

The next day was Sunday. With the help of G. Melcher,

²⁸Ibid., p. 26.

²⁹Ibid., p. 27.

³⁰The Minutes of January 6, 1879 contain a Statement by President Schwan. In it he explains why he had married the couple "on the preceding Monday night after the meeting." That meeting is dated December 30. Figuring back, then, from Monday, December 30, we arrive at the above date of Saturday, December 28.

³¹Minutes, December 30, 1878, p. 27.

President Schwan arranged to meet Mr. Hempy after the "Christenlehre" to talk the matter over with him. Mr. C. Griese, one of the elders, was also present at this meeting. Mr. Hempy admitted everything except those statements he had made to President Schwan on that October evening just before his trip to inspect Synod's institutions. All of Schwan's remonstrances were in vain.³²

On the following evening, Monday, December 30, 1878, President Schwan called a special meeting of all the voters in the congregation. He opened the discussion with the remark that some very unsavory rumors were circulating about their pastors, and that he felt the congregation members should know the facts. To this end he had prepared a written Statement which he then read. This Statement relates the story of which the preceding account is a synthesis and summary, with several additional notes from other parts of the Minutes. President Schwan concluded his reading of the Statement with these assertions: 1) that the engagement of his son to Miss Hempy was valid, and that therefore Mr. Hempy was sinning by attempting to break up the engagement; that the engaged couple had the right to get married, and that he (President Schwan) had the right to marry them how, when, and where the couple wished to be

³²Ibid., p. 28. Schwan admits that he became angry towards the end of this meeting, about the only time he seems to have lost emotional control.

married; 2) that if Pastor Paul Schwan had done nothing more than he had confessed,³³ then it would not be necessary for him to resign.

Since this concluded President Schwan's report, Mr. Schnadt was asked to present his side of the story. He declined, saying that he had not known about the whole affair until just a week before, and had therefore not been able to write up a statement. Since the hour was already late, the meeting was adjourned.³⁴

Upon the request of Paul and Marie, and practically her entire relationship as well, President Schwan performed the marriage rites that same night. This caused some bitter feelings among the members. They began to take sides, and by the time the next meeting was held on January 6, 1879, there was danger of a split in the congregation. President Schwan opened this meeting by explaining why he had performed the marriage so soon after the meeting on the preceding Monday evening. He said that there was a big stir

³³Paul had interrupted his father in the reading of that part of the Statement which dealt with the Schnadt affair. He admitted that he had told Miss Schnadt, "Marie, wenn du brav bist..." He recognized that thereby he had committed a grave sin against God, against Marie Schnadt and her parents, that he had caused his own parents much heart-ache, and that he had thereby given great offense to the entire congregation and in particular to the young people. He now asked all of them to forgive him as he firmly believed the Lord had forgiven him his sin. (Minutes, December 30, 1878, p. 23).

³⁴Ibid., p. 28.

in the congregation because of it. This didn't surprise him, since a similar case had never occurred in the congregation. He was ready to justify his course of action and desired of no one to admit the correctness of his action without any further explanation. But he also hoped everyone would quietly listen to him and not interrupt him in his report.³⁵

The following is his report.

Some of you may think that I did this thing in a hurry, without due deliberation. That is often used as an excuse. I cannot and will not use this excuse. I considered the matter long and well, and finally acted, knowing full well what I was doing (und hab's mit kaltem Blute ausgefuehrt). When Hempy opposed the marriage, I pondered what would ultimately have to be done. I discussed the case orally and on the basis of Scripture with Prof. Dr. Walther, with fellow pastors and with practically the entire Hempy relationship. On the last day, upon the request of C. Griese, I once more seriously discussed the case with Pastor Niemann, and finally, after the congregational meeting, in the family circle. So you see that I acted after due deliberation.

He now interrupted his report to give a lucid explanation of the Fourth Commandment, pointing out to what extent a child owes obedience to its parents, and when the child must obey God rather than man. He followed this up with an

³⁵Ibid., January 6, 1879, pp. 30-38. The following account is a stenographic report of the two secretaries who apparently took notes independently, and then compared them before recording them in the Minutes.

There is a secretarial footnote on page 38 which comments, "Although Pastor Schwan had asked to be heard quietly without interruption, several members permitted themselves to be carried away by their emotions, disturbing him with biting and sneering personal attacks."

explanation of what constitutes an "offence," citing examples from Scripture and from Luther's writings, and concluded with this definition:

What does it mean to give offense? To do something at which others will perhaps be offended? -- No, but when I sin, so that others are led to greater ungodliness than before. Never can I give offense if I do not sin; if you have not sinned, neither have you given offense. Now it's possible that people will be offended, as was true in Jesus' case, but that is taking offense, not giving offense. You may take offense out of love for mischief and wickedness, or also because you cannot understand a case, or because the problem is something new to you...

Then, after listing five explicit proofs to show that he had not performed the marriage in secret, he continued:

Some may object that I should have postponed the wedding because of the Schnadt affair; that my son might possibly have been engaged to Miss Schnadt. But Miss Schnadt has never made that claim, much less has it been proven.

Others will say that the engagement should have been announced in church. Nothing would have pleased me more! But Mr. Hemy openly threatened to oppose the wedding publicly if it were announced, thereby causing a scandal. The people would then justifiably have said, "If you knew that beforehand, you should have prevented that offense."

Others will say I should have asked for the congregation's approval. There are some things for which I must have the approval of the congregation (he cites a number of examples)...But there are also cases for which I need not ask the congregation's permission. Such things are my ministerial acts: marriages, funerals, etc....That is my right according to the constitution.

Now someone may ask, Why then did you present the matter to the congregation? I answer: 1) because, as I said in the first part of my Statement, all kinds of rumors were circulating, and that therefore the congregation should be advised of the facts so that it might investigate the case; 2) for this reason, that the congregation might not be too surprised and offended when I performed that which I was resolved to do... So you see that I presented the case not to ask for

approval, but that you might not take offense, and that you might be able to make an investigation.

Now some will say that I did this (present the matter) to avoid an investigation. That would have been very wicked and stupid of me. I myself moved that an investigation be made, and I hope that you will thoroughly and soon make this investigation. What, may I ask, has been obviated by the wedding? Have I disappeared, or my son? We're both here. How could anyone possibly think that I was trying to shield my son from an investigation! Would his being married protect him from punishment? No, the punishment would only be much more severe after his marriage. If there are those - and I hope there are not - who would like to see my son severely punished, then they may rejoice over the fact that he is married. That would make it even worse for my son. So you see I was not trying to protect him from punishment or from an investigation. You can punish him just as well now that he's married, as you could before.

Finally, you will ask, What's the reason for marrying your son when no one was expecting it? I answer: 1) Mr. Hempy on numerous occasions claimed that my son was only interested in his money. He told me that to my face just last Sunday. Mr. Hempy on several occasions threatened to disinherit his daughter if she did not break the engagement. Mrs. Hempy told my son that her daughter wouldn't get a cent if she refused to break relations with him. All our remonstrances with Hempy's were in vain. If my son had now backed out, it would certainly have appeared as though Hempy had been right. Had we waited, Mr. Hempy might have thought we were only waiting for the money. It was my conviction that there was only one way to convince Mr. Hempy that we weren't interested in his money, and that way was to marry them as I did. Now Mr. Hempy knows we weren't interested in his money. 2) When Miss Hempy assured her parents that she loved my son, they refused to believe her, laughed at her and said, "Love! What's love?" Regardless of how diligently and pleadingly she tried, she could not convince her parents. By getting married these two have proven that their love was real. The longer they would have waited, the more might Hempy's have thought that they weren't serious. 3) In the third place, we did it because of the threats. Mrs. Hempy told her daughter, "Marie, be careful of what you do. Your father will beat you if you don't quit Paul." Miss Caroline Hempy and Miss Veidekopf have offered to testify before the congregation that Mr. Hempy threatened to beat my son if he ever met him on the street with his daughter (saying) "It

will only cost ten dollars!"

Mrs. Lothmann has declared that Mr. Hemy had made it unbearable to be in the house; that he had carried out his threats of beating; that he had furthermore threatened to make public objection in the church. When I informed Mr. Hemy that the wedding would take place without his consent, he warned me in such a way that I could only take it as a threat. After all this, what would Mr. Hemy have thought if we had postponed the wedding? 4) Although we would gladly have waited, yet the state of affairs was such that waiting was unbearable. You don't realize what the last five months have been for us. I don't like to go into detail. These things constantly weighed on me. As I went about my work, they were continually in my mind.

For these reasons, and because the entire relationship agreed that it was impossible to go on like this, and because they said they were afraid that there would be a sad misfortune in the family, for these reasons we took the step.

When emotions are once aroused, they are not so easily quieted again. That was true in this case too, despite President Schwan's extensive and conclusive explanation. In the following weeks, the meetings became so unruly that the chairman had to call on the elders to restore order in the group. A committee was appointed to investigate the Schnadt case. On January 27 this committee presented its report to the congregation. It termed the relationship between Paul and Marie Schnadt merely "an affair," and declared the engagement of Paul and Marie Hemy valid. It was their opinion that President Schwan had the right to marry the couple, but that he had given serious offense by acting unadvisedly and too hastily. On the basis of these findings, the entire Schnadt case was closed by congregational resolution.³⁶

³⁶Minutes, January 27, 1879.

Paul soon won himself back into the good graces of the majority, but a certain faction still opposed him and apparently opposed his father even more. This, at least, is the judgment of President Schwan in the following letter which he wrote on February 19 to one of his friends.³⁷

My Dear Doctor!

...This is Paul's status. All his people in the outer district have both orally and in writing stated that they have an even greater degree of confidence in him than before. While the matter was still hanging in the balance in this (inner) district, those in the outer district were very seriously considering the idea of declaring themselves an independent parish without any support from the inner district because the latter didn't like Paul. To be sure, there is a party of older members in this district that is opposed to him; but they are the same ones who are even now yet equally set against me. You can't tell yet how it's going to turn out. Up till now, one after the other comes to me and tells me that he is ashamed of his conduct. Therefore I hope that at least those who are really sincere, will sooner or later be straightened out in their thinking on this matter.

Therefore, you were right as to how I feel about this matter. RIGHT NOW Paul dare not go under any circumstances. That might cause a split. Whether he can go later on, will have to be decided on the basis of what position our older members HERE take.

Thank God that Paul has come out of the affair as well as he has. That they are now attacking me all the more vigorously doesn't frighten me very much. I'll take care of myself all right. I have a good conscience

³⁷This letter has no date other than February 19. Since the case was closed on December 5, 1879, we assume that this letter was written in that same year. The addressee is not mentioned, but the salutation "Theurer Herr Doctor!" points to either Dr. W. Sihler or Dr. Walther, since these are about the only men in the Missouri Synod who at that time had a doctor's degree.

about the matter.³⁸

This opposition party continued through the summer and fall months. It was President Schwan who finally suggested to the congregation that they call on an unbiased, outside committee to investigate the whole affair and to let their decision be final. After all efforts had failed, the congregation agreed to do this. And so it was that a committee was appointed for this purpose. The members of this committee were: Dr. C.F.W. Walther; Vice-president of Synod, the Rev. C. Gross; the Rev. O. Kolbe of Cleveland; and Messrs. H. Killmer and John C. Haker, members of Zion Congregation.³⁹ The committee made its report on December 5, 1879, almost a full year after the first meeting. Its verdict was that the Schnadt case had been only an "affair," but an unfortunate one. The engagement and marriage of Paul Schwan and Marie Hempy was declared valid. It found the President of the Missouri Synod guilty of two errors. One, he had erred in his understanding of the doctrine of offense.

³⁸A copy of the original is found in Appendix III B. It might be well to note that the "outer" district did form an independent congregation two years later, 1880, and called Paul as pastor.

In the second last paragraph President Schwan apparently has reference to a call that Paul had received from another congregation.

Note also how completely unselfish President Schwan is in his thinking. He is concerned about the welfare of his son and of his congregation, but isn't at all concerned about himself.

³⁹Minutes, December 5, 1879, p. 85.

Two, he had acted unwisely and too hastily in marrying the couple so soon after the first meeting. President Schwan's response to these findings reveals his true greatness. As soon as the committee had read its report, he arose to make the following Declaration which is included in the Minutes with his signature.

Permit me to begin with the declaration that I for myself recognize and accept the committee's judgment as correct. The committee has convinced me - and I thank them for it - that I have erred in two things.

First, because I thought offense could be given only then when a person either does something that is inherently sinful, or when a person out of lovelessness or disregard for others does something which is not sinful in itself. But now I see that a person can also give offense when he unwisely does that which he has the right to do.

Therefore I have erred and done wrong secondly because I married my son, which was within my rights, married him in unwise haste. I should have taken more pains to first convince the congregation of the appropriateness of my proposed move.

In this way I myself have been responsible for it that so many were offended. And for this I am heartily sorry.

H.C. Schwan⁴⁰

The foregoing account of Paul Schwan's "in-law" troubles gives us an insight into the character of H.C. Schwan. We note again the thorough, meticulous character of his work. This is especially apparent in his report on January 6 after he had performed the wedding. His was a logical mind. One has no difficulty whatsoever in following his thought. It proceeds naturally from one step to the next. His language

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 97-98.

is simple and lucid, yet not vulgar. This is not so noticeable here as it is in his sermons and addresses.

So far as his personality is concerned, we are particularly impressed with his humility and readiness to learn. As president of the Missouri Synod there was great temptation to think, "I know it all. You can't tell me anything." Schwan knew how to say some of the most difficult words in the English language: I'm sorry; I was wrong; I made a mistake. Also noteworthy is his patience and self control. He waited five months for Hempy to see the light. During that time he stood by and watched his son swallow insult upon insult, a difficult thing for any parent to do. With oriental patience he tried to instruct his opponents. Although he had thirty years of pastoral experience, was university trained, had served as vice-president of his district for three years, vice-president of Synod for three years, president of his district for eighteen years, vice-president of the Synodical Conference for one year, and was president of the Missouri Synod at the time, - yet he was tolerant and patient. With such a record, many men would be tempted to say, "Who are you to dispute my word?" There is no trace of this in any of his words or actions. Personal criticism made little or no impression on him. He was concerned about the welfare of his people and of his family, not his own.

We return now to a brief account of H.C. Schwan's

three remaining sons who eventually all became lawyers. Although we cannot be absolutely sure, we assume that Ernst Schwan was the second oldest of the four sons. From the Minutes of Zion we know that he was established as a lawyer already during 1878,⁴¹ that he was married and held voting membership in Zion as early as January 21, 1878.⁴² Immanuel was born September 16, 1856,⁴³ and George on March 27, 1860.⁴⁴ Since Paul was born in 1851, and Ernst was already established as a lawyer in 1878, it would seem that he must have been approximately twenty-four years old by that time. Assuming this figure to be correct, we arrive at 1854 as the year of Ernst's birth.

Ernst attended one of the preparatory schools of his Church, probably Fort Wayne since his brothers did their work there. For some reason, however, he did not finish his theological studies, but switched to law instead. As lawyer, he later on expressed his appreciation for the tuition-free education which he had received at Fort Wayne. He did this in a very tangible way by handling a long and involved dispute concerning a mortgage on one of Missouri

⁴¹Minutes, December 30, 1878, p. 24.

⁴²Minutes, January 21, 1878, and December 5, 1879, p. 86.

⁴³Records of the Dean's Office in Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri.

⁴⁴Ibid.

Synod's properties in Springfield, Illinois.⁴⁵ Some six years later, Ernst again rendered valuable service to his Church by lending legal counsel as a member of Synod's General School Committee. This committee had been appointed to represent Synod in the fight against bills proposed in the legislatures of Illinois and several other states. Had these bills been passed, they would have disbanded Synod's comprehensive system of parish schools.⁴⁶

The name and spelling of Schwan's third son is somewhat doubtful, but in all probability it was Immanuel. According to L. Fuerbringer, two of Schwan's sons entered the ministry, one of them in Wisconsin.⁴⁷ We know that Paul was one of these two sons. From the records of the Dean's Office of Concordia Theological Seminary, we know that only two persons by the name of Schwan were graduated from that school before 1900. One of these is Paul Schwan, graduated in 1873. The other is Charles Schwan, born September 16, 1856, at Cleveland, prepared at Fort Wayne, entered Concordia Seminary in 1876 and graduated in 1879. Since this "Charles Schwan" was born at Cleveland, he must be "the

⁴⁵Synodal Bericht der deutschen ev.-luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio u. a. Staaten (St. Louis: Druckerei des Concordia-Verlags, 1884), p. 40.

⁴⁶Ibid., 1890, p. 86.

⁴⁷L. Fuerbringer, 80 Eventful Years (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1944), p. 250.

other son who entered the ministry in Wisconsin." This is also what we find in the Kalendar fuer deutsche Lutheraner.

The 1880 issue of the Kalendar lists "C. Schwan" as pastor at Pecatonica, Winnebago County, Illinois.⁴⁸ But the Kalendar of 1881 gives the address of "C.J. Schwan, care of Rev. P.H. Dicke, Shawano, Shawano County, Wisconsin."⁴⁹ In 1882 the Kalendar gives his address as "Pella, Shawano County, Wisconsin."⁵⁰ He remains at this congregation, according to the Kalendar, until 1891. In 1892 he is not listed as pastor any more.

In agreement with this evidence is the record of Der Lutheraner. The September 15, 1880 issue records his installation on the fourteenth Sunday after Trinity as assistant pastor at St. Paul's Church, Town Washington, Shawano County, Wisconsin.⁵¹ In the February 15, 1881 issue of this same publication, "C.J. Schwan" is listed as having been installed "as pastor of his new congregation at Pella, Shawano County, Wisconsin, on the third Sunday after Trinity."⁵² Although the name is still a puzzle, the

⁴⁸Kalendar fuer deutsche Lutheraner, 1880 (St. Louis: Lutherischer Concordia-Verlag), p. 41.

⁴⁹Ibid., 1881, p. 41.

⁵⁰Ibid., 1882, p. 43.

⁵¹Der Lutheraner, XXXVI (September 15, 1880), 143.

⁵²Ibid., XXXVII (February 15, 1881), 31.

foregoing does agree with Prof. Fuerbringer's note that this second son of Schwan "entered the ministry in Wisconsin, but later resigned from the ministry."⁵³ (Italics are ours).

The Minutes of Zion Congregation in Cleveland mention "Emanuel Schwan and Ernst Schwan" as witnesses in the case of Paul Schwan's engagement and marriage.⁵⁴ Since we know that Ernst was Paul's brother, we may assume that the same is true of "Emanuel." The Synodal Bericht of 1890 lists "E.C. Schwan" as a member of the General School Committee,⁵⁵ and the Schulblatt of that same year does the same, but with this significant addition: "E.C. Schwan (lawyer)."⁵⁶ The reader will recall that Prof. Fuerbringer says that with the exception of Paul, all of Schwan's sons eventually became lawyers. The "E." in the last two references, therefore, no doubt is the initial of Emanuel, and the "C." is the initial for the "Charles" in the files of the Dean's Office and in the records of the Kalendar.

There remains one unsolved problem. What about the initial "J." in the records of the Kalendar and Der Lutheraner? A solution suggests itself in this consideration.

⁵³Fuerbringer, 80 Eventful Years, p. 250.

⁵⁴Minutes, December 5, 1879, p. 86.

⁵⁵Synodal Bericht, 1890, p. 86.

⁵⁶E.A.W. Krausz, "Die Delegatensynode vom Jahre 1890 und das Schulwesen der Missouri-Synode," Evangelisch-Lutherisches Schulblatt, XXV (August, 1890), 227.

The Kalendar of 1881 and 1882 still appeared in German type, whereas all the following issues use Roman letters. The German letter "J" is identical with the letter "I" when printed. Therefore, a statistician who was not personally acquainted with Immanuel Schwan would easily read "J" instead of "I."

Three simple considerations enable us to relate all the above references to the same man. 1) It is a common German custom to use the second given name instead of the first one. 2) The German letter "J" when printed is identical with the letter "I." 3) The name "Immanuel" is frequently spelled "Emanuel."

Apparently, then, Schwan's third son was known to his friends by his second given name - Emanuel or Immanuel. Officially he seems to have been known as Charles Immanuel Schwan. However we call him, we should record the fact that Schwan's third son became a well known corporation lawyer in New York after he resigned from the ministry.⁵⁷

Schwan's youngest son, George, was born on March 27, 1860, at Cleveland. Like his three brothers before him, he also began his study of theology at Fort Wayne, Indiana. In 1879 he enrolled at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, but did not graduate.⁵⁸ Dr. Theo. Buenger includes the following

⁵⁷Fuerbringer, 80 Eventful Years, p. 250.

