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Our Anniversaries (1855-1955) (1930-1955)

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Our Anniversaries

(1855—1955) (1930—1955)

THE current issue of the CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY greets our readers in festive colors. There is ample reason for donning holiday dress. The year that is drawing to a close marks two milestones in its career. As the direct lineal descendant of *Lehre und Wehre* (1855) our journal is observing its one-hundredth birthday. It bears the marks of age and the changes that come with growing old. In its younger days it spoke to its readers in the language of Luther as *Lehre und Wehre* and continued to do so for many years. Also in German the homiletical section had appeared as a separate publication known as *Magazin für Ev.-Luth. Homiletik*.

The silver lettering on the cover takes note of the silver anniversary of the CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY in its present form. In January 1930 the first issue came off the press. It came into existence when, in the previous year, Synod resolved that a theological journal called the CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY was to continue the services rendered by the two German publications mentioned above as well as the *Theological Monthly* (founded in 1921).

On the following pages Dr. Arndt gives an account of our journal's forebears. To complete the picture a few words should be added on the history of the C. T. M. since 1930.

During these twenty-five years the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, has had the privilege and responsibility of editing the C. T. M. It discharged this task by appointing an editorial committee and a managing editor. The first to hold this key position was Dr. Paul E. Kretzmann (1930—1938). He had the assistance of a committee consisting of Professors F. Pieper (for two years), W. Arndt, Th. Laetsch, L. Fuerbringer, and Theo-

Lehre und Wehre.

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Redigirt
von
C. F. W. Walther.

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dore Engelder (since 1935). In 1938 Dr. W. Arndt began to serve as managing editor. The editorial committee remained the same and included the former managing editor until 1944. In that year the masthead lists the following editorial committee: Professors Th. Hoyer, Th. Laetsch, F. E. Mayer, L. J. Sieck. In 1948 Dr. R. R. Caemmerer replaced Dr. Laetsch. Two years later Dr. F. E. Mayer relieved Dr. Arndt of the task as managing editor. Dr. Mayer's leadership was cut short by his untimely death in 1954. Since that time the duties of managing editor have devolved upon the undersigned. The present editorial staff consists of Victor Bartling (1952—); Paul M. Bretscher (1950—); Richard R. Caemmerer (1948—); Alfred O. Fuerbringer (1953—); Arthur Carl Piepkorn (1953—); Lewis W. Spitz (1953—); Lorenz Wunderlich.

Anniversaries are always occasions for thanksgiving to God. The mere fact that our journal is in existence after 100 years, albeit in altered form, is evidence of undeserved divine mercy and grace. While perhaps not the oldest American theological publication (the writer knows of only one other that boasts of such a long career), it deserves a prominent place in the history of religious journalism in this country.

Nor did it eke out a mere existence of questionable value during all these years. *Lehre und Wehre* was the rallying call to sound Lutheranism. Its voice rang out in unmistakable accents amid much confused theological thinking. Its volumes bear witness to a consecration to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions that is wholly the gift of God's Holy Spirit. Our journal changed editors, committees, and language, but it did not shift to new theological foundations. Thanks be to God!

After 100 years it is not a senile and moribund patriarch. The first issues of *Lehre und Wehre* contained 32 pages; the C.T.M. has 80. In how many copies the first *Lehre und Wehre* appeared cannot be ascertained; no doubt the circulation was small. Today the C.T.M. is printed in 4,500 copies. Again we say: *Soli Deo gloria*.

In planning a fitting observance of this double anniversary of our journal the staff resolved to let the past speak for itself by presenting two articles in translation from the pens of its most

illustrious contributors, Dr. Walther and Dr. Pieper. One is the first editor's Foreword to Volume VIII of *Lehre und Wehre* (1862); the other is a selection from a series of eleven articles on "Dr. C. F. W. Walther as Theologian," which appeared in *Lehre und Wehre* from 1888 to 1891.

These articles were chosen not only because they are a link with the past but also because they remind us of the focal point in the theology of our journal from its earliest days. Our estimate of the theological acumen of our fathers will rise as we observe the penetration and clarity with which they established the central issues. Present-day antitheses to the theology of these earlier writers may appear in new guise and with new names. But what Walther and Pieper wrote is still relevant and enables us to evaluate and to judge modern theological thinking if we have learned the basic principles which they established.

The translators of these articles also are closely connected with the history of our journal. Dr. Arndt, managing editor of the C. T. M. for 13 years, has made his venerable predecessor's presentation accessible to our English readers. Dr. Mueller has translated the article by Dr. Walther's successor, Dr. Pieper, whose colaborer he was for many years. He is well known to our readers as a frequent contributor to our magazines.

In crossing the line into a second century of our journal the staff bespeaks the fervent prayer of our readers for the Lord's continued help and guidance.

WALTER R. ROEHRS