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REPORT OF THE BOARD MEMBERS OF
THE METHODIST CHURCH—MEMPHIS AREA

SHORT TITLE

FROM MISSION TO CHURCH

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of Memphis University, Memphis, Tennessee,
Department of Historical Theology
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Divinity

by

James Arthur Taylor

June 1954

Approved by

W. J. Deane
Dean

Herbert P. Davis
Dean

HISTORY OF THE INDIA MISSION OF
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
1945-1957

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the research presented in the following pages is to enable the writer to serve in a better capacity as a missionary in a foreign country. The collecting and correlating of the various factors in the development and history of the India Mission during the past thirteen years has been a wonderful opportunity for greater preparation in entering foreign mission work. Another purpose for this research is to bring the history of our Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's India Mission to a close. Missionary Elmer E. Griesse presented a thesis to Washington University, St. Louis, on the history of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission (M.E.L.I.M.) from the beginning of the work in 1895 through 1944. This present thesis will bring us to the end of an era—for the Mission has grown into a sister church of the Missouri Synod. On January 8, 1953, the India Evangelical Lutheran Church (I.E.L.C.) declared itself capable of self-government. The M.E.L.I.M. continues to exist, but only as a corporation recognized by the government of India. Whenever the M.E.L.I.M. is referred to in the following pages, the Mission itself is meant and not the corporation. It is assumed that the reader of this thesis knows that 1945 was not the beginning of the India Mission. At times, there are glances further back than 1945, always with the intent of pointing out previous activities in a specific field of operation.

The primary source of material for this study has been the minutes of conference proceedings of the M.E.L.I.M. The General Conferences met for four or five days in January of the even years: 1946, 1948, 1950,

1952, 1954, 1956, and 1958; the General Conference Executive Committee met periodically each year. Also accessible were the minutes of the three District Conferences—Ambur, Trivandrum, and Nagercoil. The individual committee minutes on most occasions were valuable in the area under consideration. These minutes were available through Dr. Herman H. Koppelman, the Assistant Executive Secretary of the Board for Missions in Foreign Countries of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Manuscripts, reports, and letters written by the various missionaries on the field were available. Periodicals such as The Lutheran Witness, The Minaret, National Christian Council Review, and others were gleaned for pertinent development and data. This thesis was assembled by one who has not had the opportunity and privilege of living in India or a situation similar to India. Thus the panoramic view of the India Mission is seen through the pages of minutes, manuscripts, and missionary reports.

CHAPTER II

THE POLITICAL SITUATION

Perhaps India has seen more changes during the last thirteen years than any other country in the world at any period in history. The political, social, and economic life of the people has undergone a revolutionary change. When a whole nation breaks away from subjection to another nation, it is only natural that many significant changes will occur. For two centuries India was under British rule and domination, but on August 15, 1947, a new nation was born, for India had claimed the right to rule itself. Under the able leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, his disciple, Jawaharlal Nehru, and others, the liberation from foreign rule was effected. After the assassination of Gandhi, January 30, 1948, Pandit Nehru was at the helm of government affairs as Prime Minister of India. During these years of turmoil and political entanglement following World War II Christian mission enterprises throughout the country had a feeling of apprehension and feared expulsion was just around the corner. Since the achievement of independence many of these fears have proved false and unfounded. However, the end of British rule in India did bring to an end the favored position which Christian missions occupied by virtue of their representatives being racially connected with the ruling powers.

The tendency in some parts of India was for an aggressive attitude towards Christian missions and missionaries. This action was sternly discouraged by the President of the Congress Party, Mr. Nehru, for on the eve of Independence Day in an interview which he gave to a group of Christian missionaries, he said:

It stands to reason that any faith whose roots are strong and healthy should spread; and to interfere with that right to spread seems to me to be a blow at the roots themselves. In a country with so many creeds as India, we must learn to be tolerant. For the sake of harmony we shall have to respect the religious convictions of all, irrespective of numbers and influence. Unless a given faith proves a menace to public order, or its teachers attempt to thrust it down the unwilling throats of men of other persuasions, there can be no justification for measures which deprive any community of its rights.¹

These words were put on paper and into action when the new constitution was adopted on Republic Day, January 26, 1950. In this constitution the Indian union declared itself a Secular State. The State, as such, is neither in favor of nor against any religion and does not make a distinction between indigenous and foreign religions. It would not have been surprising to Christian missionaries if Hinduism had been granted preferential treatment and a favorite position, for this is the predominant religion of India. Religion in India has always been a matter of national and political importance. The phrase, "India for the Hindus," was spread throughout the land. Fortunately, the phrase did not become reality, primarily because of the millions of Muslims living within the orbit of the Indian Union. Then, too, the leaders, especially Nehru, who drew up the constitution were indifferent toward any form of religion in its metaphysical sense.²

The constitution grants to everyone freedom of conscience and the right to profess, practice, and propagate his religion, with the provision that such propagation of one's faith shall not endanger public

¹Eddy Asirvatham, Christianity in the Indian Crucible (Calcutta, India: Y.M.C.A. Publishing House, 1955), pp. 13-14.

²H. Meyer, "Christian Opportunity in a New India," Lutheran World Review, II, No. 3 (January, 1950), 130.

health or disturb the peace.³ At the same time it is made very clear that religion and politics are to operate in completely separate spheres. Since independence India has tried to think in democratic terms and has proved this in granting religious freedom. Religious organizations have the right to own and acquire property, to establish institutions for religious and charitable purposes, and to manage their own affairs in matters of religion. To a certain extent, this influence can be traced to the West, for quite a number of the leaders in India have studied in the West. One of the prime movers behind the India constitution was Dr. B. R. Ambedkar who studied at Columbia University, New York City. Dr. Ambedkar was the chairman and main legal adviser when the Constituent Assembly framed the new constitution.⁴ To demonstrate that there is freedom of religion, one need merely point to the action of this man. He had a Hindu background, but in his education became acquainted with Christianity, and now he embraces Buddhism.

The most striking case in which the government has put its attitude of democracy into action has been its attack on the Hindu caste system. With national freedom India took steps to make all her inhabitants free, including members of the lowest castes and outcastes. This bold break with tradition, which goes back many centuries, came about as a climax to the lifelong crusade of Mahatma Gandhi on behalf of the untouchables, whom he named "Harijans" or "Creatures of God." The caste system and intolerance was declared illegal by the Congress Party and the

³Of. Article 19, Draft Constitution of India (New Delhi, India: Government of India Press, 1948), p. 9.

⁴A. Graff, "The Indian Government and Christian Missions," The Mission Call, VI (Summer Issue, 1950), 3.

constitution. It will take many years to wipe away the habit of centuries, but again we see the stability of the Indian government, as it aims for "liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith, and worship" for all.⁵

Political independence and democracy has affected the activity of Christian missions in numerous areas of work. Generally, it must be said, that this has not had an adverse effect; but on the contrary, it has been good for the different mission organizations in India. The very fact that Christianity was forced to stand before the non-Christian multitudes in the strength of the Lord and His Word alone, without any artificial support, has done much to enhance the power of the Church's message. For the Indian Christian, adherence to a foreign mission organization no longer meant social prestige or economic benefit, as it had with cases in the past. This did much to purify and strengthen the church. It also caused missionaries and their supporting Mission Boards to rethink and rework certain aspects of the work on the field.

The missionary enterprises of Western Churches suffered a staggering blow in China, when this great nation with its masses of people was swept bare of missionaries by the dominating broom of communism. To some extent missionary leaders of the world took to heart the warning that the time is short within which to make basic changes. An Anglican missionary, David M. Paton, in the book, Christian Missions and the Judgment of God,⁶ brings out the real aim of missions in all the world. It is not primarily to save souls, but to provide the permanent means by which souls may be

⁵Preamble of the Draft Constitution of India, p. 1.

⁶David M. Paton, Christian Missions and the Judgment of God (London, England: Student Christian Movement Press, 1955).

saved. There have been many predictions as to the longevity of mission work in India. Some have felt that the reign of atheistic communism is just around the corner. Others are convinced the danger is overestimated and the similarity between China and India is oversimplified. It seems apparent that India does not currently view the Red menace with the same alarm that Americans do.⁷ It is not inevitable that India should turn to communism just because China did. They are two very different countries, although their problems are similar. For example, India's top leaders today are strongly anti-communistic. That was not the case preceding China's fall. India's government is more firmly in control than was any pre-communist rule in China, where warlords and the like ruled the provinces with iron fists. India's people are strongly disposed in their religious loyalties to their Hindu deities, perhaps more so than were China's people. Be this as it may—some feeling one way about India's future and some another—it is not out of place to say that India's democratic government may be replaced by another. Unfortunately, the Congress Party has not done so well in the provinces recently, and especially not in local administrations and elections. Among the masses there is considerable discontent and disappointment which could go against the present government. "One thing is certain: whoever may eventually become the successor of the Congress Party, there is no hope that the present tolerant and reasonable attitude toward Christian missions will continue unchanged."⁸ The further existence of mission societies in India therefore

⁷Rajah B. Manikam, Bishop of the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church in India, in a recent public appearance, ridiculed America's fear of communism and marked it as the dominating problem, along with the other problem of where to park cars.

⁸Meyer, op. cit., p. 152.

depends entirely on the attitude of the men who happen to be in office at a given time.

During the years following World War II and India's independence, the Missouri Mission, like the various other mission organizations, had to re-evaluate its program of bringing the Gospel to the ninety-eight per cent non-Christian element in India. The field of education has seen many changes on this mission field, as will be seen in the seventh chapter of the paper. An emphasis has been placed on leadership training and the transfer of responsibility from mission to church. The program of building a truly indigenous church has been accelerated, and efforts have been made for the development of an Indian church—governed, financed, and extended by national Christians and leaders. This aspect of growth toward an organized India Evangelical Lutheran Church will be treated in chapter five. Financial support of the church and its workers will be taken more and more upon the shoulders of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church. These and many other lines of change can be seen in the program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod's mission in India. This survey study is an attempt to picture what has been done during the past thirteen years—from 1945 to 1958. The political environment in which our mission carries on its work has brought forth misgivings, various predictions, fears, and also many prayers. It is certainly true that the Lord of the Church has granted a further period of grace in which the task is urgent. How much longer this will last no one can tell. This decision is God's to make, but it is important that we understand the climate in which His work has been carried on in India and will continue to be carried on.

At the present, Christian missions have felt a bit more pressure

from Government sources than was the case in the past. This pressure has not been directed toward any one mission or against the India Evangelical Lutheran Church in particular. There are many in India who would like to cut off the supply of funds and missionaries from foreign countries in the hope that in this way Christianity can be rooted out, or its expansion in India curtailed to a large extent. But these elements have so far been held in check by those people who realize the many benefits that have come to India through the work of Christian missions. The philanthropic activities of missions have been encouraged, but the evangelistic endeavors of missions have been discouraged, mainly by means of published articles and papers against evangelistic activities. This is typical, for the world has never extended a hearty welcome to the Gospel call of our Savior's Kingdom. Under the grace and guidance of God, the concern of the missionaries and the India Evangelical Lutheran Church will continue to be that all are faithful witnesses to Him, who alone can cure the ills of the world.

CHAPTER III

GOSPEL WORK

The history of the Christian Church shows that no church can be truly vital and alive until it has a deep missionary purpose, thus becoming a blessing both to itself and to others. The nature of Christianity is such that the more one spontaneously shares it with others, the richer and fuller it becomes to oneself. Evangelism, the very life of the Church, is expressed in many different ways, using various gifts, opportunities, and approaches. Basically, evangelism is witness, sharing with others the good news of Jesus Christ.

It is one beggar telling another beggar where to get food. The Christian does not offer out of his own bounty. He is simply a guest at his Master's table and, as evangelist, he calls others. . . It is not his knowledge of God that he shares; it is to God Himself that he points.¹

In the mission in India there has been a renewal of interest in the evangelistic task of the church. This mission, like all missions, was born by means of evangelism, the work of the Gospel. This chapter describes the Gospel work of the Mission as it has grown since 1945. Within the three districts of the Missouri Mission there are Gospel Work Committees which are concerned mainly with evangelism. Special emphasis has been given to various means of mass communications, such as the radio and press. The adult literacy movement in India, promoted especially by the government, offers a similar opportunity to reach out with the Gospel witness. Bible women have been employed for reaching into the home life

¹D. T. Niles, That They May Have Life (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951), p. 96.

of the people. New fields have been opened and are now being served the Bread of Life.

Radio Evangelism

For many years missionaries tried to get the Lutheran Hour on the India broadcasting system. Since the government, which declares itself a Secular State, owns and controls this system, it has been impossible to acquire free time or to buy time for religious programs. The result was that the only religious programs available to the Christians of South India had to come from Ceylon or Manila. In January, 1950, a radio station was opened in Portuguese India, at Goa, under the name Radio Goa. Contact was made with Radio Goa both by the Mission and the Lutheran Hour office in St. Louis, Missouri. Soon Radio Goa began beaming the Gospel message, "Bringing Christ to the Nations," into the homes and hearts of the people of India for two full hours a week. Besides a half hour in English, there were quarter hour programs in Urdu, Marathi, Hindi, Tamil, Gujerat, Kanarese, and others.²

The authorities of the All India Radio (AIR) in Trivandrum and Madras were approached again in 1950 with the request to broadcast some religious program materials. As yet there was no opening here, due to severe political and nationalistic pressures. Renewed negotiations with Radio Ceylon were taken up in September, 1950, to get the English and Tamil programs on this station. It is interesting to note that the authorities, for a short time, felt that "Bringing Christ to the Nations" was of too proselytizing a nature to be broadcast as a part of the

² M. Kretzmann, "India Mission 1947-1950," a mimeographed report, p. 8.

national radio network in a predominantly Buddhist country.³ A few months later, however, on December 6, 1950, transmission over Radio Ceylon was started in the English language.⁴ In the coming years this broadcast from Colombo became more popular than those over Radio Goa. The power of this station was great enough to beam the message of salvation into many parts of Southeast Asia.

The type of program utilized was similar to the Lutheran Hour in America with Western hymns and hymn tunes together with an explanation in the vernacular. The most important task of arranging and preparing indigenous programs with Indian speakers and music was undertaken in 1952. From the outset of the radio enterprise the goal had been to make live broadcasts or transcriptions with Indian music, Indian speakers, and messages aimed especially at Indians. This was a large order, and help was secured for drawing up scripts and programs with the proper phraseology and suitable vernacular music. Generally it was felt that the American type program was ineffective and unpopular.⁵ Because of this, a series of biographies of Christian Biblical heroes in drama form was inaugurated, emphasizing one particular Christian virtue in each broadcast. Together with this, a memento consisting of a brief biography of the hero dramatized was sent upon request. In 1953 the vernacular broadcasts took another step forward in arranging to portray dramatized Bible stories in Hindi, Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Urdu, Kanarese, and Sinhalese over Radio Goa. Due to the lack of Mission personnel and time

³General Conference Executive Committee Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1950, p. 82. Hereafter cited as EOM.

⁴EOM, 1951, p. 9.

⁵EOM, 1952, p. 30.

these programs, for the first, were prepared by the Radio Associates of Asia in Bombay, using Hindi and Urdu only.

During 1955 the Mission began preparing its own weekly programs in Tamil and Malayalam, the two main languages of South India. These were modeled after the "This is the Life" television series of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in America by building each week's story around some character in an Indian Christian family, showing some facet of the life of an Indian Christian in this world and how he meets particular problems. Adequate script writers in both languages were difficult to find, but in time men and women became available for this important work.

Various methods of publicity were used to advertise "Bringing Christ to the Nations." Prominent newspapers, magazines, and religious periodicals were notified; handbills printed in the vernacular languages were distributed; posters were displayed in cities and elsewhere.⁶ Mementoes, correspondence courses, and other materials were offered on the Lutheran Hour over Radio Goa. Although this aspect of evangelistic outreach is limited to those who have radios or the opportunity to hear a radio, it has brought forth unexpected response. When Bible correspondence courses were offered seventy-five people requested the first course, "Fundamentals of the Christian Faith," even before the material was available.⁷ By March of 1952 this number had grown to one hundred forty-six.⁸ In addition to this, thousands of letters, periodicals, and other pieces of literature were requested. A Braille correspondence course was utilized for

⁶EOM, 1950, p. 82.

⁷EOM, 1951, p. 9.

⁸Ibid., p. 29.

the blind. Soon "Sunday School By Mail" was implemented as another result of radio evangelism. Subscriptions to "Portals of Prayer" were also handled through the Lutheran Hour office in Madras, South India. The radio programs with their influence were reaching out much farther than anyone had hoped. In this way the spoken Word and Work of God is heard over the air; the written Word is sent to many; and follow-up evangelism is carried on wherever possible by missionaries, pastors, and lay people.

Today the India branch of "Bringing Christ to the Nations" has a staff of twenty-two workers. In Madras weekly programs in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, and Hindi are prepared on tape in an air-conditioned, sound-proof studio. This work is under the management of Mr. J. Richard Jesudason, who was appointed in 1952. The program, "Sathya Satchi," (True Witness), is broadcast over Radio Manila in the four languages. There are over ten thousand listeners who correspond with the Madras Lutheran Hour office and over three thousand are enrolled in the Bible correspondence courses.⁹

Newspaper Evangelism

The newspapers of South India are another important medium for evangelism. As literacy progresses, more people will be reading newspapers regularly. Advertisements in newspapers are used to give some pertinent feature of the Christian message, a Bible correspondence course is mentioned, and other inquiries are also solicited. Such courses as those offered in newspaper advertisements and over the radio have turned out to be a very good means of getting behind closed doors and making the message

⁹Bringing Christ to the Nations, The India Edition of the Lutheran Hour News, February, 1958, p. 1.

of God's love and truth accessible to those who are reluctant. Simple Bible courses are offered on the Gospels according to St. Mark and St. John, the Acts of the Apostles, and other books of the Bible. Missionary Meinert Grumm reports on the success of this evangelistic venture:

One of the last pieces of literature sent to those taking the Bible course is a questionnaire that includes the statement: "I would like to become a full disciple of Jesus, but _____ prevents me." Recently a daughter of one of the leading industrialists in India answered this with the expression, "but family considerations prevent me." In another instance a Brahman bank manager who completed the course has continued to come to one of our English Bible Classes. Expressing his opinion of literature evangelism he says, "If you came to my bank and preached, I would feel I was being high pressured. Through the Bible course system I am free to make the first move myself."¹⁰

Along with these Bible courses, reproduced sermons, Sunday School lessons, tracts, pamphlets and the like are sent to interested inquirers.

Literature Program

From the beginning of the Missouri Mission in 1895, distribution of printed material in connection with evangelistic work has been a successful venture. Tracts were written by the different missionaries and distributed in conjunction with evangelistic efforts. There was also a relatively rich storehouse of Christian literature in the Tamil language which had come from the preceding two centuries, especially from the Tranquebar Press, operated by the Leipzig Mission. However, in 1929, a press was bought and installed in Vaniyambadi as an adjunct of the Muslim work begun by Dr. A. Brux.¹¹ Its purpose was the production, publication, and

¹⁰M. Grumm, "Bible Correspondence Course," The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in Asia and Southeast Pacific (St. Louis: Board for Missions in Foreign Countries, 1955), p. 10.

¹¹C. H. Swavelly, editor, The Lutheran Enterprise in India (Madras, South India: Diocesan Press, 1952), p. 202.

distribution of Christian literature as required in connection with evangelistic work among the Mohamzedans.¹² Since 1930 the press has operated on a self-supporting basis and has rendered an important service to the evangelistic outreach of the Mission, as well as helping to further the knowledge and understanding of Indian Christians.

Monthly periodicals are an important means of providing needed growth and strength in the Mission. A monthly publication was proposed in the Tamil language already in 1910. In 1912, it was given the name "Sathya Satchi" (True Witness) and Volume one, number one is dated October, 1921. There is also a Malayalam monthly, "Christiani," which dates back almost as far.¹⁵ These periodicals can be compared to "The Lutheran Witness" in America. In 1955, the Tamil "Sathya Satchi" appeared in 450 homes and the "Christiani" in 267.¹⁴ The goal was set to have a church paper in every literate Christian home. Articles for publication in these church papers regularly came from Indian pastors, other church workers, and laymen.¹⁵

The books which have been published by the Mission are predominantly translations and for the most part have been of a devotional, educational, or theological nature. One original Tamil novel, Inba Ootru, produced by K. Manuel, was published in 1952 and received with much enthusiasm.¹⁶ Twenty-nine books, translated and published under the auspices of the

¹² General Conference Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1952, p. 39. Hereafter cited as GOM.

¹⁵ Swavelly, op. cit., p. 201.

¹⁴ GOM, 1956, p. 30.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 29.

¹⁶ GOM, 1952, p. 38.

Missouri Mission, were sent to the Lutheran World Federation, which met in Minneapolis, Minnesota, August 15-28, 1957.¹⁷ Here was an opportunity to let world Lutheranism know that Christian literature was available in South India. Generally these books are handled through designated Concordia Book Depots at Nagercoil, Ambur, Madras, and Trivandrum.

During the years 1956 and 1957 the chief work of the Literature Committee was the translation of the Book of Concord. Both Indian pastors and missionaries have worked together on this important task. The difficulty of this translation work has been the technical terms, and the setting in which the material was originally written. The English, German, and Latin would be compared for the best translation and then put into the Tamil and Malayalam. Particular care had to be taken to present in all clarity the real meaning of such words as "free will," "actual sin," "original sin," "essential," "fides qua," "fides quae," and similar terms or phrases.¹⁸

This literature program has demanded many tiring hours of translation work by the missionaries. As nationals became available, the Mission expressed its intention of making greater use of Indian brethren for the production of indigenous materials as well as the translation of books, pamphlets, and tracts with adaptation to Indian conditions.¹⁹ One of the difficulties in this literature program was the bilingual nature of the work and finding capable writers in both the Tamil and Malayalam areas. On the whole, the production of literature in both vernaculars up to 1952

¹⁷Church Aids Committee Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1957, pp. 5-6.

¹⁸Lutheran Witness, LXXVI (December 3, 1957), 21.

¹⁹COM, 1950, p. 14.

was not sufficient, causing many to express regret.²⁰ With renewed effort the Mission aimed at greater publication output, using indigenous personnel for translation work, and undertaking an evangelism campaign with leaflets used in selected areas of the three districts. During the next biennium the amount and the quality of the literature published was a step in the right direction. Most productions were translations and only a few were originals. The number of publications prepared by Indian pastors was still regrettably low.²¹ Of particular importance to the Mission congregations were the Sunday School materials in both Tamil and Malayalam.

A theological quarterly was begun in Tamil and Malayalam in 1949. "Christhave Siddhandha Deepikai" (Lamp of Christian Truth) reaches about two-thirds of the pastors and catechists and is published by the faculty of Concordia Seminary, Nagercoil. Concerning this periodical Missionary Kretzmann reports: "In addition to notes for preaching, each issue contains doctrinal and practical articles, a section of excerpts from Luther's writings, and religious news from the world."²² Because most of the pastors and catechists do not have access to much material of this type, the quarterly has rendered a distinct service to the Church and its leaders.

The literature program of the Mission has manifested weaknesses at times, but these have been overcome when detected. At present, a weakness lies in the lack of original devotional and theological publications written against the background of Indian thought by Indian leaders themselves. The production of worthwhile Christian literature is one of the most

²⁰GOM, 1952, p. 36.

²¹GOM, 1954, p. 25.

