

7-1-1961

The Historical Background of "A Brief Statement."

Carl S. Meyer

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm>



Part of the [History of Christianity Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Meyer, Carl S. (1961) "The Historical Background of "A Brief Statement."," *Concordia Theological Monthly*. Vol. 32, Article 42.

Available at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/ctm/vol32/iss1/42>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Print Publications at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Concordia Theological Monthly by an authorized editor of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

The Historical Background of "A Brief Statement"

By CARL S. MEYER

A *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States*, adopted in 1932, is a product of the Middle Period in the history of that church. It reflects the theological concerns of that church body at that time and is conditioned by the relationships between the Missouri Synod and other Lutheran bodies during that period. Only to a lesser degree does it deal with general contemporary theological issues. Sociological and ecclesiological movements were not major factors which governed its formulation and adoption. However, without some understanding of the sociological, ecclesiological as well as the ecclesiastical and theological factors of this Middle Period of Missouri's History, *A Brief Statement* seems incomplete, unbalanced, warped.

What were the forces from within and from the outside which impinged on the Missouri Synod during this time? What was the Missourian reaction to them? Particularly, what were the developments within Lutheranism, and how did they influence Missouri? What factors in the internal history of the Missouri Synod ought to be considered to understand the historical background of *A Brief Statement*?

I

THE MIDDLE PERIOD

The "Middle Period in the History of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod" is the designation we have given to the

years 1887 to 1932, dividing the history of the Synod into three periods, 1847 to 1887, 1887 to 1932, 1932 to the present. It is this writer's opinion that the Missouri Synod is approaching the end of the third epoch and that her history can best be understood and evaluated by seeing her 115 years divided into three *eras*, each approximately the span of a generation. The year 1887, according to this periodization, would be the *terminus a quo* of the Middle Period; the year 1932, the *terminus ad quem*.

The year 1887, then, saw the end of one epoch in the history of the Missouri Synod and the beginning of another. Forty years had elapsed since its organization in Chicago, with the election of C. F. W. Walther as President.¹ Now this leader had passed on to his reward, his death occurring while the 20th convention of the Synod was in session.²

In his presidential address to this triennial convention of Synod Schwan recognized: "Approximately with this year's meeting we are beginning a new period in the history of our Synod."³

¹ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1847, p. 16. [Full bibliographical information of official records is not given in this essay. All such records cited are in the Concordia Historical Institute.]

² *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1887, pp. 3 f.; *Der Lutheraner*, XLIII (May 15, 1887), 76 ff. On Jan. 16, 1887, Walther's golden jubilee as pastor was observed. *Der Lutheraner*, XLIII (Feb. 1, 1887), 17.

³ H. C. Schwan, "Synodalrede," *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1887, p. 18.

This convention resolved, in agreement with the recommendation of the Electoral College, that Francis Pieper be the successor of the departed C. F. W. Walther, that he be offered the presidency of the Seminary, and that G. Stoeckhardt be elected as professor at Concordia Seminary.⁴ Subsequently in the same year A. L. Graebner was elected to the St. Louis faculty.⁵

This change in personnel at the theological seminary, involving the theological leadership of the Synod, is not the only factor, however, which points to a transition from one period to another.

In the year 1887 the *Progymnasium* at Milwaukee was taken over by the Synod,⁶ the first educational institution of higher education added to its system since 1857, when the *Lehrer-Seminar* was made a synodical institution and transferred from Milwaukee to Fort Wayne.⁷

In 1887 the resolution was passed to authorize the Foreign Mission Board to inaugurate a foreign mission, perhaps on the island of Ceylon,⁸ although it was not until 1894 that Theodor Naether and Franz Mohn were commissioned for service in

India.⁹ In 1887, too, two new Districts were created, the Kansas District and the California-Oregon District,¹⁰ nothing new in practice but symbolic of the continued growth of the Synod.

By 1887 the Missouri Synod had reached its measure of growth in relationship to the total population of the country, for there would be no increase percentagewise between 1887 and 1932 when compared with the over-all growth of the country.¹¹

By 1887 the *Gnadenwahlstreit* had simmered down, although echoes of this controversy reverberated, for instance, on the pages of *Lehre und Wehre* long after that date.¹²

The membership of the Synodical Conference in 1887 consisted of the synods of Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin.¹³ By

⁹ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1896, p. 79.

¹⁰ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1887, p. 81.

¹¹ *Infra*, p. 408.

¹² F[rancis] P[ieper], "Widerstehliche und unwiderstehliche Gnade," *Lehre und Wehre*, XXXIII (April and May 1887), 117 to 125; *ibid.*, XXXIII (June 1887), 160—167.

F[rancis] P[ieper], "Zum Thatachenbestand des letzten Lehrstreits," *ibid.*, XXXIII (September 1887), 251—254.

F[rancis] P[ieper], "Das lutherische und das Ohio'sche Geheimnis in der Lehre von der Bekehrung und Gnadenwahl," *ibid.*, XXXIV (February 1888), 33—42.

F[rancis] P[ieper], "Ist es wirklich lutherische Lehre, dass des Menschen Bekehrung und Seligkeit nicht allein von Gottes Gnade, sondern in gewisser Hinsicht auch von dem Verhalten des Menschen abhängig sei?" *ibid.*, XXXVII (October 1891), 289—294; *ibid.*, XXXVIII (November 1891), 321—328; *ibid.*, XXXVIII (December 1891), 361—365; *ibid.*, XXXVIII (March 1892), 65—70; *ibid.*, XXXVIII (April 1892), 104—106; *ibid.*, XXXVIII (May 1892), 129—132.

This list could be amplified by listing articles from subsequent years.

¹³ *Proceedings*, Synodical Conference, 1888, pp. 3, 4.

F[rancis] P[ieper] in "Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches," *Lehre und Wehre*, XXXIII (June 1887), 176. In italics in this report.

Similarly in 1901 Theo. Buenger, "Etlche Züge aus der Geschichte der Missouri-Synode," *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, Iowa District, 1901, p. 90, wrote: "Mit dem Tode des seligen Dr. Walther am 7. Mai 1887 ist der erste Abschnitt der Geschichte unserer Synode zum Abschluss gekommen."

⁴ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1887, p. 30.

⁵ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1890, p. 30.

⁶ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1887, pp. 42, 43.

⁷ Carl S. Meyer, "Teacher Training in the Missouri Synod to 1864," *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, XXX (Fall 1957), 97 to 110; *ibid.*, XXX (Winter 1957), 157—166.

⁸ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1887, p. 66.

1932 two small synods had been added, and the Minnesota Synod had merged with the Wisconsin Synod,¹⁴ yet there had been no radical transformation in the character of that federation during the 45 years.

These are factors that point to the year 1887 as the beginning of an epoch in the history of the Missouri Synod, an epoch which ended in the year 1932. This is said in the realization that the periodization of history is hazardous. It might be urged, for instance, that the dates 1893 and 1935 or 1887 and 1935 would be better termini.

The year 1932 saw not only the adoption of *A Brief Statement*,¹⁵ it also marked the second time that the *Proceedings* of the Missouri Synod were published in contradistinction to the *Verhandlungen*.¹⁶ The change in title already in 1929 is indicative that by and large the language transition had been almost completed, a transition in process since 1911. The organization of the English Evangelical Lutheran Conference of Missouri had taken place already in 1872;¹⁷ in 1887 the Missouri Synod declined the petition of a number of English Lutheran congregations to form a separate English Mission of the Missouri Synod;¹⁸ in 1888 the Constitution of the General English Evangelical Lutheran Conference of Missouri and Other States was adopted;¹⁹ in 1911 the English Synod

became the English District of the Missouri Synod.²⁰ These organizational aspects do not describe the language transition; they merely illustrate a few specific developments. The publication of *A Brief Statement* in a bilingual edition is another illustration of the language transition.