⁵⁸Files of the Dean's Office, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri.

in his reminiscences:

This chronicle would not be complete without mentioning a few of those who did not continue their theological studies until graduation, but were members of the original class in Fort Wayne....President Schwan's son, George Schwan, who studied law and in later life was appointed Judge of the Superior Court of Northern Ohio by President McKinly.⁵⁹

Prof. L. Fuerbringer corroborates this with the statement that "the younger one, George,...studied theology for one year in St. Louis, but decided to become a lawyer. He also became quite prominent, held the position of prosecuting attorney or city attorney in Cleveland and later was elected judge."⁶⁰ There is some indication that George got off to a rather shaky start in life, but as the above quotations indicate, there is little doubt that he overcame whatever weaknesses of character may have troubled him in early life.

Family Life

It would seem fitting at this point to reconstruct, as well as possible, the family life of H.C. Schwan, and also to include a brief study of his person. We quote again from Dr. Edmund Seuel who draws from his still active mind the colors which paint the scene of the Schwan home.

Schwan himself was a devoted family man of the patriarchal type, keeping the family together and

⁵⁹Theo. Buenger, "1882-1942," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, XV (January, 1943), 114.

⁶⁰Fuerbringer, 80 Eventful Years, p. 250.

maintaining his influence over his children even when they were fully grown. He was still their Dad. This probably was the result of his broadmindedness and liberal attitude over against some things which many of our fathers considered doubtful or even outright sinful. He frequently attended the opera, something which Dr. Walther strictly forbade. Another such example is the skating of boys and girls together. This was considered one of the most sinful forms of entertainment by many Lutherans of that day, but Schwan raised no objections when his sons went skating with their girl friends. His liberal notions did not, however, extend into the religious field. The devotional life in the Schwan family was absolute. They never missed it. Regularly the head of the family would read from the Bible and conclude the devotion with the singing of hymns and with prayers.

His Person and Personality

Dr. Seuel describes Schwan's person as "a pudgy five-foot-seven," which accounts for Schwan's own statement that the pulpit in the church of his first charge in Black Jack, Missouri "was so high that I could just barely look over the top of it, and had to stand in front of it if I wished to see and be seen."⁶¹ Again we call on Dr. Seuel for a thumb-nail sketch of Schwan's person.

Schwan enjoyed exceptionally good health, but not without reason either. He was very methodic in the care of his health, observing strict regularity in eating, and always practicing moderation in exercise. Whenever his work piled up and he felt that he was beginning to tax his strength, he simply refused to do any more. He limited his work. He followed a rigorous health program which he undoubtedly learned from one Jahan, a German athlete who was a firm believer in the old Latin proverb "Mens Sana in sano corpore."

⁶¹H.C. Schwan, "Erinnerungen eines alten Buschpastors," Der Lutheraner, LIII (February 23, 1897), 30.

This health program paid rich dividends, for Schwan became eighty-six years old, and during these many years he never was seriously ill. He also learned that secret which so many of our pastors have failed to learn, namely, how to relax. He regularly attended the opera with his wife who was a lover of music.

Though he always was healthy, he did have one weakness. Despite the fact that he was an eloquent preacher and served so many years as president of Synod, he suffered from nervous tension every time he appeared in the pulpit or in public as a speaker. Often he actually became ill with sick headaches and upset stomach.

Henry enjoyed his beer and liked to smoke a corn-cob pipe, but he never went to excess. Moderation was his watchword.

Sandy haired, blue-eyed, well trimmed full beard, a good dresser, but always within his means, he was a personality that attracted people to him.

CHAPTER IV

PASTORATE IN BLACK JACK

The Town

It was to Black Jack, Missouri that Schwan brought his South American bride in 1850. J. Thomas Scharf, in his History of Saint Louis City and County, locates Black Jack three miles east of Florissant in St. Louis County, a good farming region. He describes it as "a hamlet containing two stores and two mechanics' shops." It also boasted a post office, and took its name from the species of oak, known in common parlance as "black jack," which grows there in abundance.¹ This was in 1883. It is quite probable, therefore, that when the Schwan's arrived in 1850, the hamlet was even smaller, or perhaps did not even exist yet.

During the fifties of the preceding century, the Synodal Berichte of the Missouri Synod (at that time known as The Ev. Luth. Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States), refer to this little village as Neu-Bielefeld.² Today,

¹J. Thomas Scharf, History of Saint Louis City and County (Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts & Co., 1883), II, 1897. Archives of Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, Missouri.

²Synodal Bericht der deutschen ev.-luth. Synode von Missouri etc. (St. Louis: Druckerel der Synode von Missouri etc., 1850), p. 122. "Herr Pastor Schwan, berufen von der Gemeinde zu Neu-Bielefeld, St. Louis County, Missouri...."

however, it is listed as Black Jack also in Missouri Synod's records.³

History of the Congregation

The Lutherans at Black Jack had been served by the Rev. Carl Heinrich Gottlieb Schliepsiek during 1849,⁴ and during the vacancy following his acceptance of another call, by the Rev. J.A.F.W. Mueller, pastor in Central Township, St. Louis County.⁵

It was an unpretentious group of about ten families that made up Salem Congregation. They hailed from various parts of Germany: Hanover, Brunswick, and Prussia - all of them Low Germans, and very poor people. Each family rented a few acres of land and brought their produce to the market as soon as it was harvested. Their need for money was so desperate that every egg was sold as soon as it was laid, "while it was practically warm yet." Only one of the members owned his farm. Consequently he was the "rich man" and leader of the group. Their church - they did have one - "was a miserably small log-house," and the pews were made of unfinished boards.⁶

³The Lutheran Annual, edited by O.A. Dorn (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1950), p. 210, column 2.

⁴Synodal Bericht, 1849, p. 78.

⁵Ibid., p. 71.

⁶H.C. Schwan, Erinnerungen..., "Der Lutheraner", LIII (February 23, 1897), 30.

Arrival, Call, and Installation

Schwan says that he had just arrived in this country as a young man when this small congregation in the backwoods invited him to preach a guest sermon. When he got there, he found the pulpit so high that he could just barely look over the top of it, and had to stand in front of it, if he wished to see and be seen. Another difficulty he encountered was the large variety of hymnals. Since the parishioners came from various city states of Germany, each family had its own peculiar hymnal. One text had the same hymn for the corresponding number of another text, but had a different melody and perhaps also a variation in the wording of the lyrics. One text might have four stanzas while another had five or six. All of which made for hodge-podge singing, and didn't particularly add to the young preacher's composure.

Then came the sermon. It was long, for young Schwan was zealous, and would have liked to tell the people everything he knew. In an aside he remarks that he improved somewhat in this respect later on, but that he never did advance far enough to conform to the modern practice of preaching only fifteen minutes.⁷

In the course of the sermon, Schwan noticed that

⁷Loc. cit.

something was distracting the attention of the people, but since he couldn't determine the cause, he pretended not to have noticed anything. After the service was over, a heated discussion immediately followed. Upon his inquiry as to the subject of debate, he was told that someone had been raising a ruckus at the door of the church. The offenders were "the half-wit sons of the Evangelicals" who lived in the surrounding territory. These boys had made the life of the former pastor, a very patient man, quite miserable by rattling the windows, pounding on the doors, and growling dog-fashion while the services were in progress. These Reformed Evangelicals simply didn't want a Lutheran pastor around, and therefore they were now going to give young Schwan the works too.

The boys were still standing around, sullen and defiant. Their ages ranged from fifteen to twenty years. Schwan approached them, and as he did so, they began to beat a hasty retreat. By means of kind words he induced them to stop and talk the situation over. His loving and evangelical approach won their hearts and their confidence immediately and completely. Finally he said,

Now my dear friends, listen: I probably will become pastor here. But under no circumstances will I stand for any more disturbance of our services. The first one who tries it will find himself in the "jug" the next morning. Tell that to the rest of your gang. I know you'll never do this again. Now if I do move out here, come over and look me up. You'll find that I can tell you a lot of interesting tales. We're going to be very close friends yet. So long now.

The boys never caused any trouble again, and many of them even attended Schwan's services regularly. The moral of this story, concludes Pastor Schwan in his reminiscence, is this: "A spoonful of honey will attract many more flies than a cupful of vinegar. Nor is that inconsistent with the dignity of your office as pastor. But one must also use some of that honey you read about in Psalm 119:103, and Psalm 19:10."⁸

Apparently the people were well pleased with the young pastor's trial sermon, for they called him as their pastor.⁹ The installation took place on September 15, 1850, with the Rev. C.F.W. Walther, president of the Missouri Synod, officiating. Assisting him were Pastors Wyneken (Schwan's uncle, then stationed in St. Louis) and Mueller, who was serving the little parish as vacancy pastor at the time.¹⁰

Reminiscences

A study of Schwan's pastorates is a good course in pastoral theology. His second Erinnerung very effectively shows that he was not too proud to learn from his members,

⁸Loc. cit. Psalm 119:103 reads: "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! Yea sweeter than honey to my mouth!" Psalm 19:10 reads: "The judgments of the Lord are...more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."

⁹Ibid., LIII (March 9, 1897), 38.

¹⁰Synodal Bericht, 1850, p. 122.

and that he knew how to utilize the talents of his parishioners.

Schwan's musical sense¹¹ was jarred by the sing-song monotone of the people's singing. So he told one of his elders, the above mentioned "rich man," about this matter. The latter also had a fine esthetic sense and likewise

¹¹Schwan's delight in the rich heritage of Lutheran hymns and chorales and their joyful melodies is eloquently expressed in the following excerpt from a report he read to the Central District in 1856. Synodal Bericht des mittlern Distrikts, 1856, pp. 11-21. "An even smaller number sings spiritual hymns in connection with their family devotions. This is even more sad than it would appear at first glance. God has given our Lutheran Church such a rich heritage of hymns that no other organization can even hold a candle to it. By no means did our forbears confine this heritage to the hymnal. But sweetly and powerfully they let it resound in churches, schools, and homes, at work and at play, in sorrow and joy, for indoctrination and strength in temptation; to the praise of God, to the joy and delight of the angels; everywhere and under all conditions and for all purposes they sang these hymns from memory. And now the Church which was formerly known as the "singing Church" has become dumb, at least in its family devotions! Surely there can no longer be much real Lutheranism where there is no singing, where the powerful Lutheran folksongs are no longer loved, where the diluted and artificial psalms and arias of the native English sects are preferred.

"If we had nothing better than the meaningless and comfortless modern hymns, if we knew no other melodies than these new melodies which are so painfully alike and so consistently narcotic, and which unfortunately came into vogue as the living faith died out, then we could be excused. For who likes to sing those songs? Whoever knows what a spiritual folksong is can never find pleasure in such melodies. But since the great God of grace has again awakened a new life in the Lutheran people, now that we once again possess the beautiful old hymns in their pristine purity and also have the old living melodies, the so called rhythmic melodies, now that these have again come into use and are being used more and more, it is an ominous sign that we no longer sing in our homes."

deplored their dragging and mournful singing. Pastor Schwan told his elder that on the next Sunday he would propose to the congregation that they introduce the Missouri Synod hymnal. But the elder told him "to keep his fingers out of the matter," that he himself knew of a much better way to get the job done. Because the rest of the congregation respected the elder and looked up to him, Schwan said, "Okay... if you do a good job of it, you alone shall have the honor and glory. But if you bungle it, you'll really get to hear about it, first of all from me, and that in public!" "Go right ahead!" was the elder's answer.

So the elder got busy. He bought quite a number of the Missouri Synod hymnals at his own expense, and passed them out to the people before services the next Sunday morning. The parishioners were a bit puzzled, but he hustled them into the church saying, "The pastor's been waiting a long time already." When they were all seated, Pastor Schwan said, "Well, I see that you all have the same book. That's fine. We might as well find out how well we can sing from them, don't you think? All right then, we'll sing number --." The singing was much improved, and the people also were well pleased. The hymnal was in! Schwan openly praised the elder -- but not till three months had passed and there was nothing more to fear. For says he,

Had I done so immediately, or had I given them ever so many learned lectures beforehand, or had I told them that their old hymnals had terribly degraded rather

than improved the beautiful old hymns -- I say, all of this would have done me absolutely no good at that time. For each one would have defended his own book and they would have voted down my proposal. And who knows if we would ever have come to an agreement later on. The Missouri hymnal might never have been introduced.

So then in this case my elder had been wiser than little me. And it's a good thing for a young pastor to learn this lesson early in life. Yes, a man may be ever so simple, but in cases such as this, he may be wise as a serpent. That, we might say, is the moral of this story.¹²

In addition to his pastoral duties in Black Jack, Pastor Schwan also conducted a parochial school. His pupils ranged from six-year-old beginners to seventeen-year-old adolescents. As we have previously noted, Schwan loved good music. The Lutheran chorales were especially dear to him. And so after the problem of the hymnals had been solved, he proceeded also to improve the melodies which were still "so-so." He used the children to teach their parents in this matter. Every day, after the classes in catechism, Bible History and reading were over, he taught them how to sing - lustily! This, he says, was more important than anything else. They had to learn to sing rhythmically too, and "how quickly and eagerly they learned to do this!" Some time later one of the fathers said to him:

It makes me very happy that our children are learning to sing so lustily. They sing almost the whole day

¹²Schwan, "Erinnerungen...", Der Lutheraner, LIII (March 9, 1897), p. 38.

long. While they're herding the cattle or the geese, it's always: "Praise to the Lord the Almighty," or "Now sing we, now rejoice..." They've never done that before. How come?

By this time quite a number of other men had gathered around.

The pastor replied,

That doesn't surprise me at all. The melodies which we sing here in church can't be sung while herding cattle and geese, at least not if you want to get any pleasure out of it. They're so slow and drawn out, they put you to sleep. And those who don't go to sleep have to squeak around on every note several times before they can go on to the next one. This squeaking around is also the reason why you older folks always get all tangled up in church, and finally become completely upset. If you wanted to sing as your children do, the singing would soon be different.

"But Pastor," countered the father, "such new melodies aren't suitable for the church. There everything must be ceremonious. And even if we wanted to, we can't sing that way." Pastor Schwan came back with his punch line:

New fangled? You are mistaken. Already in Luther's day, and for a long time after that, the people sang that way in church. I can prove that from my old music books. And if you only want to, you older folks can sing just as well as your children do. Listen: If I prove to you that you actually can, will you then also sing as your children do?

With one accord they all agreed that they would, and the pastor promised that they would do just that on the very next Sunday. During the following week he drilled several melodies into the children so that nothing could throw them off. But he was careful not to choose any tunes that in any way resembled the old, slow melodies. "Had I done that," he comments, "the old folks would soon have gotten back into their old rut, and the cause might have been lost forever."

Therefore he chose melodies that were completely strange to the people, but melodies which had a natural, self-evident and irresistible rhythm.

In church the next Sunday, he instructed the people to let the children sing the first three stanzas of each hymn. Then those, but only those who had caught the melody, might join in the fourth stanza. The people obeyed, and everyone joined in at the fourth stanza, singing at the top of his voice. That's how the new melodies were introduced, and before long, they were being sung not only in the church but also in the homes. The moral - "It's a matter of using the right approach!" (Man muss die Sache beim rechten Ende fassen). And this: do not use arguments which the people do not yet understand.¹³

Brevity is the soul of wit, says the sage. In some instances it is not only the soul of wit but also the secret of success and practicality. Pastor Schwan's congregation in Black Jack had no real constitution until after he had been there for some time. He was in no hurry about writing one, and his members were even less so. But fellow pastors kept asking, "Have you no constitution yet?" For some months Schwan replied, "No, not yet." Then one day he was able to say "yes." "Well, let's see it," said the other clerics. Schwan didn't have it with him, but offered to

¹³Ibid., LIII (March 23, 1897), 49.

recite it from memory. They were very much surprised, saying, "Ohhhh! How does it read?" He answered:

Title: Constitution and by-laws of the German Evangelical-Lutheran Congregation at X... Paragraph one: In our congregation all divine and spiritual matters are to be done in accordance with Scripture and Luther's doctrine (Concordia of 1580). Paragraph two: But all other matters are to be done in accordance with love. Period.

After thus reciting the constitution, Schwan continued with this comment:

There were pop-eyes all the way around, but -- they let it pass. And how often I have rejoiced that I got along with it so well. I should say that it was not at all the great wisdom of little me that had discovered this. No, I thank dear old Dr. Luther for that. He often complained about the great trouble that these terrible, man-made laws bring on. And next to him I thank our sainted Dr. Walther, who likewise frequently and earnestly warned against premature and excessively long congregational constitutions.

And truly, how much trouble and worry we have already had as a result of those cumbersome (langstieligen) by-laws! How much simpler it is for the pastor who can go straight to the dear Holy Scriptures and need not first take recourse to the constitution every time the voters meet. But, of course -- Nota bene -- he must also be able to lay his hands on the right passage, one that will clinch the matter. -- And this last statement is really the moral of this story. Outside of that I make no claims for a patent on my constitution. They need not all be as short as mine was.¹⁴

Time came when the congregation wanted the pastor to administer Holy Communion. He wanted to break them in right, and so he requested that everyone previously announce his intention to commune. All but one Mr. K. agreed willingly. This particular individual was a little wiseacre. His

¹⁴Ibid., LIII (April 6, 1897), 57.

father and grandfather had never done that, and he wasn't going to do it either! Schwan's method of dealing with this case is indicative of his character. It points up some of the characteristics that made his ministry so successful: a deep insight into human nature and thinking, resourcefulness, love and patience, gentleness and firmness. He knew when to apply Law and when Gospel.

Schwan's first step was to arrange for an open discussion of the question before the entire congregation. After some introductory remarks, he asked Mr. K. to imagine that he was the pastor, that he had completed the consecration ceremony, and was now ready to distribute the Lord's Supper. Then he continued, "One of the first guests to approach the altar is 'Whiskey Mueller.' You saw him last night, thoroughly inebriated, beating his wife and children, cursing and swearing, leaving a litter of destruction in his wake. Now here he is at the communion rail - still visibly polluted. Do you have a vivid picture of the situation?"

"Yes," replied Mr. K.

"Now tell me honestly, would you give the body and blood of Christ to such a man?"

"No, Pastor. God forbid!"

"And why not?"

"Why, he would be taking it to his damnation."

"But that is none of your worry. He must know that

himself. You said that you don't need a mouthpiece."

"Yes, that's so," admitted Mr. K. "But I still wouldn't give it to him. The swine! Not on your life I won't give it to him!"

"Quite right, my friend," answered Schwan. "But what are you going to do with him? Tell him before the whole congregation 'Go 'way! Shame on you! You don't get the Lord's Supper?' That's what you would have to do. But think of the furor and scandal that would create in the congregation. All the devotional atmosphere would be gone."

- Mr. K. scratched his head. - "Now if he had announced himself beforehand," continued Schwan, "you could have admonished and rebuked him properly in private. That way you would have avoided all the disturbance in the service."

"You're trying to trap me," whined Mr. K.

"Yes. And I already have you trapped. You won't get away from me either. Now admit that it's better that the pastor knows beforehand who's going to take communion. You'll announce now too, won't you?"

"No. No! I won't do it! I still won't do it!"

Then Schwan applied the law. "That's right, my dear fellow. That's the way a numbskull must act if he insists on always having his own way. When all Christians and even God Himself says, 'Do this!' you just stick to your stubborn 'I won't do it! I won't do it!' You'll end up in the right place all right."

Schwan then proposed, as the only solution, that he himself go out to Mr. K. every time they celebrated Holy Communion, in order to find out if Mr. K. intended to commune. That was too much for the old fellow since he lived at a greater distance from the church than any other member.

In his Reminiscences, Schwan follows this story up with the account of a neighboring young pastor who preached a long sermon about the necessity of announcing for communion and baring the heart to him because as pastor he would have to give an account to God. The congregation didn't like it one bit. One old member, who had been well instructed in another congregation during his youth, did announce and intended to ask the others to do the same, even though he hadn't liked the manner in which the pastor had handled the situation. But when he came to announce and make confession of his sin, the pastor, having heard that this man was devout and pious, just wrote down his name, and then talked about various trivialities. This so deeply offended the man that he asked others not to announce. And it took at least five years before communion announcements were finally introduced.

The moral: it is better to exercise Seelsorge without the people being aware of it, than to announce it with the blare of bugles and the beating of drums, especially when the people won't understand it. And this: It isn't necessary to throw sticks and stones into the water in order to get fish into your net.

Announcement for Communion is an especially delicate subject. One easily makes the mistake of going through the list of communicants and deciding to say this to

one person and that to another. But when they come to announce, you just can't say it. On the other hand, when you occasionally just have no time for that, then you have no trouble thinking of and saying just the right thing. It all comes very easily. Therefore: We should pray for a truly pastoral mind, and leave the rest to Him who knows and guides our hearts.¹⁵

Despite their primitive living conditions in Black Jack, the Schwan's were happy. For quite some time they had no home of their own at all, but shared the living quarters of the "rich man" whom we have met on several occasions already. This ruggedly pious elder turned over to the Schwan's the front half - which was the better half - of his log house. It was only a single room. Here the Shepherd and Shepherdess made their parlor, living room, study, bedroom, kitchen, etc.¹⁶ Emma Wyneken adds this bit of description to the picture.