²²GOM, 1952, p. 47; The Lutheran Witness, LXXVII (February 25, 1958), 21.

durable and effective means of preparation against the day of eventual or possible expulsion of missionaries from India. Both the quality and quantity of vernacular publications must be speeded up in order to meet the growing needs. To fortify and edify the Indian Church in church, school, and home is just as important as reaching out to the non-Christian element of India. The Church in America recognizes the value of literature production and has therefore given its strong financial support.

Reading Rooms

Well-situated reading rooms have been a great aid to the Missouri Mission in carrying on the work of evangelism. A well-lighted, airy room with tables and chairs, religious pictures, and a variety of books, pamphlets, periodicals, magazines, and newspapers is, of course, ideal. In addition to this, a small inside room suitable for interviews often enhances the dignity and stability of a reading room. Too often this ideal cannot be attained due to the lack of funds and a suitable location. The value of this aspect of evangelism depends entirely on the attendant who should be on hand at all times. Missionary Engelbrecht, in a recent letter to Dr. H. H. Koppelman, underlines the importance of well-trained attendants.

. . . many reading rooms have been closed. The usual reason is that its purpose was not being fulfilled or that suitable personnel were not available. . . . We view our reading rooms as evangelism centers and expect our attendants to carry on extensive evangelism in addition to that which they do in the rooms themselves. Our attendants regularly go out into the town for flannelgraph and other programs. We now have excellent Bible correspondence courses, and our rooms are centers for the sale and correction of same. We have film-strip programs several times a week in the rooms themselves. Our attendants are trained teachers who have undergone further training in evangelism and Islamics, especially in the Christian approach to Islam. We have Sunday Schools in conjunction with our reading rooms.

All in all, we try to get good attendants, train them well, and give them an active program so that they won't go stale.²³

Usually the reading rooms are cared for by Indian pastors and other qualified workers.

Missionary May reports on the opening of a reading room in Kilimanoor during 1954:

One of the visitors was a man of thirty-six. He came to me with this story. Twenty years previously a missionary had started a catechism class in that area. Quite a few young men attended. All of a sudden the group stopped coming because they had been threatened if they did not stay away from the Christians. Now it turned out that I opened the reading room almost in the same spot where the original class had been conducted. My visitor stated that he wanted to become a Christian. He has also become instrumental in getting others to come to an instruction class. The seed was sown twenty years ago, and lay dormant all this time. As soon as someone came to harvest, all was ready. But the man complained, "Why did you wait so long to come back?"²⁴

This is only one case of real fruit harvested via the reading room method of evangelism. Usually Bibles or separate books of the Bible are obtainable to the interested reader. To attract the undereducated adult and teenager to the reading rooms, viewmasters, flannelgraphs, slides, or film strips are implemented. By means of discussion and explanation the Bible story is interpreted with its application to one's daily life.

Generally the missionary will visit the reading room, interviewing individuals or groups. These visits also afford him the opportunity to strengthen and instruct the attendant in his important work. Because many people visit these reading rooms throughout the three districts, these attendants have the opportunity of telling the real joy and peace

²³Luther Engelbrecht, "Letter to Dr. H. H. Koppelmarm," dated February 8, 1958. Board for Missions in Foreign Countries, St. Louis.

²⁴W. May, "After Twenty Years," The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in Asia and Southeast Pacific (St. Louis: Board for Missions in Foreign Countries, 1955), p. 5.

which is in Christ Jesus. A reading room has the potential of being one of the most effective evangelistic agencies, reaching out with its arm of divine love and care. "With the proper planning and program we cannot go wrong with a reading room--especially if it is made an integral part of the program of the local congregation, in which event both parties would profit."²⁵

Adult Literacy

India has remained one of the darkest spots on the world's map of illiteracy. In many parts of this vast country the art of reading and writing is known only to a small fraction of the population. In rural areas literacy is a mark of special distinction. Fortunately one of the areas in which the Mission works is the most literate section of India--Kerala State. In spite of this, the majority of the members of the congregations are not literate, due to their caste background and their village or tribal community. In the outcaste villages and among the hill tribes of South India, where these people are often located, the rate of illiteracy is often as high as ninety-five per cent.²⁶ After wrestling with this problem in the respective areas, the decision was made to liquidate illiteracy in the congregations of the Mission.

What started out to be a means of helping its own members to literacy also proved to be an effective way of carrying on evangelistic work among the non-Christians of South India. Almost over night literacy became a welcome benefit, capable of producing a real harvest of souls under the

²⁵Engelbrecht, loc. cit.

²⁶W. E. Bertram, "Imm + Doss = Expansion," The Mission Call, I (March-April, 1953), 13.

blessings of God. Soon after World War II the Ambur District began paving the way for this type of work, and in May, 1951, sent forty-five trainees (thirty-six men and nine women) to a training course for literacy teachers held under the auspices of the National Christian Council of India.²⁷

These qualified men and women were then sent out to teach their fellowmen to read and write. After a survey had been made of the needs for adult literacy in the congregations and in centers of evangelistic opportunity, the Nagercoil District began its program early in 1950.²⁸ In the Trivandrum District, where the percentage of literacy is comparatively very high, this medium of evangelistic outreach was not put into use until 1951.

As one views the reports of this work, remarkable results can be seen not only in literacy, but also in souls gained. Quite often the classes were conducted in the evenings along with the use of audio-visual aids. The following shows how this program operates:

Many opportunities have come through night classes. These center around our Lutheran schools. The teachers come back at night to teach young and middle-aged illiterates. The missionary comes once a week or even twice and a service is held. No special liturgy is used. They begin with the singing of a hymn. Then all kneel for prayer. After this there is the reading of a psalm, the assembly repeating the words the missionary has just read. Following this they sing the Glory be to the Father. Then they go through the chief parts of the catechism. Again all join in reading. The catechism used has a picture to go with each chief part. Following this the group studies a Bible story using the Concordia leaflets, or hears a sermon. At the close of the service a simple catechism leaflet prepared especially for such use is distributed to all who can read. The people attend regularly. I see every hope for fruit from the word.²⁹

²⁷EOM, 1951, p. 35.

²⁸GOM, 1952, p. 28.

²⁹H. T. Manns, "Adult Literacy Night Classes," The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in Asia and the Southeast Pacific, p. 9.

Usually these classes continue for an eight-month period, at which time an examination qualifies the individual for a literacy certificate and a New Testament, the latter a gift from the Mission. The world renowned Laubach Method³⁰ has been used with great success in these classes. Since 1954 this literacy work has expanded to include Telugu and Kanarese speaking people.

Missionary John Naumann, who had long been an enthusiastic booster of adult literacy work and very adept at speaking with the Tamil villager, spent considerable time as the representative of the Adult Literacy Board of the National Christian Council of India. He contacted leaders in the respective linguistic areas with projection equipment and specialized films. Outdoor meetings were arranged in order to sponsor and encourage adult literacy throughout India. Because of the marvelous results of adult literacy work the missionaries, pastors, and laymen are finally getting into high gear in reaching out to the illiterate masses.

Bible Women

Mission work by Indian Christian women was organized by the Ambur District in 1923 and is still carried on under the able leadership of Miss Louise Rathke, a deaconess and nurse, who entered the service of the Mission in 1926. In the Nagercoil and Trivandrum districts similar work among women is carried on under the leadership of Miss Rose Ziemke and Miss Adeline Rink. Pastor and missionary wives are also ready and willing to help in this work. Today there are a total of twenty-nine trained

³⁰F. G. Laubach, India Shall Be Literate (Jubbulpore, G. P., India: Mission Press, 1940).

Bible women; eleven in the Ambur District, seven in the Nagercoil District, and eleven in the Trivandrum District.³¹ Most of these women are widows, which enables them to come and go freely with very few family ties. They are full-time workers of the Church, specializing in visiting women, whether that be in the home, in church society meetings, at the laundry along the creek or river beds or reservoirs, in village groups, or any place where women may be found. Useful handicrafts, such as knitting, sewing, and basket making are taught by these Bible women, but always the one thing needful is presented to the hearers. Materials for instruction in Bible knowledge are given to the women's organizations of the congregations. These organizations, similar to the Lutheran Women's Missionary League and Ladies Aid Societies in America, give an opportunity for the women to express themselves, discuss problems, study the Bible and other topics which are useful for church work.

In addition to the personal mission calls and the organization of societies, the Bible women also render a valuable service in connection with medical mission work. After contacting patients at Bethesda Hospital in Ambur and other abodes of mercy, follow-up calls are made in the homes and villages. In this way a great many caste women are reached.³² The Bible women are responsible for many patients coming to the hospital for care, as health and nutrition information is dispensed freely.

Another important goal which the Bible women attempt to attain is to get the women of the respective congregations active in church work.

³¹Discussion with Miss Louise Rathke.

³²"Deaconess Work," Foreign Missions Bulletin, XLIV (December 31, 1950), 7.

Many of the societies do evangelistic work, usually under the guidance and instruction of a Bible woman or deaconess. Activity of this kind takes real conviction and indoctrination. At times there is a lack of confidence on the part of these women, especially when a low caste woman approaches a caste woman. Only by further study of God's Word and a greater Bible knowledge will this problem be solved.

Youth Work

As one views the work of the India Mission in the past, through the eyes of conference minutes, articles, and the like, a lack of youth evangelism or youth work in general is noticeable. Young people do not associate freely with those of the opposite sex as in America. However, the importance of reaching Christian teen-agers was realized and in 1946 some youth groups were formed. At this time Pastor H. Jackayya, newly graduated from Concordia Seminary at Nagercoil, was appointed secretary for youth work in the Ambur District. Later A. D. James was elected to this post in the Nagercoil District and A. Enos in the Trivandrum District.³³ Previous to this, youth work was done in connection with the Sunday Schools, Bible classes, and high schools. Many problems with youth work appeared; few have been solved. Many young people were drawn into various types of societies whose aims and programs are not always in harmony with Christian faith and life.³⁴ It was felt that unless definite ways

³³N. J. Ezekiel, "A Brief History of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission," 1954, an unpublished manuscript in possession of The Board for Missions in Foreign Countries, St. Louis, p. 5.

³⁴EOM, 1950, p. 95.

and means of using the energies of the young people were provided through channels that will serve their Lord, they will turn elsewhere.

When the important positions of youth secretaries in the three districts were filled, a number of youth societies sprang up. Recognizing the abilities and talents which young people possess, plus their constant readiness and eagerness to act, the Mission decided to spend more time with youth work and contact them through literature and various activities. Youth rallies, evangelistic camps and conventions, were encouraged and arranged, with emphasis on inspirational talks or discussions and evangelistic efforts. These existing youth societies have also engaged in evangelistic work in neighboring villages, while serving their congregations in many ways.³⁵ Today there are sixty-eight such youth leagues.

Since 1947, Youth Sundays have been observed every year with special services, sermons and prayers. The purpose of these have been twofold:

1. To make the members of the congregation realize the importance of organized youth work in the Church and get their wholehearted encouragement, support, and cooperation in youth work.
2. To make the young people realize that the Church of Christ has the prime claim on their body and soul and to make them take interest in their society activities and become good church members.³⁶

Everywhere this purposeful observance was accepted with great anticipation. Aims were set up; namely, to start societies where there were none and to strengthen those already in existence. The youth of the Church has been and will always be a very important part, for they are the leaders, witnesses and homes of the future.

³⁵Ezekiel, loc. cit.

³⁶EOM, 1947, p. 56.

Expansion Into New Fields

The expansion program of the Missouri Mission has been one which runs hot and cold. To understand this situation it is necessary to look back for a moment. In 1930, after a decade of unusual growth, geographic expansion came to a temporary halt. It was felt that the existing congregations and preaching places had to be strengthened or they would revert back to their original darkness. Missionaries concerned themselves largely with training native workers to relieve the heavy load carried by those on the field. The result of this period of consolidation was unusual in that unexpected growth was experienced, both in the number of souls and in the stability of the existing congregations. Baptized membership had more than doubled by 1940 and the number of communicants had almost tripled. The following figures show an increase of tremendous scope, which is also an indication that the close association of missionaries with the congregation work does bear fruit.

	<u>1920</u>	<u>1930</u>	<u>1940</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>1957</u>
Congregations	66	145	205	244	305
Preaching Places		38	61	122	105
Souls	2,401	7,170	14,588	20,714	29,185
Communicants	368	1,692	4,481	7,845	11,402 ³⁷

While there has been the constant concern with building a strong church, never has the importance of evangelistic outreach been minimized.

In 1945 there were only twenty-four foreign missionaries on the field, and the existing stations plus a highly developed educational system had to be maintained. From 1942 to 1946 only two men arrived

³⁷ These figures were obtained from the Indian Mission Statistics and the Statistical Yearbooks of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

from America, both of them returning to the Trivandrum District, where they, with three others, tried to do the work which sixteen were doing in 1942.³⁸ However, with the end of World War II and the arrival of many new missionaries, the Mission began to embark on a period of expansion which has accounted for terrific growth. In 1945 Rev. and Mrs. Theodore Michalk, Rev. Armand Graf, Rev. Elmer Griesse, and Mr. and Mrs. Edward Krafft arrived to strengthen the depleted missionary staff. After a year when no new missionaries came to the field, Missionaries M. J. Lutz, Robert Koepke, and Herbert Zorn then arrived with their families; also a deaconess, Miss Rose Zienke. Again in 1948 three evangelistic missionaries arrived: the Luther Meinzens, Harold Heinleins, and Wilbur May; the future wife of Missionary May joining him two years later. The year 1949 saw an increase in the staff by Missionaries James Mayer and Robert Trautmann with their families and a teacher, Miss Betty Rose Wulf. She served in the Vadakan-gulam High School until April, 1952, when she was killed in an air crash near New Delhi. Missionary personnel making their entry into India in 1950 were Rev. and Mrs. Harry Smith and Teacher and Mrs. Lawrence Meinzen. The medical staff was also strengthened by Dr. and Mrs. Bulle and Miss Hedwig Gronbach. This influx of mission workers brought the staff to a point where new stations could be opened in the three districts.

In the large cities of South India opportunities were seen which could no longer be delayed. The placing of missionaries into the major cities of South India and Ceylon has been a distinct advance in the work of the India Mission. The Ambur District assigned Missionary D. S. Stevenson, a third term missionary, and Rev. H. Jaakayya to do some

³⁸The Lutheran Witness, LXV (February 26, 1946), 75.

vigorous work in the Americanized city of Bangalore.³⁹ This city inhabited by three-fourths of a million people and one of the fastest growing cities in India, lies on the Deccan plateau at an elevation of three thousand feet, about two hundred fifty miles due west of Madras and in the heart of South India. The government has made Bangalore one of the centers of its industrialization campaign. Many factories are located here in the largest city of Mysore State, which is comparatively a very wealthy state with gold fields and three electric power plants. During the years quite a number of Christians from the Ambur District came to Bangalore for employment in the mills and factories. A plan for regional congregations was developed by using the scattered Christians as a nucleus in the different areas of the city. Today this city has three congregations, bilingual work being done, as sixty per cent is Kanarese and the rest Tamil. Missionary S. G. Lang, together with a catechist and two pastors, Rev. J. M. Jesupatham and Rev. V. Jesudas, have done much to develop personal evangelism among the members of the congregations.

The third largest city in India is Madras, with a population of one million four hundred thousand. It is located over a hundred miles north-east of Ambur on the beautiful seashore of the Bay of Bengal. Many people from the villages migrated to this important shipping center for employment in the railways and mills. The Christians drawn to this city formed a small congregation that was served from Ambur since 1924. This city mission was revitalized in 1950 when Missionary J. G. Steinhoff arrived. Today there are seven congregations and two preaching places here with a baptized membership of four hundred twenty. Missionaries placed into

³⁹The Lutheran Witness, LXVII (November 2, 1948), 358.

large cities were made conscious of the fact that new techniques of work were necessary, and they arranged to meet every year for an exchange of their experiences and to discuss plans, problems, methods, and opportunities.⁴⁰

About two hundred fifty miles south of Madras in the Nagercoil District at the foot of the Palni Hills, lies Madura, one of India's ancient and famous cities. Over a third of a million people live in this city of festivals and holy places. In and around Madura there are large cotton mills that employ thousands of countryfolk who have moved here for this purpose. In 1950 Missionary G. Rittmann began work in this important center of Hinduism, while still caring for the Ramnad and Madura District as well as scattered congregations in the Trichinopoly and Tanjore areas, one hundred miles to the north.

In the Nagercoil District the arm of the Mission bridged the few miles of water between India and Ceylon to the island's capital, Columbo. As the failure of rains in South India made the food situation unbearable, members of the Mission from the Tamil country migrated to Ceylon on occasion and worked in the tea and rubber estates or engaged in other occupations. Since 1927 missionaries or Indian pastors from Nagercoil served these immigrants. In 1949 Missionary E. H. Prange became the first resident missionary on the island, and in 1950 he was joined by Tamil Catechist M. David from India. Together these men devoted their time to gathering the scattered members into congregations and surveying the area surrounding Columbo. Large concentrations of unevangelized Hindus and Buddhists

⁴⁰The first City Missionary Conference took place October 23-24, 1950, in Madras. The minutes of this meeting are included in the 1951 Volume of the Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission.

were found among the city's 425,000 population, and with the addition of Missionary Andrew Fritze in 1953, work was started in the Sinhalese language. About one fifth of the island's more than eight and one-half million people speak Tamil and are predominantly Hindu in faith; while two-thirds of the people are Sinhalese Buddhists.⁴¹ The Christian religion claims ten per cent of the population, three-fourths of which are Roman Catholics. Not only has the India Mission been active in the urban area of Colombo, but there are congregations and Sunday Schools on a number of the tea estates which dot the 25,000 square miles of Ceylon.⁴² Missionary Victor Suehs arrived in Ceylon in 1957 as a replacement for Missionary Prange. Today there are nine congregations in and around Colombo, seven having been opened since 1954, with seventy-eight baptized members and twenty-nine communicants.

In the Trivandrum District a city mission was begun in the large sea port town of Cochin-Ernakulam. Missionary H. Smith was allocated to this post, together with an Indian pastor and a catechist in 1951.⁴³ There are at least one hundred thousand inhabitants living in these beautiful cities, which are strategically located on the West coast of India. The average intelligence of these people is extremely high, which adds to the difficulty of this urban field. Also in the large city of Trivandrum, located about fifty miles north of the tip of India on the West coast, expansion work was planned and put into operation.

⁴¹Ceylon—1957 (Washington D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1957), p. 4.

⁴²Kretzmann, op. cit., p. 6. Cf. E. H. Prange, "Ceylon" and "Gospel on a Tea Estate," The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in Asia and the Southeast Pacific, pp. 16-17.

⁴³GOM, 1952, p. 3.

In 1950 the Nagercoil District assigned a missionary to the Colachel field in Travancore, and in 1952 the Tinnivelli District was expanded when Pavanasam, an industrial area which lies just seventy-five miles north of Nagercoil, was developed by the Indian government. With the construction of dams and electrical and textile plants, many people flocked to this underdeveloped area. Rev. K. S. Ohelliah was called to work in this new field with the missionary from Vallioor. The total number of people scattered about in this area numbers close to a million. Various house services are conducted, along with Bible classes and Sunday Schools. Progress here has been due mainly to the fact that individual Christians have won their friends and relatives.

The above new fields have been primarily located in large urban or industrial areas. There has also been extensive expansion into the village and hill tribe areas of South India. One of these fields is the Wynaad area on the Malabar coast north of the states of Travancore and Cochin--Kerala State today. Wynaad is a table-land, sixty miles long and thirty broad, in the midst of the Western Ghats with an elevation of three thousand feet. For a long time malaria was the scourge of this area, but finally the government with assistance from the World Health Organization cleared a large section by means of a DDT program. The government then granted free land to about two thousand army veterans and a colony was started. In addition to this colony there are several thousand native hill people living in the Wynaad area. After a number of survey trips had been made and some national workers had spent some time there, Missionary M. J. Lutz took up residence in 1949. The large prospects in this area developed considerably during the next years, not only among the hill tribes, but among the colony and tea estate population

as well. Three pastors were called to this outpost: M. Johanan, O. K. Alexander, and M. Abishai. The two latter men succeeded in working out an adult literacy program among the hill people. They would move from one village to the next with their Concordia Sunday School leaflets telling the story of the Savior. In spite of the troublesome landlords who felt that the Christian Church was merely misleading a simple people by offering inducements, small congregations were established. In the face of opposition some ceased coming to the services and classes, but the majority stayed. Recently a new field was opened in Tortakarda. The colony in the Wynaad has been served by Rev. Johanan through a Christian reading room, street preaching, and follow-up calls.⁴⁴

Farther south at Cherpalcheri in the Valluvanaad area of South Malabar, Missionary Griesse was assigned to open a station in 1952. Here the filmstrip method of open-air preaching was used on a large scale for the first time. With ten different places to show the filmstrips and/or slides, he would reach two each evening and all of them weekly. These showings were usually held in an open field or at the roadside, the projection accomplished by means of a kerosene petromax. As many as two hundred people have come out and stood quietly to listen to the Bible story.⁴⁵ From Cherpalcheri Missionary Griesse, an Indian pastor and a catechist branched out into the hill tribes in the surrounding area of the Western Ghats.

⁴⁴M. J. Lutz, "The Colony," and "Original Inhabitants," The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in Asia and the Southeast Pacific, pp. 6-7; M. L. Kretzmann, op. cit., p. 6; Foreign Missions Bulletin, XXXIX (September 30, 1949), 5.

⁴⁵Elmer Griesse, "Silent Valley," The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in Asia and the Southeast Pacific, p. 5; GOM, 1954, p. 4; The Mission Call, II (March-April, 1954), 7.

In the numerically largest field of the Mission, Parassala, there has been added opportunity for expansion. Here a congregation was begun in Kalliyal by a Christian layman who conducted Sunday services each week. Similar village expansion was a part of the Nagercoil District work in Eruvardi, a short distance from Vallioor, and Tuticorin, the entry port for the southern tip of India. Expansion in the latter field especially has been a recent effort planned and executed by the Indian Church alone. They have shown that they know how to approach their own people and can carry on an evangelism program by themselves.⁴⁶ Nor has the Ambur District neglected the villages of India. Development of the Hosur field, between Krishnagiri and Bangalore, began in 1950. This work was supervised from Bangalore, but built up by Indian pastors and workers.

Further expansion during the past five years has been limited due to the lack of missionary personnel. The sudden death of Miss Wulf has been mentioned. Missionary Daniel Chuvala returned to America after a short illness in September, 1952, for emergency surgery. He was called Home on February 20, 1953. For various reasons the following missionaries found it necessary to continue their ministry in the United States: Missionary B. Strasen, who had served in India from 1921 to 1951; Missionary R. H. Brauer, after twenty-eight years of service from 1925 to 1953; Missionaries D. S. Stevenson and A. Rasch, after twenty-seven years each from 1926 to 1953; Missionary M. L. Wynken, from 1928 to 1954; H. Peckmann 1929 to 1952; W. Landgraf 1928 to 1952; A. J. Buehner 1928 to 1951; W. E. Bertram 1931 to 1954; H. E. Miller 1928 to 1954; M. J. Lutz

⁴⁶W. Dukewits, "Tuticorin Evangelistic Campaign," The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in Asia and the Southeast Pacific, pp. 7-8.

1935 to 1957; W. G. Dukewits 1930 to 1957; H. Smith 1950 to 1956; and E. H. Prange 1932 to 1957. The appendix lists all the missionaries who have served in India since 1945 or are still in service.