In 1897 Pieper, commenting on the future of the Missouri Synod after its first 50 years, acknowledged the necessity of working in the English language. Three fourths of the candidates were prepared, he said, to work in the English language, if necessary. Among the 180 students at St. Louis preparing for the ministry only 26 were foreign-born. The internal growth of the Synod pointed to the need of continued German as *Kirchensprache*; the main task of the Missouri Synod for the next decades would be in German, even though immigration had virtually ceased.²¹ In 1929 he spoke of the need of a *zweisprachiges Ministerium*, a topic which had occupied the convention of the Synod.²² Not the perpetuation of German culture but the propagation of the Lutheran heritage was the task of the church, whether in German or in English.²³

The "English" question was troublesome. If a minority in a congregation did not understand English, a majority did not have the right to deprive them of German services. English missions were needed.

¹⁴ *Proceedings*, Synodical Conference, 1932, pp. 3, 4.

¹⁵ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1932, p. 154.

¹⁶ The 1930 reports of the Synodical Conference were published as *Verhandlungen*; the 1932, as *Proceedings*.

¹⁷ [C. F. W.] W[alther], "Eine freie Konferenz englischer und deutscher Lutheraner in Missouri," *Der Lutheraner*, XXVIII (Sept. 1, 1872), 180—183.

¹⁸ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1887, p. 69.

¹⁹ The conference became a synod in 1891.

²⁰ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1911, pp. 31 to 40; *Reports and Memorials*, 1911, pp. 98—100.

²¹ F[rancis] P[ieper], "Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches," *Lehre und Wehre*, XLIII (May 1897), 156, 157.

²² F[rancis] P[ieper], "Unsere diesjährige Delegatensynode in River Forest," *ibid.*, LXXV (December 1929), 355, 358.

²³ F[rancis] P[ieper], "Vorwort," *ibid.*, XXXVII (January 1891), 4, 5.

"Wenn ich nur meine deutsche Kirche behalte, dann will ich gerne Opfer für die englischen Glaubensbrüder bringen."²⁴ Similar sentiments were voiced throughout Synod, although there were many congregations in which the language question caused much bitterness and hard feelings. The transition had been made or was well advanced in all except isolated culture islands by 1932.

In 1932 recognition was taken of the labors of the late F. Pieper, F. Bente, and George Mezger.²⁵ Another generation had passed; another epoch in the history of the Missouri Synod had come to a close. F. Pfothenhauer served one more term as President of the church body; in 1935 he became "Honorary President."²⁶ But L. Fuerbringer remained active for almost another decade, a fact that protests against little historians making too pat periodizations of history.²⁷

The convention of 1932 was the "depression Synod." "Es mangelt an Geld" was the recurrent song of the convention and "the present economic conditions" was the reason given for declining requests for new buildings, professorships, curtailing mission work, both at home and abroad, and so on.²⁸

In 1932 the required vicarage for theological students at St. Louis was inaugu-

rated,²⁹ as was the summer school for Lutheran teachers at Concordia Teachers College in River Forest;³⁰ the old *Kaffee-muehle* in Springfield had been torn down;³¹ and less than 4 per cent of Synod's pastors still preached against dancing as a sinful amusement.³² The first report of the Survey Committee—forerunner of the Board for Higher Education—was acted on in this year.³³ The first report of the Board of Christian Education (established in 1929), too, came to the 1932 convention.³⁴ The office of District School Superintendent was sanctioned.³⁵ None of these events is large enough in itself to mark an end of an epoch. Taken together they are indicative that one period of the Missouri Synod was giving way to another.

Brief reference must be made to the fact that during this period the Missouri Synod experienced the first trend toward a centralization of ecclesiological function. In 1908 the *Allgemeine Aufsichtsbehörde*, consisting of three men, was authorized.³⁶ Three years later the President was made a full-time official of the Synod.³⁷ In 1917 the new constitution authorized the establishment of the Board of Directors.³⁸ Then

²⁹ Ibid., p. 32.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 101.

³¹ Ibid., p. 32. *Kaffee-muehle* was the affectionate name bestowed by students of Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Ill., on one of its original buildings.

³² Ibid., p. 106.

³³ Ibid., pp. 80—85.

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 85—100.

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 158—160.

³⁶ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1908, pp. 61 to 63.

³⁷ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1911, pp. 133, 134, 192.

³⁸ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1917, pp. 84 to 92 (English ed., pp. 43—52).

²⁴ C. Z. [Carl Zorn], "Zur Sprachenfrage," *Der Lutheraner*, LXIX (May 10, 1892), 78, 79.

²⁵ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1932, p. 244; cf. p. 31 and pp. 28 f.

²⁶ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1935, pp. 212, 213.

²⁷ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1932, p. 29.

²⁸ See, e. g., *Proceedings*, 1932, pp. 34, 49, 55, 59, 61, 115, et al. "Under prevailing economic conditions" and "under present conditions" were other phrases used.

in 1932 came a realignment of boards and committees, a consolidation and strengthening of the structure.³⁹ The trend must be noted, at least, in this sketch of trends and movements within the Missouri Synod during the Middle Period.

Enough has been said to justify or rationalize the dates 1887 and 1932 as the termini of the Middle Period of the history of the Missouri Synod. In doing that, we have pointed or alluded to some of the movements and trends during that period, such as the language transition. The German character of the first period carried over to the Middle Period. Some of the immigrants who came in the 1880s and 1890s were fiercely patriotic, imbued with the spirit that engendered the formation of the first *Reich*. They brought with them a high regard for *Deutschtum* and thereby created problems for the churches.⁴⁰

However, during this Middle Period of Missouri's history the Missouri Synod was transformed from an immigrant church to a native-born church. The maximum number of persons living in the United States who had been born in Germany was reached in 1890.⁴¹ By 1910, 20 years later, the maximum for those of German parentage was reached.⁴² Thus about 1887, or better between 1850 and 1914, the *Völ-*

kerwanderung of the 19th century⁴³ became a major factor in the history of the Missouri Synod.

Immigration from Germany in 1839, the year the Saxons reached Perry County, Mo., had been only 21,028. A record number of immigrants from Germany was reached in 1854, seven years after the organization of the Missouri Synod and the year in which the young Synod found it necessary for organizational purposes to subdivide into four Districts.⁴⁴ In that year, 1854, 215,009 German immigrants set foot on American soil, a yearly total not reached again until 1882, with 250,630 immigrants. Ten years later, in 1892, there were 119,168 German immigrants, another high point. Between 1887 and 1932 there were only four years in which German immigrants exceeded 100,000 a year, and these were between 1887 and 1892 (inclusive). A low point was reached in 1898 with only 17,111 German immigrants. Between 1887 and 1914 (inclusive) an average (mean) of about 48,270 German immigrants a year entered this country.⁴⁵ These were by no means all Lutherans, but there were Lutherans among them in large enough numbers to affect the Missouri Synod also. About 1890 the character of

³⁹ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1932, pp. 98 f., 110 f., 160.

⁴⁰ See Carl S. Meyer, "Lutheran Immigrant Churches Face the Problems of the Frontier," *Church History*, XXIX (December 1960), 452-455.

⁴¹ E. P. Hutchison, *Immigrants and Their Children, 1850-1950* (for the Social Science Research Council in co-operation with the U. S. Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of the Census; New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1956), p. 4.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁴³ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1874, p. 63; the phrase was used in the report of the Commission for Emigrant Missions in New York. In this report the question was asked: "Was wäre insonderheit unsre theure lutherische Kirche in diesem Lande ohne die Einwanderung?"