When Dr. Schwan brought his bride to the United States, they were at first stationed in the backwoods near St. Louis, in a shack, which was quite a hardship for the cultured Mrs. Schwan, which however, she bore very graciously....

During the cold winter Mrs. Schwan sometimes sat without fire, wearing Dr. Schwan's fur coat, so that she could enjoy and admire the manifold fern formations on the frosted windows, which were novel to her.¹⁷

At the age of seventy-eight years Dr. Schwan could reminisce "...we were satisfied here as we practically never

¹⁵Ibid., LIII (April 20, 1897), 63-64.

¹⁶Ibid. (May 4, 1897), pp. 72-73.

¹⁷Emma Wyneken, "Memoirs of the Wyneken Household," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, XIV (January, 1942), 101.

were later on.¹⁸

Under the conditions which prevailed at Black Jack, it was quite natural that nothing had been said about salary in Schwan's call, but they never suffered want. The elder, with whom the pastor and his wife boarded, very much disliked for anyone to bring food to his boarders. But one day, without anyone having asked him to and without the pastor's knowledge, he hitched up his team and wagon, and as he drove from house to house in the settlement, he said, "Here people, toss in a ham, sausage, potatoes, cabbage or what have you. It's for the pastor. Here's the money bag, too. The pastor also needs some money."

When he came home in the evening, he rubbed his hands with satisfaction and said to the Pastor, "I've brought you something." Schwan asked, "Who told you to do that?" "If you had told me to do it," the elder answered with a smile, "I shouldn't have done it." Then he emptied the money bag on the table. Schwan pocketed the coins which were never counted nor recorded. When he and his wife went out to the smokehouse, they were astonished to see it loaded with meat, hams, sausages, potatoes, etc. It was so full that Mrs. Schwan hardly noticed it when the neighbor's dog occasionally helped himself.

¹⁸Schwan, "Erinnerungen...", Der Lutheraner, LIII (May 4, 1897), 72.

But even that wasn't good enough for these good people. One day they came to ask what kind of a house the pastor would like to have, brick or frame. Said the pastor, "Huh! You just guess again. You all have log houses. Where, pray, will you get brick or frame?" They answered that that was none of his concern. "All right," he answered, "then build me a log house." So they went right to work. And thereby hangs another tale.

When the log-raising had been finished and Schwan was sitting in front of his landlord's home one fine evening, a number of Evangelicals appeared with clubs in hand. The landlord wanted to hide, but when Schwan insisted on talking to the men, he offered to stand by him with axe handle in hand. Schwan sent him into the back room and waited for the belligerent band by himself in the front room. Despite his bold front, when the men knocked on the front door, Schwan's knees knocked too. But he showed no sign of it. After he had invited them in and offered them tobacco for their pipes, he started on a talking marathon. Eventually they got him stopped though, and told him why they had come. They said that they had nothing against him personally, and that if a Lutheran pastor had to be around, they would rather have him than anyone else. But they were determined not to have a Lutheran pastor around. All the people had been Evangelicals till now, "and that's the way it's going to stay." They warned him not to "move into that new house at the

church, or there'll be an accident!"

All attempts to dissuade them from their purpose were in vain. So he finally told them to do their worst because he was going to move in, even sooner now than he had previously planned. They left. Schwan moved. The members of the congregation wanted to stand guard over the pastor and his new house. They feared arson. Schwan feared too. But he told his people to go home, for "nothing happens without God's permission. Furthermore, if the enemy sees that we are afraid, he will have all the more courage, and may do -- who knows what!" Reluctantly they finally all went home.

The heavens got darker and darker. A storm came up, a real cloudburst. If the Evangelicals had really planned to burn the house, God had prevented it. The torrential rain made everything so wet it wouldn't burn, and also washed out all the newly planted maize, so that if the Evangelicals had really intended to play some knavish trick, they were forced to forget about it because they had to re-plant their crops. "The moral," concludes Schwan, "is this: It is good to trust in the Lord. And even though your faith be feeble and your knees knock, you don't have to let everybody know about it."¹⁹

In his own inimitable way, Pastor Schwan recounts for us one of his experiences at Black Jack which aptly

¹⁹Ibid., LIII (May 4, 1897), 72-73.

demonstrates the power of the Word. At the same time, it gives us a glimpse of Schwan's ability to think on his feet, and also teaches the lesson - as Schwan indicates in his conclusion - that Christians, especially Christian pastors, live by faith, not by sight. He changes the old proverb "Seeing is believing," into "Believing is seeing." This is the story as Schwan himself tells it.

A notorious old drunkard lived in the vicinity of the church. He was one of the previously mentioned Evangelicals. He hardly ever set foot on the church grounds, but he walked the more frequently along the fence, either partially or wholly drunk. Here he would meet the people as they came to church, and say to them, "Why do you run after that lousy pope and let him feed you all kinds of nonsense? Come on, join me in the saloon!"

One Sunday morning Schwan saw him coming into the church grounds - without the usual whiskey bottle! To the astonishment of all, he walked right into church. There he sat, without removing his cap, and with that well known flushed and defiant mien. Schwan hardly knew what to think, and therefore said nothing. One of the elders asked, "Shall we kick him out before he raises a rumpus?" Schwan answered, "No. Let him be. I'll take care of him."

His sermon for that morning was based on the parable of the sower and the four kinds of soil. He determined to make the first part of the sermon, in which he intended to

show that the seed of the divine Word doesn't make even the slightest visible impression on the stony soil of many hearts, - he determined to make this part as detailed and forceful as possible, even if it meant dropping the other three parts altogether.

As soon as the people were all seated, Schwan arose, announced the hymn, and as he did so, fixed his eyes on the drunk. He took the hint and removed his cap. Came the time for Schwan's sermon. He carried out his resolution. As clearly and forcefully as possible, he showed why many a person's heart is gradually hardened till it gets to be like a hard-surfaced road, so that not even the Word of God, which is sharper than any two-edged sword, is not able to make even the slightest impression on it. In that connection he also mentioned drinking, but without making any spiteful allusions. He expressed pity over such a condition, rather than revulsion. At the same time he also proclaimed the full and free forgiveness of Christ to such people. Only occasionally did he look at the man in question.

The man sat quietly through the whole service, breathing heavily. When all the rest had left, he remained in his seat with his eyes fixed on Schwan. After a few minutes of conversation in which the man had admitted that the sermon was directed at himself, Schwan said, "Thank God that you have come to realize your sin. But now what? Are you going to let things stay the way they have been?" The man.

replied earnestly, "No, no, Pastor. Things are going to be different. I'm not going back into the saloon. I'll come to church every Sunday. Do come and pay me a visit soon, Pastor."

And to make a long story short, that's exactly what happened. He was the most regular attendant at the services and the most attentive listener. He never missed the "Christenlehre,"²⁰ and, says Schwan, "It was touching to see what pains he took to learn what he did not yet know."

That's the way things continued for about six months. He appeared at Schwan's home one day with his clothes torn and blood trickling down his face in several places. At first the pastor thought the man had been in the saloon again and had gotten into trouble there, but that was not the case. The man's father had threatened either to burn Schwan's parsonage or to chase him out of the country. His son had replied, "Father, if you do that, I'll take the pastor into my new house, and I'll move into the old one with my wife and children." For that statement he was brutally beaten. While his brother held him, his father scratched his face. In his indignation Schwan asked, "Surely you struck back at

²⁰ "Christenlehre" was a type of Sunday School, often conducted in a special meeting of the entire congregation on Sunday afternoon. Under the pastor's guidance, they studied the doctrines of the Lutheran Church on the basis of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism. Carl Toelke, "Lutherans and Lutheranism in Cleveland," The Cleveland Lutheran Messenger, XXXVII (May, 1948), 8.

him?" "No sir!" came the answer. "I would never lay hands on my father. But it's true, I did give my brother a few licks." Schwan's closing comment is:

He conducted himself as a nobleman as long as I was in Black Jack. But that is also the only time I was privileged immediately to see the result of a sermon. Perhaps it wouldn't even be good for us pastors always or even frequently to see the results of our labors, regardless of how happy that might make us at first. Also in this respect we are to live, not by seeing, but by believing. That is the moral of this story.²¹

Pastor Schwan relates another story about a man addicted to drink, a story that might well be entitled, "Into each life a little rain must fall." This man was the exact opposite of the one just spoken of. He was extremely soft-hearted and good-natured. There was something attractive about him, something that would lead you to believe that at one time he had been a very neat man.

One would think that such a man would be more easily changed. That's what I thought too - for a while. So I didn't worry about him. But people who are by nature good-hearted, are much more difficult to straighten out, once they have given themselves over to drink, than are the defiant dipsomaniacs. They no longer have any will power. Their conscience is like a sieve. Nothing stays in it. Everything is washed out. The whole person is like a whiskey filled sponge. They listen tearfully to the most moving admonitions, but these, as well as their own vows made in the name of God, are forgotten a second later.

Nothing that Schwan could do or say had any effect on the man. He thought very highly of his pastor, and so

²¹Schwan, "Erinnerungen...", Der Lutheraner, LIII (May 18, 1897), 80.

Schwan determined that he would call him "Whiskey" Mueller in public, as most other people did, hoping that this shame would bring the man around. But it did no good. Schwan concludes his story with this remark:

...not even the time tested cures helped him so far as human eye could see. And that's a terrible thought, especially for a young beginner who wants to reform everyone over night. But we must learn to reconcile ourselves to the fact that there is Someone who has reserved this privilege to Himself. And He -- will remain blameless, even though some would fault Him.²²

The mountains are in travail. A mouse is born. This classic Latin phrase characterizes Schwan's experience with the charge of FALSE DOCTRINE! One day his neighbor dropped in to tell him that "...old Father Krischan, the one who moved in here from the old Missouri congregation in X, that old bighead and smartaleck (Quesenkopp un Glooksnut) who's always criticizing something, he said that you are not a true pastor, that you teach false doctrine."

Although the informer protested, Schwan insisted that they go out to Father Krischan immediately to get this thing straightened out. Father Krischan was very much chagrined when he heard about it, and said, "Oh Pastor, I'm really ashamed and sorry that you got to hear about this. My neighbor shouldn't have told you that." Schwan admitted that this was so, but since the matter had been brought up, it should now also be settled. Father Krischan finally

²²Ibid., LIII (October 19, 1897), 178.

stated his charge of false teaching as follows. "...Thursday before last, as I was walking by the church, you were teaching the children how to spell. And you kept saying: b-e-i -- bei. But that isn't right by a long shot. It's spelled b-e-i -- bei." After a few short explanations about the phonetic system, they parted with everyone satisfied.²³

We might caption Schwan's final reminiscence of Black Jack with another Latin phrase: Ave atque vale! Hail and Farewell!²⁴ When the congregation had improved little by little and was beginning to function smoothly, Schwan suddenly received a call. In presenting the call to his congregation, Schwan didn't commit himself. And they wouldn't hear of it. They insisted on keeping him. Another pastor was called in to explain the situation to them and make them understand. Although he was skilled in this art, and although they liked him personally, they refused to give Schwan his dismissal. So another man was sent, Prof. Biewend of the faculty at Concordia Theological Seminary.²⁵ He got the people to the point where they had to admit that

²³Ibid., LIII (November 2, 1897), 189.

²⁴Unless otherwise indicated the following is taken from Schwan, "Erinnerungen...", Der Lutheraner, LIII (November 16, 1897), 198.

²⁵William Sihler, Lebenslauf von Dr. W. Sihler (New York: Lutherischen Verlags-Verein, 1880), I, 145.

they really had no valid reason for withholding a peaceful dismissal. When they admitted this, Schwan said, "Friends, I would gladly stay here. You know that well enough. But it's just not supposed to be that way. We dare not stubbornly oppose God. And you will get another pastor." This finally convinced them, and so after a brief ministry of only ten months, Schwan moved on to Cleveland, Ohio. His successor, George Link, was installed on the tenth Sunday after Trinity, 1851.²⁶

²⁶Synodal Bericht, 1851, p. 207.

CHAPTER V

FIRST YEAR IN CLEVELAND

History of Cleveland

Cleveland takes its name from General Moses Cleaveland who was a surveyor and land agent in the employ of the Connecticut Land Company. In 1896 he laid out the plans for the town and began a permanent settlement at the trading post which had been established at the mouth of the Cuyahoga River just ten years before. The city was ideally situated for growth and industry, for it was the meeting place of iron ore from the Lake Superior region and of coal and oil from Ohio, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. The following table indicates how this fact, combined with the increase of immigration from Europe, made Cleveland a metropolitan city in a relatively short time.

Table I¹

Cleveland's Population Growth

Year	Population
1830	1,076
1840	6,071
1850	17,034
1860	43,417
1870	92,829
1880	160,146

¹The Encyclopedia Britannica (14th edition, New York: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1937), V, 809.

In the period from 1830-1870, the Lutheran population in America increased three times as rapidly as the general growth of the country.² A majority of these Lutherans were immigrants from Germany as Table II below indicates.

Table II³

German Immigration to the U.S. by Decades

1821-1830	9,987
1831-1840	157,265
1841-1850	439,270
1851-1860	976,678
1861-1870	818,554
1871-1880	781,554
1881-1890	1,641,571

The city of Cleveland was no exception to this growth by accretion. It too absorbed large numbers of German Lutherans. For when Cleveland celebrated its Centennial in 1896, James H. Kennedy was able to include in his History of the City of Cleveland the following report - a lasting tribute to the labors of H.C. Schwan and his colleagues and successors.

During the same afternoon, (Sunday, July 19, 1896)⁴ the various German Lutheran congregations of the city gathered in mass meeting in Music Hall, in like observance of the opening of Cleveland's Centennial. The

²Lars P. Qualben, A History of the Christian Church (revised and enlarged edition; New York: Thomas Nelson & Sons, 1942), p. 479.

³A.G. Merkens, "Early Lutheran Settlers and Schools in Northern Illinois," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, XXI (July, 1948), 69.

⁴James Harrison Kennedy, A History of the City of Cleveland (Cleveland: The Imperial Press, 1896), p. 527.

exercises were conducted almost entirely in German. The chair was occupied by Rev. Paul Schwan.⁵ The pastors of nearly all the congregations were present on the platform. The only decorations were the American flag, and in front of the stage was a banner bearing these words: "Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow." Prayers, speeches, and songs were the means employed by the patriotic Germans to show that they also claimed a part in the past of Cleveland, and were ready to do honor to the present. Addresses were delivered by Rev. H. Weseloh, of Akron, and the Rev. John Wepel, of Zanesville.

In the evening, there were further Centennial services in the churches, and yet another mass meeting, of German Protestant congregations, in Central Armory. Rev. F. Friedrich presided. The exercises were opened by a hymn and prayer, after which Mayor McKisson was introduced and made a brief address,....⁶

History of Zion

It was to this city of approximately 20,000 people,⁷ largely sailors and factory workers, that Rev. Schwan came in August, 1851. The congregation which he was to serve for the next thirty years dates its founding from the year 1843. On April 14 of that year forty-five communicants severed their connections with a church called the "Schifflein Christi" (Little Ship of Christ).⁸ They started a new

⁵Paul is the oldest son of H.C. Schwan. For eight years he served in Zion Congregation as assistant to his father. From 1880 on he was pastor of St. Paul's Congregation, a daughter of Zion.

⁶J.H. Kennedy, op. cit., p. 529.

⁷The Encyclopedia Britannica, V, 809.

⁸Carl Toelke, "Look to the Past to Build Tomorrow's Church," The Cleveland Lutheran Messenger, XXXVII (February, 1948), 5.

congregation because the "Schifflein Christi" was rationalistic in its doctrine and unionistic in its practice. The Rev. David Schuh became the first pastor of the new congregation, but because he did not live in Cleveland at the time, he was unable to serve regularly. Services were conducted in the upper story of Concert Hall on Superior Avenue.⁹ In 1844 Pastor Schuh resigned, and the Rev. August Schmidt took over the parish January 8, 1845. The congregation prospered under the care of its new pastor. By January 20, 1848, they were able to dedicate their own church building. This little house of worship, erected at a cost of about six thousand dollars, was located on the corner of York Street (now Hamilton Avenue) and Division Alley.¹⁰ Miss Hertha Pauli, in her novel The Story of the

⁹W.G. Polack, "Cleveland and the Founding of Synod," The Cleveland Lutheran Messenger, XXXVI (April, 1947), 5. This is the same room in which a number of Ohio Synod pastors conferred September 13-15, 1845, for the purpose of withdrawing from the Ohio Synod because of its doctrinal laxity. In this same meeting they also discussed a constitution for a new organization and arranged for further meetings for this purpose. These meetings were held in St. Louis, Fort Wayne and Chicago. At the Chicago meeting in April, 1847, this group of men, together with the Saxon immigrants of Perry County, Missouri, organized the Missouri Synod. Zion Church of Cleveland is therefore of the utmost significance in the history of the Missouri Synod; for as Dr. Polack concludes, "It may be said without fear of successful contradiction, that if it had not been for a meeting held at Zion Church, the Missouri Synod would never have been organized when and as it was."

¹⁰Festbuechlein zum 75-jaehrigen Jubilaeum der Ev. Luth. Zionsgemeinde (n.p., 1893), p. 4. Also Diamond Jubilee of Trinity Ev. Luth. Church (Cleveland: n.p., 1932), pp. 5-6.

Christmas Tree, gives us this description of the little church.

This story starts in a church. Its name was Zion Church; and its address was York Street, Cleveland, Ohio. Neither large nor old, it had a gabled roof, no steeple, and a chimney in the rear. It was so plain that at first glance you could mistake it for a dwelling; if you looked again, though, it was every inch a house of God.¹¹

Although it was only a simple little church, it meant much to these devout Lutherans. It was no easy task for them to raise a sum of six thousand dollars at that time, for they were but poor people: butchers, shoemakers, grocers and clerks, mostly foreign born.¹²

Schwan's Call and Arrival

Some time during the early months of 1851, Pastor Schmidt also resigned his charge.¹³ The Rev. F. Steinbach, of Liverpool, served as vacancy pastor for the time being.

¹¹Hertha Pauli, The Story of the Christmas Tree (2 Park Street, Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1944), p. 1. All the materials taken from this book have been verified by Miss Pauli in a letter dated December 9, 1949. The letter is in the files of the author.

¹²Ibid., p. 31. - error - p. 4.

¹³We were unable to determine the reason for Pastor Schmidt's resignation. It may be that he accepted a call to some other congregation. But one cannot help wondering whether perhaps there was some dissatisfaction or disagreement in the background. It seems significant that although Pastor Schmidt was present in the preliminary meetings at Cleveland and at Fort Wayne, he was not present at the Chicago meeting in 1847 when the Missouri Synod was formally organized.

At the urgent request of the congregation, Dr. W. Sihler of Fort Wayne, Indiana, came to Cleveland shortly before Easter.¹⁴ He advised the congregation to call Pastor H.C. Schwan, whom he had briefly met in Germany and who was also the nephew of his very close friend, the Rev. F.C.D. Wyneken, of St. Louis.¹⁵ Pastor Schwan accepted the call, and arrived in Cleveland in the month of August, 1851.

Pastor Schwan received no regular salary at all in his first charge at Black Jack because the members were too poor. In Cleveland his members were by no means wealthy either when he arrived. His salary for 1853 was \$250 plus free housing.¹⁶ For the economic conditions of that time, this was a fairly good wage however. In 1859 his salary had risen to four hundred dollars,¹⁷ which was as good as that of most of the salaried officers of the Missouri Synod in that year. The salary of only three of these men exceeded that of Pastor Schwan. Two of them received the same amount as did Schwan, and three others received substantially less.

¹⁴Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church 1857-1932 (Cleveland, Ohio: n.p., 1932), p. 5.

¹⁵William Sihler, Lebenslauf von Dr. W. Sihler (New York: Lutherischen Verlags-Verein, 1880), II, 145.

¹⁶Minutes, January 2, 1853.

¹⁷Ibid., January 17, 1859.

Table III¹⁸

Salaries of Professors of Missouri Synod in 1859

Fort Wayne, Indiana (preparatory college)

Prof. Fleischmann.....	\$350.00
Prof. Kraemer.....	\$450.00
Prof. Sihler.....	\$200.00
Mr. Kuntz.....	no figure

St. Louis, Missouri (theological seminary)

Rector Goenner.....	\$300.00
Prof. Lange.....	\$400.00
Conrector Schick.....	\$450.00
Prof. Walther.....	\$500.00
Director Saxer.....	\$400.00

By July, 1852, Pastor Schwan had a nice home of his own, a little wooden structure.¹⁹ Eighteen years later (1870) the congregation constructed another new parsonage for him after they had relocated the church building. The people made a real sacrifice in order to do this. The lot alone, on which the parsonage was built, cost them \$2,346.00.²⁰ Since they had just built a new church and a new school two years before, at a cost of more than forty thousand dollars,²¹ their total debt now amounted to somewhat over sixty thousand dollars.