Two very important steps were taken in the early 1950's as far as expansion is concerned. One of these in 1952 when the General Conference recommended the establishment of a station in Bombay, the large metropolitan city almost a thousand miles northwest of the mission station at Madras.⁴⁷ The second phase of expansion among the Muslims of South India will be treated in the following chapter. The vast field of Bombay where there are approximately five million unevangelized people, is divided into three parts: the Poonah District which lies to the east of Bombay, Bombay proper, and the Colaba District to the south of Bombay. Various survey trips into this area underscored the need of starting a station in Bombay proper. In 1954 Rev. P. K. George and Rev. James Selvaraj accepted calls to this (for them) "foreign mission." Though the work among the Lutherans in Bombay was mainly in the Tamil and Malayalam languages, both pastors studied Hindi as well, the main language of Bombay's people. Bombay is so different from the rest of India, that the two pastors, arriving from the villages of the South, felt as strange as American missionaries first arriving in India. They discovered the languages unintelligible, the customs different, the food unfamiliar, and the hectic way of life quite baffling.⁴⁸ Some of the difficulty of the work in a city of this kind can be grasped by the report of one missionary active there who must carry a

⁴⁷The Lutheran Witness, LXXI (March 4, 1952), 12. Cf. GOM, 1952, p. 29.

⁴⁸James Mayer, "Bombay," The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod in Asia and the Southeast Pacific, p. 5.

supply of Bible portions in fifteen different languages in order to distribute them to the people.⁴⁹ In spite of the many obstacles and problems, the two pastors with Missionary Mayer mapped out an aggressive plan for carrying the Gospel of Light into the spiritual darkness of Bombay. Efforts were planned in three major fields of endeavor: gathering Lutheran Christians who for many years were separated from the church of their native villages into a congregation, carrying on active evangelistic campaigns through and with local Christians, and working among the non-Christian Hindi-speaking people of Bombay.⁵⁰ In 1956 Rev. J. O. Gamaliel accepted the call to replace Pastor George in Bombay. The latter felt it necessary to take a pastorate in Ernakulam because of illness in his family.

Aggressive evangelistic work has been carried on in many areas during the past thirteen years. Today the India Evangelical Lutheran Church looks forward to further development of personal evangelism, missionary expansion, and an intensified stewardship program.⁵¹ Evangelism in India can no longer be looked upon as the work of a salaried person, rather is it regarded as the privilege of the rank and file of the Church. As this privilege is developed the tempo of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church will undergo a rapid advance in evangelism and expansion.

⁴⁹H. H. Koppelman, "A Report of the Visitation of Our Asiatic Mission Field," a mimeographed report, 1952, p. 15.

⁵⁰EOM, 1954, p. 45.

⁵¹The Lutheran Witness, LXXVII (February 25, 1958), 78.

CHAPTER IV

MISSION TO THE MUSLIMS

The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod began mission work among the Mohammedans of India in 1923. Here in the vicinity of Vaniyambadi, half of whose ten thousand inhabitants were either genuine Muslims or else Hindu converts to Mohammedanism, a reading room was opened and some evangelistic work was carried on in the Mohammedan sections of the community. Dr. A. A. Bruk, who had prepared himself in the Arabic language and customs at the University of Chicago from 1919 to 1923, was the founder of this important work. After a five-month stopover in Beirut, he and his family arrived in Bombay January 3, 1924. Due to numerous conflicts over the existing reading room, this phase of the work had to be abandoned. Medical work among the Muslims was undertaken and seemed to experience some success. In 1928 Missionary Burow came to help Dr. Bruk. Three years later on February 24, 1931, Dr. Bruk discontinued work in India, and the Mohammedan Mission was left entirely in the hands of Missionary Burow. After completing his language study, Rev. Burow took over the management of the press which had been established in 1928 and used extensively for printing Muslim Mission literature. Because there was no Christian material in the Urdu language, the supply came solely from this source. Later the press became the property of the entire mission. Located at Vaniyambadi, the Mission Press was a valuable asset, a means of economy, and a handy and efficient servant to the Mission, providing the necessary publications when other presses were too busy to handle them. After carrying the whole load for five years,

Missionary Burow discontinued his work in India in 1936.¹ The Moham-
medan Mission began its period of hibernation which lasted until early
in 1950.

Dr. Henry Nau, the famed mission personality of The Lutheran Church--
Missouri Synod, began arousing interest in Christian Missions among the
Muslims in the early forties. "The Society for the Promotion of Moham-
medan Missions" was formed by a group of interested people in the South-
eastern District of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod. "The Minaret"
became the official organ of this society. It was truly a "call for
Lutheran Missions to the 350 million people of the Muslim world."²
Attention was at first directed toward work among the Kurds in Iraq.
Due to the existing political conditions kindled by religious fanaticism,
the plans were changed. Dr. Nau then looked into the possibility of be-
ginning work among the Muslims of Iran.³ Here, too, complications set
in, for the government of Iran was extremely wary and feared ulterior
motives.⁴ On the advice of the Board for Missions in Foreign Countries,
Dr. Nau journeyed to India to survey the possibilities of work among the
Muslims along the Malabar Coast in South India. Missionaries John Gall
and Henry Otten, who had received calls into this work in 1948, would
soon join Dr. Nau in India. The General Conference which met in early
January, 1950, made these recommendations regarding the Muslim work:

¹Elmer E. Griesse, "Lutheran India Missions," unpublished Master of
Arts Thesis, Washington University, St. Louis, 1945, p. 59.

²Robert C. Stade, "In Memoriam," The Minaret, XI (June, 1956), 3-4.

³Henry Nau, "On the Way," The Minaret, V (September, 1949), 1.

⁴E. F. Engelbert, "Waiting," The Minaret, V (December, 1949), 1.

1. That we ask Dr. Nau to survey the various areas in South India where Muslims are concentrated.
2. That the survey of the Wynaad area be done in conjunction with the resident missionary [Martin Lutz] and Missionary Wyncken.
3. That the resumption of Muslim Mission work in the North Arcot and Salem District be given due consideration in the selection of a field of work.
4. That Dr. Nau be requested to consult with the General Conference Executive Committee before making his final recommendations to the Home Board.
5. That the Muslim Mission work be constituted as a separate Muslim Mission Conference, with an independent budget, and independent spheres of work, receiving its financial support from the General Treasurer in the same manner that the present districts receive theirs, and that the manner of affiliation with General Conference be committed to a committee consisting of Dr. Nau (if he is still in the country), the Muslim missionaries, and the Executive Committee of General Conference.
6. In order to insure continuity in this Muslim Mission work, every effort be made to bring the staff of Muslim Missions up to at least four or five men as early as possible.
7. That, in the event that not enough men are available for this work from America, we consider the possibility of releasing some men from the India Mission, and that adequate provision be made for training in a recognized school of Islamics before entering the work.⁵

With these resolutions as the foundation upon which to build, the Muslim Mission work was revived. On May 10, 1950, Missionary Gall and Missionary Otten with his wife, arrived at the Beach Hotel in Calicut, where Dr. Nau was waiting. Previous to their departure from America, they had spent a year of study at the Kennedy School of Missions in Hartford, Connecticut. For the next year or so language study was undertaken at Feroke, a town on the banks of the Baipore River, about a half mile from the ocean and thirty or forty miles from the Wynaad highlands.⁶

It had been decided previous to this that the work would be concentrated among the Mappilas or Moplahs along the Malabar coast and also in

⁵General Conference Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1950, p. 12. Hereafter referred to as GCM.

⁶J. Gall and H. Otten, "Here We Are," The Minaret, VI (June, 1950), 1.

Vaniyambadi, where the seed sown years ago had not been altogether in vain. Vaniyambadi, a city of 40,000 people located on the main road between Bangalore and Madras, the largest cities in South India, is one of the stations of the Ambur District of the India Mission. The chief work done here at this time was among the Hindus. Muslims make up about one-half of the total population. Many of these people were at one time out-caste Hindus, having been converted under Muslim pressure during the days when Mohammedan rulers controlled the area.⁷

The mission work among the Mappilas along the Malabar coast also showed an outstanding need. Although the religion of the Koran is monotheistic, the Mappilas incorporated into their worship many saints and martyrs. Their religion showed not a few traces of primitive animism and ancestor worship. These particular people were also known as a troublesome class. Their rebellious spirit seems to have been nourished by poverty, agrarian problems, and religious fanaticism of one kind or another.⁸ The community as a whole was found to be of a rural rather than of an urban type. It was suggested by Dr. Nau and the two other members of the committee (Dr. O. H. Schmidt and M. J. Lutz) appointed by the General Conference, that for the first the Muslim missionaries live just a bit outside of the selected field itself. Reasons which prompted this decision were: first, this area though normally peaceful and friendly, could easily flare up if their leaders aroused them. Thus, a minor error on the part of the missionaries in their first year might

⁷John Gall, "Vaniyambadi," The Minaret, VI (December, 1950), 10.

⁸General Conference Executive Committee Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1950, p. 5. Hereafter cited as ECM.

spoil the chances of future success; second, any house available within the area itself would involve eviction of the present tenant, considerable repairs, hardship for the new men, and selection of a center before the mission was ready for it.⁹

One of the most difficult tasks which Dr. Nau and the others had to deal with was the method of approach. How do we reach these Mohammedans with the Gospel? The fact that it is difficult to gain converts from Mohammedanism to Christianity cannot be denied. Anyone who is acquainted with the facts knows that Muslims are and always have been difficult to convert. These people are especially on their guard against Christianity: first of all, because of what the Koran says about this religion. The Koran states that Christians believe in three Gods—the Father, the Virgin Mary, and Jesus. There is nothing so hated among Mohammedans as polytheism.¹⁰ The Muslim is filled with revulsion because of misconceptions. Secondly, Christian missionaries in the past have approached the Mohammedan from the logical standpoint, arguing for the sole truth of Christianity. This method of controversy was a total failure. Men are seldom brought to Christ by logic, for St. Paul refers to the Gospel of Christ as being foolishness to men. The Muslim must have a different approach. In this witness the most important thing is continuity of effort. Many Muslim mission enterprises died for lack of continuity.¹¹ With the knowledge of these particulars Missionaries Gall, Otten, and Nau sought to

⁹Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁰J. Gall, "Cross or Crescent," The Mission Call, IV (September, 1949), 3.

¹¹EOM, 1950, p. 8.

impress Mohammedans with the truth of the Gospel more or less indirectly, using the "non-Biblical" approach. This type of witness is done by performing works of mercy by means of hospitals, clinics, orphanages, schools, and reading rooms. In these ways men of God have sought to let their light so shine before men that they may see the power of the Gospel and believe.

Missionary Henry Otten and his wife, and Missionary John Gall spent their first four months from May to August of 1950 at Feroke, Malabar. In August, Dr. Henry Nau returned to his post as President of Immanuel Lutheran College at Greensboro, North Carolina. A few months later the two missionaries left on the field moved from Feroke to Calicut. The main occupation during this time at these two places was language study. In addition some tours were made into the interior with a view toward finding a permanent mission station on the Malabar coast. In December of 1950 Missionary Gall returned to America.

In 1951 after numerous contacts with the people of the Calicut area, Missionary Otten with his family settled in Wandoor because of its central location and the availability of suitable living quarters. In this area, which was about three hundred square miles, the population was predominantly Muslim, and other church bodies had not located there. Mr. K. Lukose, a 1951 graduate of the Missouri Mission Seminary at Nagercoil, arrived to take up permanent work with Rev. Otten. Previous to this, Mr. Lukose and another Indian Christian, Susselan, were closely associated with the Muslim work in this area, have made numerous excursions with Rev. Otten. These two again spent a period of about four months in the study of Arabic and Islamics. There were many interested inquirers who sought out the new missionary and his religion. Some even tried to

convert Missionary Otten to the Muslim faith. Again and again opportunities arose to witness to the Gospel and to clarify wrong ideas which were entertained about Christianity. In Wandoor itself a well-lighted and well-ventilated reading room was rented and opened December 4, 1951, with Mr. Lukose in charge. Religious pictures were explained from the Bible, and the reading room also served as a library. Newspapers, Christian biographies in Malayalam, Christian stories for children, Bibles, Gospels, and a few Christian novels were placed on the shelves. Also a biographical study of Christ and a copy of Bevan Jones' Best Friend in Malayalam, written especially for Muslims, were used in the reading room.¹² In addition to this phase of the work Missionary Otten drew up plans for a small dispensary in the city of Wandoor. A lady doctor was procured from Tiruvalla, a building was rented, and the people were being served in this area of need.

While this was happening along the Malabar coast, Dr. Nau, although sixty-nine years old, had accepted a call to return to India, his first love, as a missionary to the followers of Mohammed, whom Dr. Nau so often referred to as "the Forgotten People" of Christian mission endeavors. He had served in India from 1905, the date of his graduation from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, to 1914. He had been personally responsible for opening up mission stations in the Nagercoil and Malayalam areas. Early in August of 1951 Dr. Nau and his wife arrived in Vaniyambadi.¹³ There a reading room was immediately put to use. In addition to this activity,

¹²GOM, 1952, p. 32.

¹³R. Stade, "Lest We Forget," The Minaret, VII (September, 1951), 3.

Dr. Nau established contact with students of high school age; lectured on the Bible at Islamiah College, a Muslim owned and operated college in Vaniyambadi; and regularly visited Krishmagiri and other nearby villages and towns. The work in the Vaniyambadi area was more complicated due to the use of Urdu. Dr. Nau spent four to six hours each day in the study of this difficult language. His efforts toward obtaining adequate Indian personnel for the work among Muslims was experiencing some success. A catechist and his wife from the Ambur District offered to enter this field of labor; also, another Bible woman from the same area. Dr. Nau arranged for them to study Urdu under a student from Islamiah College. The study of Urdu was incorporated into the curriculum at Concordia High School, Ambur, in this way hoping to encourage and interest more Indian Christians to prepare themselves for this vital field of witness.

Soon after the beginning of the Muslim Mission, it was necessary to incorporate the group into the General Conference of the Missouri Lutheran Mission. This action was necessary because of the political situation and, also, because of financial reasons in respect to the home board. It was decided that the Muslim Mission would constitute a separate Conference within the General Conference and would have the same privileges and rights as the other area conferences with regard to allocation of missionaries, finances, general administration of work and representation on the General Conference Executive Committee.¹⁴

Additional missionary personnel were on the way from America. Two 1952 graduates of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, received and accepted

¹⁴EOM, 1952, p. 17.

calls to serve in the Muslim Mission fields. Ernest Hahn and his wife arrived in Vaniyambadi in January, 1953. Roland Miller and his wife arrived in Malabar in September of the same year, after completing a year of studies in the Kennedy School of Missions. For a short time there would be two missionaries in each of the harvest fields. This, however, would be only temporary, for Dr. Nau was expected to leave for America in 1954. Due to the difficulties in obtaining visas for foreign missionaries (Missionaries Hahn and Miller had no difficulty because of their Canadian citizenship), it was decided to request Indian help in the Muslim Mission fields. Mr. K. Satyanesan was appointed to replace Mr. K. Lukose, who had resigned from the work in the Wandoor reading room. This replacement lasted only a short time, for Mr. Satyanesan returned to the Seminary at Nagercoil to undergo further training. A very capable replacement was acquired in the person of N. Appukuttan. On March 22, 1953, Rev. P. V. David was ordained and commissioned in Trivandrum as the first Indian pastor among the Muslims.¹⁵ In the following year Rev. P. Chellayyan and Rev. R. Devadoss also accepted calls into the Muslim Mission work.¹⁶ So, the small force of Gospel workmen was growing.

Meanwhile, the dispensary at Wandoor had expanded and reached out into the small village of Pandikad, eight miles south. Each week the small force from Wandoor would take the short jaunt to Pandikad for the purpose of serving the people with medicine for the body and the soul. At Wandoor Dr. Mary Abraham, a Mar Thoma Syrian Christian, who had

¹⁵Muslim Mission Conference Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1953, p. 2. Hereafter will be referred to as MDM.

¹⁶"Notes of Interest," The Minaret, X (September, 1954), 2.

received her medical training and experienced as a habitant in North India, had arrived.¹⁷ Mrs. A. Thomas was acquired as the compounder or pharmacist. A replacement was soon needed, as Mrs. Thomas resigned. After a considerable search by Missionary Otten, Mr. P. N. Varughese was hired. He had received his training in the Presbyterian Mission Hospital in Miraj and proved himself a neat and efficient compounder as well as a sincere Christian.¹⁸ Mrs. Otten was capable of doing most of the laboratory diagnosis in the dispensary. At the end of the first year the Wandoor dispensary treated a total number of 17,175 patients. Of this number 771 were treated from the branch dispensary at Pandikad.¹⁹ From the Conquest for Christ funds of the Missouri Synod, money had been allotted for these buildings: dispensary, doctor's house, compounders' house, pastor's house, and missionary bungalow. Plans were drawn up for this much needed building program on eight acres of land, located next to the government high school.²⁰

When Missionary and Mrs. R. Miller arrived in Malabar, they took up residence about thirteen miles west of Wandoor. For the first year they devoted themselves almost entirely to the study of the Malayalam language. After this it was decided by the Muslim Mission Conference to make Malapuram the area to be developed by Missionary Miller.²¹ This place was

¹⁷H. Otten, "A Few Hours in the Wandoor Dispensary," The Minaret, VIII (September, 1952), 6.

¹⁸R. C. Stade, "News From the Field," The Minaret, VIII (December, 1952), 12.

¹⁹F. Frese, "Pandikad at Home," The Minaret, IX (December, 1953), 12.

²⁰H. Otten, "A Chapel on the Hill," Ibid., p. 4.

²¹MMOM, 1954, p. 1.

situated in the center of the Muslim population and located high on the slope of a hill, making it an excellent place to live. Missionary and Mrs. Hahn both spent fifteen months of intensive work in the study of the Urdu language. Meanwhile, Dr. Nau continued to make his rounds, instructing many individuals and doing evangelistic work. Here is an excerpt from one of his last letters from the field:

Besides this work [Dr. Nau is referring to the religious instruction classes in which he was also engaged.], I have regularly visited the villages round about Vaniyambadi, proclaiming to the people forgiveness of sin and salvation through the Name of Jesus Christ. Altogether I have visited about 150 of these villages, and in only two of them have I been met with opposition. Generally speaking, the people were happy to listen. Usually the Indian pastors from Vaniyambadi and Medupallayam accompanied me.

Twenty-five miles from here are the Javvadi Hills, inhabited by hill tribes. Last week again we trekked up there and stayed some three days. This time I took two Bible women along in order to attract the women of these hill tribes. We came back greatly encouraged. The work up there is great enough to demand the services of a full-time pastor.²²

On April 17, 1954, Dr. Nau and his wife sailed from India for America with the intent, however, of returning after a brief furlough. This left the Vaniyambadi field in the hands of Missionary Hahn and of Rev. Devadoss, who was still engaged in preparatory work in the Henry Martyn School of Islamics at Aligarh, North India.

Luther Engelbrecht, a 1953 graduate of the St. Louis Seminary, had accepted the call to labor among the Muslims. He and his family were very eager to enter the work and began their preparation in the Kennedy School of Missions.²³ They sailed for India on May 25, 1955. He had

²² H. Nau, "Dr. Nau Writes," The Minaret, IX (May, 1954), 10.

²³ MADM, 1954, p. 5.

been allocated to replace Dr. Nau, who had been active in and around Vaniyambadi. Because this field was being worked by Missionary Hahn, together with Rev. Devadoss, an Indian pastor; Decasagayam, reading room attendant; and Mrs. Devabakkiam, a Bible woman; it was decided another opportunity should be developed in and around Krishnagiri. Missionary Engelbrecht moved here in October, 1956, and worked among four different linguistic groups: Urdu, the language of most Indian Muslims; Tamil, the language of Madras State and of most of the Indian Christians; Telugu, the language of neighboring Andhra State; and Kanarese, the language of neighboring Mysore State. He himself was able to learn only Urdu and relied on Indian co-workers for the other languages.²⁴

Dr. Nau, who had hoped to return to this beloved field of labor in India, had been called by His Lord to his home in heaven. On May 17, 1956, the man of God who had brought light to many dark corners of the earth passed from the Church Militant to the Church Triumphant. He had given much of his life to the mission fields of our Church.

Along the Malabar coast Missionaries Miller and Otten carried on their labors of love and mercy by means of the dispensary at Wandoor and now a Child Welfare and Maternity Guidance Center at Malappuram.. The latter was dedicated March 26, 1956, and a Christian nurse, Miss Muthammal, was appointed to serve the people in that area. In Wandoor Dr. Mary Abraham, who had served in the dispensary from its beginning, took up another post and left on February 13, 1955. For a brief period of time Dr. Saramma Thomas, a very efficient and capable woman, carried

²⁴Brief Items," The Minaret, XIII (September, 1957), 12.

on the work. This appointment was only temporary and on July 1, 1955, Dr. Annamma Isaac took up her duties.²⁵ Because the number of patients being treated by the dispensary had almost doubled, it was necessary to increase the staff. In December of 1955, Mrs. Elsie Varughese, the wife of the compounder, was appointed as nurse and midwife. A few months later Miss Achamma Cherian joined the staff as an aid to Mrs. Otten, the laboratory technician. In May of 1956, a male doctor, Dr. T. V. Kuruville, was added to the dispensary staff.²⁶ With these additions it was made possible for Missionary Otten and his family to return to America for a year's furlough, without harm to the evangelistic and medical work of Wandoor and Pandikad. During the first term the Ottens had laid an excellent foundation for extensive evangelistic work among the Mappilas of Wandoor and the surrounding area. With his return in October of 1957, big steps forward could be looked for, with the continued blessing of the Lord.

While Missionary Otten and his family were on furlough the evangelistic work was carried on by Rev. P. V. David, A. Asirvadam, and R. Frederick. Children and adults with whom these men met acquired a good knowledge of Bible History in the reading rooms at Wandoor and Pandikad. Flannelgraphs, Sunday School leaflets, and various books were used as effective aids in this work. The most important activity on the part of Rev. David was personal witness. He reports of his work in this way:

Using Wandoor as the center, I have walked up to eight miles in all directions, visiting homes along the roadside, stopping in shops,

²⁵MMOM, 1955, p. 19.

²⁶MMOM, 1956, p. 6.

and talking to many individuals about the Lord Jesus Christ. Altogether I have spoken to some five hundred families and more than one thousand individuals. Some of these were Hindus, but the great majority were Muslims. A number of these have requested additional literature to read and study. In Muslim bazaars there have been repeated requests for Arabic and Malayalam Gospels.²⁷

Also in Wandoor, Rev. David conducted Bible classes for two Muslims and held devotions in the dispensary. The dispensary continued its service of love by treating about one hundred patients daily.²⁸

Missionary Otten and his family returned to Wandoor on October 14, 1957. Practically the entire Mohammedan town assembled to welcome them back.²⁹ This reception was quite a contrast to the one received when work was begun in the area. Suspicions and even threats accompanied the Ottens in 1951; but now there were words of welcome and joy. Truly the Gospel witness, lived out in daily life, had taken hold upon the people of Wandoor.

Nineteen fifty-seven saw many forward steps being made in the other fields of operation, also. A vacation Bible school was conducted in Vaniyambadi in an attempt to reach the children of that city who as yet had not had the opportunity for hearing and learning of Jesus. Twenty-seven men and women, including lay people and teachers, served on the staff, and 212 children, representing twenty localities, were enrolled.³⁰ In Krishnagiri a reading room was opened and put into operation by Mr. G.

²⁷P. V. David, "An Open Letter," The Minaret, XIII (January, 1958), 9.

²⁸"Mission Among the Muslims in India," The Lutheran Witness, LXXVII (January 28, 1958), 15.