⁴⁴ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1854, pp. 17, 19 f.

⁴⁵ *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1957*, prepared by the U. S. Bureau of the Census with the co-operation of the Social Science Research Council (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1960), C-94, pp. 56, 57.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF A BRIEF STATEMENT

the immigration changed; this change had a partial effect on the Missouri Synod.

Table I makes it evident that the Missouri Synod membership fell slightly behind the increase in the population of the country as a whole in the Middle Period.⁴⁶

Table I

Year	Population of the USA	Membership of Mo. Syn.	Mo. Syn. membership per cent of USA population
1890	62,947,714	531,357	.0084
1900	75,994,575	728,240	.00963
1910	91,972,266	878,654	.00955
1920	105,710,620	1,009,982	.00955
1930	122,775,046	1,163,666	.00946

It is true, but nevertheless, it can be very deceptive to say that between 1890 and 1926 the membership of the Missouri Synod increased 133.24 per cent, and that its yearly increase was 3.7 per cent in this period.⁴⁷ In this same period the population of the country as a whole increased by 185 per cent.⁴⁸ Moreover, 22 per cent of the population of the country was churchd in 1890; of this number the Missouri Synod made up 3.8 per cent. But in 1930, 43 per cent of the population of the country was churchd; the Missouri Synod

made up only 2.2 per cent of this number. In the increase of population the Missouri Synod was barely holding its own, if that; it was not increasing as rapidly as was the over-all church membership of the country.

It was not that the immigration was disregarded by the Missouri Synod. Far from that. Already in 1869 Stephanus Keyl had become *Emigranten Missionar*, a position he held almost up to his end on Dec. 15, 1905.⁴⁹ In 1890 there were immigrant agents in New York and Baltimore as well as in Hamburg and Bremen in Germany.⁵⁰ In 14 years the Iowa District, by way of illustration, had increased from 19,072 in 1886 to 35,426 in 1900, an 83 per cent increase.⁵¹ The constant need for *Reiseprediger* remained with the Synod. In 1880 F. Pfotenhauer, later to serve the Synod as President (1911—1935), accepted a call as candidate. In 1884 his parish consisted of five congregations and five preaching places.⁵² Pleas were made in the church periodicals, in synodical conventions, and in the conventions of the Districts for young men to serve in the fields almost invariably described as "white unto harvest."⁵³ F. Pfotenhauer wrote of this expansion in the Northwest:

⁴⁹ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1908, p. 84.

⁵⁰ *Amerikanischer Kalender für deutsche Lutheraner auf das Jahr 1890* (St. Louis: Lutherischer Concordia-Verlag, 1890), pp. 28 f.

⁵¹ Theo. Buenger, "Etlche Züge aus der Geschichte der Missouri-Synode," *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, Iowa District, 1901, p. 90.

⁵² *Statistisches Jahrbuch*, 1884, p. 48. Of 14 men serving in Dakota in 1884, only one served as few as three congregations.

⁵³ F. Pf[otenhauer], "Vortrag über Innere Mission," *Lehre und Wehre*, LI (August 1905), 353—358; A. G[raebner], "Unsere 'Innere Mission,'" *Der Lutheraner*, I (Jan. 30, 1894), 22, 23; *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1902, pp. 65—74; et al.

⁴⁶ The figures for the U. S. A. were taken from Edwin O. Goldfield, ed. *Statistical Abstracts of the United States*, 1960 (81st ed.; Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1960), table 1, p. 5.

The figures for the Missouri Synod are from Erwin L. Lueker, ed. *Lutheran Cyclopedia* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1954), p. 629.

⁴⁷ The data are from O. M. Norlie and G. L. Kieffer, eds. *The Lutheran World Almanac and Encyclopedia*, 1931—1933 (New York: National Lutheran Council, 1932), p. 393.

⁴⁸ *Historical Statistics*, A-2, p. 7. The estimated population on July 1, 1890, was 63,056,000; on July 1, 1926, 117,399,000.

The growth of our Synod in the Northwest now [1880] assumed unlooked for dimensions. By the providence of God several factors worked together to bring about this growth. The newly organized [Minnesota and Dakota] District carried on its mission work in a systematic way. At its conventions a detailed report was given of the work done, and this was followed by thorough deliberations. The Board of Missions was earnestly devoted to this worthy cause and provided the missionaries with the necessary means of support, though these could be supplied only moderately. The conferences of the District tried to find ways and means for opening up new territories. . . . The number of graduates from our seminaries that entered the work of this mission District increased from year to year. These young men took hold of the work filled with enthusiasm and energy. They traversed the prairies in all directions and extended the work done by the first pioneers.⁵⁴

But the demands for men constantly exceeded the supply. In 1890 there were 105 calls for 68 candidates (40 from St. Louis and 28 from Springfield).⁵⁵ In 1909 there were only 96 men available (61 from Saint Louis, 35 from Springfield) for 180 calls.⁵⁶ In 1914 there were 122 calls for 116 candidates (93 from St. Louis and 23 from Springfield).⁵⁷ The vast demands of the *Innere Mission* — home missions — harassed the officials and boards and faculties

of the seminaries. By the end of the period, however, *Reiseprediger* had in general given way to missionaries who were stationed in urban areas.⁵⁸

This means that by 1932 there was a notable trend toward urbanization also within the Missouri Synod. In 1932 out of 3,512 congregations, 376 Missouri Synod churches were located in 20 of the largest cities within the U.S.A.⁵⁹ The statistics are not exact enough to determine how many of the 1,424 congregations in 1887 were in cities. Among German immigrants in general, it may be noted, there was a readiness to settle on homesteads in the earlier years; in the later period Germans tended toward nonrural occupations.⁶⁰ These trends had important bearings on the Missouri Synod in the composition of her congregations. That Missouri Synod congregations in another generation have varied sociological backgrounds needs no documentation. The shift was evident already in 1932.

In 1932 the third generation within the Missouri Synod was coming to the fore. Marcus Lee Hansen had formulated what he calls "the principle of third generation interest." He says: "The theory is derived from the almost universal phenomenon that what the son wishes to forget, the

⁵⁸ See, e.g., *Our Home Mission*, IX (September 1933), 11. Thirty men served 105 places.

⁵⁹ *Statistical Yearbook*, 1932, p. 142. Cf. also the parochial reports. The count was made by me.

By 1926 the Missouri Synod was 54.6 per cent urban. A report from the *U. S. Census of Religious Bodies*, 1926, in *Theological Monthly*, IX (May 1929), 142.

⁶⁰ Hutchison, *Immigrants and Their Children, 1850—1950*, pp. 107—111.

⁵⁴ F. Pfotenhauer, "The Opening Up of the Great Northwest," *Ebenezer: Reviews of the Work of the Missouri Synod During Three Quarters of a Century*, ed. W. H. T. Dau (Augmented ed.; St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1922), p. 338.

⁵⁵ *Der Lutheraner*, XLVI (July 29, 1890), 129.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, LXV (June 1, 1909), 167.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, LXX (May 26, 1914), 174.

grandson wishes to remember."⁶¹ The second generation of Missourians did not wish to forget their theology, whatever defections there may have been. However, by the early 1930s there was another generation which numbered many who wanted to maintain the theology of the founding fathers. Since the stream of immigration continued until after 1900, there were second- and third-generation immigrants simultaneously within the Synod, a factor which may account for some of the tensions of the 1930s within this church body. The phenomenon, at any rate, deserves a much fuller investigation than that presented here.