¹⁸ Synodal Bericht der deutschen ev.-luth. Synode von Missouri etc. (St. Louis: Druckerei der Synode von Missouri etc., 1860), p. 75.

¹⁹ Johannes Strieter, Lebenslauf des Johannes Strieter (n.p., n.d.), p. 50. Archives of Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, Missouri.

²⁰ Festbuechlein..., p. 5.

²¹ Minutes, January 13, 1868.

The Christmas Tree

As Pastor Schwan indicates in his Reminiscences, there were several trying incidents in his pastoral work in Cleveland. The first of these came only four months after he began his work in this city. Strange as it may seem, it was in connection with the Christmas season that this bitter opposition and criticism arose. The young pastor wished to make this first Christmas with his new parishioners a truly happy one, one which they would long and favorably remember. So he prepared a surprise for them. When they gathered for the Christmas Eve service, they were astonished to see before the altar "a tall, green tree, glistening in the light of its candles." The people, especially the children, were delighted. For this was the first Christmas tree they had ever seen!²²

²²Pauli, op. cit., p. 1 and passim. Also R.T. DuBrau, "The Christmas Tree," Walther League Messenger, XLIII (December, 1933), 244.

The question has been raised, if the Christmas tree was first used in an American church by a Lutheran pastor, then why was the name "Lutheran" omitted from the title of Miss Pauli's book? The Rev. A. Meyer answers this question for us on page 93 of The Lutheran Witness, LXIV (March 13, 1945). Pastor Meyer, a member of the American Lutheran Publicity Bureau, says:

"We merely wish you to know that the omission was not an oversight of A.L.P.B. Our staff co-operated with the author in discovering the facts of the Christmas tree, and, incidentally, of bringing out and emphasizing the Lutheran Church's part in this historic custom which has become widespread throughout America.

"We were given the privilege of reading the manuscript, and the copy at that time mentioned the Lutheran Church, also the Rev. Heinrich Christian Schwan was mentioned as a

When the people returned for the Christmas Day service the next morning, however, Pastor Schwan immediately sensed that something was wrong. After the service he learned what it was that had distracted his hearers. Some of the members, after talking to fellow Clevelanders about the new Christmas tree, decided that it was sacrilege and idolatry to have such a tree in the church. An argument ensued, and in order to preserve peace, Schwan sadly took the tree into his own back yard.

Removing the tree from the church didn't settle the issue, however. This incident in Zion Church was the talk of the town. An editorial in one of the newspapers termed the tree in Zion Church a "nonsensical, asinine, moronic absurdity, besides being silly."²³ Although he was saddened by this unexpected turn of events, Pastor Schwan did not give up or sit idly by. He began writing letters to pastors and friends all over the United States, asking if they were familiar with the custom of the Christmas tree in the church. Many of his letters remained unanswered. Most of the answers he did receive were discouraging. While he was carrying on this correspondence, he also spoke to the people

Lutheran pastor who later became president of the Missouri Synod. We, too, protested the omission of 'Lutheran' and were informed by Miss Pauli that her publishers had insisted upon omitting the name 'Lutheran' because of 'business reasons.' "

²³Pauli, op. cit., p. 46.

he met in the city. Many immigrants were passing through Cleveland on their westward trek during these years, so that in this way he contacted many people from all parts of the country and of the world. In a very systematic and methodical way Schwan gathered and recorded his data. According to a Cleveland tradition, he copied a large map showing America on the left and Europe on the right. Then he cut tiny models of a tree from cardboard. These he placed on the maps as markers of all the places to which the Christmas tree, in his knowledge, had advanced. Wherever possible, he also noted both the date and circumstances of the conquest. But even this wasn't enough for the methodical pastor. Every land in which the custom prevailed got a dark green tree, while others, where Christmas trees had been used in specific instances only, were given a tree of a lighter color.²⁴

²⁴Ibid., p. 31. Miss Pauli says, in a letter of December 9, 1949, "This whole part of my story was told me in Cleveland as a sort of old local tradition, handed down by word of mouth. I am not sure though, that it wasn't a tradition just like that of Luther's Christmas tree....there are good and bad traditions - it depends on what you make of them."

Schwan prepared his sermons with meticulous care. His son Paul told Dr. G.V. Schick that his father used to write out his sermons word for word. Then, when he descended from the pulpit after delivering the sermon, he immediately noted every word that he had altered in his delivery. The Statement which Schwan read to his congregation in connection with Paul's engagement and marriage was very accurate in its details. His sermons and synodical addresses were carefully polished. In view of all this meticulous work it would seem justified to give credence to this tradition.

One day some months later, a letter came from Wooster, Ohio. It informed Pastor Schwan that Christmas trees had been known there for some years. Schwan followed up this lead by traveling to Wooster on the railroad which had just been built. Here in Wooster he learned the story of August Imgaard. August was a German boy who had come to America in 1847 and had introduced the Christmas tree into the home of his brother as a surprise and gift for his nieces and nephews.

Joyfully Schwan returned to Cleveland with proof that the tree was at least being used in a home, if not in a church. Armed with this information, he now called a meeting of leaders in the community, including the reporter who had previously referred to the Christmas tree as "a nonsensical, asinine, moronic absurdity...." The meeting of these dignitaries took place in the pastor's study. Schwan told them the story of August Imgaard in Wooster. In the course of his story he also mentioned one of the hymns which the Imgaards had sung under their Christmas tree. This hymn was the well known "O Christmas Tree" (O Tannenbaum). After Schwan had sung the first stanza, (Miss Pauli's conjecture) the listeners joined him in the refrain. The catchy melody had caught their hearts, and the struggle to bring the Christmas tree into its own was over. The Christmas tree was accepted, and soon "the custom spread through

all the land."²⁵

The following statement is typical of many others, made orally or in writing, in Missouri Synod circles and elsewhere:

America saw (the Christmas tree) for the first time two or three years after its public acclaim in Paris (1840). It was brought to Wooster, Ohio, by one August Ingaard from Germany....About eight years after this, the Christmas tree appeared for the first time in a church during the Christmas season. And it is of interest to us to know that it first appeared in the church of the president of the Missouri Synod, the Rev. H.C. Schwan, in Cleveland. Amid much opposition he introduced this German custom in his church in 1851. Since its humble beginning in a Lutheran church of the Missouri Synod, the tree has made its victorious way all over our continent.²⁶

According to this statement, and many others like it, Pastor Schwan was the first to introduce the use of the Christmas tree in a church. From an article by Dr. W.G. Polack, professor of Church History at Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, we learn that this claim is partly erroneous. Dr. Polack's information is taken from The American German Review (February, 1944). One of the articles in this issue cites evidence that points to the Rev. John

²⁵Pauli, op. cit., pp. 47-49. It should be noted that the statement that Schwan sang the Christmas hymn is only a conjecture. Again we quote from Miss Pauli's letter of December 9, 1949. "This whole part of my story was told me in Cleveland as a sort of old local tradition....That Rev. Schwan as a young man used to sing often and well I also heard in Cleveland; that on this particular occasion he sang 'O Tannenbaum'...was my conjecture."

²⁶R.T. DuBrau, "The Christmas Tree," Walther League Messenger, XLII (December, 1933), 244.

Muelhauser as the man who first introduced the Christmas tree into the church.²⁷ Here is the story of Muelhauser's Christmas tree as told by Mr. Rolf King, of Rochester, New York, in The American German Review.

On the 23rd of December, 1840, the following notice appeared in the Rochester Daily Democrat:

GERMANY IN AMERICA!

The undersigned has learned that the German Protestant children will celebrate according to the custom of the Old Country, Christmas Eve, at their Meeting House at the corner of Grove and Scio Street. Those of the American children, wishing to see the above mentioned celebration on that evening, are respectfully invited to attend. The celebration commences at 6 o'clock precisely.

J.H. Peck, a member of said church.

Fortunately one American was curious enough to attend this Christmas Service. It impressed him very much. He sent the following account to the Rochester Daily Advertiser:

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION OF THE
GERMAN PROTESTANT CHURCH

Mr. Editor: Having seen a notice in the daily papers that the children connected with this church would celebrate the festival of Christmas after the German custom, I thought as it was something new to me, I should embrace the opportunity of seeing it. As it is probable that but few of your readers were present, the following brief account may be somewhat interesting:... (There follows a long description of the tree itself and of the program.)

For six years the newspapers are silent about any continuance of this custom. Then in 1847 the following announcement appeared in the Daily Democrat for December 15:

CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL OF THE GERMAN LUTHERAN
CHURCH ON STILSON STREET

The custom had by this time degenerated into a money

²⁷Dr. Polack identifies Rev. Muelhauser as the same man who began his ministry in Rochester, New York, in 1837, and later on in 1849, together with the Langenberg Missionaries Johann Weimann and W. Wrede, founded the Wisconsin Synod in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

making scheme, for they charged admission (25 cents for adults; 12½ cents for children), ostensibly to pay for some "new Galleries." In addition to this, prizes were given to visitors. That is the story of Mr. King.²⁸

The humble Pastor Schwan would have been the last man to insist on the honor of introducing the Christmas tree into the church, and in the face of the above evidence, we cannot accord him that honor. Nevertheless, he is still the man - so far as we know - who introduced this custom into the West and Midwest. Furthermore, the account in the December 1847 issue of the Daily Democrat would seem to indicate that quite possibly this custom might have died out without the efforts of Pastor Schwan. Until further evidence points to a different conclusion, therefore, we may still credit Schwan with the honor of putting this custom into its own with all of its beautiful significance. As Miss Pauli puts it,

...its meaning shines brightly to Christendom, which views the evergreen garb of the tree as a symbol of the Father's everlasting love, while the light of the Savior's birth radiates for us in the gleam of the Christmas candles.²⁹

²⁸W.G. Polack, "The First Christmas Tree in an American Church Service," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, XVII (April, 1944), 4-6.

²⁹Pauli, op. cit., p. 61.

CHAPTER VI

THE SCHOOL AND YOUNG PEOPLES SOCIETY

The School

Apparently Pastor Schwan's task in Cleveland was, in one respect, somewhat easier than it had been in Black Jack. Since Zion Congregation already had two teachers in 1849, it is unlikely that the pastor ever had to teach in the parochial school.¹ This does not mean, however, that he lost interest in the school. On the contrary, he seems to have considered it a highly important part of the congregation's task. It was used with great success as a missionary agency.

When Pastor Schwan arrived in 1851, the school had an enrollment of fifty pupils. Six of these were children of parents who were non-members.² Within one year the enrollment jumped to sixty-eight, of whom fourteen were children

¹Festbuechlein zum 75-jaehrigen Jubilaeum der Ev. Luth. Zionsgemeinde (n.p., 1893), pp. 3-4. The two teachers during that year were a Mr. Wagener and Mr. Fr. Walz.

²These and also all the following enrollment figures are taken from the Parochial Reports in the Synodal Bericht der Ev.-Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio u.a. Staaten (St. Louis: Druckerei der Synode von Missouri etc., 1851-1881) and from the same Parochial Reports in the Synodal Bericht des mittlern Distrikts der Ev. Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio u.a. Staaten (St. Louis: Druckerei des Concordia-Verlags, 1851-1881). See Appendix I for the complete tabulation.

of parents who did not belong to the congregation. By 1854³ the enrollment was ninety-two, seventeen of these being outsiders. Two years later, in 1856, the figure had risen to 140. During 1858 a second daughter congregation was founded,⁴ causing the enrollment to drop to eighty-nine. But of these eighty-nine children, forty-four were from non-member homes. After this date the records do not indicate how many of the children were native and how many from the outside, but the enrollment continued to climb. By 1867, ten years after the second daughter congregation (Trinity) had been formed, Zion was supporting four schools with an enrollment of 430 pupils. With but few exceptions, the enrollment climbed steadily till 1874 and 1875. In those years it hit a peak of six hundred pupils distributed in six schools. It is of interest to note that in 1875 a total of 163 people were baptized.

The policy of the congregation seems to have been the following. Gather in as many of the youth as possible. When the school gets too small, build another. As soon as this school has a large enough nucleus of adults, call a pastor for this group and let it become an independent

³During this year, St. John's Congregation of Newburgh, the first of a number of daughter congregations, branched off from the mother church. The Rev. Johann Strieter was called as its first pastor. Johann Strieter, Lebenslauf des Johannes Strieter (n.p., n.d.), p. 66.

⁴Minutes of Zion Congregation, Cleveland, Ohio, May 16, 1858.

congregation. At the time of this writing it is almost one hundred years since Pastor Schwan took charge of the mother congregation of the Missouri Synod in Cleveland. During this century the number of churches has grown from one to almost forty.⁵

Much of the success of the school program must be credited to the pastor's interest and encouragement. In 1861, for example, when the enrollment was up to 160 with only one school, Pastor Schwan spoke to the voters' assembly concerning the need for beginning a new school. This was on June 30.⁶ In the July 23 meeting, he kept the issue alive by pointing out that the ability to meet the cost of building a new school depended on faith. For "all things are possible to them that believe." After he had illustrated this truth with numerous examples, the congregation resolved to proceed, regardless of cost.⁷ By September the new building was in use.⁸

No doubt much of the growth of the schools was the result of advertisement as well as good teaching. The Minutes of September 23, 1861 contain a resolution to have three

⁵Statistical Yearbook of the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod for the Year 1948 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1949), pp. 20-22.

⁶Minutes, January 30, 1861.

⁷Ibid., July 23, 1861.

⁸Ibid., September 23, 1861.

hundred or more pamphlets printed so that the German citizens of Cleveland might become aware of the newly built and reorganized school. Pastor Schwan read an advertisement which he had already prepared previous to the meeting. It was immediately adopted for publication and circulation.

Vocational education was also a part of Zion's educational program. Although it was probably only a small class, there was a course in Home Economics for the girls. Upon Pastor Schwan's suggestion, the congregation adopted the plan of offering "a special course in household skills, since a person capable of teaching these is available." Classes were held on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons. A small fee of twenty cents per month was assessed from each child.⁹

Three years later, in 1864, Pastor Schwan again demonstrates his vital concern for education as well as his foresight and his interest in winning souls. In a meeting of January 11, he speaks of the need for a "Lutheran school at the Pittsburgh depot, since many people, who are Lutherans from home, live there. If we don't start a school there, someone else soon will." The congregation acted on his proposal, resolving to build a school in that district.

⁹Minutes, September 22 and 28, 1862. Later on, according to the Minutes of August 28, 1871, Frau Papke was granted permission to use one of the school rooms for a course in sewing.

They did this although they had a debt of several hundred dollars, were in the process of collecting over four hundred dollars for a poor congregation in New York, and were in need of a new church edifice themselves.¹⁰

The statement is occasionally made that in many present day churches the Holy Spirit has been shoved into the back seat. This certainly was not the case in Zion Congregation. The vacations for the school children called for an equally long rest period during the Pentecost festival as during the Christmas season. During both of these seasons, the vacation lasted one week. Easter called for two weeks of vacation, while the mid-summer lay-off lasted only three weeks. Apparently these people disagreed with the prevailing practice of the twentieth century - three months of academic inactivity during the summer.¹¹

Tuition rates for Zion's school children were the following: one child paid eight cents per week, two children from the same family were taken at a reduced rate of twelve cents per week (six cents per child); if the family had three children in attendance, the fee was fifteen cents per week (five cents per child). This was the maximum fee for any one family. If there were more than three children, the tuition was still only fifteen cents per week. Poor

¹⁰Minutes, January 11, 1864.

¹¹Ibid., September 13, 1853.

families also received special consideration. If their poverty was evident, the children were given their education free of charge.¹² The policy of charging tuition was still in practice in 1866, but at a slightly increased rate.¹³

The Young Peoples Society

In 1856 Pastor Schwan reported to the Central District pastoral convention on the condition of the congregations of the Central District. He divided this report into three sections: a) family devotions, b) announcement for Communion, and private confession, c) the prevailing character and attitude of the youth.¹⁴ It is the third part of this report in which we are here interested.

He reports that the pastors are almost unanimous in decriing the disappointing and disturbing spiritual condition of the youth. One pastor informed him that he didn't even have two or three young people with whom he could start

¹²Loc. cit.

¹³Minutes, September 17, 1866.

¹⁴Schwan gathered his information by asking every pastor in the district for a report on these three phases of the Christian life in his congregation. Then he had the pastors meet in five separate conferences to summarize their findings in their particular territories. From these five summaries Schwan draws the information for his own report. It should be noted that Schwan was at this time vice-president of the Central District (Synodal Bericht, 1856, p. 29), not president, as is stated by the Rev. Walter A. Maier on page 432 of Ebenezer, edited by W.H.T. Dau (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1922).

a Young Peoples Society. Conditions in the city congregations were always worse than in the rural parishes. In a few congregations the picture was more encouraging, but the overall condition, the moral quality of the youth in the "average" congregation, gave them cause for concern.

For although the majority of the young men and women who have been confirmed in our churches, have a satisfactory understanding of the most important teachings concerning faith and the Christian life, although they attend church and "Christenlehre" fairly well and guard against gross debauchery and sin, yet on the whole they evidence a lack of true reverence and fear of God, of sincere repentance, of living faith in Christ, of true joy in and love for God's Word and Christ. Sad to say, there is increasing evidence of a worldly spirit, vanity, pride, haughtiness, luxury of dress, disobedience and disrespect toward parents and teachers, yes, even greed and unchastity....

Schwan proceeds to analyze the causes for this condition.

Not all of the blame can be laid on the conditions of the country, he says. The primary cause is deficient child training. He points out that it had been customary in the past to train children in a stringent, oftentimes hard and legalistic way. As a result, the children were often seriously handicapped, for this type of training robbed them of their youthful buoyancy. It made them timid, reserved and slavishly subservient. On the other hand, this type of training also produced in them a certain reverence and awe. This type of child training has today been replaced by a kind of training, he continues, which produces disrespectful and disobedient children. It is a type of training in which neither Law nor Gospel is employed. Even Christian parents

are for the most part too lax with their children, and in most cases forget the privileges and obligations which God Himself has given them in the Fourth Commandment.

Now Vice-president Schwan follows this analysis up - and this is the important thing, this is his contribution - with a program for positive action. He says the parents must be made to realize their obligation to youth more and more. The simple and wholesome piety of the forebears must more and more become part of the homes. The youth must be instructed in the true way of salvation, both in the churches and in the schools. Parents must take a more faithful interest in the confirmed youth and gather them into and keep them occupied in appropriate societies. "The more we do this," he concludes, "the less cause will we have for complaining about the character and attitude of our youth."¹⁵

Now the question is: Did Schwan in his own parish practice the program he outlines in the preceding report? Although the evidence of the records is slim, there is some reason to believe that he did. On November 5, 1860, the Young Peoples Society of Zion submitted a request that the congregation encourage all its younger members to join the society. This request "was joyfully received," and it was resolved "to act on this request by passing it on to as many

¹⁵Synodal Bericht, 1856, pp. 11-21.

of the persons concerned as possible."¹⁶

Another reference is made to the Young Peoples Society in the Minutes of February 28, 1870. In this meeting, the society reported that their receipts for the previous year had amounted to \$193.73, that their expenditures for that period had been \$156.09, leaving a balance of \$37.64 in the treasury. The congregation expressed its happiness over the contributions of the young people, and encouraged them to continue in this fine spirit.

Apparently the enthusiasm and interest of the young people grew cold during the following eight years, for on December 9, 1878, the voters discussed what they might do to start up a Young Peoples Society again.¹⁷ The reader will recall that this is the same year in which the scandal concerning the engagement of Paul Schwan and Marie Hemy took place. It seems quite possible, therefore, that this may have been a major cause for the death of the society.

¹⁶Minutes, November 5, 1860.

¹⁷Ibid., December 9, 1878.

CHAPTER VII

GROWTH OF THE CONGREGATION

Physical Expansion

As we noted in the preceding chapter, Zion's parish schools were an effective missionary agency. This certainly was a big factor in the growth of the congregation. There were, of course, several other factors. The growing westward migration in America and the immigration from Europe both contributed to this growth. Without a vital interest in missions on the part of the pastor, however, these factors would have had little influence on the growth of the parish. As the writer of Zion's history said, "With the arrival of the new pastor in 1851, Zion becomes a truly evangelical-lutheran congregation."¹ Schwan's arrival marks the beginning of Zion's growth in both the physical and in the spiritual realm.

One year after Schwan had begun his work in Cleveland, he asked for and received permission to preach in Ohio City (now West Cleveland) one Sunday afternoon per month.² His efforts bore fruit so abundantly that six months later a

¹Festbuechlein zum 75-jaehrigen Jubilaem der Ev. Luth. Zionsgemeinde (n.p., 1893), p. 5. Archives Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, Missouri.