²⁹"News of the Church in the World," The Lutheran Witness, LXXVII (January 14, 1958), 5.

³⁰"News Items," The Minaret, XIII (January, 1958), 10.

Shem, a consecrated and courageous young worker.³¹ In September an institute for Christians interested in learning how to approach Muslims was held in Vaniyambadi. In Malappuram Missionary R. Miller instructed a wealthy cloth merchant, a Muslim farmer, and a Hindu clerk; twelve Hindu children were enrolled in the Sunday School.³² Fifty patients a day came to the Welfare Center located at Malappuram for treatment and care. The leprosy clinic connected with the Center served about ninety lepers. And, thus, the work among the Muslims of India has continued to grow.

For years the need for organized Muslim evangelism in other areas was recognized, but only recently expansion in the Nilamel, Tinnevely, and Vallioor areas realized. After a survey of the Nilamel area, it was estimated about one hundred thousand Muslims live within a thirty mile radius. Rev. P. V. David, who had much experience in Muslim evangelism, began this work in and around Nilamel.³³ Two students, K. P. Samraj and S. Suvisheshamuthu, who will graduate from Concordia Seminary, Nagercoil, in 1958, will be called to further expand the Muslim Mission outreach. Gospel work among the Muslims by the Seminary students at Nagercoil was also carried on as a part of the regular field work program. The students go in teams to the Muslim villages where they carry on both individual evangelism and street meetings.³⁴ Much enthusiasm and interest has been

³¹Ibid., p. 11.

³²"Mission Among the Muslims in India," loc. cit.

³³MDM, 1957, p. 15.

³⁴Ibid., p. 4.

shown in this field work. Truly the missionaries and Indian Christians have brought the Gospel of love and sacrifice and salvation to the "Forgotten People" of Christian Missions.

The final meeting of the Muslim Mission Conference of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission took place in Krishnagiri on November 2, 1957. As of January, 1958, this Conference became the Board for Muslim Work of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church. In the past it was an independent conference; now it is a board under the control of the Indian Church. This work will still receive support from the Home Board in America, and yet it will be the responsibility of Indian Christians. This is their mission work, and with the blessings of Almighty God the endeavor will continue to move forward—ever forward until the day when the true Christian witness has reached the remotest corner of India and the world.

CHAPTER V

GROWTH TOWARD AN INDIGENOUS CHURCH

It was not only India that entered a new era on Independence Day, 1947, but also the Mission of the Missouri Synod. Since that time there has been greater effort toward having the congregations take over more responsibility for their work of building the Church of Christ. Eyes were fixed on the day when the Church in India would be able to do the work of the Lord without depending on assistance or guidance from other lands. In order to realize this goal, a church, built on an Indian scale to suit Indian needs, rather than a foreign church imposed on Indian soil, would have to be developed. In the formation of an indigenous church in India the goals of self-government, self-support, and self-propagation were stressed.

The preliminary steps of setting up a program of cooperation between missionaries and Indian leaders had been taken in all three districts, Ambur, Trivandrum, and Nagercoil, previous to 1947. Following the years of world turmoil from 1940 to 1945, all of India realized that independence was fast approaching. When this came the Mission accelerated its program of developing proper leadership, capable of assuming control of the affairs of the church. At first there seemed to be very little enthusiasm for self-government on the part of the Indian Christians, and missionaries also entertained much doubt about the ability of the congregations to conduct their own affairs.¹ However, the atmosphere of a

¹O. H. Swavely, editor, The Lutheran Enterprise in India (Madras, South India: The Diocesan Press, 1952), p. 196.

politically free India began to make it easier to interest the congregations in self-support and self-government.

Already in 1924 the congregations of the Ambur District had organized themselves into a Pirathinithi Sangam or Delegates Conference for purposes of conducting joint evangelistic projects. Year after year more and more responsibilities were given to this Sangam with a view of converting it into a Synod. This goal was attained on October 22, 1948, when a draft constitution was accepted. Rev. M. Philip, an Indian pastor from Vaniyambadi, was elected as the first president of the Synod, which comprised forty-eight congregations with a baptized membership of a little more than five thousand.² A year later, in October, 1949, the India Evangelical Lutheran Church—Ambur District was officially inaugurated. It was felt that in the matter of self-government integration was the best procedure; that is, a partnership between Church and Mission in the total work of the Church. Therefore, a Joint Executive Council, composed of eight Indian members and all the missionaries of the Ambur District, was set up to conduct church business. Joint administrative committees were established to administer evangelistic, educational and medical work.³ No longer was it only missionaries who made the decisions, but missionaries and elected representatives of the Indian Church. This period of cooperation enabled the missionaries to train and guide Indian Christians in the administrative responsibilities of the work.

²Foreign Missions Bulletin, XXXVI (December 15, 1948), 8; N. J. Ezekiel, "A Brief History of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission," 1954, an unpublished manuscript in possession of the Board for Missions in Foreign Countries, St. Louis, p. 6.

³General Conference Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1950, p. 3. Hereafter cited as GCM.

Steps were also taken in the Nagercoil and Trivandrum Districts to have members and congregations take over more work and responsibility. In both of these districts Delegate Conferences were organized with the aim of forming District Synods. More and more congregations adopted their own constitutions. A system of subsidy was inaugurated whereby each congregation prepared a yearly budget, and the necessary money needed over and above contributions was generally given by the Home Church. This did much to stimulate interest in the congregations to do more for the work of the Church.⁴ In both of these districts there were obstacles in the way of further organization which were not met with in the Ambur District. Caste problems had to be dealt with on a large scale. The scattered fields and congregations made travel difficult and expensive. Before an extensive organization could be established on the synodical level, a stronger form of organization on the congregational level had to be built. This proved to be a slow and tedious task which demanded patience on the part of all concerned.

From 1952 to 1956 the Nagercoil and Trivandrum District Conferences were actively engaged in working out their respective plans for synodical organizations. In October, 1956, twenty-five circles or circuits in Trivandrum sent seventy-five delegates to the organization meeting of the district synod, held in Concordia High School, Trivandrum. The new constitution was accepted after careful consideration of each point of the proposed document. Rev. D. Vethamanickam was elected as president of the Trivandrum District Synod. The Synod also chose officers for the four

⁴Ibid., p. 4.

standing committees of Gospel Work, Education, Building, and the Executive Committee. The latter included nine Indian pastors and seven missionaries, while the other three committees were composed of four Indians and two missionaries.⁵ The responsibility of the work of the Church was turned over to the nationals with missionaries assuming the role of advisors. This organization in the Trivandrum District drew together one hundred five congregations, thirty-seven pastors, and about twelve thousand members.

Approximately one month later in November, 1956, the same type of meeting took place in the Nagercoil District. Seventy-eight congregations became charter members of the new district synod by signing the constitution. Again the transfer of administration from Mission to Church took place to some extent. At the close of the organizational meeting of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church—Nagercoil District, Missionary Rittmann, the last chairman of the Nagercoil District Conference, handed a Bible and a copy of the new district constitution to the newly-elected president of the Nagercoil District Synod, Rev. S. Savarimuthu.⁶ This was a wonderful way in which to enter the Golden Jubilee year of 1957, commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the work of the Mission in the Nagercoil District.

With the formation of synods in Ambur, Trivandrum, and Nagercoil earnest attention could now be given to the organization of the three districts into a unit. In the interest of keeping the districts from spreading far apart instead of drawing closer together, the General

⁵The Lutheran Witness, LXXVI (January 29, 1957), 51.

⁶Ibid., p. 53.

Conference in 1956 resolved to include Indian members on all of its important committees.⁷ This venture, the first in the history of the Mission, proved to be of great mutual benefit to the missionaries and Indian leaders. The target date of 1958 was set for a synodical organization. The reasons for having such an organization were more pressing than ever before, due mainly to the nationalistic pressures of the Indian government, which kept insisting that Indian institutions must stand on their own feet and take a greater part in the management of their own affairs. This was also in keeping with the feelings of the Mission and plans were made for the joint synod. Each district elected two Indian representatives and one missionary delegate to a Synod Formation Committee. This group drafted a synodical constitution which was accepted and approved by the three district bodies and the Home Board. The time and place of meeting was set for January, 1958, at Nagercoil. Dr. A. H. Grumm, first vice-president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, was invited to be present when the General Synod of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church (I.E.L.C.) came into being, along with Dr. A. Fuerbringer, president of Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis. Dr. O. H. Schmidt, Executive Secretary of the Board for Missions in Foreign Countries, was also on hand for this historic event.

On January 9, 1958, the first autonomous church in the foreign mission history of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod was established when the three districts of Ambur, Nagercoil, and Trivandrum were brought together into one self-governing church body. After considerable discussion on delegate representation and the positions in the new autonomous

⁷GOM, 1956, p. 3.

church which could be occupied by missionaries, the constitution of the I.E.L.C. was unanimously adopted. Rev. B. H. Jackayya, an Indian pastor and professor at Concordia Seminary, Nagercoil, was elected to the top office of General Secretary.⁸ This sister church of the Missouri Synod of America looks forward to a bright future—a future of which Rev.

Jackayya speaks in an open letter to the Church in America:

We also look forward into the future. The creation of the Indian Church places upon us heavy responsibilities. How much are we equipped spiritually, mentally, and financially to take these God-given responsibilities on our shoulders? Many difficulties and problems surround us. Many hindrances and handicaps face us. Opposition to Gospel work is increasing. But in spite of all this fear and doubt we know that the Lord is still ruling and guiding both the church and the nations and that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church." We are also assured by you of your continued prayers and help in men and money, so that we achieve the goal that is set before us.

It is, therefore, with a sense of overwhelming joy and gratitude and hope that we begin the new life of the Church. Pray for us that we re-dedicate ourselves and all that we have to the service of the Church, that we may always and ever turn our eyes to the boundless and merciful love of God in Christ Jesus and that you and we may be blessed to see, in the gracious providence of God, another glorious day when we will become a "full-grown" Church doing a mighty work in this our country and even in countries outside India!⁹

A long-awaited goal had been reached in South India, but the primary goal and aim of the Mission and the Church would always be to build the Kingdom of our Savior in all the world. Self-government had been attained, but the I.E.L.C. is going ahead cautiously in taking over the work. For a time, Missouri Synod's missionaries will continue as advisors and helpers under the I.E.L.C.

Another part of independence is financial independence—self-support.

⁸The Lutheran Witness, LXXVII (February 11, 1958), 51.

⁹B. H. Jackayya, "Letters," The Lutheran Witness, LXXVII (February 25, 1958), 93.

Dependence on foreign finance in various phases of the church's life and work was taken for granted by Indian Christians for many years. During the past ten years this has changed considerably. Early in the history of the Mission it seems little attention was given to the grace of giving. This was very likely due to the extreme poverty of the individual congregation members. Although most of the congregations are still composed of members whose economic status is very low, they have been urged to further growth in the art of Christian giving. Self-support is still in the distant future, but with the reduction of five per cent every year of the American church's subsidy to the Indian Church, self-support will be attained, even if it takes the full twenty years.

In 1948 the Ambur District developed a method of financing the work in existing congregations by means of request and subsidy. Previous to this plan, the Home Church assumed the support of the local congregations. The people were encouraged to contribute, but they realized that if the necessary funds were not raised by themselves they would be supplied by the Mission. This system placed the foreign organization at the center and tended to give the impression that the support of the local congregational work was the responsibility of the foreigner. To overcome this distinct disadvantage and to center the responsibility of the work where it belonged—in the local congregation—the subsidy system was developed. Each congregation set up a budget for its work and endeavored to support its own pastor and teacher(s). When additional help was needed the group applied to the Mission for a grant out of foreign funds. When such a grant was made, the local congregation and the Mission entered an agreement with each other, whereby each would fulfill its financial obligations. This system of financing in the Ambur District resulted in average

contributions twice as high as those in the districts where the system was not in force.¹⁰ With these results as evidence of the workability of a system such as this, it was soon implemented in the other two districts. While calling for support from the Home church, there was a demand for definite contributions from the national church, also. A similar plan affected the building programs throughout the three districts. When a group desired land or a building it would have to gather twenty per cent of the cost before the Mission would grant twenty per cent and loan sixty per cent of the total cost. The twenty per cent gift came directly from American funds, and the sixty per cent loan likewise from the Mission funds, some of which accumulated in the Church Building Fund in India, similar to the Church Extension Fund in America.¹¹ In most cases it took many years—often too long—before the congregation could raise even one-fifth of the necessary building or land fund. In the future this plan will be rigidly enforced.

The missionaries and Indian leaders began to realize the importance of financial independence when the severe blow of Communism struck the Missouri Synod's mission in China. But the India Mission also saw that to accomplish self-support, particularly on the congregation level, would mean a marked increase in the offerings and a substantial decrease in expenditures. Attempts were made, but on the whole they completely failed to make possible a decrease in the amount of financial help necessary. More Indian men and women were offering themselves for service in the

¹⁰M. L. Kretzmann, "The India Mission 1947-1950," a mimeographed report, p. 5.

¹¹H. H. Koppelman, editor, "India 1956," 1956 Foreign Missions of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (St. Louis: Board for Missions in Foreign Countries, 1957), p. 3.

Mission organization; they were put on the payroll. The cost of living was rising, due to the government's stress on industrialization. This meant a raise for teachers and pastors because the salaries for teachers in the public schools had risen. The teachers affiliated with the Mission had to be paid on the same scale, as their salaries too were under government supervision. Instead of a decrease in subsidy from the Home church a substantial increase was needed each year.

A very severe problem in self-support lies in the limited resources of the individual congregations. Most of these have memberships which come from the economically and socially lower classes. The average income of a family affords enough money to buy food, while other expenses must be taken care of by borrowing or doing without.¹² Economic pressure is great throughout India as the average income per capita is fifty-seven dollars.¹³ Quite often the pastor's salary must be paid by the Mission or he receives no salary at all. Most of the congregations are convinced that the work of the Church cannot be done without salaried workers, whether they be pastors, teachers, or catechists. It may be necessary to consolidate many of the congregations which exist side by side, so that together they can support their pastor. For a congregation to become self-supporting a drastic increase in the numerical structure is necessary. These various problems will have to be solved as the subsidy is

¹² Ibid.

¹³ General Conference Executive Committee Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1956, p. 36. According to a report from New Delhi, India, appearing in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, Section A, p. 12, col. 6, the official figures show an average income of \$58.86. This figure is still one of the lowest in the world.

reduced each year. Unsalariated lay workers and ministers will have to be implemented as the necessary tools for expanding the Church of Christ.

In 1956 the Board for Missions in Foreign Countries resolved "to send no more for church operations in India in 1957 than received in 1956, and that with the 1958 fiscal year there would be a downward revision of five per cent a year until after twenty years the Church would be on its own."¹⁴ Not presently included in this extended plan toward self-support is any reduction of subsidy for the Seminary, the medical mission, and the mission to the Muslims. The main purpose of this plan is fourfold:

1. To make the five per cent cut an orderly procedure.
2. To direct it at the responsible area of the church's work.
3. To remove any misunderstanding that "we [the home church] are pulling out."
4. To nurture a sense of mission responsibility.¹⁵

Most of the missionaries and Indian leaders are convinced that the annual reduction is necessary. The goal of self-support will be welcomed by all.

By force of circumstances the responsibility for bringing the Gospel to the millions of people in India has been increasingly assumed by national Christians. An example of this is the experience of the Home Church in failing to obtain permission to send new missionaries to replace those who were lost to the service of the Mission either by death or resignation. Today the numerical strength of the foreign staff is very low, compared to what it was in former years. This means that the church in each local situation has to be actively concerned for those on the outside. Members have grown away from the old idea that the preaching of the Gospel is only the work of the paid mission worker or the foreigner.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 67.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 68.

Further training and development is needed in the most important aspect of the indigenous church—self-propagation. Rev. Jackayya, speaking to the First General Synod Convention, underlined the importance of evangelism.

The Church is not an end in itself. Its sole purpose is evangelism. The Church cannot but evangelize. The Church is a Church only when there is witnessing in the Church. Fire burns. Fire is not fire unless it burns. So also the Church is not a church unless it evangelizes. Evangelism is not merely a duty or responsibility. It is the very nature of the Church.

Evangelism does not mean only "out preaching." Christians should be witnesses to Christ in their lives and avocations. To this end the Body of Christ is to be edified. This is the first and foremost work of the Synod.¹⁶

Both within and without the India Evangelical Lutheran Church barriers to the spread of the Gospel will be met, but the Head of the Church directs, controls, and gives abundant blessing to His Church.

¹⁶Proceedings of the First General Synod Convention of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1958, p. 25.

CHAPTER VI

EXTERNAL RELATIONS

One of the most active sections of the ecumenical-minded world is that of India. The Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission is right in the middle of this constant movement toward wider and still wider union. The impetus toward union was given an added thrust when Indian independence became a reality. It was only natural that when India received political freedom from Western domination it had to declare its attitude toward Western influence in all spheres of life—economic, cultural, political, and religious. Many feared that the activity of foreign missionaries would come to an end at once. This fear was unfounded; but, nevertheless, there was always the possibility that soon the time would come when foreign staff members would have to evacuate. Because most people feel that there is strength in numbers, especially when the number of non-Christians is so great, union is the only answer. In confronting the non-Christian a united approach has been thought to be more effective.

There has been a need for much concern with regard to the ecumenical movement in four particular fields: discussions and negotiations with (1) The Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India; (2) The Tamil Nad Lutheran Free Conferences, which includes the three Lutheran groups active in South India; (3) The National Christian Council; and (4) The Church of South India. This chapter will be divided in this manner.

The Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India

The Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches in India (F.E.L.C.) corresponds somewhat to the National Lutheran Council in the United States. All the Lutheran bodies represented in India, except the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission (M.E.L.I.M.), are members of the F.E.L.C. The Federation was formed in 1926 and its constitution adopted in 1932.¹ In 1949, the Federation counted ten member-synods or churches, besides four co-operating missions. The member-churches and the founding missions are listed here with their baptized membership. The historical data is taken from the publication, edited by C. H. Swavelly, The Lutheran Enterprise in India (Madras: The Diocesan Press, 1952). The figures are from Lutheran Churches of the World, published under the auspices of the Lutheran World Federation, 1957. The section on the Far East was written by Rajah B. Manikam, Bishop of the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Name and Founder	Baptized Membership
Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church	50,000
1706 Danish-Halle Mission	
1840 Leipzig Evangelical Lutheran Mission	
1874 Church of Sweden Mission	
1919 Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church founded	
Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church	250,000
1842 General Synod (Guntur Field)	
1870 General Council (Rajahmundry Field)	
1879 Augustana Ev. Lutheran Church (U.L.C.A.)	
1927 Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church Constituted	

¹H. M. Zorn, "Lutheranism in India," Concordia Theological Monthly, XXIII (November, 1952), 825.

Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Church 1845 Gossner Evangelical Lutheran Mission 1919 Autonomy declared	201,670
Aroot Lutheran Church 1864 Danish Missionary Society 1913 Church constitution inaugurated	12,000
South Andhra Lutheran Church 1865 Hermannsburg Mission Society 1920 Taken over by Ohio Synod 1945 South Andhra Lutheran Church organized	13,584
Santal Evangelical Lutheran Church 1865 Scandinavian Missionaries begin 1910 Santal Mission of the Northern Churches	32,599
Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Central Provinces 1877 Evangelical National Missionary Society of Stockholm 1923 Church constitution accepted	4,420
Jeypore Evangelical Lutheran Church 1882 Schleswig-Holstein Ev. Lutheran Mission Society, also called Breklum Society 1928 Jeypore Evangelical Lutheran Church established	29,243 (1950)
Evangelical Lutheran Church in East Jeypore 1890 Breklum Society Mission 1932 Placed under Danish Mission Society 1949 Church organized	1,062
Sirhadi Evangelical Lutheran Church 1903 Danish Pathan Mission in Pakistan 1939 Lutheran Sirhadi Church consecrated	225 (1950)
Co-operating Missions United Lutheran Church Mission (1842 co-operated with Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church) American Lutheran Church Mission (1865) Church of Sweden Mission (1874, co-operated member of Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church) Evangelical National Missionary Society of Stockholm (Co-operated member of Santal Ev. Lutheran Church)	
Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission (For purposes of comparison) 1894 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod launches its foreign mission program 1958 India Evangelical Lutheran Church formed	29,185

During the war years the various Lutheran missions and churches had worked together in close harmony, mainly in extending aid to German missionaries and to orphaned missions. When this relationship was no longer necessary each group tended to go its own way, but the leaders of the Federation saw the danger and called the churches together. An enlarged Executive Committee of the Federation met in Madras during December of 1946. Rev. Jackayya and Missionary Lang of the Missouri Mission were also invited to attend. It became quite evident to most everyone present that the strength of the Federation was in jeopardy. Missionary Lang in his report to the General Conference summarized the feeling of those present in these words:

An Indian said that the Federation is one of the most backward of Christian groups and that it doesn't know the times. He stated that Christian members of the Indian Assembly are against sending money from foreign countries to India for Missions and for missionaries and that these and other opinions must be fought. Another Indian said that the Federation was not doing anything, the committees were not working; the Gospel Witness [the magazine of the F.E. L.C.] was poor. A missionary replied that the reason committees were not working was that they continued to elect men on committees who they knew from experience would not do the work. Another missionary advised waiting a few years to obtain a full-time worker for the Federation. Some felt that a full-time worker was desperately needed to keep the working apparatus of the Federation in use.²

There seemed to be little unity of thought on the matter of church union, which was discussed at some length. It was pointed out that a union of Lutheran Churches must be based on faith and theology, but before this could be a reality doctrinal discussion between the Lutheran groups involved would have to be undertaken. Quite a number of Indian pastors felt that the Lutherans should join the South India United Church, even

²Supplement to the General Conference Executive Committee Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1947, p. 1.

before they were sure of the union in the Federation. All in all, there was a certain amount of dissension among the ranks.³

The postwar years were trying ones for the Federation and in 1947 it became evident that there had to be a change of tactics, mainly due to the formation of The Church of South India (C.S.I.). The F.E.L.O. was forced to pay attention to three matters in the field of internal and external relationships:

- a. There was a strong movement for changing the Federation into a more closely united church.
- b. The M.E.L.I.M. had from time to time, and much more so during the past years, sent "observers," on invitation, to the meetings of the Federation, and also in other ways shown an interest in the question of inter-Lutheran co-operation and possible union.
- c. In 1947, the Anglicans and the Methodists joined the South India United Church [mostly Presbyterians and Congregationalists] to form the Church of South India. This left the Lutherans and the Baptists the only remaining large bodies of evangelical Christians in South India outside the united church.⁴

So the pressure was put on the F.E.L.O. from outside groups. The C.S.I. sent out invitations to the Lutheran groups and the Baptists for discussion toward a wider union. The M.E.L.I.M. was interested in furthering doctrinal discussion on the matter. Rather than work toward a loosely organized group of all the Protestant churches in India, which was the aim of the C.S.I., the F.E.L.O. felt that a confessional basis was essential to the formation of a satisfactory united Lutheran Church in India. To meet these problems the F.E.L.O. began the preparation of a doctrinal statement in 1948. The first edition of this statement was printed at the Missouri Mission press in Vaniyambadi in 1949.⁵

³Ibid., p. 2.

⁴H. E. Miller, "Doctrinal Statement of Lutheranism in India," Congregational Theological Monthly, XXI (October, 1950), 761.

⁵Ibid., p. 762.