The closing of the frontier in 1890, too,⁶² must be taken into consideration in giving a detailed analysis of the history of the Missouri Synod. What this meant for the Middle Period of her history is difficult to evaluate. The influence of the frontier, however, must not be overlooked.⁶³

The declining importance of immigration after 1892 or so can be seen in the reports of the Immigrant Commission.

⁶¹ M. L. Hansen, *The Problem of the Third Generation Immigrant* (Augustana Historical Society Publications; Rock Island, Ill.: Augustana Historical Society, 1938), p. 9.

⁶² Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1920), developed the frontier thesis in a paper to the American Historical Association in 1893.

⁶³ The frontier thesis has been applied to the churches in America by Peter G. Mode, *Source Book and Bibliographical Guide for American Church History* (Menasha, Wis.: Banta Publishing Co., 1921), and especially by William Warren Sweet, *Religion in the Development of American Culture, 1765-1840* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1952), and *The Story of Religion in America* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1939).

By 1911 this committee reported: "Zwar ist die deutsche Einwanderung, namentlich aus Deutschland, gegen früher sehr zurückgegangen . . ." ⁶⁴ By 1917 the report read: "Das Pilgerhaus ist verkauft." ⁶⁵ It marked, in a sense, the end of an epoch.

This period, it must be remembered, had begun in 1839 and was not quite at an end in 1917. Other immigrants were to come in the 1920s and again in the late 1940s and in the 1950s. Immigration had played an important part in the development of the Missouri Synod. During the Middle Period it had absorbed most of the mission efforts of the Synod. By 1932 the transition to a large extent had been made. World War I cut off immigration, and restrictions after the war curtailed it greatly. In 1932 these restrictions on immigration by the United States Government in part prompted a move to discontinue the Immigrant Mission entirely; the Synod, however, transferred this mission in New York City to the Atlantic District.⁶⁶

The consolidation of various mission boards and missions, too, was determined in 1932, and the office of Secretary of Missions was created. Foreign language missions were transferred to the Districts in which the work was being done.⁶⁷

Mission work among the Indians belongs to the heritage of the Missouri Synod, going back to the Loehe colonists in the Saginaw (Michigan) Valley. The last report of the Board for Indian Missions to the Synod was made in 1932; this board was eliminated, and the work of this board

⁶⁴ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1911, p. 88.

⁶⁵ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1917, p. 56.

⁶⁶ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1932, pp. 148 to 150.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 110, 111.

was transferred to the Districts "having Indian communities in their midst," with the encouragement "to give them their fostering care."⁶⁸ Moves of this kind, with their broader implications, show that the end of an epoch had been reached.

The growth and development of the Missouri Synod during the Middle Period is reflected in the expansion of its school system for training professional workers in the church. Here the period from 1887 to 1926 is marked off clearly.

In 1887 four institutions for professional training were under the control of the Missouri Synod: Concordia Seminary, St. Louis; Concordia Theological Seminary, Springfield, Ill.; Concordia Teachers College, Addison, Ill.; and Concordia College, Fort Wayne, Ind.⁶⁹ In 1887 the *Concordia-Progymnasium* in Milwaukee was added to the synodical schools.⁷⁰ In 1894 the second teacher-training institution was opened under synodical auspices in Seward, Nebr.⁷¹ By resolution of Synod a *Progymnasium* was also begun in 1893 in the St. Paul-Minneapolis area.⁷² In 1896 the *Progymnasium* at Concordia, Mo., was accepted by the Missouri Synod as a synodical school;⁷³ so, too, the school at Nepheran, N. Y.⁷⁴ A resolution of Synod directed Districts to found new schools only after permission

had been granted by the Synod.⁷⁵ In 1905 authorization was given for establishing a school in California.⁷⁶ In 1908 St. John's College in Winfield, Kans., was finally accepted as a gift from the English Missouri Synod.⁷⁷

The general trend in the first decade of the 20th century was for District ownership of schools, with subsidy from the Synod. Concordia College in New Orleans, La., was founded by a College Association in 1904, which received a synodical subsidy, beginning in 1905,⁷⁸ but was taken over by the Southern District in 1906, with continued subsidy from the Synod.⁷⁹ In 1917 the institution was closed because of decreased enrollment.⁸⁰ In the meanwhile the California school continued under District auspices until it was taken over by Synod in 1923.⁸¹ In that same year the institution at Portland, Oreg., was taken over.⁸² It had been under District auspices since 1905; since 1911 it had received subsidy from the Synod.⁸³ In that year, too, Concordia College of Conover, N. C., became the property of the Missouri Synod.⁸⁴ Not until 1920 was the school in Porto Alegre, Brazil, subsidized by Synod since 1908 as an institution of the

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁷⁶ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1905, pp. 54 to 56; the school was opened in 1906.

⁷⁷ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1908, pp. 60, 61.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 53, 54.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 53, 54; *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1911, pp. 75, 76; *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1914, pp. 62, 63.

⁸⁰ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1917, pp. 40, 41.

⁸¹ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1923, pp. 71, 72.

⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 73—75.

⁸³ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1911, pp. 79 to 82.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 139; see pp. 135—139, 111.

⁶⁹ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1887, pp. 27, 41.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 42, 43.

⁷¹ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1896, pp. 56 to 59.

⁷² *Ibid.*, pp. 65—69.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 69—72.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 72, 73.

The actual dates of organization of the schools are: Bronxville, 1881; Milwaukee, 1881; Concordia, Mo., 1883; Winfield, 1893; Seward, 1894.

Brazilian District,⁸⁵ taken over by the Synod.⁸⁶

In 1920 Synod resolved to build a school in Western Canada, to be opened in September 1921 with a *Sexta* class.⁸⁷ Then in 1923 a *Gymnasium* was voted for Texas by Synod.⁸⁸ The Teachers College was moved to River Forest in 1913.⁸⁹ With the relocation and new housing of Concordia Seminary in Clayton, Mo., in 1926,⁹⁰ one epoch in ministerial education of the Missouri Synod came to an end. Missouri had expanded her system of professional training schools during the Middle Period, a system which helped her maintain her stability.

During this epoch attempts were made within the Missouri Synod to supply secondary education for its laity. Walther College, the successor of the *Buergerschule* in St. Louis, flourished from 1888 to 1917. Its pioneering character is of significance in the educational history of the Missouri Synod.⁹¹ The high schools in Milwaukee (1903),⁹² Chicago (1909),⁹³ and Fort

Wayne (1916), Immanuel at Greensboro (1903), Bethany College in Mankato (1911) and the Lutheran High School and Business College in Deshler, Nebr. (1913), had their beginnings at this time.⁹⁴ The establishment of community Lutheran secondary schools in the first decade of the 20th century constitutes a trend, not to be duplicated for another generation.

Toward the close of this period, too, in 1925, Valparaiso University was acquired by an association within the Missouri Synod.⁹⁵

The establishment of Lutheran secondary schools was due in part to the urbanization and prosperity of the Missouri Synod Lutherans. It was due in part to the system of parish schools fostered by the Synod. It is true, between 1887 and 1932 the parish schools of the Missouri Synod underwent a transformation.⁹⁶ Begun as agencies to transmit the teachings of the church in the language of the old Fatherland, they became for many simply agencies to transmit their German heritage. This became evident from the large num-

⁸⁵ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1908, p. 78.

⁸⁶ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1920, pp. 74 to 78.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 78—80.

⁸⁸ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1923, pp. 84 to 85.

⁸⁹ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1914, p. 28.

⁹⁰ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1926, pp. 29, 30; also see *ibid.*, pp. 25, 26.