²Minutes of Zion Congregation, Cleveland, Ohio, December 5, 1852.

school was built in Ohio City, and Candidate J.C.W. Lindemann was called to take charge of this mission project. He served as assistant to Pastor Schwan, the two exchanging pulpits regularly, but otherwise ministering to the spiritual needs of their own district.³ Lindemann arrived in Cleveland on August 12, 1853, and was installed on Sunday, August 28. Already during the next month a small church, measuring only forty by twenty-six feet, was dedicated. The little mission continued to grow rapidly.⁴ By 1878 it numbered five hundred families and 1506 communicants.⁵ On May 16, 1858 Zion Congregation unanimously resolved that the two "districts" should henceforth be independent congregations.⁶ Pastor Lindemann's district adopted the name "Trinity." Trinity's growth fully equalled that of her mother. By 1932 she had already founded seven daughter churches of her

³Trinity Ev. Luth. Church (Cleveland: n.p., 1932), p. 6. Archives Concordia Historical Institute.

⁴Loc. cit.

⁵Ibid., p. 14.

⁶Minutes, May 16, 1858. According to Zion's 75th anniversary booklet, and also according to the Rev. Carl Toelke ("Look to the Past to Build Tomorrow's Church," The Cleveland Lutheran Messenger, XXXVII (February, 1948), 5)) this took place in 1857. That date seems to be a misprint or an oversight. For Zion's Minutes specifically state page 64, paragraph 5, "Nachdem nochmals ueber die Trennung der beiden Distrikte unserer Gemeinde gesprochen worden und die in voriger Versammlung erwahnten Gruende nochmals in Erwaegung gezogen worden waren, so beschloz die Gemeinde einstimmig, dasz beide Distrikte zwei von einander unabhengige Gemeinde(n) von nun an sein sollen."

own.⁷

Now we pick up the history of Zion proper once more. Although Pastor Landemann was called as assistant for the group in Ohio City in 1853, the next year saw another group of about twenty adults found an independent congregation two miles south of Newburgh (now called Garfield Heights). In October 1854 the Rev. Johannes Strieter came to serve this small parish which had by that time already erected a tiny church and an even tinier parsonage.⁸

A little more than a decade after St. John's Congregation in Newburgh was formed, Zion had again outgrown her shoes. The old church building was therefore moved from York Street to a new location on East Ninth and Bolivar Streets, and a new school built on this location. This was in 1857. Even before the next decade had ended, the congregation again filled the church to overflowing, but the Civil War prevented them from building a new church until 1866. The first little church "that might have been mistaken for a dwelling," was now supplanted by an edifice that cost \$35,335.72.⁹ It was dedicated on the first Sunday after New Year.¹⁰ The following excerpt from one of Pastor Schwan's

⁷Diamond Jubilee of Trinity Ev. Luth. Church, pp. 6-18.

⁸Johannes Strieter, Lebenslauf des Johannes Strieter (n.p., n.d.), p. 66.

⁹Festbuechlein..., p. 4.

¹⁰Minutes, December 27, 1866.

letters to his close friend in Fort Wayne, Indiana, Dr. William Sihler, indicates how rapidly the new church was filled. "Things are running quite smoothly here. The new church is practically filled again, but it causes me a lot of trouble because I have to preach so terribly loud."¹¹

By 1873 both school and church, particularly the former, were again too small to accommodate the ever growing congregation. Upon Schwan's extensive presentation of the need for a new school in East Cleveland, and the advisability of calling a "friendly, competent ministerial candidate" for this position, the congregation voted approval of the suggestion. Pastor Schwan suggested that his son Paul met the important qualifications of which he had spoken. Again the congregation agreed, and called Paul Schwan in the capacity of instructor in the new school and assistant to his father. The arrangement was identical to that which had formerly existed between Zion and Trinity. Paul's salary was set at five hundred dollars per year.¹²

Five years later, on August 28, 1878, a number of

¹¹The letter is dated April 10, 1867. "Bei uns geht's ziemlich wohl. Die neue Kirche ist fast schon wieder voll, aber macht mir viel trouble weil ich so schrecklich laut predigen musz." Schwan occasionally slips an English word right into the middle of a German sentence. We note the same thing in the Minutes towards the end of the century, but in Schwan's case it appears to be a touch of humor rather than a slip of the pen.

¹²Minutes, March 5, 1873.

families living south of Kingsbury Run organized an independent congregation under the name of "St. John's." They called Candidate August Dankworth as their first pastor.¹³ Half a decade later, St. Peter's Congregation was founded in 1883 by a number of Zion's members living in the vicinity of Woodland Cemetery. In the case of both St. John's and St. Peter's, the chief reason for beginning a new congregation was the problem of transportation.¹⁴

Thus Zion and her five daughters, and her grand daughters as well, continued to grow. By 1947 there were 32,946 Lutherans in Cleveland.¹⁵ The Missouri Synod alone had thirty-eight congregations in the metropolitan Cleveland area in 1948, and this does not include the churches of the Slovak Synod which is in affiliation with Missouri.¹⁶

¹³Ibid., September 3, 1878.

¹⁴History of St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church, Cleveland, Ohio, 1878-1928 (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1928), p. 6.

It is interesting to note that English speaking children of non-members were not permitted to attend the parochial school of St. John's. This may have been an emergency measure to limit the number of pupils because only a small number could be accommodated, or it may have been a defensive measure against what was considered the danger of "Americanization." In either case, this resolution does not bespeak the same spirit of Zion's members during the fifties. There the policy was: Take them in. The Lord will provide and care for them and for our own children.

¹⁵Frederick W. Kemper, "The Church in Cleveland," The Cleveland Lutheran Messenger, XXXVI (November, 1947), 4.

¹⁶Carl Toelke, "Look to the Past to Build Tomorrow's Church," The Cleveland Lutheran Messenger, XXXVII (February, 1948), 4.

Thirty-six of the thirty-eight Missouri Synod congregations can ultimately be traced to Zion Congregation.¹⁷ For this reason the Rev. H.C. Schwan "is always to be remembered as one of the chief builders of Cleveland Lutheranism."¹⁸ One might well call Zion the "mother" of Lutheranism in Cleveland, and Pastor Schwan its "father."

Spiritual Progress

The first of the preliminary meetings which led up to the formation of the Missouri Synod was held in Zion Church. Synod was formally organized in April, 1847, but strangely enough, Zion did not become a member of this body until 1852. One wonders whether this was due to the attitude of Pastor Schmidt who resigned in 1851. Although the Minutes shed no light on the problem, they leave the impression that this was the case. For in the very first year after the arrival of Pastor Schwan, Zion took up membership in the Missouri Synod,¹⁹ and at the same time extended an invitation to Synod to convene in Zion Church for its 1853 sessions.²⁰ Synod

¹⁷Ibid., p. 5. See Appendix II for the complete genealogy. The two exceptions noted above are St. John's in South Euclid, and its daughter, Our Savior.

¹⁸The Cleveland Lutheran Messenger, XXXVI (April, 1947), 6.

¹⁹Festbuechlein..., p. 4.

²⁰Minutes, January 6, 1852.

accepted the invitation. That the members of the congregation were deeply interested in their new relationship is evident from the fact that on July 22 of that same year (1852) they resolved to "take up a collection for the college in St. Louis." Thus in a tangible way they demonstrated the sincerity of their action and their sense of responsibility.²¹ This same attitude comes to light in a resolution passed in 1853. It indicates that they took their religion seriously and tolerated no laxity. They resolved that

those who signed the constitution without reading it, but have not taken part in the work of the congregation shall be asked if they want to remain members of the congregation. In case they admit that they haven't read the constitution, they are to be warned to fulfill their obligation as members. If they say No (to the question whether they want to continue as members), they shall without further adieu be stricken from the list.²²

The members of Zion were not interested in mere numbers. If anyone failed to conduct himself as a Christian, he was dealt with in accordance with Matthew chapter eighteen. And if this brought no results, excommunication followed. Pastor Schwan's evangelical character displays itself in a set of six statements which he drew up in 1854 for the clarification of the correct procedure in such cases. Here are the statements which the congregation adopted as written by Pastor Schwan in explanation of paragraph 16 of the congrega-

²¹Ibid., July 22, 1852.

²²Ibid., November 14, 1853.

tional constitution.

- 1) In the acceptance or excommunication of members, unanimity of all voting members present shall be necessary.
- 2) Should it occur that one or several members vote against the majority, then the resolution of the majority shall not be carried into effect; but neither shall it thereby be nullified; the congregation shall require of the objectors that they present their reasons for dissenting, and shall evaluate these reasons.
- 3) If the congregation finds these reasons without basis, but is not able to convince the minority, is herself convinced however, that the motives and intentions of the dissentors are honest, then the acceptance or excommunication shall not take place.
- 4) Should the congregation find the advanced reasons insufficient and also feel that the objectors are not upright (aufrichtigen Herzens sind), but that they are only objecting with ulterior motives, then, if two-thirds of those present realize this, the objectors shall be declared under Church Discipline, and they shall be dealt with as are all those who stand in the third degree of discipline, i.e., admonition of those concerned shall be continued until either they are declared beyond church discipline for lack of evidence, or until it has become evident to all that they are obstinate sinners.
- 5) Until completion of this investigation, the original matter shall rest.
- 6) All those who for any cause are in the third step of church discipline shall not, until completion of the case, exercise their franchise, nor be accepted as guests at the Lord's Table, nor serve as sponsors at a baptism; and they are obligated, without special invitation, to attend every congregational meeting in which their case is considered.²³

These resolutions were also carried into effect. In one of the voters' meetings the ban was pronounced on one of the members. A few objected, but without being able to advance any reason for dissenting. Their conduct became so

²³Ibid., March 19, 1854.

intolerable that before the meeting was over, seven of them were placed under Church Discipline.²⁴ Four of these ultimately recognized their error and were returned to good standing.²⁵

Pastor Schwan was concerned for the spiritual growth of the souls entrusted to him. He was expendable. In addition to his morning service, he conducted the "Christenlehre" service on Sunday afternoon, held one afternoon service per month in West Cleveland, and had regular Sunday evening services in Zion Church.²⁶ In 1859 he noticed that many of the members were not clear on certain doctrines. This became evident to him in his discussion with them when they came to announce for Communion. He therefore suggested a special review of these teachings for the adults. With much enthusiasm the congregation reserved Monday evening for special reviews of Christian doctrine (Wiederholungsstunden der Christenlehre).²⁷ Pastor Schwan also devoted a great deal of time in the voters' assemblies to discussion and explanation of synodical and district proceedings. After Synod had discussed an essay on Private and Public Confession, Zion spent almost two whole meetings in discussing this

²⁴Ibid., July 31, 1854.

²⁵Ibid., October 23 and November 13, 1854.

²⁶Ibid., November 28, 1853.

²⁷Ibid., February 7, 1859.

topic.²⁸

As we have seen, Schwan wasted no time in reforming essentials. He knew how to wait for changes in non-essentials however. Zion's constitution was defective and obsolete in various ways, but he patiently waited with revision of non-essential matters until his members had come to see these defects. Then at the opportune moment he suggested a restudy and revision. This moment came in 1874, almost twenty-five years after his arrival. In that year the constitution had to be reprinted since there were no more copies available and they wanted every new member to receive a copy. It was at this point that the pastor suggested a revision of the document. His suggestion was gratefully accepted.²⁹

The Rev. Matthias Loy, longtime president of the Ohio Synod and close friend of Pastor Schwan, points to one of the chief reasons for his success as a pastor - his ability to understand people, and consequently knowing when to apply Gospel and when to apply Law. Loy says, "...I was blessed with the acquaintance of men, such as Wyneken and Schwan, who knew something of men and of the Gospel; and therefore could distinguish when the flesh seemed to domineer over the

²⁸ Ibid., February 7 and 15, 1859 et passim.

²⁹ Ibid., February 23, 1874.

spirit.³⁰ Schwan's clear understanding of the Gospel, his evangelical attitude, and his ability to put this knowledge into practice is particularly evident in one of the discipline cases he was obliged to handle in Zion. It was a particularly bad case of embezzlement with which the congregation had dealt for almost nine months. Finally the guilty party was willing to admit his guilt in writing, and had already effected a reconciliation with the man from whom he had taken the money. When this was announced in the voters' meeting, Pastor Schwan made the following remarks:

Two important things are to be kept in mind in a case of Church Discipline, 1) the matter must be taken seriously and dare not be concluded as quickly as possible (darf nicht so rasch wie moeglich zu erledigen ueber's Knie abgebrochen werden) just to be done with it. The congregation has acted in accordance with this principle since she has been dealing with this case for almost nine months. 2) If by God's grace a sinner is brought to recognize his sin, and if he shows himself penitent, then the congregation is not to deal harshly with him; is not to force him to make special confession of this or that detail. We are through love to believe that the person involved is penitent, unless we can prove the contrary. The prophet Nathan did not require of David, and Jesus did not require of Peter that he make confession of the details of his sin, but absolution was pronounced on them as soon as they showed themselves penitent.³¹

From the foregoing it is evident that Schwan was a thoroughly evangelical, kind-hearted man who could sympathize

³⁰M. Loy, Story of My Life (Columbus, Ohio: Lutheran Book Concern, 1905), p. 193.

³¹Minutes, December 9, 1878.

with the unfortunate. But he was not wishy-washy, afraid to come out with the truth. He could be very firm, even to men older and of higher standing than he. A good example is his letter to Dr. William Sihler in 1876. Apparently Sihler had tendered his resignation from a certain office merely to elicit praise for his past work and encouragement to continue in his office. Completely contrary to his expectations, his resignation was accepted, and now he was thoroughly miffed. Schwan writes to him:

Cleveland, July 22, 1876

Dear Doctor!

Don't let your resentment of senseless house-cleaning (unverstaendige Waescherei) move you to drop the work you had undertaken. It's my conviction that elections are often very foolish. That's what happened in this case too. But since it's hard to change such things under our constitution, it must be taken in stride. Furthermore, I think it an excuse for Synod as well as a comfort for you that you yourself are at least partially responsible (for the action) since you on various occasions very earnestly, yes even tearfully, pleaded with Synod no longer to elect you to this or that office. And I am firmly convinced that this is what persuaded many to grant the "old man" a rest which he didn't want at all. You feel that your vigor and efficiency remains unimpaired - thank God for that! - but the great majority just simply don't share your conviction. They see and hear old age in your bearing and speech, and Young America is hard on everything old. You aren't the only one who feels this barb. I for my part wouldn't object very strenuously if I, too, were soon relegated to the scrap-heap (Altentheil); and in my case they will hardly wait until I have reached your age. But it's always wrong both to wish for old age prematurely in order to be rid of one's burdens, and to be unwilling to become old or to be considered old. Surely the only right course of action is to do what you are able and always leave it to God whether or not your work is appreciated. If God permits you to be shoved aside, all right! No one is indispensable for Him; and He is able to forge a tool out of anyone whom we consider useless.

So then in God's name, away with all resentment which tends to appear more readily as we grow older. Display for Synod a fresh and happy spirit, write a good essay for us, one which will present the truth without bitterness and ill will; and then leave the rest to God.

With sincere greetings,
Yours most devotedly,
H.C. Schwan.³²

In an earlier letter to Sihler, Schwan appends this postscript, "...Nitzel is good as gold, but on the one hand he's a bit overly evangelical, and on the other, so eccentric in his speech that he drives the people crazy...."³³ Again we note his kind, evangelical realism which is not blind to deficiencies nor to the good qualities of a man.

To quite an extent the spiritual growth of Zion is attributable to Schwan's success as a preacher. This success was not something with which he was born, but something which he acquired by dint of hard labor. Dr. G.V. Schick, who served together with Paul Schwan for several months in 1928, relates that

While in Cleveland, I was assisted by Dr. Schwan's son. He told me how his father used to write out his sermons word for word and take the script into the vestry with him. When he descended from the pulpit, he would take his pen and change any word which he had altered while delivering the sermon.³⁴

³²The original manuscript is in the archives of Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis, Missouri. A reproduction of the original is found in Appendix III A.

³³The letter is dated October 28, 1868, and is also in the archives of Concordia Historical Institute.

³⁴Dr. Schick is professor of Hebrew and Old Testament Exegesis at Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri.

The Rev. Johann Strieter, pastor of St. John's Congregation at Newburgh and close friend of Pastor Schwan, includes a short story in his autobiography which gives us further insight into the amount of preparation that went into Schwan's sermons. After school was out on Monday afternoon, Strieter would walk the five miles to Schwan's home, and then they would take a swim in Lake Erie or they would go for a hike in the country. After these exercises they started work on their sermon for the next Sunday. Schwan had a Latin Harmony and Strieter had a copy of Luther. When they had finished their study of these books, Schwan would ask, "Strieter, what will we use?" And Strieter would have to begin making the outline. Occasionally Schwan would laugh, but very often he praised Strieter's efforts. On one occasion he said, "Your outline is remarkably good. If Walther had this outline, he would produce a masterful sermon on the basis of it. But you are too stereotyped." Strieter wanted to know how he should go about developing a more flexible style. Schwan advised, "Copy someone else's sermon so that you get into a different line of thought. Use Fresenius." Strieter followed the advice, but got stuck so miserably in his next sermon that he went back to his own style.³⁵ Homileticians may disagree with Schwan's advice, but the story does give us an indication of how much work

³⁵Strieter, op. cit., p. 69.

went into the preparation of his sermons. He continued this practice with his uncle F.C.D. Wyneken when the latter succeeded the Rev. Lindemann as pastor of Trinity Congregation in 1864. Wyneken made it a point to visit with his nephew at least once a week, usually on Monday. In these visits the two pastors conferred on various topics,³⁶ no doubt in much the same manner as Schwan and Strieter had done.

We have noted how Schwan improved the singing of his congregation at Black Jack. His love for the Lutheran heritage of music also made itself felt in Cleveland. Those members of Zion who founded the congregation at Newburgh in 1854 "were very good singers. (They) even sang four part harmonies."³⁷ The Minutes of Zion record a resolution that "in the 'Christenlehre' and in the Wednesday evening services only rhythmic singing³⁸ shall be used." In the Sunday morning and evening services this type of singing was to be used only on occasion.³⁹ About one month later they resolved that the entire congregation meet on Sunday

³⁶Emma Wyneken, "Memoirs of the Wyneken Household," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, XIV (January, 1942), 101.

³⁷Strieter, op. cit., p. 68.

³⁸The original phrase is "dasz nur rhythmisch gesungen werde." The opposite type of singing was the "schleppender Gesang," a very long, drawn out type of singing. "Rhythmisches Singen" was much more lively, taking cognizance of the time value of each note.

³⁹Minutes, March 1, 1855.

evenings to rehearse the rhythmic melodies.⁴⁰

In respect to the language problem, Zion's growth was rather slow. The English language was not used regularly until 1918.⁴¹ It is true that at least one - and possibly two - English services were conducted before that time. In 1866, when the new church was in process of building and plans for the dedication were being made, the following resolution was passed: "Resolved, that on the day of dedication the afternoon service be in English."⁴² The other instance is problematic. The Synodical Conference met in Cleveland in 1875. According to the Proceedings of the conference, the meeting was held in Trinity Church.⁴³ But the Minutes of Zion contain the resolution that "if Pastor Schwan deems it advisable, an English service shall be held during the Synodical Conference convention."⁴⁴ This would seem to indicate that the meeting was held in Zion Church.

⁴⁰Ibid., April 30, 1855.

⁴¹Carl Toelke, "Learn From the Past," The Cleveland Lutheran Messenger, XXXVII (March, 1948), 9.

⁴²Minutes, October 22, 1866. It should be noted that in a later meeting on December 27, 1866, the congregation decided that "the hymns are to be sung in German on dedication afternoon."

⁴³Verhandlungen der vierten Versammlung der Ev. Luth. Synodal Konferenz von Nord-Amerika, zu Cleveland, Ohio, vom 14. bis zum 20. Juli 1875 (St. Louis: Druckerei der Synode von Missouri, Ohio u. a. Staaten, n. d.), p. 3. Note that this is the year in which Schwan served as vice-president of the Synodical Conference.

⁴⁴Minutes, July 4, 1875.

Unfortunately, the Proceedings do not include a record of the services conducted during the course of the convention. In any case, however, Zion was slow in making use of the English language.

The question presents itself, Was Pastor Schwan responsible for the lack of growth in this respect, or must the congregation be faulted? In answering this question, it is well to keep in mind that the use of English in Zion Congregation was not introduced until forty-seven years after Schwan had resigned as pastor. Certainly his successors would be at fault as much as he, even more so, because the need for using the American tongue was not nearly as great before 1880 as it was during the following decades. But was he at fault? Was he lacking in vision?

According to Missouri Synod's synodical report of 1857, H.C. Schwan preached a sermon on the Gospel for the day (Matthew 9:1-8) in the morning in the English Lutheran Church.⁴⁵ There is, unfortunately, no indication whether this sermon was delivered in the English or in the German language.

Dr. Edmund Beuel, a close friend of Dr. Schwan in his later years, comments that "Schwan was not much of an English speaker, but he was a good American, advocating the use of English in our schools in order that we might bring the

⁴⁵Synodal Bericht, 1857, p. 370.