Extensive work went into the preparation of the Doctrinal Statement. The Executive Council of the F.E.L.C. appointed a committee on Lutheran Unity, whose task it was to study afresh the contents of the Lutheran Confessions and state them in brief and simple language, with special reference to the situation of the Church in the new, free India. Representatives of the various bodies, including the M.E.L.I.M., met at different centers and held retreats of several days in which a joint study of Scriptural doctrine took place. In this way preparations were being made for the drafting of the Doctrinal Statement, which would have a threefold purpose: (1) It should be a brief exposition of the doctrinal basis for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in India; (2) it should serve as a preparation for discussions and joint theological study with the O.S.I.; (3) it should form the basis for negotiations with the M.E.L.I.M. regarding their entry into the F.E.L.C.⁶

In the conference sessions the theological committee requested remarks from all the constituent bodies with regard to the Doctrinal Statement. Numerous remarks and criticisms were offered and the committee accepted and adopted many of these. "Since the M.E.L.I.M. criticisms and suggestions were most complete, the Statement in its final form showed much M.E.L.I.M. influence."⁷ There was in the conference sessions a wide range of representation, due to the many Mission Societies active in South India. Missionaries from the United Lutheran Church in America, the American Lutheran Church, and Missouri Synod, together with missionaries from Germany, Denmark and Sweden; also intelligent Indian leaders

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Zorn, op. cit., p. 825.

of churches which had been founded by these various missions.⁸ Missionary Miller has summed up these doctrinal retreats:

Those who were present at the meetings in which the wording of the Statement was debated will testify that discussion was full and frank, and there was usually sufficient evidence of a genuine attempt to state the Scriptural truth plainly. Naturally there were differences, some of them rather fundamental. Now and then one of the other of the conferees made an un-Lutheran, un-Biblical remark. But he was immediately and unmistakably corrected. Further discussion cleared up the matter. Often these errors were merely misunderstandings, for here there were men not only from different seminaries, but with different national backgrounds.⁹

The matter concerning the doctrinal position of the Statement was brought up by the M.E.L.I.M. representatives at the meetings. A suggestion was asked for and the "Brief Statement" was brought in. Immediately everyone present recognized the value of this, but recommended that a doctrinal statement in India should be made against the background of the non-Christian religions and should be of an apologetic nature. The "Brief Statement" had been drawn up for a different culture, a different people, a different situation entirely.

In January of 1951, the theological committee presented the revised Doctrinal Statement to the Triennial Convention of the F.E.L.C. meeting at Guntur, with its recommendation to adopt it.¹⁰ It was immediately adopted as an adequate statement of the Lutheran faith; however, the group was careful to state that this adoption did not make the statement an outright confession. As soon as all the constituent bodies would accept this Doctrinal Statement as their confession, then it would become an official confession to be adopted by the F.E.L.C. as a unit.

⁸Miller, op. cit., p. 764.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Zorn, op. cit., p. 826.

The Doctrinal Statement itself consists of about four thousand six hundred fifty words, including a six hundred word foreword.¹¹ The title of the document is "The Doctrinal Statement Presenting the Confessional Basis Proposed for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in India." There are advantages and disadvantages in the content of the Statement. Some significance is to be seen in the order and the length of the various articles incorporated into the Statement. The articles on "The Fruits of Justification" and "The Sacraments" are longer, for it was necessary to present the F.E.L.C. position over against the Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational position in the C.S.I. The articles on "The Church" and "The Authority and the Ministries in the Church" served the same purpose in respect to the Anglican elements in the C.S.I. Some of the articles also provided a needed antithesis to Hinduism, as the situation in India was the foremost concern. "This Doctrinal Statement prepared by the Federation was a distinct advance in the direction of confessional Lutheranism over the attitude which was evident in the years past."¹²

As to the document itself in the process of thorough study by the Missouri Mission, Missionary Miller writes:

We can truthfully say that it is far better than could ordinarily have been expected. While a different wording might be preferred in some places, there is very little with which we feel that we must still disagree. If in some places we are a bit disappointed in not finding the words which we think would defend the doctrine against possible misinterpretation, we are equally pleased in finding such definiteness and clarity in other places where vagueness might have been expected if the purpose had been to leave room for difference of interpretation.¹³

¹¹Miller, op. cit., p. 762.

¹²General Conference Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1950, p. 12. Hereafter cited as GCM.

¹³Miller, op. cit., p. 765.

The acceptability or unacceptability of the Statement lay in the important articles on the doctrines of "The Word of God," "The Sacraments" (specifically the Lord's Supper), "The Last Things," and the attitude toward the ecumenical movement. Although it is well stated in the Doctrinal Statement that "the Holy Scriptures are the only source of doctrine and the only norm and authority according to which all doctrine, preaching, confession, and life in the Church should be judged,"¹⁴ there is nowhere a clear statement that the Holy Scriptures are inerrant or infallible. Dr. William F. Arndt, who had been asked by the Home Board to examine the document, was able to point out the shortcomings of the Doctrinal Statement of the F.E.L.C.:

Where the doctrine of the Word of God is sketched, the statement should be included that the Word of God, the Bible, is infallible, inerrant. You will notice that the question whether the Bible has this character has been sidestepped. The thoughts that are submitted are practically those of the Baltimore Declaration of the United Lutheran Church of America. What is said is true, but the presentation is not complete enough.¹⁵

The article on "The Lord's Supper" does not touch on the necessary distinction between the Lutheran and the Calvinistic teaching.

The Lord's Supper is essentially the mystery of the real presence of our Lord Jesus Christ according to His promise, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, . . ." (Matthew 18, 20) and "Lo, I am with you alway, . . ." (Matthew 28, 20).¹⁶

The Scripture passages cited here do not refer to the special sacramental presence and should be replaced by the Words of Institution and I Corinthians 10, 16.

¹⁴A Lutheran Committee, "New Doctrinal Statement in India," Lutheran World Review, XI (April, 1950), 234.

¹⁵Wm. Arndt, "Federation Theses," copy of letter to Dr. O. H. Schmidt dated November 24, 1949, Memorials of GOM, 1950, p. 9.

¹⁶A Lutheran Committee, op. cit., p. 229.

On the doctrine of the Lord's Supper the definition submitted is too general. Calvinists would find no difficulty in subscribing to it. The truth that in this sacrament we orally eat Christ's body and drink His blood is not expressed. Some sentence should be inserted stating that with the bread and wine we orally, though mysteriously, partake of our Lord's body and blood.¹⁷

The article on "The Last Things" says correctly: ". . . God will terminate history and time itself, consummating His plan by a definite act, namely, the return of Jesus Christ in the same manner as He ascended into heaven."¹⁸ Dr. Arndt replies to this statement:

In the discussion of eschatology it seems to me one important note is missing. The language is so vague and general that many millennialists would not have any difficulty in signing it. I suggest that to this statement these words be added: "That He will establish a thousand years reign here on earth is an unscriptural dream."¹⁹

The concluding words of the Statement are also questionable regarding the attitude on inter-church relationships, opposition to doctrinal indifferentism and unionistic laxity:

Though the basis for the unity of the Church is oneness in the Lord Himself, nevertheless, for the fuller manifestation of this unity, agreement regarding the basic doctrines which are of the essence of the Gospel, clearly taught by the Word of God, is necessary. The way to such agreement is a fresh, unbiased devotion to the Word of God in a common endeavor to understand and state the truth.²⁰

A clearer statement was thought to be necessary by the Missouri missionaries.²¹ The F.E.L.C. instructed its theological committee to work further on a revision of the Statement.

¹⁷Arndt, loc. cit.

¹⁸A Lutheran Committee, op. cit., p. 237.

¹⁹Arndt, loc. cit.

²⁰A Lutheran Committee, op. cit., p. 238.

²¹Miller, op. cit., p. 769.

When the revised Statement was adopted at Guntur in 1951, the committee on the Doctrinal Statement made this report: "Unanimity of thought and expression and unity of faith and doctrine were the objects that were said to have been achieved."²² The revised Statement was accepted as an adequate expression of the doctrinal position of the Federation. There were a few corrections and additions which had been made; some of them had come from the suggestions of the M.E.L.I.M. especially with regard to the Sacraments, inspiration, and the doctrine of the Church.

In 1952, when the Twenty-eighth General Conference of the M.E.L.I.M. met at Trivandrum, the Lutheran Relations Committee came forward with an important proposal. For some time the F.E.L.C. Doctrinal Statement had been studied; and now, the Committee which did most of the dealing with the Federation in this matter, was convinced that the Statement was of such a nature and Lutheran character that membership in the F.E.L.C. was the correct and God-pleasing thing to do.

On the basis of impressions and observations made while dealing with the F.E.L.C., the Lutheran Relations Committee draws certain conclusions and offers recommendations. The most important of these impressions is a conviction that the members of the F.E.L.C. accept wholeheartedly the formal principle of Lutheranism, i.e., that all matters of doctrine and life must be decided on the basis of the Word of God alone. It has been the experience of the committee that when anyone was able to say authoritatively: "This is what Scripture says," and to convince the others that Scripture actually said that, the matter was decided on that basis. This experience assures the committee that some closer relationship is God-pleasing.²³

²²J. G. P. Naumann, "Report on the Guntur Conference," General Conference Executive Committee Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1951, p. 13. Hereafter these Executive Committee Minutes will be cited as EOM.

²³GOM, 1952, p. 50.

The need for closer and more stable union between the Lutheran Churches active in India was pointed out to the Conference:

One can learn much in the line of ways of expression and points of emphasis from non-Missouri churches. This association with European Lutheran bodies is an advantage which we in this country are privileged to enjoy. By this very token, M.E.L.I.M. will be able to make its contribution to the theological and practical church thinking of those other bodies. . . . In the present situation in India, no one knows how long missionaries will be able to continue in the work. It may become necessary for missionaries to leave very hurriedly. While there is yet time, we should do all in our power to strengthen the feeling of oneness among Lutherans throughout India so that the withdrawal of missionary influence will not be the cause of our church falling into either sectarianism or indiscriminate unionism.²⁴

It was also called to the attention of the Conference that the purpose behind the Doctrinal Statement was not that it should be treated as a confession, for then subscription to it and complete agreement with it in all points would be necessary. The aim of the Statement was that through it, the M.E.L.I.M. and the F.E.L.C.—since they co-operated in the writing of it—should recognize one another as bodies of a truly Lutheran character.

Because membership in the Federation did not presuppose fellowship in the narrow sense, it did not constitute a closer relationship than the M.E.L.I.M. had with non-Lutheran churches such as the National Council of Churches; and because the Federation was considered to be thoroughly Lutheran in character, the Committee recommended that membership in the F.E.L.C. be applied for.

There is no doubt that membership in the F.E.L.C. is a step on a longer road to fellowship in the narrow sense. Before this can be established, many differences and misunderstandings must be cleared up. The probable direction of this work would be further study of the Statement and connected doctrinal discussions; considerations of matters of practice which seem to be out of tune with doctrinal

²⁴ Ibid.

confession. Membership in the F.E.L.C. will make it possible for us to further these objectives.²⁵

The recommendation of the Lutheran Relations Committee came up against one main objection. Concerning this, Missionary Zorn reports:

There was basically a lack of information. The Home Board was not clear on the implications of this move toward union; the Indian pastors and many of the missionaries on the field knew very little of the matter; and the Indian Church knew nothing.²⁶

With these objections before them, and with the findings of the committee, the General Conference declined to adopt the recommendation. However, the Floor Committee recommended that the matter be exhaustively discussed with the Home Board to determine what obstacles still lay in the path of entering the Federation. From the time of this conference meeting to the next one in 1954, the matter of union would be brought to the attention of the Indian Church, especially the leaders; it would be studied in the District Pastoral Conferences and the Missionary Conferences. A continuous improvement in the relationship between the Missouri Mission and the F.E.L.C. had been experienced during the years leading up to this point. So as to continue this, the General Conference pursued two main lines:

First, it presented anew the question of the implication of membership in the F.E.L.C.; that is, whether fellowship is there or not? Secondly, it urged that the various conferences within the M.E.L.I.M. study extensively the revised draft of the Doctrinal Statement in the light of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, with regard to both the content and the evidence of adherence to the formal principle of Lutheranism.²⁷

²⁵Lutheran Relations Committee, "Theses on Membership in the F.E.L.C.," GOM, 1952, p. 66.

²⁶Zorn, op. cit., p. 827.

²⁷Ibid., p. 828.

Early in 1953, the Executive Committee of the Federation met in Madras. Once again the M.E.L.I.M. was represented with Missionaries Zorn and Kretzmann in attendance. When the Doctrinal Statement came up for discussion it was pointed out that this document was not to be considered a confession, for it did not bind the members of it to adherence to it in detail.²⁸

The matter of the formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of India was discussed. This amalgamation would unite all the Lutheran bodies active in India, which seemed to be an important goal of the Federation. Many feared that the C.S.I. might become the one important church in South India, the result being that the Lutheran Church would be viewed as a small, insignificant sect. It was noted at Madras that the progress toward the Evangelical Lutheran Church of India was meeting with many obstacles. Only three groups had agreed to this formation out of the many who were involved in the Federation. These were some of the difficulties:

Perhaps one of the biggest difficulties is the anomalous nature of such an organization. It would be spread all over India, with big gaps in between. More than six languages would be concerned. It would be all but impossible to call this a church at all; it would end up in being just a strong federation. The co-ordinate problem, one that indicates a good bit of sloppy thinking within the bodies, is the matter of church polity. The European element is very strong for an episcopate--with life-term bishops. The American element is almost as strongly opposed to it. Some doubt that a part-episcopal and part-congregation "church" would be a church at all. Some fear that the Swedes are eager to get the Apostolic Succession in under the door. There seem to be a great number of points of distrust and unclarity.²⁹

Little was accomplished at this meeting with regard to the inauguration

²⁸EOM, 1953, p. 8.

²⁹Ibid.

of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of India. Another factor which very likely played in was that the supporting mission boards in America and elsewhere feared that the monies sent over for their respective missions would not go directly to the mission but rather to the whole united group. However, as soon as five bodies would agree to the amalgamation it would become a reality. This seemed to be quite far in the future.

Among other implications a formation such as this would mean union in theological education. Already there was considerable discussion and planning in this direction. The United Lutheran Theological College at Gurukul, Madras, had been established, the inauguration service taking place July 17, 1954. This was one of the main concerns of the Home Board when they began examining the Doctrinal Statement of the F.E.L.C. A special committee, consisting of Dr. William Arndt, Dr. Walter Baepler, and Professor Lorman Petersen, had been appointed by the Home Board to investigate the matter of the Lutheran Federation in India. The following report was adopted by the Home Board:

Our committee, having studied both the report of the committee of the M.E.L.I.M. and also the Doctrinal Statement of the F.E.L.C. in India, rejoices that progress has been made regarding fellowship of our Lutheran Church in India. The consensus of our committee is as follows:

1. If joining the Federation by our M.E.L.I.M. means cooperation in externis only, we cannot see, in our short perspective of the situation, any objection to such action on the part of our brethren in India.
2. We feel, however, that such membership should be on a very restricted basis since our study of the objectives of the Federation compels us to foresee some serious difficulties in the future development of the Federation, e.g., the attempt to operate jointly a theological institution.
3. After a close study of the articles of the Doctrinal Statement itself, we find a number of wrong statements which would have to be corrected before this document could serve as a satisfactory basis for church fellowship.
4. We recommend that the brethren in India proceed cautiously in this matter but at the same time continue to meet with the

representatives of the other Lutheran bodies for the clarification of doctrine.

5. We have full confidence that our men in the India field will be guided in all their deliberations by Scriptural principles, and we assure them of our prayers for successful negotiations.³⁰

Since the report from the special committee justified a connection with the Federation that would mean co-operation in externals only, and this on a restricted basis after cautious examination; the M.E.L.I.M. asked the F.E.L.C. for a statement on this matter. Just what would membership in the Federation mean for the M.E.L.I.M.? In a letter dated August 22, 1953, from the president of the F.E.L.C. this pertinent part appeared:

Offhand I would say that if your Mission comes in, its relation to the F.E.L.C. would be very much the same as your relation to the National Christian Council of India, of which I think your Mission is already a member. Of course, its activities are confined to Lutheran circles. It has, of course, a confessional basis in the constitution but I think that you may take it that this is the minimum confessional requirement and not the maximum one. In other words, your own confessional basis may be more strict than the one required by the Federation and it still would not render you ineligible for membership. If the same is so desired I think they would even state this in a special communication when applying for membership, in case any of your brethren have any qualms about your position being compromised. I do not know whether this would meet their possible objection or not.³¹

After reviewing this and several other developments during the past two years, the Committee recommended to the Twenty-ninth General Conference that full membership in the F.E.L.C. should not be applied for at the present time. Many feared ramifications and repercussions that membership would cause in America. Although the F.E.L.C. was not a member

³⁰This report is a part of a letter written by O. H. Schmidt to M. Kretzmann, April 1, 1953, appearing in the 1953 volume of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission Minutes, p. 10 of "Board Letters."

³¹Quoted in part by the Lutheran Relations Committee in their report to the Twenty-ninth General Conference, GOM, 1954, p. 37.

of the Lutheran World Federation (Only organized churches can take up membership, and the F.E.L.O. is not a church.), yet the L.W.F. had designated the Executive Committee of the F.E.L.O. as the National Committee for India.

The resolution which was adopted by the Twenty-ninth General Conference concerning its relationship to the F.E.L.O. is as follows:

1. That we do not apply for membership in the F.E.L.O. at this time.
2. That we ask the F.E.L.O. to extend to us, for the present, an Associate Membership in the Federation.
3. That we define the term "Associate Membership" to mean:
 - a. That our connection with the Federation shall be confined to cooperation in externals.
 - b. That we shall reserve the right, in brotherly consultation with the Federation representatives, to dissociate ourselves from such activities of the Federation which, according to our principles, are beyond such cooperation in externals.
 - c. That we shall assume our proportionate share of the administrative expenses of the Federation, but reserve the right to limit our financial support to those phases of the Federation's budget which do not violate our principles of church fellowship, and joint church work.
 - d. That in all other matters, such as advisory committee duties, research and survey projects, we assume our full share of the work in proportion to our strength and ability and the wishes of the Federation authorities.
4. That resolution number two be implemented only upon express approval of the Home Board.³²

From all indications the Home Board did not favor the "Associate Membership" with the F.E.L.O. as long as there was no doctrinal agreement between the two. The Board also feared the danger of being drawn into co-operation with the Federation in matters which would be against the principles of church fellowship and therefore would be involved in unionism.³³ Because a clearer picture of the situation was needed, a

³²GCM, 1954, p. 38.

³³External Relations Committee Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1955, p. 3. Hereafter cited as EROM.

list of the external matters in which the M.E.L.I.M. could freely cooperate with the F.E.L.C. was called for. When prepared this would be submitted to the General Conference and the Home Board for acceptance. No records indicate what external matters are and this would have to be made clear before really making application for associate membership in the Federation. During this time there was constant work being done on the Doctrinal Statement by the Missouri Mission. Numerous points of doctrine and/or difference were thoroughly discussed in committee meetings. All remarks and suggestions were submitted to the External Relations Committee. In 1955, the External Relations Committee again went through the Statement in the light of the suggestions made by the three Missionary Conferences and the Pastoral Conferences. A list of the pertinent suggestions and remarks was drawn up to be presented to the F.E.L.C. in the near future, after first going to the General Conference that would meet in 1956. At this Conference held in Ambur, the floor committee turned the suggestions back to the External Relations Committee. They in turn gave them to a subcommittee, where they remained for some time.

Meanwhile, the Federation had gone ahead with their proposed discussions with the Church of South India. Representatives of the F.E.L.C. joined those of the C.S.I. in recommending proposals for the establishment of pulpit and altar fellowship between the two churches.³⁴ This was done without full doctrinal agreement. It had been agreed by the F.E.L.C. that further unity among the Lutherans was needed before thinking of union with the C.S.I. When in 1955, an agreed statement on the Lord's Supper was accepted by the F.E.L.C. and the C.S.I., some

³⁴ Ibid., p. 15.

representatives of these two groups joined in recommending the establishment of pulpit and altar fellowship. Further agreement could then be reached. The Statement regarding the Lord's Supper was quite ambiguous, in that those who accepted the Real Presence and those who did not, could agree to it. The M.E.L.I.M. representatives at this particular meeting, did not agree on the proposed statement on the Lord's Supper, nor on the proposed pulpit and altar fellowship. They held the principles that had been proposed by Rev. W. Hellinger, a leading missionary of the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church. He had been active in the discussions aimed at the formation of the United Lutheran Church in India. These principles were:

- a. All doctrinal negotiations should precede actual union.
- b. The Lutheran Churches should act unitedly, not individually.
- c. There should be no union without confessional agreement.
- d. The confessional agreement should be in the form of a perpetual proclamation of the Gospel.³⁵

For a time it seemed, the F.E.L.C. (mainly the Arcot Lutheran Church) and the O.S.I. practiced altar and pulpit fellowship. Some in the Federation pleaded with the Arcot Lutheran Church not to go its own way in this matter of pulpit and altar fellowship. The plea deterred them from applying for membership in the O.S.I.

Although the Home Board rejected the request by the General Conference of 1954 for Associate Membership in the F.E.L.C., a renewed resolution came out of the General Conference of 1956. It was resolved to ask the Board to reconsider its action of 1955 (A negative answer was given one and one-half years after the 1954 meeting.³⁶) and to sanction the

³⁵Ibid., p. 14.

³⁶EROM, 1956, p. 19.

request to the F.E.L.C. for Associate Membership as defined in the 1954 General Conference resolution.³⁷ The Doctrinal Statement had been thoroughly examined by the External Relations Committee, the individual District Conferences, the General Conference Executive Committee, and the District Pastoral Conferences. Each of these came forth with suggestions and comments. In the light of these, the External Relations Committee prepared a new statement to the Federation for changes and/or additions to the Doctrinal Statement. As far as the records indicate, these later suggestions have not been presented to the F.E.L.C. It was hoped that retreats and opportunities for further discussions with the F.E.L.C. would be arranged.

During 1957, the M.E.L.I.M. requested the Home Board for a "co-operating relationship" with the F.E.L.C. Since the term previously used was misleading and needed more clarification and definition, "associate membership" was dropped. A co-operating relationship with the Federation would be safeguarded sufficiently so that it would include only co-operation in externals. This was not really a change in the previous request, but merely an interpretation of the action of the General Conference of 1954 and 1956.³⁸

Late in 1957 and early in 1958, Drs. A. H. Grumm, A. O. Fuerbringer, and O. H. Schmidt were present to discuss the many aspects of external relationship with the missionaries and national pastors. A mutual understanding was the result of the frank, brotherly conversations with the three representatives of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod from

³⁷GOM, 1956, p. 36.

³⁸EROM, 1957, p. 5.

America.³⁹ With the formation of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church, which took place January 9, 1958, further growth toward co-operation and/or doctrinal unity could be looked for. Steps in this direction had already been taken by the M.E.L.I.M., and now the India Evangelical Lutheran Church would continue to strengthen true evangelical Lutheranism in India.

The Tamil Nad Lutheran Free Conferences

The purpose of the Tamil Nad Lutheran Free Conferences in a linguistic area has been to explore ways and means of sharing and co-operating with one another in areas of work where policies on fellowship are not violated. The churches participating in the conferences in South India have been and still are the Arcot Lutheran Church, the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the M.E.L.I.M. These meetings received their impetus from the F.E.L.C. when this group began working toward a United Lutheran Church in India. The language barrier could be broken down by meetings in the respective areas. The first of these, with full representation from the three Tamil-speaking Churches, was held at Cuddalore, November 27-28, 1951. It was attended by eight representatives of the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church, six of the Arcot Lutheran Church, and four of the M.E.L.I.M. At this meeting the Doctrinal Statement of the F.E.L.C. was discussed at some length. A common liturgy, a theological college, what union is and means were some of the other areas under consideration. In general, it was noted that the conference was interested in practical matters of co-operation.⁴⁰

³⁹Ibid., p. 18.