⁹¹ Arthur O. Leutheusser, "The Founding, Rise, and Extinction of Walther College," *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, XXXI (July 1958), 33—38.

⁹² E. H. Buerger, "The History of the Lutheran High School in Milwaukee, Wis.," *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, XXXIII (January 1961), 107—120; *ibid.*, XXXIV (April 1961), 5—17.

⁹³ Elsa M. Birkner, "Lutheran Secondary Ed-

ucation in Chicago," *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*, XXXII (October 1959), 79 to 86.

⁹⁴ John F. Stach, "The Period of Assimilation, 1894—1914," *One Hundred Years of Christian Education*, ed. Arthur C. Repp (Fourth Yearbook; River Forest, Ill.: Lutheran Education Association, 1947), pp. 164—166.

⁹⁵ John Strietelmeier, *Valparaiso's First Century* (Valparaiso: Valparaiso University Press, 1959).

⁹⁶ In the L. E. A. Yearbook cited in footnote 94 the period from 1847 to 1864 in the educational history of the Missouri Synod is called The Period of Planting; the period from 1864 to 1894 is called The Period of Expansion; from 1894 to 1914, The Period of Assimilation; and that from 1914 to 1947, The Period of Integration.

ber of *Fremde*, nonmembers, in the schools.⁹⁷ The Foreword of the 1871 *Schulblatt* said: "We want to further a German school setting in this our new fatherland."⁹⁸ Yet the answer given to the question, "What should move us to erect Christian schools and use them faithfully for our children?" included six points, among which there was one "our love to our Fatherland [the U.S.A.]." The command of God to the parents, the church, the pastors, love for the children, and love for "God's Word and our precious church" were other reasons cited.⁹⁹

World War I caused some of these schools to be closed because they were "German" schools. The "German" school at Schumm, Ohio, e. g., was dynamited and was closed for a period of almost a year. Other schools were closed permanently. The congregations of the Synod had 2,216 schools in 1912;¹⁰⁰ in 1922 there were 1,345 schools.¹⁰¹ This number increased by only 32 schools in ten years, for by 1932 there were no more than 1,377 schools.¹⁰² Those that remained, however, were the stronger as educational institutions, since they were forced to re-examine their standards, and in part at least, to reorganize their curricula.¹⁰³ There are indications that by

1932 a new appreciation of the objectives, the values, and the mission of the parish schools had set in among the members of the Missouri Synod and a new epoch had set in.¹⁰⁴

During the Middle Period the members of the Missouri Synod had to face serious legal threats to their schools. In Illinois the Edwards Law, the Bennett Law in Wisconsin, and the Starkwell and Knudsen bills of Minnesota were directly or indirectly aimed against the parochial schools. This crisis, around 1890, enlisted the forces of the Missouri Synod, the Wisconsin Synod, and the Synodical Conference in support of the schools.¹⁰⁵ It brought about good. Internal improvements resulted:

1. More efficient training of teachers.
2. Better support of the schools on the

book of the Lutheran Education Association; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951).

¹⁰⁴ L. G. Bickel, "The Period of Integration, 1914—1947," *One Hundred Years of Christian Education*, p. 198: "Because of a great world disaster our people were forcibly led to re-examine their set of social and spiritual values, with the result that, having faced the choice, they became stronger in their convictions both in the spiritual realm and in their mission and duty toward their children. At the dawn of another era, God appears to have prepared His people for great things for Him."

¹⁰⁵ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1890, pp. 83 to 86; *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, Wisconsin District, 1889, pp. 51—53; *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, Wisconsin District, 1891, pp. 60—84; *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, Illinois District, 1889, pp. 114 to 117; *Proceedings*, Synodical Conference, 1890, pp. 35—43; Stach, "The Period of Assimilation, 1894—1914," *One Hundred Years of Christian Education*, pp. 137—140; Walter A. Beck, *Lutheran Elementary Schools in the United States* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1939), pp. 227—250; Anson Phelps Stokes, *Church and State in the United States* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), II, 737.

⁹⁷ Walter F. Wolbrecht, "The Period of Expansion, 1864—1894," *One Hundred Years of Christian Education*, p. 82.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 76, with reference to *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, Iowa District, 1882, pp. 10 ff.; the essayist was Geo. Mezger.

¹⁰⁰ *Statistisches Jahrbuch*, 1912, p. 177.

¹⁰¹ *Statistical Yearbook*, 1922, p. 132.

¹⁰² *Statistical Yearbook*, 1932, p. 138.

¹⁰³ Arthur L. Miller, *Educational Administration and Supervision of the Lutheran Schools of the Missouri Synod, 1914—1950* (8th Year-

part of the congregation in the matter of books and other essential supplies.

3. An upward extension of the elementary school system.
4. Increased use of the English language.
5. More prayers on the part of the congregations for the continued existence of the schools.¹⁰⁸

After the First World War other attempts were made to curtail the work of the parochial schools. In Nebraska, Michigan, and in Oregon laws were passed that threatened the parish schools.¹⁰⁷ Again the forces of the Synod, notably the American Luther League under the leadership of J. C. Baur, joined forces with others to bring about the eventual defeat of these measures. The decisions of the Supreme Court in the Oregon Case (1924) and the *Meyer v. Nebraska* case (1923) were of the greatest importance for the furtherance of the church schools within the Missouri Synod as well as within other church bodies.¹⁰⁸ The good resulting from the crisis of the early 1890s was repeated in a large measure in the early 1920s; another generation within the Missouri Synod learned to re-evaluate and appreciate its schools.

Part-time programs of Christian education, too, were furthered during this period.

¹⁰⁸ Stach, p. 140, with reference to Beck, p. 261.

¹⁰⁷ *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1920, pp. 234, 235; *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1923, pp. 152, 153; J. P. Meyer, "Der Kampf um unser Schulwesen," *Proceedings*, Synodical Conference, 1922, pp. 1—25; Bickel, "The Period of Integration, 1914—1947," *One Hundred Years of Christian Education*, 198; Beck, pp. 324—343; Stokes, II, 733—744; Fred Vonderlage, "Saving the Private Schools: A Study of Pressure Group Influence on State Referenda in Michigan and Oregon," Unpublished Master's Thesis, 1959, Washington University, St. Louis.

¹⁰⁸ Bickel, p. 198.

Sunday schools,¹⁰⁹ Saturday schools, summer schools were fostered.¹¹⁰ Vacation Bible schools were making their appearance by 1932, e.g., in Rochester, Minn.

These, then, are some of the trends and movements, illustrated by specific events, of the Middle Period of the history of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The period from 1887 to 1932 saw this church body changed from an immigrant group to a predominantly native-born group, second- and third-generation children of immigrants. In this period the Missouri Synod faced the overwhelming demands of *Innere Mission*, a characteristic which this period shared with the first period. During this Middle Period the Synod began her foreign missions. She made the transition from a German to a predominantly English church body. She experienced a trend toward urbanization. She engaged in several struggles for her parochial schools, which she retained and strengthened. She expanded her system of professional preparatory schools. She even saw the beginnings of a gradual centralization of synodical functions. Doctrinal concerns, a concern for the *reine Lehre*, were still extremely strong, particularly in the face of liberal theology, higher criticism, theories of evolution, the social gospel, fundamentalism, and dispensationalism. Conversion and election, the "Four Points," open questions, the Scriptures, were major questions in her relation with other Lutheran bodies. It is to some of these doctrinal concerns to which we now turn.

¹⁰⁹ Martin A. Haendschke, "The Historical Development of the Sunday School Movement in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod," Unpublished Doctor's dissertation, 1961, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

¹¹⁰ Bickel, pp. 200—204.