Gospel to our unbelieving fellow citizens."⁴⁶ That this assertion is based on fact is evidenced by a number of Schwan's own statements. On April 7, 1881, he wrote to Dr. Sihler:

It is my opinion, which I have already written to St. Louis, that we should immediately begin a Monthly in opposition to the Columbus Bimonthly. Our German publications are inaccessible to many people in English Lutheran and other synods. Whatever these people learn about us, they hear from the mouths of our enemies, to their own and our harm. Therefore we should do what we can. And thank God we have plenty of men who are able to take up the battle, not only against the minor gods (minorum gentium): Schuette, Stodde, etc., but also against Jupiter Maximus Loy. Lange, Bischoff, Diedrich, Grull, Eirich, Niemann and others could turn out something worthwhile in the form of original articles and translations. No doubt the magazine would continue, even if it were no longer necessary because of the Lutheraner.... If you agree, as I hope, you too will encourage the St. Louisans.⁴⁷

In his address to Synod at the 1881 convention, Schwan again urged such a publication. He says in part:

...At this point I cannot refrain from urging Synod very seriously to consider whether it isn't high time to begin publication of a monthly theological journal in the English language....It is our duty and obligation to remedy this situation as much as we possibly can. With God's blessing, such a magazine would perhaps do more to build up a doctrinally sound English Church than many other laborious and expensive media which we have used in the past, mostly in vain.⁴⁸

Synod acted in accordance with President Schwan's exhortation

⁴⁶This statement was made in the previously mentioned interview with Dr. Edmund Seuel.

⁴⁷The original letter is in the archives of Concordia Historical Institute.

⁴⁸Synodal Bericht, 1881, pp. 22-23.

by appointing Professor R. Lange as editor of The St. Louis Theological Monthly.⁴⁹ Much to Schwan's regret, this publication was discontinued after going through two volumes. Those who had been appointed to write the articles failed to produce.⁵⁰

If there remains any doubt as to Schwan's position in the language question, it will be dispelled by the following excerpt from his report on the English Missions of the Missouri Synod in 1890.

According to the report of the Commission for English Missions, there are to date seven congregations and pastors who received support totaling five thousand dollars. Results have been very gratifying. That is good news and will, God willing, remove the disfavor under which this work has had to suffer in various places until now. To be sure, the doubts which we had about this work were not without foundation. For the attempts which we and other friendly synods had previously made, had for the most part been complete failures. The congregations either did not come into existence or they did not last, but soon went over to the camp of our English opponents. What was the reason? In several cases it became evident that "the crying need and general longing for English congregations" did not actually exist, but was used only as a cloak for the dissatisfaction with old-fashioned preaching, discipline and order, and to hide the desire for a more modern way of life. In other cases the result was that the hope to attract many native-born Americans through Lutheran teaching and services was fulfilled either in a very small measure or not at all. It is no wonder, therefore, that courage waned everywhere, and that here and there the thought arose that the English language itself was responsible for the bad

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 71.

⁵⁰Ibid., 1884, p. 22. "Unsere englische Monatschrift ging ein, weil die erbetene und zum Theil zugesagte Mitarbeit ausblieb." The first issue appeared in May, 1881, and the final issue combined October and November in 1882.

results. Now that is, of course, a mistake. Until now the German language had a big advantage over the English language because during the Reformation the saving truth of Scripture was victorious over the idolatry of the papacy through the German tongue; and therefore the real mines of Lutheran, that is biblical doctrine, are even now yet to be found in the German language. BUT MORE THAN THAT WE DARE NOT CLAIM FOR IT. For if the Gospel, according to the will of the Savior, is to be preached to all nations, then it must also be preached in ALL languages, and that EFFECTIVELY; therefore also in the English language. No, it isn't the English language itself which is dangerous. It is something entirely different, but admittedly something which tends to appear in the wake of the English language. It is the "American" spirit, the spirit that prevails today, that smooth, superficial, careless, business like attitude with which also spiritual matters are carried on here, a frame of mind which has no understanding of the real essence of Christianity, and therefore looks upon the struggle for the one faith as pure godlessness; and on the other hand looks for works. This is the spirit which is so apt to sneak into the congregations along with the English language; this is what brought about the downfall of the previous attempts, and which indeed is still a great danger today. It is true, of course, that we have only been experimenting up till now. For the present, these missions must first prove themselves. But this is the very thing which our brethren, who are now conducting this work, are experiencing in a most realistic manner. And it is but reasonable to expect that this fact would make us willing and eager to help. How wonderful it would be if an English church body were to come into being, one that is doctrinally sound in all points, and one to which we might without hesitation or doubt send all those who need English sermons; a body in which we might eventually - if that stage is ever reached - dissolve ourselves with a good conscience! (Notice the breadth of the man's vision!) -- Certainly our approval shall not be wanting if it is the wish of these brethren and if their work will be benefitted by their joining the Synodical Conference as an independent body.⁵¹

⁵¹Ibid., 1890, pp. 25-26.

It might be well at this point to include the comment of Dr. William Dallmann. "At this time (1888) Dr. Schwan, the venerable president of the Missouri Synod, bade the brethren at Baltimore be very careful, for if this mission

It is evident that President Schwan was years ahead of many of his contemporaries, but that as a good leader he patiently waited for the masses to "catch up" before proceeding. As the late Dr. Martin Sommer put it,

Schwan was president of Synod in the midst of the transition period from German to English. There were many extremists on both sides, but Schwan steered a safe middle course. He wasn't carried away by these rushing streams. He always managed to keep a level head.

No, we cannot fault Pastor Schwan for Zion's slowness to make the transition from German to English.

proved a failure, English work in the Missouri Synod would be dead for the next fifty years, and if this venture proved a success, English work would be taken up elsewhere." As Dr. Schwan had foretold, English missions were soon started in a dozen other cities. ("The English Work of the Missouri Synod," Ebenezer, edited by W.H.T. Dau (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1922), pp. 423-424.)

CHAPTER VIII

UNUSUAL EXPERIENCES

Reputation at Stake

Not too long after Schwan had begun his ministry in Zion Church, he was accused of illicit relations. The woman involved in the case came to the pastor for counsel. After a short time, the young man who had committed the offense, spread the rumor that Pastor Schwan was the father of the child that would soon be born. Schwan wasn't long in getting a confession of the truth from the woman, and then he got to work on the young man. At first the latter was adamant, refusing to retract his accusations. But when the pastor threatened to turn the story over to the newspapers, the offender lost heart and signed a written confession of his own guilt, thus exonerating Pastor Schwan.¹

Visit to Germany

Some two years later, in 1860, Pastor Schwan requested and was granted a leave of absence of three to four months to visit his parents and other relatives in Germany.²

¹Minutes of Zion Congregation, Cleveland, Ohio, September 20, 1858.

²Ibid., April 9, 1860.

Although there is no specific record, he did apparently make the trip. For during the four months between April 23 and September 2, there are no Minutes except for one meeting on June 18; and the Rev. J. Lindemann (of Trinity Congregation) presided at that meeting. No mention is made of Schwan. In the Minutes of the September 2nd meeting, however, the usual phrase "Herr Pastor Schwan" occurs again. There is no record to indicate whether or not his wife accompanied him or, if she did, whether they took time off to visit with her relatives in Brazil.

Hot Questions

The old saying that lightning never strikes twice in the same place has been disproven any number of times. We add another proof to the already long list. On May 17, 1876, Zion's church steeple was twice struck by lightning. The first stroke came at 5:15 in the morning. Then a second storm built up during the forenoon, and at 10:45 another bolt struck the tower. This time it ripped practically all the weather boarding from the framework, but left intact the supporting structure as well as the cross atop the tower. Fortunately, neither of the two bolts was hot enough to start a fire.³

The question of fire insurance was a burning issue in

³Minutes, May 18, 1876.

the Missouri Synod as late as the early part of the present century.⁴ Therefore it is noteworthy that Zion Congregation was carrying fire insurance at this time already.⁵ As a matter of fact, they had insured their church against fire before 1848.⁶ Lightning rods were also a hot question in the Missouri Synod during the nineteenth century.⁷ The objection was much the same as that against fire insurance, namely that it was interference with God's will to erect lightning rods. Apparently Zion's members and their pastor were not concerned about this angle. They were concerned about whether or not these things were really effective. After the occurrence of the above incident, they wrote to Professor H. Duemling of Fort Wayne, Indiana, asking for his opinion as to the effectiveness of lightning rods. He replied that, humanly speaking, properly installed lightning rods

⁴In a brief note to Prof. L. Fuerbringer in 1899, President Schwan alludes to Synod's refusal to carry fire insurance. See Appendix III E for a reproduction of the entire letter.

⁵Minutes, May 29, 1876.

⁶Ibid., December 18, 1848. The following is the pertinent part of a resolution passed in that meeting: "...vorgeschlagen und beschlozen dasz das Kirchengebaeude wieder fuer \$1200 gegen Feuers Gefahr versichert werde fuer ein Jahr."

⁷Prof. L. Steiner, one of the original staff members at St. John's College, Winfield, Kansas, repeatedly told his physics classes about Synod's opposition to lightning rods on the buildings, and this despite the fact that the largest building was being struck by lightning once or several times each year.

would be effective. Despite his advice, the congregation decided not to install them since the building already was insured, and because they had just recently incurred a heavy debt.⁸ A small group of individuals wasn't satisfied, however. On June 11 they were granted permission to install the rods at their own expense.⁹

Silver Anniversary

Pastor Schwan had an especially joyful experience in 1876. The congregation arranged for an elaborate celebration of his twenty-fifth anniversary as pastor of Zion. The first special meeting was held on July 2. In this meeting it was decided 1) that although the anniversary date was really August 31, they would celebrate the occasion on Sunday, August 27; 2) that Professor Lindemann of Addison, Illinois should be asked to deliver a special address since he had served the congregation for a number of years as assistant to Pastor Schwan; 3) that Trinity Congregation should be invited to participate in the celebration.¹⁰

In the second special meeting, it was announced that Professor Lindemann had joyfully accepted the invitation to speak. It was resolved that they present Pastor Schwan with

⁸Minutes, May 29, 1876.

⁹Ibid., June 11, 1876.

¹⁰Ibid., July 2, 1876.

a gold watch and a gold-crowned cane.¹¹ When the great day finally arrived, the anniversary committee went to the unsuspecting pastor's home at 8:30 to offer their congratulation. At ten o'clock all the teachers and elders gathered in the parsonage to accompany Pastor Schwan to the church. Professor Lindemann led the procession, followed by the elders. Next came Pastor Schwan, accompanied by his son Paul and the Rev. H. Weseloh. The trustees and the teachers completed the train. Professor Lindemann delivered the sermon, basing his remarks on Psalm 126:3: "The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." In very touching words Pastor Schwan expressed his deep appreciation to the congregation for the love which they had shown him. A second service was conducted in the evening, with the Rev. J.H. Niemann in charge. The choir sang in both services. Secretary Schmidt closes his detailed account with these words: "Thus the glorious anniversary (Jubelfest) came to an end, a celebration which no one, fortunate enough to have taken part in it, will soon forget."¹²

¹¹Ibid., August 13, 1876. Apparently silver had not yet been accepted as the appropriate color for a twenty-fifth anniversary, or perhaps the people were not as conscious of "Emily Post regulations" as we are today.

¹²Ibid. The entire account, covering six pages, was written and inserted into the Minutes after the celebration had taken place.

CHAPTER IX

CALL TO HIGHER SERVICE - RESIGNATION

Schwan had been elected president of the Missouri Synod in 1878. At the end of his first term in 1881, he requested to be relieved of this office because it was taking up too much of the time that he felt he should be spending in his parish. His congregation and family were being neglected, and at the same time, it was impossible to do justice to the presidential office. Synod took his request into consideration, but did not relieve him of his duties as president. Instead it adopted a resolution that required of its president that he serve only as supervisory pastor or as assistant pastor to whatever extent he would be able to do this in addition to fulfilling his presidential duties.¹ Schwan was then re-elected president, and in view of the resolution, he resigned as pastor of Zion on May 30, 1881. "With deep sorrow"² the congregation accepted his resignation, recognizing in Synod's re-election of its pastor the Lord's call to higher service. Schwan served as vacancy pastor until the Rev. Carl M. Zorn, former missionary

¹Synodal Bericht der deutschen Ev. Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio u. a. Staaten (St. Louis: Druckerei des Concordia-Verlags, 1881), p. 68.

²Minutes of Zion Congregation, Cleveland, Ohio, May 30, 1881.

in India, arrived to take charge. The last congregational meeting in which Pastor Schwan took part was held on July 11, 1881.³ Pastor Zorn was installed on June 12 of that same year.⁴

Some time during the next few months, the congregation asked its old pastor to continue as assistant to Pastor Zorn. President Schwan accepted this invitation and call, saying that he would be glad to preach and administer the sacraments to them whenever Pastor Zorn requested his services and his own duties permitted him to do so. He also expressed his sincere appreciation to his "dear old congregation for the trust and love which you have hereby manifested. God bless Zion Congregation, teachers and learners, young and old! Amen."⁵

According to President Schwan's report to Synod in 1884, he resigned his full pastorage in Zion as soon as feasible, and in lieu thereof accepted a position as assistant preacher (Huelfsprediger) for the three parishes in East Cleveland.⁶ He was still serving as assistant to his

³Ibid., July 11, 1881 and September 5, 1881. Cf. also L. Fuerbringer, 80 Eventful Years (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1944), p. 240.

⁴Festbuechlein zum 75-jaehrigen Jubilaeum der Ev. Luth. Zionsgemeinde (n.p., 1893), p. 5.

⁵The quotation is taken from Schwan's letter of acceptance December 1, 1881. The letter is affixed to Zion's Minutes of December 5, 1881.

⁶Synodal Bericht, 1884, p. 29.

son Paul in 1893.⁷

It was on October 29 of this same year that the churches of Cleveland festively observed a rare occasion: the fiftieth anniversary in office of the Nestor of Cleveland and Missouri Synod Lutheranism, President H.C. Schwan. A report of the celebration in Die Abendschule serves to point up the high esteem with which the people regarded their aging pastor and president. It also reveals the deep and sincere humility of the man. The report reads in part as follows:

During these days the Lutherans of Cleveland, and together with them a host of fellow-believers coming from all parts of the country, are observing a rare occasion....This occasion has not been observed until today, the 29th of October, because the person who is being honored kept his day of honor a secret. He doesn't like public demonstrations, and it may not suit him at all to have to submit to such a celebration in his honor.⁸

This aversion to fanfare is well illustrated by another incident that occurred in 1893. The Rev. Julius A. Friedrich, a personal friend and acquaintance of President Schwan, relates the story to us from Paul Schwan. The Norwegian Lutheran Church had conferred on President Schwan the Doctor of Divinity degree, honoris causa. When Schwan got home, he tore the certificate into pieces and tossed them into the fire. This was not intended to be an affront to the Norwegian

⁷Die Abendschule, XL (October 26, 1893), 186. Dr. Hermann Duemling was editor of the publication at that time.

⁸Ibid., p. 185.

brethren, but merely indicated how Schwan disliked being in the limelight.

CONWAY CHAMBERLAIN

What was it that made Schwan the successful preacher and pastor that he was? Let us hear those who personally knew and worked with him.

In 1851, the same year that Schwan became a full member of the Missouri Synod, he delivered a sermon to the congregation, ending his remarks in a Christianian Postscript.

They go on that they which you in a more than all, and the more you know the better. In fact, that you may know, but every one that you wish for the matter is to be done in all things. Now they do it by means of a very simple method, but we are interrupted. I therefore do not, not as usual, but I do it, not as one that has to do it. Oh, I hear that you have, and being in this situation, but that by my means, when I have preached to others, I speak should be a great help.

In the choice of this text we note one of the reasons for Schwan's effectiveness as a preacher. That text would be more fitting for an audience of preachers than this text. He chose texts that met the needs of his hearers, that were appropriate for the type of audience which he was addressing. Synodical reports tend to be very objective, with little or no praise for individuals. Therefore, when we find such a sermon, we sit back and take notes, for it must have been

Copyrighted material for September 22, 1900. Schwan, 1851, p. 134. The Missouri Synod, 1851, p. 134.

CHAPTER X

SUMMARY CHARACTERIZATION

What was it that made Schwan the successful preacher and pastor that he was? Let us hear those who personally knew and worked with him.

In 1852, the same year that Schwan became a full member of the Missouri Synod, he delivered a sermon to the convention,¹ basing his remarks on 1 Corinthians 9:24-27:

Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away.

In the choice of this text we note one of the reasons for Schwan's effectiveness as a preacher. What text could be more fitting for an audience of preachers than this one? He chose texts that met the needs of his hearers, that were appropriate for the type of audience which he was addressing. Synodical Reports tend to be very objective, with little or no praise for individuals. Therefore, when we find such a comment, we sit back and take notice, for it must have been

¹Synodal Bericht der deutschen Ev. Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio u. a. Staaten (St. Louis: Druckerei der Synode von Missouri etc., 1852), p. 199.

an unusual piece of work to evoke the tribute. We find such a tribute in the Synodical Report of 1858. "The vice-president of Synod, Pastor Schwan, delivered...an unusually comforting and beautiful sermon in the opening exercises of the morning service."²

The following outline of this sermon on John 15:1-8 again indicates how fittingly the text is chosen, how well the content meets the needs of the audience.

There is no danger so long as we cling to the true Word and faith. 1) For then we shall remain in Christ and He in us; 2) For then everything that we suffer at the hands of Satan, the world and false brethren, cannot be anything but the faithful work of the Divine Dresser of the vineyard on His vines; 3) For then we need not fear the terrible judgment pronounced on the false and fruitless vines, for we shall not be lacking in fruits that are pleasing to the Divine Gardener.³

When the California-Oregon District of the Missouri Synod was organized in 1887, President Schwan preached the opening sermon which is characterized by the District Report as "extraordinarily appropriate for the occasion."⁴

In 1893 Dr. Hermann Duemling, editor of Die Abendschule, characterized Schwan as "a preacher of note, profound yet practical and popular, a model for form and clear division of parts."⁵ Suffice it to cite only one example of what Mr.

²Ibid., 1858, p. 3.

³Synodal Bericht, 1858, p. 3.

⁴Synodal Bericht des California-Oregon Distrikts (St. Louis: Luth. Concordia-Verlag, 1887), p. 3.

⁵Die Abendschule, XL (October 26, 1893), 186.

Duemling had in mind. In 1883 Schwan preached on Psalm 2 at the Central District convention. The introduction very lucidly and convincingly presents the fact that Christ can EASILY be found in the Old Testament, and that the Old Testament presents the SAME way of salvation as that proclaimed in the New Testament. His theme "Kiss the Son," is divided into two parts. Part I - Who is this Son? Part II - What does it mean to kiss the Son?⁶ One of the final resolutions of this convention was that President Schwan should have his opening sermon printed not only in Der Lutheraner, but "because it is such an excellent introduction to the doctrinal essay," that he should also have it published in the Report as well.⁷ Sixty-five years later, in 1949, the late Dr. Martin Sommer told the writer, "I can still remember that sermon today!" Dr. Sommer, a preacher of no mean reputation himself, tersely characterized Schwan's preaching as "popular but not corrupt." With this judgment agrees the Rev. Julius A. Friedrich who says:

Schwan's success as a preacher was due to the simplicity of his language. He understood the common man, and knew how to get things across to him. He was able to reduce the most difficult thoughts into short, simple, terse statements that could be understood by the most uneducated, simple laymen. He was a popular preacher, not an orator (ein Volksredner, nicht ein Kunstredner). He stirred the people's hearts, stirred

⁶ Synodal Bericht des mittlern Distrikts (St. Louis: Luth. Concordia-Verlag, 1883), p. 3.

⁷ Ibid., p. 91.

them into action.

Professor L. Fuerbringer points to Schwan's skill in using illustrations as another contributing factor for his success as a preacher. Says Fuerbringer:

He also used to illustrate, especially for the lay delegates, the progress in Christianity, and again I must say, in his brief, clear, inimitable way he said, "First Christianity enters the head, and one learns Christian doctrine and practice. Then it enters the heart, and one becomes a true Christian, accepting God as his Father and Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. And finally the Christian religion enters the pocket book and urges the Christian to be a cheerful and willing giver for his Church."⁸

Fitting texts which met the needs of the audience, logical outlines and progression of thought, thorough understanding of Scripture, profound thought clothed in simple language, apt illustrations, a keen insight into the human mind, a love for God and for people, these are the factors that made Schwan a successful preacher.

What made Schwan a successful pastor? Again we shall let those speak who had the privilege of knowing the man personally and observed him at work. Doctor Sommer, in his own terse and cryptic style says:

Schwan, like his uncle Wyneken, was a thoroughly evangelical man. He gave everyone the benefit of the doubt. ---Schwan was not afraid of dealing with unsavory people, that is, with the "low brows," the disreputable characters in society. Said he, "Don't stand on dignity too much." ---He was a manly man, that is, he didn't indulge in the effeminate practice

⁸L. Fuerbringer, 80 Eventful Years (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1944), p. 246.

of gossip. ---Schwan was very good at giving private advice. ---Schwan is the one who said: "If you come to a stone you cannot move, leave it alone." ---He also said: "Don't try to push your head through a brick wall; crawl over the top."