⁴⁰H. A. Schulz, "Report on the Cuddalore Conference," EOM, 1952, p. 10.

The second of these Free Conferences was held at Nagercoil, July 28 and 29, 1953. Although the first meeting dealt almost entirely with practical matters of co-operation, the second devoted half of its time to the reading and discussion of short papers related to doctrine.⁴¹ The doctrinal essays were concerned mainly with the unity of the Church:

1. Organization and Church.
2. Is External Union Essential to Unity?
3. Geographical Union or Confessional Union--Which Corresponds to the Gospel?
4. What Is Our Attitude to the F.E.L.C. Doctrinal Statement Vis-a-vis the Lutheran Confessions?
5. Fundamental and Non-fundamental Truth in Relation to the Unity of the Holy Christian Church.
6. The Application of the Law of Love in Relation to Other Christians.⁴²

It seemed to be the feeling of most present that there should be external union with regard to the churches in South India. This should precede doctrinal unity with the exception of unity on the Gospel and the use of the Sacraments.⁴³

The third Tamil Nad Regional Free Conference was held at Kodaikanal, May 28-29, 1954. These papers were presented by the M.E.L.I.M. representatives: "Guiding Principles for the Interpretation of Scripture"; "Review of Newbigin's Book The Household of God"; "A Brief History of the M.E.L.I.M."; and "What is Lutheran." Once again the value of these meetings lay in the informal and personal contact between the representatives of the three churches which have a common confessional background, language, and tradition. A better understanding would result from the common study

⁴¹GOM, 1954, p. 40.

⁴²M. Kretzmann, "Report on Lutheran Free Conference," EOM, 1953, p. 32.

⁴³Tamil Nad Regional Free Conference Minutes, 1953, p. 5. Included in EOM, 1953.

of the Word of God and discussion of mutual problems. It was impressed upon the M.E.L.I.M. representatives by the General Conference that the dual aims of such meetings; namely, further growth toward doctrinal unity and co-operation in externals, be kept constantly before them so that the proper balance is maintained.⁴⁴

The fourth meeting of this nature was July 13-14, 1955, in Cuddalore. Here the "Doctrine of the Lord's Supper in the New Testament" was discussed at some length. The "Doctrine of Verbal Inspiration," "Closed Communion," "The Lutheran Church's Attitude Toward the Lutheran Confessions," and "The Lord's Supper and John 6, 51-58" were papers given considerable attention. By now the three churches active in these Conferences had come into closer fellowship and had established a mutual understanding. The groundwork had been laid for the important meeting in 1956.

For two days in July, 1956, the Tamil Nad Churches met in Ambur. The greater part of the time and effort was devoted to the discussion of the theme: "What Next?" Missionary Kretzmann presented the paper on this theme for the Missouri Mission, and after explaining the tremendous progress that had been made, suggested certain progressive steps:

While we must think, eventually, of only one Lutheran Church in Tamil Nad, we must also consider an intermediate goal, which can be called a synodical conference. Five essential characteristics of this type of organization are: (1) Agreed confession basis; (2) a constitution which allows the member churches to maintain their administrative autonomy; (3) altar and pulpit fellowship among the member churches; (4) standing committees to look after the common areas of work such as evangelism, theology, educational policy; (5) biennial or triennial meetings to review the work of the Lutheran Churches in Tamil Nad.⁴⁵

⁴⁴COM, 1954, p. 40.

⁴⁵Tamil Nad Regional Free Conference Minutes, 1956, p. 1. Included in 1956 volume of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission Minutes.

It was felt by most of those present that the formation of a synodical conference was the answer to "What Next?" The five points above were recommended to the floor by a subcommittee for adoption and implementation. It was admitted that there was still a lack of mutual understanding regarding theological insights, doctrinal interpretations, and liturgical practices.⁴⁶ The formation of the synodical conference would merely be a "stage" in achieving the final goal of a United Lutheran Church in South India. A doctrinal committee and a constitution committee were appointed to take immediate steps for the organizing of the synodical conference.

Although the representatives at these Free Conferences had no official status as far as their church was concerned (They could only speak their own mind and not the mind of the church they represented.), it was resolved by the M.E.L.I.M. to express its opinion to the Home Board on the steps outlined by the Tamil Nad Churches toward the formation of the synodical conference. In other words, all action was subject to approval by the Home Board.

Perhaps the biggest stumbling block at this Conference of 1956 was the discussion of practical problems. The doctrinal basis of the three churches had been worked over, the results being:

Acceptance of the Holy Scriptures as the sole norm and touchstone for all doctrines and teachers, of the Lutheran confessional books by each of the three churches and their common language of Tamil to most of the membership ought to make it possible for them to become united.⁴⁷

However, the practical problems also had to be faced by all present.

Some of these were:

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 2.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

(a) The use of grape juice in Communion by the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church; (b) a united high school by the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church and the C.S.I.; (c) relations with the Home Boards of the different constituencies; (d) the fact that the Swedish Church and the Danish Church were very liberal.⁴⁸

It was felt that these practical problems would be solved as the three churches involved grew closer to one another. As yet the synodical conference was still in the formative stage.

The committee appointed by the Free Conference in 1956 to draw up a doctrinal basis for the synodical organization met during May of 1957. After considerable discussion it recommended the "Common Confession," with necessary modifications to Indian conditions, as the basis for the synodical conference. This recommendation was not accepted because the opinion was that this did not represent the Indian situation. The Unity in Faith Committee was then asked to take the Common Confession, the F.E.L.C. Doctrinal Statement, and other pertinent documents and formulate a confessional statement for the synodical conference.⁴⁹

The Home Board had postponed an opinion of the formation of a synodical conference until Drs. Grumm, Fuerbringer, and Schmidt had an opportunity to discuss the matter fully with the men on the field. At this meeting the proposed constitution of the synodical conference was discussed. It was pointed out that agreement was definitely needed on the approach to Scripture, the confessional basis, and a certain degree of control over practices of pulpit and altar fellowship. It was also noted that if such a conference was formed, it would be an intermediate stage; only one step in establishing a limited but working fellowship, looking

⁴⁸Discussion with Missionary S. Lang.

⁴⁹EROM, 1957, p. 11.

toward ever closer unity. The goal should be a fuller working fellowship as one church.⁵⁰ The work begun in bringing about a Lutheran synodical conference would be continued, as the problems which had been met were not of such a nature that conversations should be stopped. Meanwhile, recommendations and suggestions for constitutional and confessional foundations would be revised if needed, studied again, approved and finally adopted.

The National Christian Council

The National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon (N.C.C.); or, as it is also called, the Christian Council of India and Pakistan, carries on a well-rounded program of activity. The M.E.L.I.M. applied for membership in this organization when the Twenty-seventh General Conference met at Ambur, January 6-11, 1950, and this recommendation was adopted:

Whereas the N.C.C. is not a Church or Mission organization, and Whereas membership in the N.C.C. does not involve church fellowship, and Whereas the various conditions of membership do not, as far as we can see, violate any Scriptural principles or mission policies, and Whereas membership in the N.C.C. is of practical benefit to the work of our Mission, particularly with regard to its relations to government, we recommend that the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission apply for membership in the National Christian Council under Clause three of Section four of the N.C.C. constitution.⁵¹

This action was sanctioned by the Home Board, for they also could see the necessity for such an affiliation with the N.C.C. The government had made it difficult for the Missouri Mission and other individual groups not affiliated with a larger body in India to obtain entrance visas for

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁵¹ GCM, 1950, p. 11.

incoming missionaries. Dr. Schmidt made this suggestion to Missionary R. M. Zorn:

We would like to encourage you to proceed with whatever you can do to bring about such connection with the N.C.O. as will enable us to secure the necessary visa sponsoring and yet not commit us to anything which the N.C.O. may want to do in which we could not share.⁵²

It was only after extensive and intensive study and discussion that application for membership in the N.C.O. was agreed upon.

The Council itself was neither a Church nor a Missionary body, but only an advisory group. It consists of representatives from the fourteen provincial Christian Councils, from a number of Churches or Missions directly affiliated with it, and co-opted members.⁵³ Noteworthy is the fact that all questions of doctrine and church policy have been declared outside the realm of the N.C.O. The main objectives of the N.C.O. are:

1. To stimulate thinking and investigation of questions relating to the church and the Christian enterprise;
2. To review from time to time, the progress of the Christian enterprise and suggest plans for further advance;
3. To co-ordinate the activities of the provincial councils;
4. To help form Christian public opinion and to take such action as may be necessary on the social, moral and religious problems of the day.⁵⁴

Co-operation with the individual groups associated with the Council and with the government has been the aim of the N.C.O.

In order to carry on its activities, the N.C.O. puts numerous departments to work. These are:

⁵²O. H. Schmidt, "Board Letter," dated December 6, 1949, and included in the 1950 volume of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission Minutes.

⁵³EOM, 1951, p. 17.

⁵⁴Ibid.

1. Evangelism (surveys of mass movements, of unoccupied areas, ...
 . Schools for the study of Islam, Hinduism)
2. Church and Ministry (cooperation in theological institutions, survey of theological education, survey of Bible schools, conferences of theologians interested in Indian Christian theology)
3. Relations with Government (Orphaned missions, problems connected with new Indian constitution, famine and refugee relief work, recognition of mission societies by government.)
4. Literature (Production, publication and distribution of Christian literature, literature for the blind)
5. Medical work.
6. Christian education (surveys and studies)
7. Economic life of the Church (Self-help and indigenous projects promoted, rural life centers.)
8. Christian Home Movement (Survey of life and work of women in the Church, Christian home work, festivals)
9. Youth work (Youth leadership training course, survey of Christian youth work)
10. Adult Literacy (Training institutions, literacy campaigns, production of literature, appointment of literacy workers and directors of adult literacy on subsidies by the Council)
11. Audio Visual Aids (Institutes for training, film libraries and production)
12. Welfare of the blind and deaf.⁵⁵

It was because of number three that the M.E.L.I.M. thought it best to take up membership in the N.C.C.

During the first five days of May, 1957, an N.C.C. Faith and Order Conference was held in Mathoran, a hill station near Bombay. An opportunity to share in the beginning stages of such discussions was given the Missouri Mission. Three representatives were present at this conference, where the following important issues were discussed:

1. The necessary marks of a universally acceptable ministry.
2. The nature of the relationship between a valid ministry and the unity of the Church.
3. The meaning of Baptism as the rite of Christian initiation.
4. The theological necessity of the rite of Confirmation.⁵⁶

Papers were read on these subjects by men of the various traditions and the discussions tried to find the roots of the differences. Considerable

⁵⁵Ibid .

⁵⁶EROM, 1957, p. 1.

divergence of view appeared, especially in the discussion of Baptism and Ordination.⁵⁷ This was expected because of the many different groups represented. There was definite value in a conference of this type, for here the various traditions had the opportunity to express their viewpoints and discuss them mutually. Participation in conferences of this nature has done a great deal to widen understanding on the attitudes of the non-Lutheran Protestant Churches. Here again is afforded an opportunity to witness to the truth, and the India Evangelical Lutheran Church will carry on the witness.

The Church of South India

Shortly after the Church of South India (C.S.I.) came into being in September, 1947, it issued invitations to the five Lutheran Churches within its geographical boundaries to take part in conversations which would lead to closer relationships and eventual organic union. (The C.S.I. is a union of all the Protestant Churches in South India, with the exception of Baptist, Lutheran, Salvation Army, and other small groups that might be included in the term Pentecostals.) These five Lutheran bodies are the Andhra Evangelical Lutheran Church, the South Andhra Lutheran Church, the Arcot Lutheran Church, the Tamil Evangelical Lutheran Church, and the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission. In the early periods of conversation, the Baptists also were active but soon withdrew on the grounds that their church polity and doctrine prevented any actual results from such ecumenical efforts. (The Baptists were interested in union only on their own terms.) The Federation of Evangelical Lutheran Churches

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 13.

agreed to take part in these meetings on the condition that they were in no wise to be considered as "negotiations" but only as "conversations," so that the respective bodies could come to a better understanding as to each other's nature.⁵⁸

The first of these meetings was held in Madras during December, 1948, and was largely exploratory to see what the problems were which would have to be considered if further talks were to be held. Two groups were appointed by those present (The M.E.L.I.M. was not represented at this first meeting.): a Theological Commission to study the doctrinal problems involved in future relationships, and an Inter-church Group to receive the reports of the Theological Commission and study the implications of its findings and report them.⁵⁹ Both practical and doctrinal matters were considered but it became evident that the Lutheran position demanded a priority in doctrinal matters.⁶⁰

In the 1950 meeting, the Lutherans presented the Doctrinal Statement which had been prepared under the auspices of the F.E.L.C. The C.S.I. in turn criticized the Statement both favorably and negatively, and this meeting ended with a request that the C.S.I. present a similar statement on their position. From this meeting on the Missouri Mission was represented in these discussions with the C.S.I. Missionary Steinhoff, the appointee of the General Conference, has summarized this 1950 meeting.

The two days were spent in a careful study of the revised draft "Doctrinal Statement" proposed as a basis for the Evangelical

⁵⁸GOM, 1954, p. 38.

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Kretzmam, "Lutherans and the Church of South India," American Lutheran, XXXIX (November, 1956), 290.

Lutheran Church of India. At the conclusion of this study the members unanimously agreed to place on record, with deep gratitude to God, their sense of unity in fundamental doctrines. While at certain points criticism of the Statement was made, and differences of emphasis were revealed, the members were unanimous in the conviction that these discussions had been helpful to both groups, and that they had shown a unity in holding the essentials of the Christian faith. . . . These meetings demonstrated to me, as they did to all present, that there is a much greater affinity between the C.S.I. and the Lutherans--doctrinally speaking--than is generally supposed.⁶¹

The next meeting held November, 1951, in Madras, had before it the C.S.I.'s statement of their doctrinal position. The Lutherans "expressed disappointment that the statement did not give an adequate account of the doctrinal teaching of the Church."⁶² Their statement was merely an adherence to the Nicene Creed. The C.S.I. was reluctant to present an expanded doctrinal statement because they felt that union should come first and that from it should grow the unity in doctrine and life that is so important to the life of the Church. Their concern lay primarily with a practical get-together and then doctrinal discussions could take place. The Lutherans, on the other hand, urged first a unity of doctrine, followed by union. Due to this difference of opinion, it was resolved that there should be a discussion on some of the noticeably different doctrines.

Meetings in 1953 and 1954 dealt with these subjects: The Holy Spirit, the Life of Christ, Law and Gospel, Election, Authority of the Bible, Is Visible External Unity Essential?, Authority of the Church, the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.⁶³ On some of these, agreed statements were published, in others no agreement could be reached. In these

⁶¹ EOM, 1951, p. 15.

⁶² GOM, 1954, p. 39.

⁶³ EROM, 1956, p. 6.

discussions there seemed to be too much haste, little time being given to further discussion.⁶⁴ These discussions on specific doctrines revealed:

a divergent attitude toward the Scriptures, in that the U.S.I. representatives have held firmly to the historical position of the Reformed Churches in viewing the Scriptures as a book of laws and principles revealed by God. The Lutherans, on the other hand, have come out plainly for the interpretation of the whole revelation of God in the light of the Gospel of the grace of God in Christ Jesus. This is the basic difference between Lutheran and Reformed theology, as it has been since the time of Luther and Zwingli.⁶⁵

In the 1955 meeting, papers on the Lord's Supper were presented by both the Lutherans and the representatives of the U.S.I. An agreed statement on this Sacrament was recommended and accepted by the group. However, the delegation from the Missouri Mission took exception to this action, refused to accept the statement, and dissociated itself from a recommendation of the Joint Theological Commission that the degree of unity reached should be shown by a certain degree of pulpit and altar fellowship on the local level.⁶⁶ It was at this time that some of the congregations of the Arcot Lutheran Church adhered to this recommendation, and by their action, brought dissatisfaction from the F.E.L.C. Again it was evident that the U.S.I. was in too much of a hurry.

At the request of the Lutherans in 1955, it was resolved to hold one more meeting of the Joint Theological Commission in April, 1956, to discuss further the doctrine of the Church and the Ministry. Prior to this meeting with the U.S.I., the Lutherans (M.E.L.I.M. included) met for two days in Madras and adopted a statement on the Nature of the Church and

⁶⁴ Discussion with Missionary Lang.

⁶⁵ GOM, 1954, p. 40.

⁶⁶ EROM, 1956, p. 7.

Ministry setting forth the Lutheran position.⁶⁷ Concerning this meeting it is reported:

Generally speaking, there was a high degree of agreement on this paper. [A paper on the Nature of the Church and Ministry had been presented by Rev. Andersen, a Danish missionary closely associated with the Arcot Lutheran Church.] Although it was revised considerably, most of the revision concerned wording. One revision that was felt necessary was a further expansion on the matter of the ministry in the church. This addition later proved vital to the discussion in Bangalore [where the meeting with the O.S.I. would take place]. . . . the doctrinal approach to the church and to the ministry in the church showed practically no divergence of opinion. The group left for Bangalore with the assurance that the Lutheran position was clearly understood and unified.⁶⁸

Meanwhile, the O.S.I. had not prepared a new statement on this doctrine prior to the 1956 meeting. Rather a small pamphlet which had been prepared in 1952 for the Lund Faith and Order Conference was presented.⁶⁹ Here the principles of the O.S.I. and its formation were outlined. Many felt it was an inadequate statement for this type of meeting. The discussion revealed a large measure of disagreement. The problem of the ministry and historic episcopate created the stumbling block for the 1956 meeting. Here is briefly the feeling of both sides:

The Lutheran conception of the holy Christian Church, with its emphasis upon the direct relationship between the Christian and God through faith in Christ, struck the members of the O.S.I. as entirely too individualistic. To them, this put entirely too much into the responsibility of man and too little into the work of God the Spirit. It also gave rise to too much spiritual anarchy where man holds his relationship to God outside of any church body, whatsoever. The assurance of the Lutherans that the congregation and the ministry in it is the area in which the Christians operate, did not seem sufficient to allay the fear of spiritual anarchy.

⁶⁷Kretzmann, "Lutherans and the Church of South India," p. 292.

⁶⁸ECM, 1956, p. 8.

⁶⁹Kretzmann, loc. cit.

Conversely, the C.S.I. position that the church must be a visible, physical organization with a membership that may be weak and sinning in the extreme seemed to the Lutherans to set forth a society, rather than a church. It became a little difficult to see just where the C.S.I. would consider putting hypocrites and others who were in the church under false pretense. There seemed to be a strong tendency to place them in the same category as those Christians, who as a result of their weakness and sinfulness, did not fulfill the duties of Christians to their God. While Lutherans divided between Christians and non-Christians on the principle of faith, the C.S.I. seems to add a strong principle of church membership to this division.

The difference in approach was even more pronounced in the matter of the ministry.⁷⁰

There was one pleasing note in the 1956 meeting, and that was the emphasis on doctrinal unity. The old idea of union now and later doctrinal agreement was missing except for a few representatives. Real progress had been made in the mutual understanding necessary for further discussion toward doctrinal unity. At the close, it was recommended to continue discussion on the subjects: Law and Gospel, the Lord's Supper, and the Nature of the Church and its Ministry. These discussions would be held in the four regional languages of Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, and Kanarese.⁷¹ The M.E.L.I.M. would be represented at the proposed meetings.

At the regional Tamil conference in Madurai, April, 1957, papers were read by the C.S.I. and Lutheran representatives on the subjects mentioned above. Certain changes in the Agreed Statements of the Bangalore meeting on specific doctrines were suggested and sent to the Joint Theological Commission for consideration. Notable among these was the addition of the words "in the bread and wine Christ gives us His body and His blood to eat and drink" in the statement on the Lord's Supper.⁷² The

⁷⁰EROM, 1956, p. 9.

⁷¹Ibid., pp. 11-12.

⁷²EROM, 1957, p. 12.

lack of such a statement in the original Agreed Statement was felt to be a serious defect by the M.E.L.I.M. at the previous meetings. This was the main reason for refusing to associate with the other Lutherans in accepting the Statement. Now, however, the regional meeting had been able to make a satisfactory addition. The other regional theological meetings had not yet been held but were still in the planning stages.

Meanwhile, the F.E.L.C. posed three questions to the O.S.I. for the purpose of clarification on the doctrine of the ministry. What is the meaning of the historic episcopate? In what does the continuity of the ministry lie? What constitutes the validity of the ministry?⁷³ As yet the O.S.I. has not answered these questions of vital importance.

Early in 1958, the progress of the Lutheran conversations with the O.S.I. was reviewed by the Missouri Mission and Drs. Grumm, Fuerbringer, and Schmidt. It was felt that full unity on all doctrines, especially on the church and ministry, was doubtful in the near future. However, growth had been experienced and future conversations with the O.S.I. were encouraged. On the central doctrine of justification by grace through faith, the O.S.I. has an irreproachable article in its constitution.⁷⁴ There are large areas of unity with them.

The activity of the External Relations Committee of the M.E.L.I.M. will be carried on by the Inter-church Relations Committee of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church. There will be a continuous exchange of information and viewpoints with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod of America, especially with its Doctrinal Unity Committee.

⁷³Ibid., p. 4.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 18.

CHAPTER VII

EDUCATIONAL WORK

The beginnings of an educational program were almost simultaneous with the founding of the Missouri Mission in South India in 1895. It took little time at all to realize that an effective program of education was vitally needed on the mission field. Although the beginnings were very modest, in time a comprehensive program was developed and in 1905 the Mission acquired the Ambur Lower Secondary School. Previous to this the school had been a private Hindu institution.¹ Soon after this, schools began to spring up throughout that area and in the other district further to the south. Today there is a network of approximately ninety-five primary schools, ten middle schools, four high schools, two teacher-training schools at Trivandrum and Ambur, a one-year finishing school at Nagercoil for teachers, and a seminary at Nagercoil. In addition to these facilities there are 207 Sunday Schools, 166 Bible Classes, and other agencies of education. Here we are concerned mainly with the educational program which the church has operated in India. It is not the intention of this paper to trace the development of this program from the beginning nor to bring out the reasons for the many changes which have taken place, but rather to present the general framework and the established program which exists at the present time. There will, of course, be numerous references to what has taken place in the past ten years as far as the Mission is concerned and the government.

¹O. H. Swavelly, editor, The Lutheran Enterprise in India (Madras, South India: The Diocesan Press, 1952), p. 197.

In general, the system of formal education is patterned after that of the Indian government, which in turn is based on the British system. From entrance to the end of high school training the system is divided three ways. Classes one to five comprise the primary school. In number these are more widespread than the higher divisions, and today the government has passed a compulsory attendance law in many States. Generally the educational facilities offered in the elementary schools are free of any tuition.² They are usually separate and apart from higher education establishments. Classes six to eight, or Forms one to three as they are known in India, make up the middle schools, and these serve a wider geographical area than the primary schools and are fewer in number. As yet attendance here has not been made compulsory by the State government. The high school division is also made up of three classes: Forms four, five, and six. There are fewer high schools than middle schools, although generally a government high school will have attached to it a full middle school program. One of the aims of the government educational system is to have all the middle schools include a high school training course. The middle schools of the India Mission, of which only four have connecting high schools, in time will also be compelled to meet the government restrictions along this line.