II

MAJOR THEOLOGICAL MOVEMENTS
IN AMERICA, 1887—1932

The men of this generation of the Middle Period in the history of the Missouri Synod were doing battle "gegen das Pabstthum, gegen Unglauben, gegen Schwärmerie und falsches Lutherthum."¹ They believed that polemics were necessary, didactic, edifying, wholesome, and comforting.² Defense of false doctrine meant a falsification of the principle of Scripture.³

In the "Vorwort" to the *Lehre und Wehre* for the first number of the 20th century, Pieper asked the question, "What does the church need for the 20th century?" His answer was simple—the Gospel, the old Gospel, the Gospel of God, the Gospel of the grace of God, the Gospel of peace, the everlasting Gospel.⁴

The accent on *reine Lehre* was an accent on the Gospel. "Our Synod will retain the pure Gospel and God will permit our Synod to grow and prosper only if she is zealous in her stipulated task, namely, in the perpetuation and dissemination of the pure Gospel."⁵

¹ [Martin] G[uenther]. "Vorwort," *Der Lutheraner*, XLVI (Jan. 1, 1890), 1.

² G. St[oekhardt], "Vorwort," *Lehre und Wehre*, LI (January 1905), 2, 3: "Ja, die Polemik ist nothwendig. . . . Die Polemik, das ist schriftgemäße Polemik, ist lehrreich. . . . Die Polemik, rechte Polemik ist erbaulich. . . . Polemik, rechte Polemik ist heilsam und tröstlich."

³ F[rancis] P[ieper], "Die Vertheidigung falscher Lehre zieht die Fälschung des Schriftprinzips nach sich," *ibid.*, LI (January 1905), 9—18.

⁴ F[rancis] P[ieper], "Vorwort," *ibid.*, XLII (January 1901), 1—5.

⁵ F[rancis] P[ieper], "Das Evangelium oder die reine Lehre von der Rechtfertigung die Quelle der rechten Begeisterung für alle Arbeit

Protestantism as a whole in the 19th century was faced with the aftermath of the Enlightenment and with continued Rationalism. Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768 to 1834) and Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772—1834) in the first part of the century found the heart of religion in the realm of *Gefühl*, or emotion, a sense and taste of the Infinite, the indispensable friend and advocate of morality.⁶ In the course of the century Biblical criticism came to the fore. Wilhelm Martin Leberecht de Wette (1780—1849) was preceded by Hermann Samuel Reimarus (1694 to 1768), Johann Salomo Semler (1725 to 1791), and Johann Gottfried Eichhorn (1752—1827).⁷ Heinrich Georg August Ewald (1803—1875) produced his seven-volume *Geschichte des Volkes Israel* by 1859, which was criticized by conservatives and radical critics alike.⁸ Johann Karl Wilhelm Vatke (1806—1882) was less influential but even more original than Julius Wellhausen (1844—1918).⁹

David Friedrich Strauss (1808—1874)

im Reiche Gottes," *Der Lutheraner*, XLVI (July 29, 1890), 126. Original in italics. From a lecture presented at the convention of the Missouri Synod in 1890.

⁶ John Dillenberger and Claude Welch, *Protestant Christianity Interpreted through Its Development* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1954), pp. 182—189.

Kenneth Scott Latourette, *Christianity in a Revolutionary Age* (Vol. II of *The Nineteenth Century in Europe: The Protestant and Eastern Churches*, New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), pp. 12—16.

⁷ F. L. Cross, ed. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), pp. 394, 395, 1148, 1239, 443; Latourette, II, 41.

⁸ Cross, *Oxford Dict. of the Chr. Ch.*, p. 480; Latourette, II, 42 f.

⁹ *Ibid.*, II, 43.

in his *Leben Jesu*, published in 1835, applied the "myth theory" and raised a commotion that gave a "major impulse" to critical studies of the New Testament.¹⁰ Tuebingen's Ferdinand Christian Baur (1792—1860) did not quell the storm by his Hegelian interpretation of New Testament history.¹¹

The recall of these names is enough to point up this movement in Protestantism, the elaboration and acceptance of "higher criticism." Dillenberger and Welch, moreover, make it plain that the movement included an attack on the "significance and authority of the Bible as a whole." They say: "In short, it was all up with the dogma of the inerrancy of scripture."¹²

In this country the newer theories were popularized by men like Lyman Abbott and John Fiske.¹³ In the 1890s Charles A. Briggs became the center of a storm within the Presbyterian Church,¹⁴ a storm which raged until Gresham Machen and his followers withdrew in 1929 to organ-

ize Westminster Theological Seminary.¹⁵ Harry Emerson Fosdick was a prime target of the Fundamentalists for such books as his *The Modern Use of the Bible*.¹⁶ However, more than a decade before, beginning in 1909, the twelve volumes of *The Fundamentalist* were being mailed to Protestant pastors throughout the length and breadth of the country.¹⁷ In their controversy with the Liberals, the sympathies of the Missouri Synod theologians were on the side of the Fundamentalists, although by no means entirely so.¹⁸

In the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy, they warned, the Fundamentalists would lose, because of their approach to Scripture.

Because they are not willing to take the first step, that is, to believe that the Bible is the *verbally* inspired Word of God, that it must be taken as it reads, and that no man has the right to read into the words of the Bible his own opinions, therefore they are not willing to take the second step, in fact, they cannot consistently do so, namely, deny the others the right which they for themselves have assumed; nor can they consistently take the third step,

¹⁰ Ibid., II, 47; Cross, *Oxford Dict. of Chr. Ch.*, p. 1295.

¹¹ Latourette, II, 47—50; Cross, *Oxford Dict. of Chr. Ch.*, pp. 142, 143.

¹² Dillenberger and Welch, p. 195, italics in the original.

¹³ Ira V. Brown, *Lyman Abbott: Christian Evolutionist, A Study in Religious Liberalism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1953).

Aug. Schuessler, "Einige Aphorismen über das Verhältniss von Theologie und Wissenschaft," *Lehre und Wehre*, XLIII (June 1897), 176—178, inveighs against both Abbott and Fiske. He calls Abbott "The Goliath of the evolutionists of our country."

¹⁴ For a Missourian reaction to the *Casus Briggs* see F[rancis] P[ieper], "Die Presbyterianer und die Lehre von der Inspiration der Heiligen Schrift," *ibid.*, XXXIX (June 1893), 161—166.

¹⁵ Ned B. Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen: A Biographical Memoir* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1955) gives a sympathetic account of Machen's role.

Lefferts A. Loetscher, *The Broadening Church: A Study of Theological Issues in the Presbyterian Church since 1869* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1954).

¹⁶ Francis P. Weisenburger, *Ordeal of Faith: The Crisis of Church-Going America, 1865 to 1900* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959), pp. 80—109.

¹⁷ Clifton B. Olmstead, *History of Religion in the United States* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960), pp. 549—553, for "The Conservative Reaction"; also see pp. 467 to 474.

¹⁸ *Infra*, p. 420.

that is separate themselves from those who teach error.¹⁹

Contemporary with the development of "higher criticism," continuing the tradition of Schleiermacher, stood Albrecht Ritschl (1822—1889). His dual emphasis was on justification and reconciliation and on the kingdom of God. He influenced men like Wilhelm Hermann (1846—1922), Adolph von Harnack (1851—1930), and Ernst Troeltsch (1865—1923).²⁰ These in turn influenced some of the makers of the social gospel.