Pastor Friedrich tells several anecdotes which reveal how deeply President Schwan was interested in the affairs of little congregations, little pastors, and the little man generally. Friedrich began his ministry in a small parish in Chattanooga, Tennessee. His predecessor had completely ruined the reputation of the Lutheran Church in the entire town. When Friedrich arrived on the scene, it was impossible to buy so much as five pounds of nails on credit. The congregation had a \$1600 mortgage on its property - due in several months! And the people were paupers - Friedrich's salary was twenty-five dollars per month. So he wrote to friends, relatives and acquaintances all over the Midwest and East, but to no avail. In desperation he appealed to President Schwan. Several weeks later a letter arrived from St. Louis. In it was a check for \$1600! Along with the check was Friedrich's original letter, but with this additional note, underscored in red ink: "Schade, Help. Schwan." Schade was a well-to-do doctor in St. Louis, and took to heart the cryptic note which Schwan had appended to the letter. The check enabled the struggling congregation to pay off its mortgage, and Schade refused to charge interest for the first three years, and only two per cent thereafter. The sum was paid before the

three years were up.

Friedrich's other anecdote points up Schwan's humility, his sense of humor, his respect for the common man, and his poise in elite society.

The following anecdote is an explanation for his success both as pastor and as president of Synod. It was at the convention in Altenburg. After the session was adjourned, President Schwan would retire to the outside. There he sat down on an old stump, lit his corn-cob pipe, and with the farmers gathered round, exchanged pleasantries and jokes with them in Low German. It was because of this ability that he was so dear to the hearts of laymen as well as fellow pastors.

He was a common man with uncommon gifts and abilities. For although he loved the common man, yet he could move about in elite circles and feel perfectly at ease there too.

Otto F. Hattstaedt, longtime professor of German at Concordia College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, reminisces about the men who played an important part in the Missouri Synod during its childhood years.

Above all I must revive the memory of Dr. H. C. Schwan... I often met him during this time (1884 ff.) when he was, of course, a regular attendant at our Synodical conventions, and I was always delighted with his affability and kindness; for though I was a young man, he conversed with me as if I were his equal. In the synodical meetings he did not say very much, but in the evenings, especially after supper when the day's task was done, he was the most entertaining talker, and we could not but admire the fine humor with which he spiced all his narratives...⁹

Again we note his kindness, humility, respect for the common man, and his sense of humor.

⁹Otto F. Hattstaedt, "Personal Reminiscences," Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly, XIV (July, 1941), 37-38.

The Rev. Johann Strieter, many years pastor of St. John's Congregation at Newburg (part of present day Greater Cleveland), reminisces that:

My relations to the neighboring colleagues were of the best. I visited them and they me. We frequently conferred with one another. Schwan was located in Cleveland. He was our Senior...I know that on one occasion Schwan and Lindemann "hoofed" the five miles out to my place. I strolled over to Schwan practically every Monday afternoon after school was out.¹⁰

The reader will recall Strieter's description of their sermon studies. Again Schwan's friendliness and interest in the next fellow comes to the fore. This apparently is another of those characteristics which carried over into his relations with the members of his parish and contributed to his success as their pastor.

Dr. Edmund Seuel, when asked to characterize Schwan, replied,

He was a man of few words, not at all verbose, not suffering from the disease with which a good many people are afflicted: diarrhea of the mouth. When he corresponded, he usually wrote on postal cards...His success was due to God's blessing and his wonderful temperament. Dr. Schwan was a joyous Christian. His jovial good humor was one of his outstanding characteristics.

Dr. Theodore Graebner, noted writer and professor of Theology and Church History at Concordia Theological Seminary in St. Louis since 1913, adds this brief characterization: "Rev. Schwan was a well-balanced theologian, uniting

¹⁰Johann Strieter, Lebenslauf des Johannes Strieter (n.p., n.d.), p. 69.

in himself the qualities of leadership with earnest piety and solid learning.¹¹

Dr. Francis Pieper, Schwan's close friend and successor as president of the Missouri Synod in 1899, emphasizes Schwan's gifts as theologian and leader when he says, "The entire Synod knows how abundantly God blessed the departed, a gifted leader in confessional doctrine and practice."¹²

Dr. C.F.W. Walther, president of the Missouri Synod for seventeen years and called "the most commanding figure of the Lutheran Church in America during the nineteenth century,"¹³ was a close friend of Schwan. In a letter to the latter, he closes with these words: "I am joyfully looking forward to seeing you and my dear Wyneken once more this year, God willing. Old friends, old wine."¹⁴ Walther also thought highly of Schwan as a theological essayist. Under date of April 10, 1867, he writes to Schwan:

The doctrine of Inspiration would no doubt be an outstanding subject for discussion, also for the laymen, provided a good essay is supplied. It seems to

¹¹Th. Graebner, "The Founders and Some Builders," The Lutheran Witness, XLI (May 9, 1922), 149-150.

¹²Francis Pieper, Der Lutheraner, LXI (August 1, 1905), 243.

¹³The Concordia Cyclopedia, L. Fuerbringer et al editors-in-chief (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1927), pp. 804-805.

¹⁴L. Fuerbringer, Walther's Briefe (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1915), II, 98-99. The letter is dated June 4, 1867.

me that if the Reverends Dr. Sihler or Stubnatzi or Prof. Lange or a certain Pastor Schwan, and especially the latter (one of them that is) would agree to deliver an essay on Inspiration, that each one of these, particularly the latter, would produce an essay which we could discuss with great profit.¹⁵

Professor L. Fuerbringer offers a more complete characterization than any that we have cited. It gives us an excellent portrait of the man, and in addition to many of the characteristics already pointed out, it emphasizes especially Schwan's evangelical character.

He was throughout his life a plain, simple, modest man, although, in fact, an outstanding member of our church.¹⁶

The convention of 1884 was the second time I saw Schwan in the presidential chair. At that time I was a student at the Seminary, and already in those days he impressed me with his outstanding ability as a parliamentarian. This I noticed even more in the succeeding years, when I was able to attend all general conventions of Synod, and also after I had entered the ministry, in his active participation in the District conventions in Michigan. But before this I had received words of encouragement from that venerable man when he was present at one of the catechetical exercises at St. Louis and I had to catechize boys from Holy Cross on a section of the Catechism. I also had to preach for the first time at a synodical convention when the Michigan District convened in Adrian and Schwan was in the audience. And especially after I had been called to St. Louis and Schwan came to the Seminary to hold the regular visitation, he always also called at my home; and when I asked him to criticize my lectures which he had attended, he did that in a very frank and cordial way, which I shall never forget. He was a gentleman from head to foot. He knew when to speak, and he knew when to be silent. Pastoral wisdom was an outstanding factor in his make-up.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 89-91.

¹⁶Fuerbringer, 80 Eventful Years, p. 239.

But I think I got to know him best as a young minister, when at the District conventions he sat with us in the respective parsonages and told us of happenings in his life, in his ministry in Cleveland, and in his office as President. Everything was to the point, brief but clear-cut,...¹⁷

Schwan did not try to do too much, did not engage in everything and rush into it, but waited till it came to him, considered it carefully, and then acted. This sometimes created the impression that he was not interested in certain matters, but it was pastoral wisdom and prudence which moved him not to do and to write too much and arouse antagonism. That he did not shirk his duty is clear from the careful guidance of our Church body in distressing days.¹⁸

In conventions, in church gatherings, and in private contact, he was always the thoroughly evangelical fatherly adviser. I have just mentioned that he was an evangelical man. That is true to the letter. There was nothing legalistic about him. Even as a comparatively young man he led the doctrinal discussions at a convention of the Central District in 1862, and his thirty-two theses against unevangelical practice were printed in the Report of the Eighth Convention of that District and are being used to the present day.¹⁹

Schwan's circle of friends and admirers was not restricted to the members of his own church body. As previously noted, the Norwegian Lutheran Church in 1893 conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. Dr. Matthias Loy, eminent journalist, theologian, and longtime president of the Ohio Synod, includes the following tribute in his autobiography.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 244.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 249.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 246. See Appendix IV for a translation of these theses.

A remark made by a friend in Cleveland, who had gone through a similar experience as pastor there, who was always cheerful, and whom I asked how he maintained his cheerfulness under the persecutions he was enduring, said that every time a handful of mud was flung at him, he ran to the Lord and received new grace, and prayed for his enemies who knew not what they did, and went on with his work smiling. This man of God belonged to the Missouri Synod, with which ours was not on good terms; but I had not imbibed any prejudice against the body to which he belonged, and our similar conflicts rendered us sympathetic; while his superior theological equipment and larger experience made him a most valued friend. Dear Dr. Schwan, even the fierce predestinarian controversy which came a quarter of a century later, could not sever the ties of friendship, based on a common faith and mutual sympathy in the suffering entailed by its confession. Even in my latest affliction, which seems to have ended the direct work of my calling in any official capacity, he did not forget me, though he, the older man by a good many years, had for some years before retired and had been honored by the well-deserved continuance of his salary by the Synod which he served so long and well.²⁰

...I was blessed with the acquaintance of men, such as Wyneken and Schwan, who knew something of men and of the Gospel, and therefore could distinguish when the flesh seemed to domineer over the spirit.²¹

What was it that made Schwan so successful as preacher and pastor? You have read the characterizations and opinions of those who were his contemporaries. Important as all these things are, yet when Dr. Loy mentions the faith and prayer life of Dr. Schwan, he strikes the key which set into motion and vibrated all the other strings - love, humility, kindness, sympathy, understanding, wisdom, patience, prudence,

²⁰Matthias Loy, The Story of My Life (Columbus, Ohio: Lutheran Book Concern, 1905), p. 121-122.

²¹Ibid., p. 193.

humor. This is the key that produced the full and harmonious chord of the life and work of H.C. Schwan as pastor and missionary.

Year	Voters	Schools	Pupils			Baptized	Confirmed	Communed Publicly	Communed Privately	Total Communed	Married	Buried	
			Native	Outside	Total								
1870	134	4			360	82	53			2479	25	28	
1871	135	4			300	81	53			2727	23	30	
1872	134	4			380	111	64			2732	23	30	
1873	145	6			500	117	73			3003	47	48	Paul Schwan called
1874	145	6			600	153	73	3286	76	3362	42	57	
1875	148	6			600	163	77			3272	28	45	
1876	148	6			576	156	87			3204	30	56	
1877	160	6			520	157				3723	30	50	
1878	165	6			510	129	76			3423	24	40	St. John (5826 Gable) formed
1879	168	6			500	124				2826	28	47	
1880	150	4			340	94	40			2360	31	49	St. Paul formed
1881	75	2			203	63	25			824	13	17	

APPENDIX I

Parochial Record of Zion Church During H. C. Schwan's Incumbency

* Year	Voters	Schools	Pupils			Baptized	Confirmed	Communed Publicly	Communed Privately	Total Communed	Married	Buried	
			Native	Outside	Total								
1851	92	1	44	6	50	35	14			445	14	19	
1852	143		54	14	68	53	13			630	31	27	
1853	No Report Given -----											Lindemann calle	
1854	128		75	17	92	113	20			1075	43	79	St. John, New- burg, formed
1855	145	2			115	111	22			1717	47	22	
1856	150	2			140	114	20			1894	36	28	
1857	74		45	44	89	69	10			1094	19	19	Trinity formed
1858	87				90	67	11			1430	23	16	
1859	77				100	67	10			1528	15	12	
1860	81	1			114	56	9			1496	10	13	
1861	89	1			160	68	12			1496	13	20	
1862	109	2			170	57	10	1447	91	1538	17	21	
1863	No Report Given -----												
1864	112	3			245	54	23	1691	90	1781	18	19	
1865	124	3			300	85	17	1597	115	1712	20	31	
1866	121	3			350	71	14	1547	110	1657	18	29	
1867	124	4			430	79	24	2394	130	2524	16	27	
1868	126	4			400	68	33			2343	24	37	
1869	128	4			350	103	45	2376	120	2496	24	30	

APPENDIX III

Letters

A

Cleveland, 22. July '76

Lieber Herr Doctor!

Lassen Sie sich den Unmuth ueber unverstaendige Waescherei nicht bewegen, die uebernommene Arbeit liegen zu lassen. Nach meiner Ueberzeugung wird allerdings manchmal sehr unverstaendig gewaehlt, auch in dem bewussten Fall ist das geschehen, aber das ist schwerlich zu aendern bei unserer Verfassung, und musz mit in den Lauf genommen werden. Sodann, und das denke ich ist sowohl eine Entschuldigung fuer die Synode, als ein Trost fuer Sie, haben Sie aber auch unleugbar mit Schuld, da Sie bei mehreren Gelegenheiten und zwar sehr dringend, selbst mit Traehnen, die Synode gebeten haben, Sie zu diesem und jenem Amt nicht mehr zu waehlen, und ich bin fest ueberzeugt, dasz das gar manche bewogen hat dem "alten Mann" Ruhe zu goennen die er gar nicht begehrte. Dasz Sie sich noch bei vollen Kraeften fuehlen lieber Herr Doctor, wofuer Gott gedankt sei, bestimmt die grosze Menge nun einmal nicht. Sie sieht und hoert aber das Alter an Gestalt und Sprache und bei Young America faehrt alles Alte schlecht. Sie sind es nicht allein, die das zu fuehlen haben. Ich meinerseits haette nicht viel dagegen wenn man mich auch bald auf den "Altentheil" setzte, man wird mit mir auch schwerlich so lange warten, bis ich zu Ihren Jahren gekommen bin. Aber jedenfalls ist beides verkehrt, so wohl zu frueh alt sein und die Lasten los sein wollen, als nicht alt werden oder dafuer angesehen sein wollen. Das Richtige ist doch allein, zu thun, was man kann und immer es Gott ueberlassen, ob es anerkannt wird, oder nicht. Laeszt Gott es zu, dasz man beiseite geschoben wird, wohlan! Er hat Niemand noetig; und kann aus Jedermann ein Werkzeug machen, den unsererseins fuer unbrauchbar hielte. Also in Gottes Namen weg mit dem Unmuth der wohl eben auch bei zunehmenden Jahren leichter einstellt. Zeigen Sie der Synode einen frischen froehlichen Muth, machen Sie uns ein schoenes Referat, das die Wahrheit aufdeckt ohne Saeure und Graemlichkeit und dann lassen Sie es gehen, wie Gott will.

Mit herzlichem Grusz

Ihr Ergebenster H.C. Schwan

ZION 1843

* St. John's 1878

* st. John's 1854

* Trinity 1857

Concordia 1914

st. Andrew 1911

Zion 1882

st. Paul 1858

Christ 1889

st. Luke 1895

Redeemer 1898

st. Paul 1905

Messiah 1928

Unity 1915

Trinity 1920

Pilgrim 1914

Mt. Calvary 1920

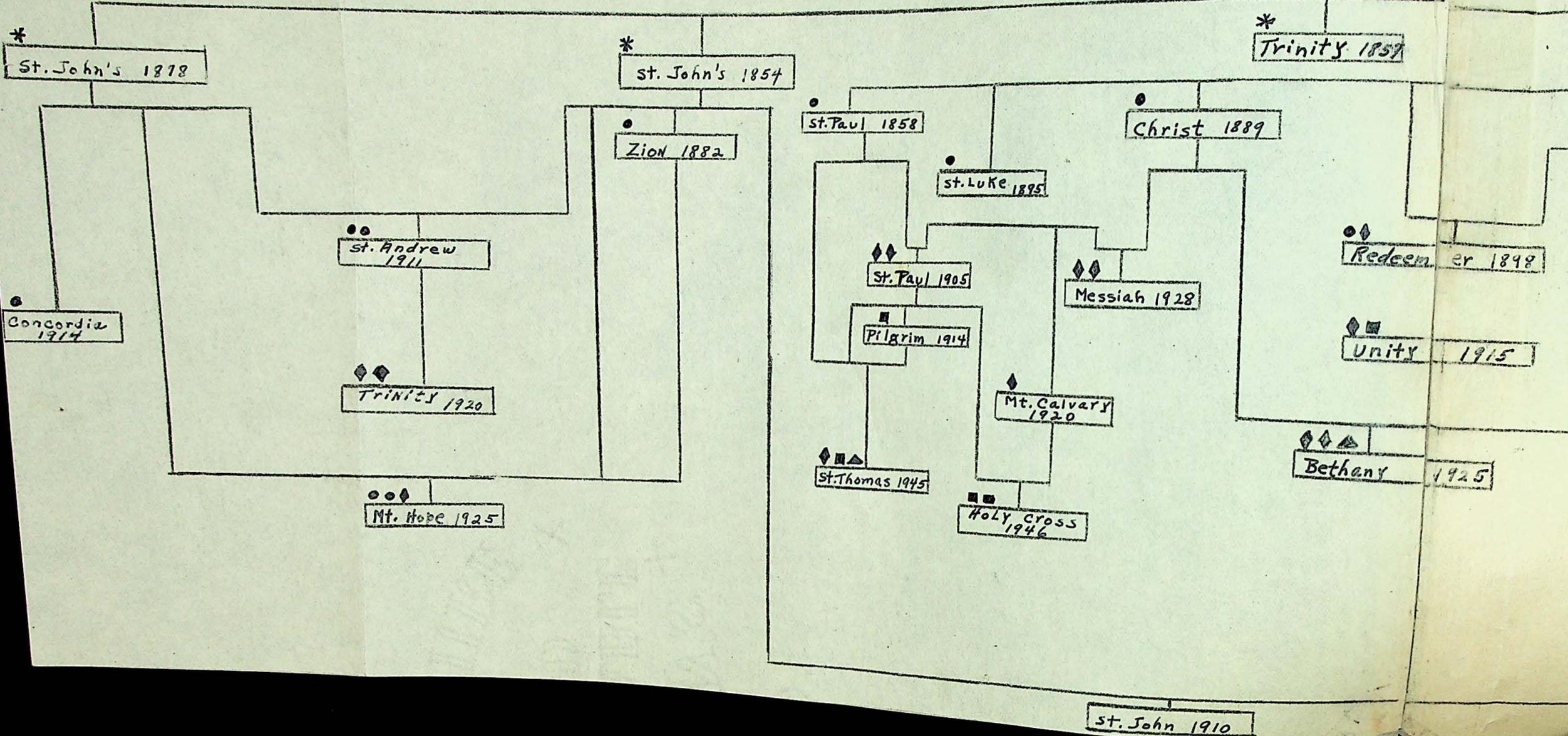
Bethany 1925

Mt. Hope 1925

st. Thomas 1945

Holy Cross 1946

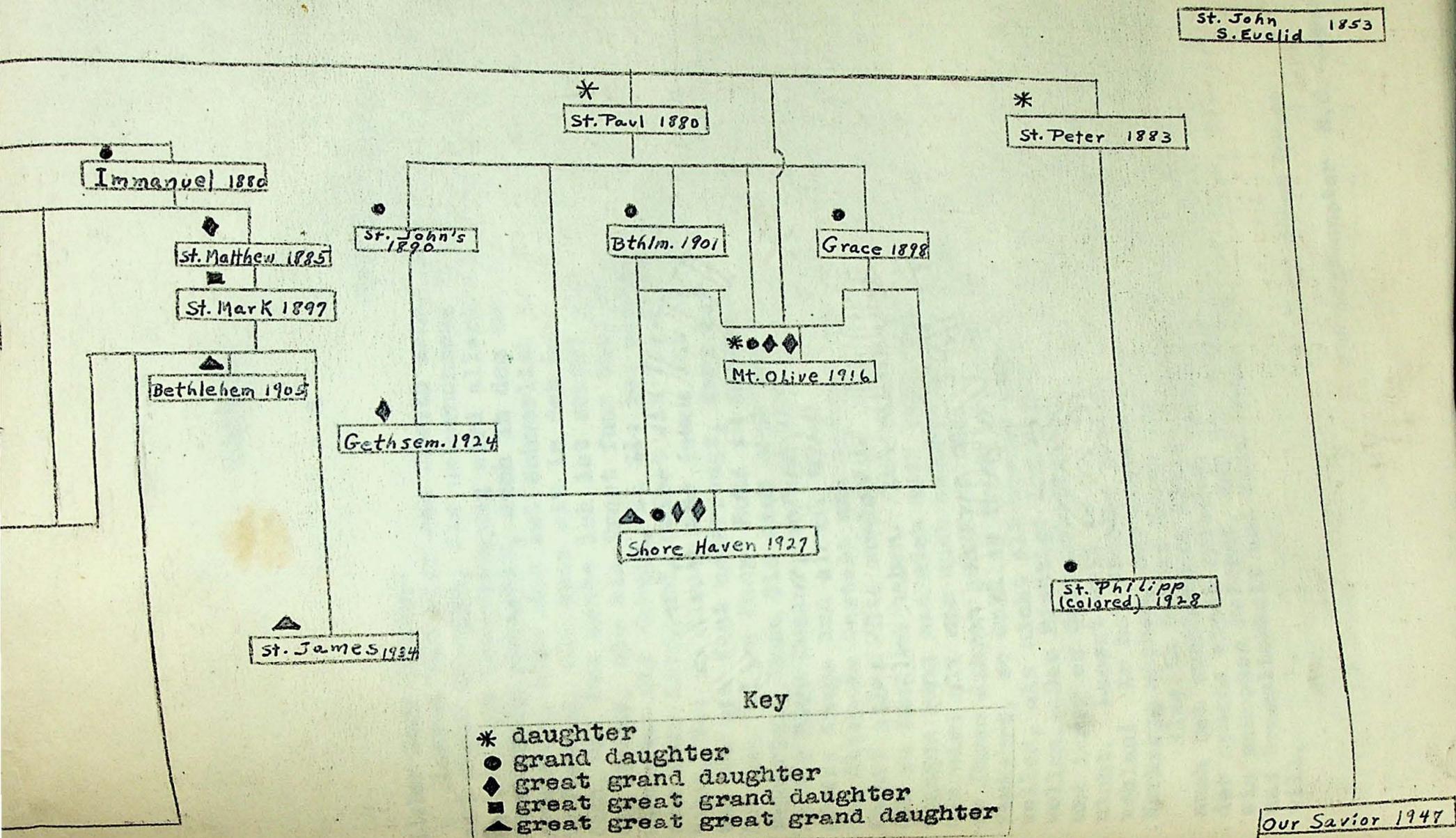
st. John 1910



APPENDIX II

Genealogy of Missouri Synod Lutheran Churches in Cleveland, Ohio

Adapted from: Carl Toelke, "Look to the Past to Build Tomorrow's Church," The Cleveland Lutheran Messenger, XXXVII (February, 1948), 4.