Superimposed on this program of general education in India are the four-year liberal arts colleges, of which there are many in India today. Here a vast variety of specialized training is available. A number of these colleges are operated by Christian Missions. It is at this point in the educational system that the courses in teacher training are offered

²Eddy Asirvatham, Christianity in the Indian Crucible (Calcutta, India: Y.M.C.A. Publishing House, 1955), pp. 213-214.

by the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, either for one or two years duration depending upon the regulation of the local state education department. This, then, is the pattern of the Indian educational program, against which we can now view the program of the Missouri Mission.

The elementary or primary schools operated are divided into two classes--lower elementary and upper elementary. The former consist of the first two or three grades and are usually very meager, with little in the way of necessary equipment. The upper elementary schools consist of the full five grades. This paper includes the two levels under the term elementary schools.

From the years 1945 to 1950, a steady reduction in the number of elementary schools conducted by the Mission was experienced. In 1945, there were 129; in 1947, 111; and in 1949, 97. The total enrollment in these ninety-seven schools was 9,546, of which 3,113 were members of the Mission congregations.³ From 1949, the number of schools has remained fairly constant. During these years from 1945 to 1950, the total school enrollment fell by about twelve hundred, but the Lutheran enrollment increased by approximately five hundred. This was certainly a step in the right direction, for one of the problems confronting the Mission was the high percentage of non-Christian enrollment in its schools. Also during these years the educational policies of the government caused much concern.

With the advent of newly gained independence in India much weight was placed on compulsory elementary education. In 1947, India became an independent nation. Literacy in India previous to 1947 was about thirteen

³M. L. Kretzmann, "The India Mission 1947-1950," mimeographed report, p. 7.

per cent; by 1955, it had jumped to twenty per cent.⁴ In its endeavor toward compulsory elementary education the government no longer would offer grant-in-aid to private mission organizations that had been conducting their own schools. Previous to 1950, the government insisted on having a controlling hand in the schools that received grant-in-aid. This, in itself, did not effect the Missouri Mission schools, because grant-in-aid from the government had long been declined.⁵ However, in addition to this law, religious instruction in the private schools could not be made a required subject for all students. Only those children who belonged to the respective churches could be instructed in these schools. A previous ruling by the government, that no child could be forced to take religious instruction, was changed to the effect that no child could be given religious instruction unless his parents requested it in writing. During these years of stress and strain, the Sunday School became an important means of religious instruction. In order to compensate for the inability to conduct Christian day schools in all the mission stations the missionaries and Indian pastors were forced to turn elsewhere. While in 1945 there were only two Sunday Schools with an enrollment of 120 pupils, by 1949 there were sixty-six such schools with an enrollment of 1,804 pupils.⁶ Today there are 207 Sunday Schools that reach close to 7,933 children of all ages. These children are taught by 357 national teachers⁷ whose services are almost completely voluntary.

⁴Asirvatham, op. cit., p. 212.

⁵Foreign Missions Bulletin, No. 29, December, 1946, p. 4.

⁶Kretzmann, loc. cit.

⁷Statistics of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1957.

The Sunday School has also proved to be an effective means of evangelization. Periodic annual refresher courses are given Sunday School teachers in the respective districts by the missionaries and Indian pastors.

The day when there were no other schools in India except mission schools had passed. Formerly, the government had assumed little or no responsibility for the school system, and the standards of instruction and accommodation were set by the mission which carried on the program. However, as an independent nation, India began working toward literacy and education for all. Soon it was the government which set the standards and often insisted on modern and spacious buildings, better equipment and teaching facilities, higher salaries for teachers, and the right to determine the curriculum and administration. It is against this background that the Missouri Mission has operated its school system since 1950. This program has consumed more than fifty per cent of the annual total church budget and, on the elementary school level, served better than seventy-five per cent of the established congregations.⁸

In the light of financial developments the General Conference reconsidered its former policy regarding grant-in-aid from the government.

It is obvious that there has been a tremendous increase in government interest in the control of our schools. It is the considered opinion of some that the interference could not be worse even if we were taking grant. Sometimes our not taking grant causes suspicion and distrust. The situation has changed considerably from the time when it was resolved that it was not "expedient" to take grant. Under certain conditions it might be desirable to take grant for certain special services and equipment, e.g. agricultural, audio-visual aids, etc.

We do not favor going in for grant-in-aid in a wholesale manner as there are obvious pitfalls, dangers, and difficulties. Nevertheless

⁸ Edward Krafft, "The Education Program of our India Mission," an unpublished report prepared at the request of E. O. Zimmermann, 1954, p. 3.

we believe that there may be cases and types of grant where it is not only expedient to take grant but it may even be inexpedient not to take it.⁹

It was finally decided to apply for grant-in-aid in a number of cases and so enable the Conference to see what would happen and later formulate new policies.

At the same time, however, a survey of the schools conducted by the Mission brought two factors into the open. (1) In many cases the school establishments had expanded beyond the financial ability of the congregations connected with them; (2) In many schools the proportion of non-Christian children to Lutheran children, or even Christian children, was found to be such that the schools tended to lose their Christian character.¹⁰ As soon as this occurred it was almost impossible to carry on effective follow-up work as far as evangelism was concerned, with the result that one of the chief reasons for having parochial schools proved ineffective. Less than fifty per cent of the children enrolled in the schools conducted by the Mission were Christian.¹¹ Often, however, the Christian influence brought to bear in the schools showed remarkable success. The seed of the Gospel was definitely planted in the hearts of these youngsters, no matter what their background. In certain areas religious instruction had to take place before government prescribed school hours. The then Travancore-Cochin government insisted on adherence to

⁹General Conference Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1950, p. 10.

¹⁰Ambur District Conference Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1950, pp. 81-82.

¹¹Krafft, loc. cit.

this law.¹² With many problems confronting the missionaries and national workers, the Mission continued its program of Christian education among the children and teen-agers.

At the present time, the overall picture of the elementary schools shows ninety-four in operation; however, this number will be decreasing as the Indian church takes over the financial support of these schools. Grant-in-aid from the government will become a necessity which will mean that certain standards must be attained. When they cannot be reached some of these elementary schools will have to be discontinued. In the past the village schools and the Word which was sown by many faithful teachers brought forth abundant harvest, but in the future the same Word with its blessings will be sown by means of Sunday Schools in the many villages, Vacation Bible Schools (comparatively new in India), and other agencies of Christian education and edification.

In 1957, there were 2,052 pupils enrolled in the ten middle schools operated by the Mission. The number of Lutheran pupils was 724.¹³ Connected with these day schools on the secondary level are nine boarding homes, housing 356 boys and girls. These students usually live beyond walking distance of the schools and desire to continue their education in Christian schools. These boarding schools supply a large percentage of the men and women who later become full time workers, members, and leaders in the church.

Four high schools have also been important agencies for training the young Christians of India. Three of these are located in the southern

¹²Lawrence Meinzen, "Fruits of Our Schools," The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in Asia and Southeast Pacific (St. Louis: Board for Missions in Foreign Countries, 1955), pp. 5-6.

¹³Statistics of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1957.

tip of India within a radius of forty-five miles, at Nagercoil, Trivandrum, and Vadakangulam. The fourth is at Ambur five hundred miles north. The total enrollment in these high schools during 1957 was 766. The entire teaching staff numbered approximately sixty-five, of which twenty were non-Lutheran. As to the management of the four high schools, until 1955 they were operated as private schools under the direct and sole control of the Mission. Only recently has it been necessary to look to the government for grant-in-aid funds. Each of these schools has been accredited and recognized by the government and thereby comes under the rules, regulations, and supervision of the State Department of Education. The Department of Education has complimented the Mission on its procedure and method of conducting these schools.

The curriculum on the high school level is for all practical purposes identical with that of the government schools.

The curriculum provides for a general and college preparatory education. Because of the peculiar situation in which India finds itself linguistically, the curriculum is heavy with languages. The mother tongue both constitutes a full annual school credit and serves as the medium of instruction. Hindi, which has been adopted as the national language, is the second required language and English is the third. Both English and Hindi are required subjects throughout the six years of the secondary program in most schools.

The balance of the program is made up of mathematics, history, geography, science, drawing and craft and physical education. Our schools also try to include some instruction in music, usually group singing.¹⁴

The outstanding difference between the government schools and those operated by the Mission is the religious training course. Because such a high percentage of the teachers are Christian it is possible to make religion the center of the curriculum.

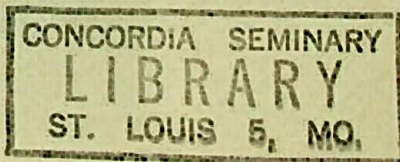
¹⁴Krafft, op. cit., p. 5.

The teaching staffs at the high schools are made up completely of Indian nationals with the possible exception of a few missionary instructors in the religion classes. The average teaching load per teacher is between twenty-five and thirty hours per week, while the average pupil load per teacher is between thirty and thirty-five.¹⁵ Each of the three schools at Ambur, Nagercoil, and Trivandrum is administered by a Lutheran Christian headmaster or principal. At Vandakangulam a missionary acted as principal until 1956, when Missionary Dukwitz left the field. The missionary conference of each district is closely associated with the high schools in the respective areas and directly supervise the administrative operation of the schools. There is also the Board for Higher Education of the General Conference that concerns itself with matters of education.

Previous to the year 1952, the two teacher training schools conducted by the India Mission were located at Ambur and Nagercoil. The school in Ambur was opened in 1926 with four students enrolled.¹⁶ This school is conducted in the Tamil language and according to the educational code of the State Government of Madras. The course of study covers a period of two years according to government regulation. The school has to accept and graduate a certain number from the non-Lutheran community. There are times when this percentage runs as high as seventy-five per cent. For example, in 1955, the two training schools graduated twenty-five Lutheran teachers and seventy-five non-Lutheran men and women. This part of the program is undertaken upon the insistence of the Education Department of

¹⁵Ibid., p. 6.

¹⁶Swavely, op. cit., p. 198.



the government.¹⁷ Upon passing the required state examination the graduates from the training school at Ambur are eligible to teach in mission or government schools up to and including the middle school.

The school at Nagercoil was opened May, 1942 for both Tamil and Malayalam speaking students.¹⁸ Here a three-year course of study was offered until the close of this institution March, 1953. The reason for the discontinuation was the opening of a Malayalam training school in Trivandrum in 1952. The Mission now had a training program in the two language areas, Ambur and Trivandrum. The new school under the Tranvancore government offered a one-year course for teachers.

The curriculum at these teacher training centers is much as we would find in similar American institutions.

The course of instruction centers on methods of teaching and educational psychology. Subjects in the curriculum include Tamil or Malayalam, English, mathematics, social studies, physical science, natural science, drawing and craft and physical education. A daily two-hour course in the teaching of religion completes the teacher training school curriculum. This training program is complete with school and classroom observation and practice teaching; more in the two-year and less in the one-year course.¹⁹

Manifold blessings have been experienced from these two schools. For the most part, the Lutheran men and women who attend these schools have gone through the educational system of the Mission from the first grade upward.

A problem which must now be faced by the India Evangelical Lutheran Church (I.E.L.C.) is a financial one. How will a teacher training program be financed, much less the whole educational program? With new

¹⁷H. H. Koppelman, editor, "India 1956," 1956 Foreign Missions of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod (St. Louis: Board for Missions in Foreign Countries, 1957), p. 6.

¹⁸Swavely, loc. cit.

¹⁹Krafft, op. cit., p. 7.

government restrictions and regulations on training schools for teachers, how will the I.E.L.C. meet these? In charting a course of action numerous points have been considered. A consolidated effort toward more adequate facilities and better trained teachers would result in one training school instead of two. The cost of this single institution would be financed proportionately by the congregations. Government grant-in-aid could be sought and would perhaps be necessary. In view of these and other factors, the Trivandrum training school has recommended that the Board for Higher Education close the school in the Malayalam speaking area as of April, 1958.²⁰ As yet no action on this has been taken.

Closely connected with the teacher training program is a full year of Bible study conducted at the Seminary in Nagercoil since 1952. The successful completion of the teacher training course together with the year's Bible course better qualifies the teacher to fulfill his/her duties in one of the Christian day schools. There are instances when a male teacher will continue his studies at the Seminary for another two or more years, which qualifies him to serve as a pastor of the I.E.L.C. to carry on the work of bringing the Gospel to his fellow Indians. The one-year Bible course for teachers is under the direction of the three missionaries and two Indian pastors who have been called to the Seminary, and whose chief work is centered in instruction. The courses of Bible study are:

History of Israel, The Writing Prophets, Devotional Books of the Old Testament, Life of Christ, The Teaching of Jesus, History of the Apostolic Church, The Epistles of Paul, The Non-Pauline Writings, Fundamental Christian Beliefs, A Survey of Hinduism, Village Preaching and Worship.²¹

²⁰General Conference Higher Education Committee Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1957, p. 24. Hereafter HEOM.

²¹Krafft, op. cit., p. 8.

Already in the teacher training school a good Bible background was received. Together with this added knowledge, plus the ability to apply the truths of the Bible to his secular training, the teacher has a solid foundation in the truths of Scripture and the way of salvation.

Early in the history of the Missouri Mission the national Christian aided and assisted the missionary in many areas of work. Those men who were salaried were called catechists or evangelists. One of the first of these catechists was G. Jesudason. For years he had been educated and trained by the early missionaries. After considerable practical training as a catechist and evangelist he was ordained as the first Indian pastor of the Mission on March 13, 1921.²² Other men had been trained as catechists in the respective districts or language areas by the missionaries. In 1934, however, a separate unit of instruction was begun at Concordia Seminary, Nagercoil. It was called the Catechists' Seminary and was completely independent of the Pastors' Seminary, except that both had the same instructors. A two-year course was offered intermittently from 1934 to 1946, a new class coming in after the previous one had finished. The first class of nineteen graduated in 1936 and was sent out to work in the congregations and teaching and preaching places for their practical work. After a certain period of observation, some a longer period of time and others shorter, the men who proved to be efficient, advanced catechists would study for two more years at the Seminary and upon graduation were eligible for immediate ordination. After 1946, this course of instruction was eliminated from the Seminary program. There seemed to be a sufficient

²²H. E. Miller, "A Brief Historical and Statistical Survey of Concordia Seminary, Nagercoil, India, Up to 1947," unpublished report, Board for Missions in Foreign Countries, p. 1.

number of catechists and evangelists on the field. The importance of an ordained native ministry was being stressed. The Indian pastor would soon replace the catechist. In 1950 there were 154 catechists under the auspices of the Missouri Mission working together with the thirty-five national pastors.²³

In 1924 the Mission launched out into its program of organized theological training by opening Concordia Seminary in Nagercoil to serve all three districts and the two language areas of Tamil and Malayalam. The plan was at first to give a three-year course of training for students with catechist experience. However, due to the lack of Christian background and general education a four-year course of instruction was necessary. The first class of students graduated in 1928, but they were not immediately ordained into the ministry. The seven young men in that class were sent out as evangelists to take care of congregational work and establish new places, but always in close association with the missionaries.²⁴ During the following years these men were guided in their work and study by the local missionaries, and after a period of observation they were recommended for ordination to the local missionary conference. Upon passing an examination set by the Seminary faculty, these men were ordained and installed in the larger congregations of the mission field as pastors. This procedure was necessary because of the lack of previous training in both elementary subjects and Christian doctrine. Now the students who graduate from the Seminary are called and ordained immediately; their training has been more intensive, and they are better

²³Kretzmann, op. cit., p. 4.

²⁴Kretzmann, "Ministerial Training in India," an unpublished report, in possession of The Board for Missions in Foreign Countries, St. Louis, January 21, 1955, p. 3.

qualified. Those who were at one time evangelists are today ordained pastors of the I.E.L.C.

From 1928 to 1946, there were only six graduating classes from the Seminary. It was the custom, as in many Indian seminaries, to admit one class every three years. The entering class would finish the entire course of training before another class was admitted. In these eighteen years fifty-four men graduated, of whom thirty-six were ordained as pastors.²⁵ The remaining eighteen served as catechists or evangelists.

While some of the workers in the various congregations continued to labor very faithfully and effectively with little formal education, the advantage of a well-trained native ministry was recognized. Following the war years, the aim was to make high school graduation the minimum qualification for entry into the Seminary. By this time, the general educational program of the Mission had grown enough to permit this entrance requirement, with the provision, however, that exceptions could be made in the case of worthy students. Because of the lure of more profitable employment for high school graduates, the exceptions turned out to be the rule. It was becoming difficult to find enough young men for ministerial training. Often older men with families were accepted into the training program at Concordia. It was hoped that by 1951 the requirement of high school graduation could be put into effect. Men with various qualifications were placed in separate groups: those with a high school background who could handle more advanced work, especially in subjects where English could be used as the medium of instruction; and those with

²⁵Kretzmann, "Nagercoil Seminary Serves New Sister Church," The Lutheran Witness, LXXVII (February 25, 1958), 93.

less general educational background who could only absorb lectures in one of the two vernaculars, Tamil or Malayalam. Thus, the teaching load of the three missionary instructors was increased considerably.

Previous to 1948, Dr. A. J. Lutz, a veteran missionary, served the Seminary as professor and president. Because of illness he was unable to return to the field after a year's furlough, and early in 1948, he died. In a special meeting on January 27, 1948, Missionary M. L. Kretzmann was elected to fill the vacancy.²⁶ Missionary H. Earl Miller was appointed as president and Missionary R. M. Zorn, dean. These three men served in this capacity until 1954 when Missionary Miller was called to a congregation in America. On February 9, 1956, M. L. Kretzmann was elected to fill the position of Seminary president.²⁷ Two Indian pastors, Rev. M. Philip and Rev. B. H. Jackayya, were added to the faculty. Rev. Philip accepted his appointment on September 8, 1955.²⁸ The third missionary member of the faculty, H. M. Zorn, was installed with Pastor Jackayya June 20, 1956.²⁹ The addition of the two Indian pastors to the teaching staff was a significant step in turning more responsible positions over to the national church.

In March, 1951, thirty-four students graduated from Concordia Seminary as candidates for the ministry. This almost doubled the number of national pastors working with the Mission. That same year in May a new class of twenty-four entered the Seminary. In 1954, this class graduated and the entire group was declared eligible for ordination. In the classes of

²⁶The Lutheran Witness, LXVII (April 20, 1948), 132.

²⁷HEOM, 1956, p. 5.

²⁸HEOM, 1955, p. 13.

²⁹HEOM, 1956, p. 7.

1951 and 1954, some of the students had had a full college education before entering the Seminary. All sixty-eight men received a formal theological training with most of the usual seminary subjects, in addition to elementary work in Greek and Hebrew, the latter for the advanced students.³⁰

From the founding of the Seminary in 1924 until 1954 a new class of students entered every three years, mainly to conserve the manpower of the missionary staff. However, since 1954, the need for fully qualified pastors, as well as evangelists and teachers, to reach the unchurched through methods that the non-Indian missionary can no longer freely use, has made the Mission reconsider its policy of a three-year graduation program. It was resolved late in 1954 to admit a new class into the Seminary each year. A fourth class was admitted in 1957 and from 1958 forward a group of pastoral candidates will be sent out into the established congregations and new places of evangelistic work. Twelve men will be ordained into the ministry this year, and approximately the same number each succeeding year. A smaller, but steady annual supply of pastors will better supply the needs of the I.E.L.O., rather than a larger group graduating every three years.

What has happened to the men who have graduated from Concordia Seminary, Nagercoil? One hundred and four pastors have been trained and of these, ninety-eight are still in the service of the Church.³¹ They are serving in the many city and village congregations of the I.E.L.O. Some of these men open new evangelistic stations where the Christian community is either very small or non-existent. A number of these teach in the high schools and/or teacher training schools. Two Indian pastors serve

³⁰Kretzmann, "Ministerial Training in India," p. 4.

³¹Kretzmann, "Nagercoil Seminary Serves New Sister Church," loc. cit.

as professors at the Seminary. Three have gone into foreign missions, one across the Gulf of Munnar to the island of Ceylon, and two in their own country in Bombay. Finally, there are some in the difficult work of Muslim Missions. As dedicated young men leave Concordia, they are well-trained for their place in the growing Church in India.

It has been the practice of the Mission to find a congregation or evangelistic post for those graduating from the Seminary. A living income was guaranteed the pastors as they took up their work. In the past the graduates of the Seminary have expected this from the Mission. In the near future, however, things will change, and the future pastors and teachers of the I.E.L.C. are aware of this situation. Most of them realize the importance of an independent church, able to support its own pastors and teachers. But they also see the impossibility of this. This presents a tremendous challenge to their faith and dedication, for it means they must give up a sure source of income in some other occupation and rely on their own abilities to support themselves while they carry on the work of the Church. To bear up under these trials and tribulations will take a strong, and yet stronger, faith in the eternal promises of our God.

CHAPTER VIII

MEDICAL MISSIONS

The activity of the Missouri Mission in furnishing medical relief, advice, guidance and care to the peoples of India has always been one of the most satisfying adventures in Christian living, loving, and serving. One of the greatest and most evident lacks among the people of India is the personal concern of one man over against another, or even over against himself. There was a time, prior to 1947, when the average life expectancy of the Indian was twenty-seven years. Today it is twenty per cent higher, at thirty-three years.¹ Christian love and service has always been the concern of the Missouri Mission in India, for this is the response of God's love in Christ working itself out in everyday care. This type of action strikes deep into the consciousness of those who have never before experienced such love and care. Medical Missions is and always has been an arm of the Church.

The beginnings of the medical mission work go back to the year 1913, after the Missouri Synod had given its approval in 1911. Previous to this, individual missionaries had done some medical work. Various Ladies' Aid Societies, principally in the Middle West, arranged for the support of a registered nurse from Evansville, Indiana, Miss Louise Ellermann.

Under frustrating handicaps but with self-effacing devotion she worked among the sick and needy at Bargur in the Madras Presidency, thereby laying the foundation of our entire medical mission program

¹"India on Its Birthday," St. Louis Post-Dispatch, January 28, 1958, Editorial page.

and preparing the way for the establishment of the Bethesda Hospital at Ambur in 1923.²

From 1913 to 1919 Miss Ellermann labored in this peaceful village. During this time those in the field were pleading with the Home Board for additional help and supplies. A trained physician was desperately needed.

Finally in 1921, the prayers of the church were answered in the person of Dr. Theodore J. Doederlein from Chicago. He had been sent out on a two-year basis with the specific assignment of establishing a hospital. He arrived in Ambur in November, 1921.³ By this time, the dispensary had been moved from Bargur to Ambur, and from this time on Ambur became the chief center of medical activity. Two months after the arrival of the first doctor, two additional nurses made their appearance, Misses Etta Herold and Angela Rehwinkel. Very soon after this the first sod was turned for the new hospital building. Dr. Frederick Brand, the Director and General Secretary of the Foreign Mission Board of the Missouri Synod, was in India at the time and proceeded to lay the cornerstone in March, 1922. On January 13, 1923, Bethesda Hospital was dedicated to the glory of the Triune God and for the purpose of serving our fellowmen in India bodily and spiritually.⁴

Dr. Doederlein served as the first resident doctor until 1923. At the same time a nurses' training school had been established. After the departure of Dr. Doederlein the hospital had an Indian doctor but no

²E. J. Friedrich, "Historical Sketch of Medical Missions," Lutheran Women's Quarterly, XVI (January, 1958), 3-4.

³Elmer E. Griesse, "Lutheran India Missions," Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Washington University, St. Louis, 1945, p. 54.

⁴Meinert H. Grumm, "The Medical Mission in Ambur, India," an unpublished report, n. d., p. 1.