Along with the liberalism of Ritschl and Schleiermacher and the attacks on Scripture by Strauss and Wellhausen and others came the impact of the evolutionary theories popularized by Charles Darwin (1809—1882) in his *The Origin of Species* (1859) and *The Descent of Man* (1871). Science and the Christian faith were regarded as incompatible. Nonetheless the scientific movement had a tremendous influence on theology.²¹ H. G. Wood said

¹⁹ J. H. C. Fritz, "Will the Fundamentalists Win Out in Their Fight Against the Modern Liberals?" *Theological Monthly*, IV (Aug. and Sept. 1924), 240; see pp. 234—242 for the entire article.

²⁰ Cross, *Dict. of Chr. Ch.*, p. 1168; Dillenberger and Welch, pp. 198—200; Latourette, II, 16, 17.

²¹ Dillenberger and Welch, pp. 200—206.

Ralph H. Gabriel, *The Course of American Democratic Thought: An Intellectual History Since 1815* (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1940), pp. 161—172.

Olmstead, pp. 465—467.

Weisenburg, pp. 61—80.

Barbara M. Cross, *Horace Bushnell: Minister to a Changing America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), pp. 115—133, tells about Bushnell's reaction to Darwinism. His *Nature and Supernatural* (1858) already had grappled with some of the problems of the "new science."

that Darwin undermined Genesis, challenged Theism, weakened the Fatherhood of God, and threw doubt on the hope of personal immortality.²² Dillenberger and Welch pointed out that because of the widespread acceptance of the hypothesis of evolution in fields other than biology "increased emphasis was laid upon the influence of cultural environment in the development of religious thought and practice."²³ Three trends in Protestant thought, which, according to them, "may properly be associated with liberal theology," resulted. The one was a much greater stress "on the 'immanence' of God"; the second, "the reinterpretation of traditional conceptions of sin and redemption"; and the third, that the relationships between Christian and non-Christian religions were softened and greater syncretism (the term is not theirs) resulted.²⁴

For all that, as an eminent American historian pointed out, "The impact of science, and especially of the Darwinian theory, was violent but not shattering." He concluded:

It was a tribute either to the skill of Fiske, Beecher, Lyman Abbott, and their allies, or to the ability of Americans to divorce their Sunday from their weekday world, that the most scientific-minded people in the western world were, on the whole, those whose faith was least impaired by science.

Certainly by every test but that of influ-

The literature on Darwinism and its influence is large. No attempt is made to cite even a significant portion of it.

²² H. G. Wood, *Belief and Unbelief since 1860* (Cambridge: University Press, 1955), pp. 50—56.

²³ Dillenberger and Welch, p. 205.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 205, 206.

ence the church had never been stronger than it was at the opening of the twentieth century, and its strength increased steadily. . . . The typical Protestant of the twentieth century inherited his religion as he did his politics, though rather more casually, and was quite unable to explain the difference between denominations. He found himself a church member by accident and persisted in his affiliation by habit; he greeted each recurring Sunday service with a sense of surprise and was persuaded that he conferred a benefit upon his rector and his community by participating in church services. The church was something to be "supported," like some aged relative whose claim was vague but inescapable.²⁵

In how far evolution contributed to the growing secularism of the nation is difficult to say. Materialism, however, had pervaded the intellectual scene and overshadowed the spiritual. The trend had set in long before 1859, to be sure; by the end of the 19th century it had become most evident.²⁶ "The church itself confessed to a steady secularization: as it invaded the social and economic fields, it retreated from the intellectual."²⁷ And, we might add, all too frequently from the spiritual.

Along with Liberalism, evolutionism, and Biblical criticism the restless and ebullient era known as the Gilded Age or the Era of Big Business confronted the churches with social and economic problems. Nascent socialism and expanding

unionism among the laboring classes, the humanitarianism of philanthropic industrialists, and the impact of frontier forces which engendered spiritual activism seemed, at least, to demand the involvement of the churches. Roman Catholic concerns, made articulate in the *Rerum novarum* of Leo XIII (May 15, 1891),²⁸ may have implemented the movement. An American theology—so it was touted—had taken shape in the social gospel. A descendant of the "patriarch of Lutheranism in America," William A. Muhlenberg (an Episcopal rector) launched the institutional church, which was developed by W. S. Rainsford. The interchurch or undenominational city mission and settlement houses, such as the famed Hull House in Chicago, associated with the name of Jane Addams, promoted the program. Henry George's *Progress and Poverty* (1879) did more than advocate the single tax. It sought an ethically superior society.²⁹ With Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward* (1888) it asked for the good life—in a material sense—although Bellamy's novel was utopian in its frame of reference.³⁰ Inveighing against "the present barbarous industrial and social arrangements," Bellamy tried to further nationalism as "the means of social salvation."³¹ Thus various factors, social, economic, intellectual, combined to lend essence and weight to the writing

²⁵ Henry Steele Commager, *The American Mind: An Interpretation of American Thought and Character Since the 1880s*; paperbound ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959 [c. 1950]), p. 166.

²⁶ James H. Nichols, *History of Christianity, 1650—1950: Secularization of the West* (New York: Ronald Press Co., 1956), p. 269.

²⁷ Commager, p. 167.

²⁸ Etienne Gilson, ed. *The Church Speaks to the Modern World: The Social Teachings of Leo XIII* (Image Books. Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1954), 200—244.

²⁹ Gabriel, pp. 198—204.

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 210—212.

³¹ Joseph Schiffman, *Edward Bellamy: Selected Writings on Religion and Society*. American Heritage Series (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1955), p. 129.

and pronouncement of a Washington Gladden, Richard T. Ely, George D. Herron, Francis G. Peabody, Josiah Strong, Henry King, or Charles M. Sheldon. It remained, however, for Walter Rauschenbusch to articulate the social gospel most clearly in his *Christianity and the Social Crisis* (1907) and *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (1918).³² Progress and prosperity, it was said, would be certain hallmarks of the kingdom of God.³³ Among Lutherans J. H. W. Stuckenberg in his *Christian Sociology* (1880) advocated an application of Christianity to social problems.³⁴

A major pronouncement of the social gospel, however, came from the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. In 1908 it adopted the Social Creed of the Churches. It called for the protection of the workingman against the hardship "resulting from the swift crises of industrial change," for the necessity of "con-

ciliation and arbitration" in labor disputes, for the "abolition of child labor," for the "suppression of the 'sweating system,'" for the "reduction of the hours of labor," for "provision for the old age of workers," for "the protection of the worker from dangerous machinery," and for "the most equitable division of the products of industry."³⁵ The platform seemed radical to many; visionary to others. However conservative some churchmen might have been, the social gospel, nevertheless, maintained itself as a force in American religious life into the 1930s.

The concerns of the churches with the social order, pacifism, prohibition, the Depression, and the New Deal were concerns that grew out of the social gospel. That they were overemphasized and weakened the respect which many held for the churches was stated especially by those who found the social gospel and Liberalism going hand in hand.

Billy Sunday denounced the doctrines of universal brotherhood ("the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man") and of social service and, in the words of his biographer, "damned the whole social gospel movement as sacrilegious, un-American quackery."³⁶ Sunday advocated civic reform, prohibition, and "the old-fashioned Gospel."³⁷

Sunday belonged to the Fundamentalists. Their adherents stood for more than opposition to the social gospel. We have al-

³² B. Y. Landis, ed. *A Rauschenbusch Reader* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), is a convenient compilation of the best in Rauschenbusch's writings.