Key

- * daughter
- grand daughter
- ◆ great grand daughter
- great great grand daughter
- ▲ great great great grand daughter

B

no date
(but it must be 1879)

Theurer Herr Doctor!

(The first paragraph of this letter has no bearing on this thesis and has therefore been omitted.)

Mit Paul steht es so, dasz gerade seine Leute draussen alle nicht bloss dasselbe Vertrauen zu ihm muendlich und schriftl(ich) (durch eine Adresse) geaeuszert haben, sondern dasz sie ihn fast noch lieber Zutrauen zu haben scheinen. Waehrend bei den hiesigen die Sach noch in die Schaale hing, gingen die draussen alles Ernstes damit um, wenn man ihn hier nicht moege, sich zu einer eigenen Parochie zu erklaeren und Alles ohne Beihuelfe der hiesigen zu erhalten.--- Hier sind nun allerdings noch ein Theil und zwar gerade der aelteren Glieder gegen ihn eingenommen, aber gerade dieselben, die ebenso und noch mehr auch bis jetzt auch gegen mich sind. Man kann ja nun noch nicht gewisz sagen, wie das endet. Aber da doch bis jetzt Einer nach dem Andern kommt und mir sagt, er schaeme sich seines Betragens, so hoffe ich wenigstens, dasz eben kurz oder lang alle Aufrichtigen in diesem Stueck zurecht kommen.

Also: wie Sie mir ja auch zutrauen, dasz ich die Sache ansehe, jetzt gleich darf Paul auf keinen Fall gehen, das koennte eine Spaltung verursachen. Ob spaeter? das musz darnach entschieden werden, welche Stellung unsere aelteren Glieder hier einnehmen.

Gott sei Dank, dasz Paul so gut aus dem Affaire gekommen ist. Dasz man nun desto mehr an mich will, erschreckt mich nicht so sehr. Will mich schon wehren, hab' ein gut Gewissen in dieser Sache.

Seit Lindemanns Beerdigung haben wir bestaendig Kranke hier im Hause. Gott helf! Ihr

ergebenster H.C.S.

19 Febr.

C

Cleveland 16 Sept. '80

Theurer Herr Doctor!

Ihr Christian, der mich zu meinder Freude gleich besuchte, hat mir das Naehere von unsers Stube. (Stubnatzi) Ende mitgetheilt. Ich denke, aehnlich wird's mir auch mal gehen und meinetwegen mag das bald sein. Habe von Allen genug, nur nicht von Gottes Gnade und die wird mir ja beim

Ende nicht fehlen.

Dasz ich nicht zur Leiche gekommen bin, wird mir hoffentlich niemand dort uebel genommen haben. Ich war ja erst eben von Canada zurueck und musz bald wieder fort nach Chicago und dann zur Westlichen Synode. Meine Leute werden immer unwilliger und nicht ohne Ursache. Ich fuehle, dasz ich nicht blosz bei einzelnen laufenden Sachen aus dem Zusammenhang komme, sondern weil ich mir thoerichterweise allerlei trouble um die Synode mache, dasz ich dadurch wirklich meiner Gemeinde entfremdet und entzogen werde. Habe ja einen guten Adjunct. Aber er hat selbst alle Haende voll und die Mit- ja Hauptverantwortlichkeit fuer Alles bleibt doch auf mir und das ist's was mich drueckt. So geht das auf keinen Fall laenger, zumal nun noch mehrere Districte dazu kommen werden.

Aber ad rem. Grosz wuerde vortrefflich passen in jeder Hinsicht, gewisz auch in Bezug auf das College. Aber l. waere es wirklich schade um Buffalo (wo man ihn auch schwerlich lassen wird) sodann, denke ich, dasz es der Districts Aemte halber doch nicht noethig ist, jemand von auszen zu berufen. Fuer die naechsten 2 Jahre ist erstlich mal Niemann Praeses. Und der wird, ich mueszte mich fast sehr irren, sein Amt in der Synode (und auch in der Aufsichtsbehoerde) so fuehren, dasz man ihn wiederwaehlt. Aber geschaehe das auch wirklich nicht, so sind ja C. Schmidt, Nuetzel und Andere da, den lieben Sauer besonders nicht zu vergessen. Endlich aber kann ich mit dem Allg. Praesidium nicht laenger fertig werden. Man wird mich gewisz los lassen. Dann hat aber doch wohl Grosz die meiste Aussicht. Und da die Synode sich entweder gefallen lassen musz, dasz das Amt sehr oberflaechlich ausgerichtet werde, oder dem Allg. Praeses von seinem Pfarramt zu entbinden haben wird (wenigstens ihn so zu stellen dasz er eigentlich nur dem Namen und Schein nach Pastor ist) so wuerde der Ft. Wayner Gemeinde auch noch nicht gedient sein.

Ich weisz deshalb in der That nicht, wen ich vorschlagen sollte. Jedenfalls sollte man aufs College ernstlich mit Bedacht nehmen und jemand waehlen der al peri mit den Lehrern staende und einen guten Einfluss aufs Ganze uebte. Dazu aber wuerde nach meiner Ansicht Liebt. (?) wohl nicht der Mann sein.

Fuer Huegeli, seine Gemeinde in Detroit ueberhaupt waere es gut, koennte er versetzt werden. Wenn Allward aus der Lehrverwirrung heraus waere, wuerde er vielleicht auch gut passen. Nuetzel koennte und sollte ein groeszeres Feld haben. Er haette dann keine Zeit, Kopfweh zu haben. Doch das Alles sage ich strictly: entre nous. Hoffentlich werde ich auch in der Sache nicht gefragt.

In der Hoffnung, Sie in Chicago zu sehen und dort eine Beichtrede von Ihnen zu hoeren, wie die in Indianapolis war, so wie auch herzl. Gruesze von Haus zu Haus. Ihr

ergebenster H. C. Schwan

Hat der sel. Stube. wohl, wozu ich ihn wie alle Distr. Praesides aufforderte, diejenigen in seinem Districte, die in der Gnadenwahl opponiren oder unruhig sind, noch besonders und dringend eingeladen, nach Chicago zu gehen?

D

Cleveland 7. April 81

Theurer Herr Doctor!

Ich weisz kein Wort davon, was Rohe und seine Gemeinde thun will (erfahre es auch aus Ihrem werthen Schreiben nicht) eben so wenig, was Pr. Fuerbringer im Sinn hat. Wie konnte ich wohl in der Sache etwas thun und wie koennte ich es jetzt?

Dasz er sich nicht an Ort und Stelle begibt, wo es Noth waere, darueber habe ich ihm schon muendlich und schriftlich ernstlich Vorstellungen gemacht. Er behauptet aber, das sei ihm unmoeglich und die Synode habe ihn unter dieser ausdruecklichen Bedingung erwaeht.

Vielleicht hat es mehr Erfolg wenn Sie, da Sie zumal auch jetzt(?) von(?) der(?) Sache wissen, einmal ihm zu Herzen reden und ihn dringend auffordern selbst zu kommen.

Durch viel Ablehnen u. Entschuldigen, was mir viel Schreiberei machte, ist die Liste der Prediger fuer die Synodalversammlung jetzt dahin abgeaendert: Eroeffnung: Prof. Craemer, Grosz; Freitag Abend: Spehr(?), Lindemann (?) (der aber, weil nach N.Y. versetzt nicht kommt u. fuer den ich noch niemand habe); Sonntags Evang.: Reinke, Steup(?) (der auch viel Einwendungen hat); Epistel: C.C. Schmidt, Koch; Dienstag Abend: Stoeckhardt, Dreyer in Richmond; Pastoral-Predigt: Eirich, Strieter.

Ich habe auch gleich an Simon gedacht. Aber nun schlaegt der Lehrer-Collegium und zu meiner Verwunderung auch die Aufsichtsbehoerde Zucker vor. Das wird, zumal kein Grund angegeben wird, einen niederschlagenden Eindruck machen und man wird wissen wollen: Warum?

Ich meine, hab's auch nach St. Louis geschrieben, gegen das Columb. Bimonthly sollten wir sogleich in St. Louis (eine) Monthly haben. Gar vielen in englisch luth. und anderen Synoden sind unsere deutschen Publikationen unzuganglich. Was sie ueber uns erfahren, hoeren sie aus dem Munde unsrer Feinde zu ihrem und unserm Schaden. Da sollten wir thun was wir koennen. Und wir haben Gottlob genug die es nicht nur mit d. diis minorum gentium: Schuette, Stodde, etc. sondern auch mit d. Jupiter Maximus Loy aufnehmen koennen. Lange, Bischoff, Diedrich Crull, Eirich, Niemann u. andere koennten durch original-Artikeln u. Uebersetzungen etwas Gutes liefern. Wahrscheinlich bestaende

das Blatt auch noch fort, selbst wenn es des Lutheraners halben nicht mehr noethig waere. ---- Wenn Sie auch so denken, wie ich hoffe, bitte, so ermuntern auch Sie die St. Louiser.

Meine Frau erholt sich, wie es scheint, ein wenig. Wenn nur dieser erschreckliche Winter einmal zu Ende waere!

Mit herzlichem Grusz u. Wunsch in Gott befohlen!

Ihr

ergebenster H.C. Schwan

E

Cleveland, 8 Maerz, '99

Lieber Herr Professor!

Bitte nehmen Sie dies in die naechste Nummer der Lutheraner auf. Von dem Unglueck in St. Paul werden Sie gelesen haben. Ich weisz noch nicht wie hoch sich der Schaden in Geld belauft. Unserer Finanz Verhaeltnisse und dem Muth der Synode wird es aber sehr schaedlich sein. Da die Synode nun einmal nicht versichern will, sollte sie freilich desto bereitwilliger zur Hilfe sein. Got geb's!

Mit herzlichem Grusz

Ihr

Ergebenster H.C. Schwan

APPENDIX IV

Propositions on Unevangelical Practice

1. Evangelical practice consists not in this, that we teach and treat nothing except the evangelical message (the Gospel), but in this, that we treat everything in evangelical fashion.
2. This means that since we expect justification before God, the renewal of the heart, and the fruits of the Spirit only through the Gospel, we in everything that we do have this one thing in mind, to give free course and sway to the Gospel.
3. For this very reason, when we follow evangelical practice, we do not discard the Law or make its edges dull through bringing in the Gospel, but we rather preach it with all the more seriousness in its full severity, however in evangelical fashion.
4. The Law is used in an evangelical way if it is employed solely for the purpose of preparing the soil for the evangelical message (the Gospel) and of submitting a divine norm for the manifestations of the new life which spontaneously arises through the evangelical message.
5. It is not evangelical practice to cast the pearls before the swine, but much less is it evangelical practice to keep them in one's own pocket.
6. Evangelical practice drops not one iota of the things which God demands, but it demands nothing else and no more than faith and love.
7. Evangelical practice demands manifestation of faith and love if we desire to be saved, but it does not issue commands about their various manifestations as far as aim, amount, and mode are concerned.
8. Evangelical practice demands fulfillment of even the smallest letter of the Law, but it does not make the state of grace dependent on the keeping of the Law.
9. Evangelical practice endeavors indeed to prepare the way for the operations of the Gospel by the Law; but it does not endeavor to aid the Gospel in its real functions by the Law; and since it expects the fruits of the Spirit to be produced solely by the Gospel, it is willing to wait for them, too.
10. Evangelical practice considers nothing an essential gain that does not come through the Gospel, that is, through faith; therefore it rather bears with all manner of defects, imperfections, and sins than to remove them merely in an external manner.
11. Evangelical practice limits pastoral care (Seelsorge) to specific applications of the Law and the Gospel; the

- scrutiny and judging of the hearts it leaves to God, the Searcher of hearts.
12. Evangelical practice insists on good human order, but still more does it insist on Christian liberty, and for that reason it lets adiaphora remain real adiaphora, that is, it leaves the decision concerning them to the conscience of the individual.
 13. Evangelical practice is faithful in little things; yet it considers matters in their larger aspects and totality more important than individual details.
 14. To be wise as serpents, to redeem the time, not to let Satan gain an advantage over us, to become all things to all men in order that by all means some might be saved, are likewise elements of evangelical practice.
 15. Evangelical practice is equally far removed from Antinomian and from legalistic practice.
 16. Evangelical knowledge and disposition should issue in evangelical practice, but do so rather seldom and slowly.
 17. Usually we do not advance beyond legalism, or we fall into Antinomian laxity; to such an extent the Gospel is foreign to our nature.
 18. There is danger in both directions. For us at present the greater danger is still in the direction of legalism.
 19. Apart from the natural tendency of the old Adam and our origin in pietistic circles, etc., our present situation and the necessary reaction against the prevailing moral laxity in principles and in life are responsible for this state of affairs.
 20. Or how many are there not who secretly fear more to give the blessings of the Gospel to an unworthy person than to deny them to a poor sinner or to curtail them? Whose conscience is not hindering him to follow the example of Paul and to become all things to all men? But where this is the case, one surely still finds legalistic practice.
 21. Legalistic practice does not consist in this, that one does not treat anything except the Law, but in this, that one treats everything in a legalistic manner, that is, in such a way that one's main aim is to see to it that the Law gets its due and that one tries to accomplish through the Law or even through laws what only the Gospel can accomplish.
 22. In addition, the more (as is often the case where the inner motive power really still is the Law) fiery zeal asserts itself which not even permits love to be the queen of all commandments, which spurns Christian wisdom as its counselor, and which even when it appears merely to teach, to reprove or to admonish, in reality applies coercion, and at that the worst kind of it, namely, moral coercion - all the more unevangelical our practice

- gets to be.
23. Unevangelical, legalistic practice is found not only in churches and congregations, but likewise in schools and in the homes, and besides in our fraternal intercourse.
 24. The instances of unevangelical practice which are still most frequent with us in the realm of ministerial work, the cure of souls, and congregational government are perhaps the following:
 - a. In sermons: overabundant castigation (*durchgeisseln*) of individual sins, unwholesome conditions or perhaps even of matters of personal dislike - the portraying of well-known sins of well-known persons, instead of laying bare the bitter roots out of which all evil fruits grow - mere so-called testifying without real instruction and admonition - unnecessary or premature or unedifying polemics - urging that repentance and faith be manifested, instead of preaching that which produces repentance and faith - a pietistic classification of the hearers - attaching conditions to the Gospel promises (*Verklausulierung des Evangelii*) - preaching faith preponderatingly as to its sanctifying power - presentation of the grace of God only to build demands on such presentation;
 - b. With respect to Confession and the Lord's Supper: To demand more for admission than is absolutely required for its salutary use - schoolroom catechizing and inquisitorial searching of the heart of those announcing - postponing reproof till announcement for Communion or Confession - to use refusal of Holy Communion as a coercive, terrifying or disciplinary means - to refuse even when a state of unrepentance cannot be proved;
 - c. With respect to Baptism: To be either unwilling to baptize children of heretics or unbelieving people who, however, are in contact with the Word (*die unter dem Schall des Wortes leben*), even if there is no intrusion in somebody else's domain (*in ein fremd Amt greifen*) or only after various human guarantees have been given - to put the acceptance of sponsors on a level with admission to Holy Communion;
 - d. At marriages: To refuse to perform marriages of people who are outside the congregation even if they are not manifestly wicked - a meticulous insistence on a certain form of parental consent and of engagement;
 - e. At funerals: Absolute refusal of burial in the case of all who did not somehow belong to the congregation or at least requested the visit of the pastor - adherence

to the principle that at every funeral the salvation or damnation of the deceased must be asserted publicly, that sins have to be castigated and the occasion must be used to take a fling (anzustechen) at the sins and failings of the survivors;

f. In the care of souls:

Constant trimming and pressing (hobeln und feilen) on everybody till all wrinkles have been removed - acceptance of every kind of gossip (Zutraegerien) - mixing into house, family, and matrimonial matters even if no public offense has been given - to judge of one's attitude of heart on the basis of a few words and works - the application of moral coercion through exaggeration, etc.;

g. In congregational government and church discipline:

Exaggerated demands at the reception of new members - a denial of, or peremptory fixing of time limits for, participation in the spiritual treasures of the Church as a guest, especially for attendance at the Lord's Table - mandatory imposition of dues on church members, requiring the same amount from all - or coercive taxing of the individuals, - use of church discipline as a measure against matters which are not evident, mortal sins, or even against self-provoked sins - to consider a person as convicted in his own mind or as opposing maliciously because he is not able to reply to the arguments and charges uttered against him, or even assents - to lay more weight on the correct form of the proceedings than on the achieving of the purpose of the discipline - to demand the same form and the same degree of publicity for all confessions of sins which may have to be made - the endeavor to make the chasm between those who are in and those who are outside the congregation really large, instead of building bridges for the opponents and for those who are on the outside.

25. Legalistic practice in itself makes the Gospel law, the Law a taskmaster (but not unto Christ); it makes confession a torture, the cure of souls hypocritical fawning; the Sacrament a testimony and seal that one is acceptable (to the pastor); it makes Christian liberty a mere pretense, church discipline an oppression of consciences, the people painfully meticulous, self-righteously pharasaical, and the church a police institution.

26. Legalistic practice has the appearance of greater conscientiousness, courage, and quicker success only for the blind. Looked at carefully it lacks true courage to allow God to reign and His Word to work. Its conscientiousness is that of an erring conscience and in

- itself one of the greatest hindrances of the working of the Law as well as of the Gospel.
27. Legalistic practice behooves no church less than the Evangelical Lutheran.
 28. To make fine customs of old established churches the standard for such as are in process of establishment - is not Lutheran.
 29. There are plenty of things in which we cannot avoid giving offense; let us not give it by unnecessary severity in practice.
 30. Let us courageously make an end of all unevangelical practice; but let us not forget that there is but one step from legalistic to antinomian practice.
 31. Antinomian practice would beware of legalism and would effect everything only by the Gospel. But since it lacks the severity of the Law it also lacks the fervor of the Gospel. Therefore it will result in laxity and undisciplined conduct.
 32. If we fall from legalistic into antinomian practice, evil has become worse.

Note: The above translation is taken from the Appendix of Speaking the Truth in Love (Chicago: The Willow Press, 1632 North Halsted), pp. 77-80. It is largely the work of the sainted P.T. Buszin (p. 5). A reprint of this translation is found in the Concordia Theological Monthly for May, 1945. The original German will be found in the Synodal Bericht des mittlern Districts, 1862, pp. 10-14.

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was in the matter of taking notes in classes, lectures, and during conferences.

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Miscellanea

Much of the information concerning Dr. Schwan's person and personality was gained through personal interviews of men who were personal friends and acquaintances of Dr. Schwan. These men were:

1. The late Dr. Karl Kretzmann, curator of Concordia

Historical Institute until his death in 1949.

2. Dr. Edmund Seuel, 2000 Bellevue, St. Louis, Missouri, former manager of Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis.
3. The Rev. Julius A. Friedrich, pastor emeritus, now living in St. Louis.
4. The late Dr. Martin S. Sommer, professor at Concordia Theological Seminary until his retirement in 1948, and associate editor of The Lutheran Witness until his death in 1949.