American until 1933, when Miss Eleanor Bohmsack, M. D., of Fargo, North Dakota, was sent out. In a short time, however, she became Dr. (Mrs.) Orim, and there was another long hiatus.⁵ Dr. Norbert F. Leckband filled this gap in 1936 and continued to serve in this capacity until 1942. In 1942 a maternity wing was added to the hospital. Also during these years a traveling dispensary van was put to work in outlying villages.

"Absolom," as the Ford truck was called, served as a traveling drugstore and was operated three or four days a week by competent hospital people and one missionary. An average of one hundred people a day were treated in this fashion and the missionary had the opportunity to preach and apply the lessons of the Word of God.⁶

After Dr. Leckband returned to America, the Mission hospital was without an American doctor until the arrival of Dr. W. F. Bulle in November, 1950. During these intervening years the work was carried on by two Indian doctors and the hospital superintendent, Miss Angela Rehwinkel, R. N. Her life of love and service at Bethesda has truly been and will continue to be an inspiration to many. Dr. O. H. Schmidt, Executive Secretary of the Board for Missions in Foreign Countries, describes Miss Rehwinkel and her activities at the hospital in these words: "You should see with what honor and gratitude the people of Ambur regard Miss Rehwinkel for her ability, her understanding of their ways, and for her sympathy."⁷ Prior to the arrival of Dr. Bulle the facilities of the hospital consisted of a complex of small single-story buildings connected by covered runways.

⁵Ibid.

⁶O. H. Schmidt, "Our Missions in India and China," Concordia Theological Monthly, XVII (November, 1946), 834.

⁷H. S. Schwenk, "Foreign Mission Nurse, Angela Rehwinkel," The Lutheran Witness, LXXII (May 12, 1953), 166.

The front building contains treatment rooms for male and female out-patients and a central compounding room where prescribed medicines are dispensed. The inpatients are taken care of in two separate eight-bed wards, but here airy construction and wide verandas allow for expansion to double the capacity in case of need. On the female side a new section was added in 1942, the maternity wing, built with funds supplied by the Northern Illinois Women's Missionary League. It is made up of a larger ward, four small private rooms, nursery, delivery room and reception rooms. There is also a model home for the nurses.⁸

Soon a much needed expansion program would be under way at Bethesda.

In America, meanwhile, Missouri Synod Lutherans had taken steps to set up a national organization of doctors, nurses, and other interested people. The Lutheran Medical Mission Association was formed in March of 1947. It would assist in giving medical missions assurance that the work is being supported by professional people in the United States. It would also serve as liaison for securing the needed personnel, physicians, dentists, nurses, dieticians, laboratory technicians, etc. for foreign service. These would be screened and given final appointment by the several mission boards.⁹ At the Milwaukee Convention in 1950, the Missouri Synod gave this organization its official blessing and provided temporary financial support for its program. This group has established chapters in many of the large cities.

At the hospital in Ambur the expansion program was beginning to take shape. At its 1951 meeting in New York, the Lutheran Women's Missionary League set aside \$70,000 for this needed program. The Medical Mission Association also showed considerable interest. Plans for enlargement and modernization were drawn up and approved. The following report of the

⁸Grumm, op. cit., p. 6.

⁹H. H. Koppelman, "Medical Missions," a tract on the history of Medical Missions, issued by the Lutheran Medical Mission Association, 1951.

progress after three years under Dr. Bulle's guidance sums up the construction work completed and in the process of being completed:

The following projects have been completed: outpatient department, two compounder's houses, one doctor's house, second floor over central wing, new laundry, 15 small kitchens for patients' relatives, water supply system, enclosure around hospital, extension of nurses' home, extension and modernisation of nurses' bungalow and most of the alterations originally planned on the old buildings. Several new roads have been built. At present under construction are the following: new wing of main building, two special wards, second doctor's house, duplex compounder's house, ward for infectious diseases.¹⁰

Because of the generous gift from America these buildings could now intensify and augment the service of love brought to the people of South India by the hospital. Miss Rehwinkel spoke of her biggest thrill in India during her thirty-seven years of service in these words:

My biggest thrill was the gift of \$70,000 from the L.W.M.L. This gift provides for the expansion of Bethesda from a 45-bed to a 100-bed hospital; for improving our electrification; for our outpatient clinic, which takes care of people who are not hospitalized; for three residences for doctors; for enlarging the nurses' home; for improving the water system; for water storage tanks; for repairing roads on the compound; for new water piping; and for a drainage sewer.¹¹

During the years of major construction and modernization many problems developed. Two widespread epidemics of typhoid and one very violent epidemic of cholera cost the Mission an unforeseen amount of money and tied up more than one-third of the hospital bed strength. The people among whom the Mission worked faced economic hardship due to the lack of rain for several years. Naturally, charity cases were constantly on the increase. Then, too, dependable and fully qualified Indian doctors were difficult to find and most of the work fell upon the shoulders of either

¹⁰General Conference Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1954, p. 23. Hereafter cited as GOM.

¹¹Schwenk, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

Dr. Bulle or Miss Rehwinkel. In addition to the professional care which demanded much of Dr. Bulle's time, there were also the administrative duties of an expanding hospital to look after. Help was needed especially in the form of competent personnel.

Miss Hedwig Gronbach, R. N., M. A., from Cincinnati, arrived in April, 1951. For a very short time she was enrolled in language school but was soon needed for emergency work at the hospital in November.¹² She became the assistant superintendent at Bethesda. Early in 1952, Miss Audrey Rasch, daughter of Missionary and Mrs. Arthur Rasch in India, came and served as the anesthetist until 1957. In addition to the three American nurses on the staff, there were twelve native professionally trained assistants to strengthen the hands of Dr. Bulle.¹³ It was still hoped that an additional European doctor would enter the service at Bethesda. It was also hoped that a missionary would be allocated to the hospital for full time evangelistic work among the sick. "The goal of the hospital was to lead men to their Savior. Without this aim the professional work of the hospital would lose its justification."¹⁴ In June, 1954, Missionary Robert Trautmann began this important work at Bethesda by helping the hospital staff improve their own evangelistic efforts.¹⁵ He was also a great help in administrative duties.

During 1954 some important additions were made to the hospital staff.

¹²COM, 1952, p. 57.

¹³H. H. Koppelman, "A Report of the Visitation of Our Asiatic Mission Fields," a mimeographed report, [1952], p. 14.

¹⁴Ambur District Conference Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1954, p. 20. Hereafter cited as ADOM.

¹⁵Ibid.

On May 1, Dr. Irwin Samuel joined the staff; Dr. F. Santiago, a highly recommended physician, began his work at Ambur on August 1; on January 1, 1955, Dr. Sojibai Samson was added to the group.¹⁶ Dr. Bulle had aimed to raise the standards of Bethesda and thereby enhance the respectability of the hospital in the eyes of the government. The service which the hospital rendered to the community had also experienced improvement in both quality and quantity. These are the statistics reported for 1954:

One thousand four hundred four inpatients were treated of whom 380 underwent surgery, compared with 279 operations performed last year. Total number of patients treated in inpatient department, outpatient department and by roadside dispensary work were 48,551 compared with 46,961 last year. Two hundred fifty-one maternity cases (27 complicated) were treated. Our bed strength was increased from 60 to 75.¹⁷

The end of January, 1955, marked an important milestone in the history of Medical Missions in Ambur. The major part of the building program had been completed and the old hospital had been remodeled. Bethesda Hospital seemed new from top to bottom. On January 28, the Governor of Madras State, Sri Sri Pragasam, was present to formally inaugurate the more recent buildings. With the cornerstone laying on the following day by the Governor, active preparations for the construction of a rural branch hospital at Reddivalasu were begun. Reddivalasu is located about thirty miles from Ambur and is the center of one of the rather inaccessible hill regions. Funds for this outreaching station and for work at Ambur came from an array of sources:

The government granted Rs. 10,000. Also welcomed donations of \$5,000 from the North Wisconsin L.W.M.L., \$10,000 from the Wheat Ridge Foundation to be used for tuberculosis work in this area, and about \$5,000 in the form of additional clinical equipment such as

¹⁶ADOM, 1955, p. 6.

¹⁷Ibid.

sterilizers, operating tables, etc., from the St. Louis Chapter of the Lutheran Medical Mission Association.¹⁸

The hospital at Ambur had received the attention and official approval of the government, due to its exceptional progress during the past years.

Other work was constantly going on simultaneously with the building and regular programs. A leper clinic and an eye clinic was operated from time to time from the hospital. Both of these have always been vitally necessary for the welfare of the people. Now Bethesda would undertake extensive tuberculosis treatment, for this disease had plagued the people of India for centuries. Previous to this, there had been some treatment of this scourge, but never enough. The Wheat Ridge Foundation granted continuous financial support for this task. By 1958, \$61,061 had been allocated for this work.¹⁹ These funds were used to erect buildings, provide facilities and hospital equipment, train medical personnel, and for drugs for the treatment of tuberculosis patients. The tuberculosis unit of the hospital has the facilities to care for forty patients.

By 1955, Bethesda had grown from a forty-five bed to a one hundred ten bed modern hospital. There were sixty on the staff; including five doctors (two female and three male), fifty nurses, three laboratory technicians, the superintendent, Miss Rehwinkel, and Dr. Bulle. With the continual growth being experienced, the staff was yet insufficient. The services which the hospital chaplain, Rev. Trautmann, continued to render, proved to be very beneficial to both the staff and patients. The aim of the entire group was to convince people that someone does care for them,

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Friedrich, op. cit., p. 6.

both as far as their bodies and souls are concerned. Physical and spiritual needs were taken into consideration. After the patients have left the hospital, follow-up work is of the utmost importance. This was carried through by the local pastor and/or Christian. This fusion of evangelistic and medical work has increased the worth of the hospital to the people of Ambur and vicinity.²⁰

The year 1955 saw an unfortunate turnover in the professional staff. Men and women doctors who seemed to be interested in the work suddenly left the hospital. Dr. Samson took up work with the army in July; Dr. Gnanamuthu resigned in September; Dr. Samuel followed in December; and Dr. Santiago left for a short time to further his studies.²¹ Replacements for these doctors had to be found. On January 1, 1956, Dr. Ebenezer Devedutta joined the staff. In June, Dr. Samuel Isaiah began working at Bethesda. In July, Dr. M. P. George's appointment commenced.²² Another important addition to the staff was Rev. J. Isaiah, who would serve as the Assistant Chaplain at the hospital.

In spite of the depleted staff, the work output had grown during 1955, in comparison with that of 1954.

The number of inpatients treated were 1,523 compared with 1,404 in 1954. The number of outpatients was 27,040. The number of operations increased from 58 majors to 116 and from 322 minors to 491. The number of deliveries was 213 normal cases and 28 surgical deliveries.²³

²⁰W. F. Bulle, "Bethesda Hospital," The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod in Asia and the Southeast Pacific (St. Louis: Board for Missions in Foreign Countries, 1955), pp. 14-15.

²¹ADOM, 1956, p. 6.

²²Ibid., p. 29.

²³Ibid., p. 6.

Also in 1955, an extensive program was activated to detect, treat, and prevent tuberculosis among the people of the Ambur area. X-ray equipment had been purchased and used immediately. All this was done under the capable guidance of Dr. Bulle and Miss Rehwinkel. The latter had suffered a severe illness during the past year, followed by a fall which resulted in a broken hip. These experiences would have been enough to force less determined people into retirement, but by God's grace she was able to return to her work.²⁴ Even while bedfast she continued her duties.

The successful initiation of a tuberculosis control program brought a new type of patient in greater numbers to the hospital. This program received large grants from the Wheat Ridge Foundation and the Central Government of Madras. This increased the opportunities of serving those in need and especially of leading them to a knowledge of their Savior. Sunday afternoon services for all the patients were conducted by Missionary Trautmann or Rev. Isaiah. By the end of 1956, four thousand residents of Ambur had been X-rayed. This work was done on a charity basis. In August, 1956, the new building for the administration of the tuberculosis control program and X-ray equipment was completed. A bacteriological laboratory was also equipped and completed.²⁵

Sufficient personnel was still a problem at Bethesda. Miss Lois Kropp, R. N., had accepted an appointment to serve in India, and sailed on December 7, 1956. She joined the staff after a short period of language study in Bangalore. Miss Annal Peter, who had undergone training as an anesthetist-nurse in Lahore, Pakistan, had returned to Bethesda to

²⁴Ibid., p. 7.

²⁵ADOM, 1957, p. 5.

replace Miss Rasch, who would soon return to America. The need for a laboratory technician arose when Mr. Kirubaiiah decided to leave the hospital in order to set up a private laboratory in the city of Ambur. He had been with the hospital staff for twenty years.²⁶ Miss Johanna Leo, R. N., arrived on the field in the fall of 1957 to assume her duties. Eleven years of nursing experience in Germany, England, Canada, and the United States would greatly enhance the service Miss Leo would be rendering at Bethesda.²⁷ Another missionary addition could be looked forward to in 1958, for Dr. Fred Langsam had accepted an appointment to serve at Bethesda.

Perhaps the most outstanding individual aspect of the Missouri Mission, as far as medical work is concerned, has been that of the consecrated, loving service rendered by Miss Angela Rehwinkel. Since 1921 she has been a part of the everyday life and activity at Bethesda. Every missionary on the field and all those interested in the Lord's work at home thank God for these many years of faithful service.

²⁶ADON, 1956, p. 61

²⁷Ibid., p. 85.

CHAPTER IX

KODAIKANAL

About in the center of the Missouri Synod mission field, up in the Palni Hills at an elevation of nearly seven thousand feet, is Kodaikanal. A mountain retreat was purchased here in 1912 through funds supplied by the Ladies Aid and Walther League societies of The Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod in America. Four dwellings were erected on a six and one-half acre plot, more familiarly known as Loch End. This had been acquired at a total cost of ten thousand dollars. The missionaries had easy access to the Kodaikanal Road Station via the South India Railway. From this road station they could be carried up to the seven thousand foot level of their mountain retreat by coolies.¹ Since the hot plains of India have an enervating effect upon the missionaries coming from America, this six-week vacation was considered an absolute necessity. During this time there was ample opportunity to regain strength and health, to associate with other missionaries, and to study and grow together.

At Kodaikanal the Missouri Mission has a delightful complex of grounds with numerous cottages and other buildings, a dignified church built through the efforts and gifts of the missionaries, and a well-equipped modern school for the children of the missionaries. These children are housed in modern dormitories. The arrangement takes care of the grade school work of these children under almost ideal conditions. There is also the opportunity to take high school work at Kodaikanal, since a

¹Elmer E. Griesse, "Lutheran India Missions," unpublished Master of Arts Thesis, Washington University, St. Louis, 1945, p. 30.

group of other denominations maintains a high school. Van Allen Hospital with its modern facilities gives proper medical care to the children and their parents. In 1930 Kodaikanal was supplied with a regular missionary, E. H. Meitzen, for the boarding home and congregational work in and about Kodaikanal. The school has been taught by Mrs. Gertrude Heckel since 1940. On September 18, 1957, Mr. Albert Hennig and his family arrived in Kodaikanal to help train and equip the missionaries' youngsters for later life. Life in the boarding school is made as homelike as possible by the teachers and missionary. It is not easy to maintain a true "home away from home" but the equipment supplied by the Home Church is of the best and aids a great deal in keeping the young usefully employed and happy. Workshops, pianos, library, playgrounds, hikes, and movies are only some of the facilities. In Kodaikanal, as in any home, there is a program of work adapted to all ages. In spite of the servants available, the children are expected to do their share. A Junior Walther League is activated whenever the number of teen-age children warrants this.²

Living at Kodaikanal has proven very beneficial to the work of the Missouri Mission during the past years. The six weeks of hill leave, during the hottest season on the plains, has been a wonderful aid towards keeping the missionaries and their wives at peak efficiency during the entire term of service on the mission field between regular furlough periods.

²General Conference Minutes of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, 1954, p. 33.

CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

The General Conference of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission died, in a sense, on January 8, 1958. The day that had long been worked and prayed for had arrived, for the General Synod of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church came into its own. By God's grace the three districts of Ambur, Trivandrum, and Nagercoil agreed to join together into a united organization in order to build the Savior's Kingdom in India more effectively. Missionary Theodore A. Michalk, the last General Secretary of the Missouri Evangelical Lutheran India Mission, speaking to the assembled body, said:

It is good that we meet together here under the blessing of our gracious God, to learn of the great opportunities that He has placed before us and to consider together ways and means of carrying out the work which we now undertake in His Name.

As the General Conference of missionaries in India invites you as members and delegates of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church to take over the responsibility for the administration and future development of the Church which has come into being through the preaching of God's Word and the administration of His Sacraments we would remind you of the source of your strength as a Christian Church and wish you the abiding blessing of God upon the work of your hands done in His Name.¹

The preceding pages are a resume of what led up to this new undertaking in the respective fields of activity. The limitations of the study lie in the lack of personal or physical contact with the Mission in India. It is impossible to view things as they really are in India or to evaluate fully and picture the work from a desk or typewriter in America,

¹Proceedings of the First General Synod Convention of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church, January 8-9, 1958, pp. 2-3.

looking through the eyes of missionary reports, observations of others, or minutes of conference and committee proceedings. Be this as it may, there are numerous questions which come to mind after completing the study.

Has too much reliance been placed on the trained and salaried church worker when more responsibilities may have been placed on lay members? Has sufficient stress been placed on lay evangelism within the India Mission? The unfinished work of lay evangelism training is before the India Evangelical Lutheran Church.

One of the greatest tasks before us is to stir up our people for the work of the Lord. There are so many in this land that have not yet heard of the true God who loved all men so much that He gave His only begotten Son to be our Savior. . . . The task of enlisting our laymen in the army of the Lord is perhaps the greatest task that God has laid upon you who have been elected by your fellow Christians to serve as the first delegates to the organizational meeting of the India Evangelical Lutheran Church.²

Has enough attention been given to financial stewardship? Is it possible that some institutions have been permitted to develop beyond the means and capabilities of the Indian Christians? Today there are very few congregations which can support their own pastors, much less help subsidizing other needed areas of Gospel work, such as exist in Bombay and Ceylon. The writer recognizes the tremendous task involved here, for these people lack so much in the line of material things. But has the development of Christian responsibility which is an important part in the life of the Church been neglected? There is much confidence in the newly organized Synod that these problems with regard to the source of financial support will be faced from the beginning and solved under the guidance of God.

²Ibid., p. 2.

We know that heat is necessary to weld certain metals together. Perhaps this problem of finances will be the heat that God will use to weld us together so that we become better tools for the building of the Kingdom of His dear Son. God is placing before us a challenge that will lead us to realize at the very beginning of our Synod that our strength lies not in ourselves but in God, and that without Him we can do nothing.

The decision of the Home Board to reduce the subsidy granted to the Indian Church by five per cent each year will make it necessary for us to rethink and re-evaluate all phases of our work. We will have to cut down here and expand there. We will have to replace less effective methods of doing our work with more effective ones. It is perhaps well that decisions of this kind affecting the future of our work should be made by responsible leaders of the Indian Church rather than by foreign missionaries who may not long be able to continue to work with you. Our district synods will have to pray and work in close harmony with each other. We will have to ask God to grant us the wisdom that He is ready and willing to give to those who ask without doubting (James 1, 5-6).³

Throughout the work of the Missouri Mission during the past sixty years there has been abundant evidence of God's gracious guidance and blessing. For this we give thanks to Him for having used sinful men to gather His scattered sheep around the cross of Jesus Christ. The India Evangelical Lutheran Church has now taken over the responsibility for administration and further spread of the Gospel. Its dedication to this cause is expressed by General Secretary B. H. Jackayya in the closing address of the Synodical formation meeting:

The Church is the form in which Christ continues to do His saving work in the world. So the Church is Christ's mouth, hands, and legs. . . . The Church in the world is imperfect and so needs to grow in knowledge, faith and life. . . . The Church is a church only when there is an effective will to assume the responsibility for maintenance of the Church and godly impatience with the dependent status.⁴

May the Lord of the Church continue to shower upon our sister Synod His great and marvelous blessings.

³Ibid., pp. 2-3.

⁴Ibid., pp. 24-25.

APPENDIX

MISSIONARY PERSONNEL

Workers	Date of Entry	
Bertram, W. E.	1951	1954
Brauer, Richard H.	1925	1953
Buehner, Andrew J.	1928	1951
Bulle, W. F., M. D.	1950	In service
Chuvala, D. S.	1929	1953 *
Doctor, Miss A., R. N.	1932	1945
Dukewits, W. O.	1930	1957
Engelbrecht, Luther **	1955	In service
Fritze, Andrew J. ***	1953	In service
Gall, John D. **	1950	1950
Graf, Armand	1945	In service
Griesse, Elmer E.	1945	In service
Gronbach, Miss Hedwig, R. N.	1951	In service
Grumm, Meinert H.	1932	In service
Hahn, Bernhard P.	1930	1948
Hahn, Ernest **	1953	In service
Hattendorf, Gerhard O.	1927	1948
Heckel, Mrs. Gertrude (Teacher)	1940	In service
Heinlein, Harold E.	1948	In service
Hennig, Albert L. (Teacher)	1957	In service
Kauffeld, Paul M.	1920	1947
Kline, Norman W.	1951	1948

Koepke, Robert T.	1947	In service
Krafft, Edward (Teacher)	1945	In service
Kretzmann, Martin L.	1930	In service
Kropp, Miss Lois, R. N.	1957	1958
Landgraf, William G.	1928	1952
Lang, Samuel G.	1926	In service
Leo, Miss Johanna, R. N.	1957	In service
Luecke, George	1953	1956
Luedtke, Walter A.	1928	1945
Lutz, Anton J.	1912	1948 *
Lutz, Arnold J.	1946	In service
Lutz, Martin J.	1935	1957
Manns, Herbert T.	1928	In service
May, Wilbur T.	1948	In service
Mayer, James W.	1949	In service
Meinzen, Erwin H.	1948	In service
Meinzen, Lawrence E. (Teacher)	1950	In service
Meinzen, Luther W.	1948	In service
Michalk, Theodore A.	1945	In service
Miller, H. Earl	1928	1954
Miller, Roland E. **	1953	In service
Mitchell, Miss Nora (Teacher)	1956	In service
Mueller, Kenneth	1957	1946
Nau, Henry **	1950	1956 *
Naumann, John G. P.	1929	In service
Otten, Henry J. **	1950	In service
Peckman, Henry F.	1929	1952

Frango, Erich H. ***	1932	1957
Rasch, Arthur R.	1926	1953
Rasch, Miss Audrey, R. N.	1952	1957
Rathke, Miss Louise (Deaconess)	1926	In service
Rehrinkel, Miss Angela, R. N.	1921	In service
Rink, Miss Adeline (Deaconess)	1952	In service
Rittmann, Clarence L.	1928	In service
Schroeder, George O.	1921	1950
Schulz, Henry A.	1925	In service
Sieving, Reinhard P.	1937	1945
Smith, Harry D.	1950	1956
Steinhoff, John G.	1937	In service
Stelter, Gerhard R.	1926	In service
Stevenson, Duncan S.	1926	1953
Strasen, Bernhard T.	1921	1951
Suhs, A. Victor ***	1957	In service
Trautmann, Robert	1949	In service
Wetzel, Louis M.	1929	1946
Wulf, Miss Betty Rose (Teacher)	1949	1952 *
Wyneken, Martin L.	1928	1954
Zienke, Miss Rose (Deaconess)	1947	In service
Zorn, Herbert M.	1947	In service
Zorn, Kurt M.	1927	In service
Zorn, Robert M.	1929	In service

* Died in service

** Muslim Mission

*** Ceylon

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