³³ For the social gospel movement see especially Charles H. Hopkins, *The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism, 1865 to 1915* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940); Henry F. May, *Protestant Churches and Industrial America* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949); Robert Moats Miller, *American Protestantism and Social Issues, 1919 to 1939* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1958); Herbert W. Schneider, *Religion in 20th Century America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952); Paul Carter, *The Decline and Revival of the Social Gospel: Social and Political Liberalism in American Protestant Churches, 1920-1940* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1956); Nichols, pp. 269-282; Gabriel, pp. 308-330; Commager, pp. 165-177; Olmstead, pp. 475 to 494; Weisenburger, pp. 117-140.

³⁴ A. R. Wentz, *A Basic History of Lutheranism in America* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1955), pp. 329, 330.

³⁵ Elias B. Sanford, *Origin and History of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America* (Hartford, Conn.: S. S. Scranton Co., 1916), pp. 493-503, esp. pp. 497 f.

³⁶ William G. McLoughlin, Jr., *Billy Sunday Was His Real Name* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1955), p. 138.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 225-234.

ready noted the fact of the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy. The Fundamentalists were essentially polemical, opposing evolutionism, higher criticism, and Liberalism. They upheld the literal interpretation of the Bible, especially of Gen. 1 and 2, the deity of Christ, the substitutionary atonement, the second coming of Christ, and, in many instances, a premillennium. Their leaders included men like J. Gresham Machen, John Roach Straton, William Jennings Bryan, William Bell Riley. The controversy (who disturbed Israel, the Modernists or the Fundamentalists?) reached its peak in the 1920s, especially among the Baptists, both Northern and Southern, and the Methodists. Highly publicized, the Scopes trial was only one phase of this controversy.³⁸ Fundamentalism, however, remained a significant force in Protestantism.

Of lesser importance but not to be ignored is the movement known as Dispensationalism. Allied to Fundamentalism and literalistic in its approach to the Bible, it emphasized the eschatological portions of Scripture. Cyrus S. Scofield was most influential in spreading such teachings.³⁹

By 1932 the various movements in theology in America were largely in a state of transition. Reinhold Niebuhr's *Moral Man and Immoral Society* (1932) was one indication that a new movement was under way. Walter Lowrie's *Our Concern with*

the Theology of Crisis (in the same year) by its very title was descriptive of the new movement. Karl Barth's *The Word of God and the Word of Man* had appeared in 1928; in 1934 George W. Richards' *Beyond Fundamentalism and Modernism* appeared. Neo-orthodoxy, the theology of crisis, or whatever labels may be used, are names of a new era in theology in America begun between 1932 and 1934.⁴⁰

What were the reactions of the Missouri Synod theologians to the various theological movements between 1887 and 1932? Specifically what were their reactions to Biblical criticism, evolutionism, and the social gospel?

Throughout the history of the Missouri Synod there have been voices raised against the denial of the inspiration and infallibility of the Scriptures. In the preface of the first volume of *Der Lutheraner* issued after the organization of Synod, now published as an official organ of the church body, Walther wrote:

... die Bibel Alten und Neuen Testaments ist Gottes unwandelbares ewiges Wort, vom ersten Buch Mosis an bis zur Offenbarung St. Johannis vom Heiligen Geiste eingegeben Wort für Wort. Diese heiligen Schriften der Apostel und Propheten sind daher die einzige Regel und Richtschnur alles Glaubens, die einzige Quelle aller seligmachenden Erkenntnis und die einzige Richterin aller, die christ-

³⁸ Norman F. Furniss, *The Fundamentalist Controversy, 1918—1931*. Yale Historical Publications, Miscellany: 59 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954). Stewart G. Cole, *The History of Fundamentalism* (New York: Richard R. Smith, Inc., 1931).

³⁹ C. Norman Kraus, *Dispensationalism in America: Its Rise and Development* (Richmond, Va.: John Knox Press, 1958), p. 111 et passim.

⁴⁰ Sidney E. Ahlstrom, "Continental Influence on American Christian Thought Since World War I," *Church History*, XXVII (Sept. 1958), 256—272, esp. pp. 264—267; Olmstead, pp. 574—578.

Published just as this article was going to press is the two-volume *Critical Bibliography of Religion in America* by Nelson R. Burr in *Religion in American Life*, ed. James W. Smith and A. Leland Jamison (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1961).

liche Lehre betreffenden Streitigkeiten. Diese geschriebene Offenbarung des allerhöchsten Gottes soll daher weder nach der blinden Vernunft, noch nach dem verkehrten menschlichen Herzen ausgelegt werden, sie erklärt sich selbst; es soll weder etwas davon noch dazu gethan und von keinem Buchstaben derselben, weder zur Rechten noch zur Linken, abgewichen, sondern alles so in kindlich demüthigem, einfältigem Glauben angenommen werden, wie die Worte lauten.⁴¹

This statement summarizes the position of the Missouri Synod for a hundred years. Walther's "Vier Thesen über das Schriftprincip" (1867) upheld these same principles.⁴² In 1874 Walther bewailed the fact that the revival of Lutheranism in Germany saw a defense of Christianity and a denial of fundamental doctrines, among them *die {Lehre} von der göttlichen Eingebung und Irrthumslosigkeit der kanonischen Schriften des Alten und Neuen Bundes*.⁴³ It is possible that Walther stimulated the writing of an essay in 1886 against the findings of the new theologians regarding the Bible.⁴⁴ Be that as it may,

⁴¹ [C. F. W. Walther], "Vorwort des Redacteurs zum vierten Jahrgang des Lutheraner," *Der Lutheraner*, IV (Sept. 8, 1847), 1.

⁴² *Lehre und Wehre*, XIII (April 1867), 97—111.

⁴³ [C. F. W. Walther], "Synodalrede," *Proceedings*, Mo. Synod, 1874, p. 9.

⁴⁴ G. Stoeckhardt, "Was sagt die Schrift von sich selbst? (Mit Berücksichtigung der gerade auch neuerdings erhobenen Einwürfe der neueren Theologie)," *Lehre und Wehre*, XXXII (June 1886), 161—168; *ibid.*, XXXII (July and Aug. 1886), 205—215; *ibid.*, XXXII (Sept. 1886), 238—257; *ibid.*, XXXII (Oct. 1886), 281—288; *ibid.*, XXXII (Nov. 1886), 313—323; *ibid.*, XXXII (Dec. 1886), 345 to 355. The essay was presented at the pastoral conference of Missouri.

According to F. Pieper, "Dr. C. F. W. Walther als Theologe," *ibid.*, XXXIV (July and

Missouri Synod theologians knew the theological developments in Germany at first hand. In 1887, while Walther was slowly nearing his end, the editor of *Der Lutheraner* reiterated: "Die lutherische Kirche richtet sich in allem, was sie lehrt, genau nach der heiligen Schrift, sie thut nichts dazu, sie thut nichts davon, sie unterwirft sich unbedingt dem Worte Gottes."⁴⁵ The infallibility and clarity of Holy Writ was emphasized repeatedly.⁴⁶

In 1892 *Der Lutheraner* carried a series of articles by Prof. Stoeckhardt on "Die Bibel das unfehlbare Gotteswort."⁴⁷ Current theories of Biblical criticism, the misgivings of scientists, and modern claims of errors in the Scriptures were examined in popular language. The emphasis was that everything in the Scriptures is God's Word and everything is true, certain, reliable. Again, Guenther wrote: "Die heilige Schrift ist ja von Gott eingegeben, 2 Tim.

Aug. 1888), 193, Walther was *not* the author of the article, "Was lehren die neueren orthodox sein wollenden Theologen von der Inspiration?" *ibid.*, XVII (Feb. 1871), 33—45; *ibid.*, XVII (March 1871), 65—76; *ibid.*, XVII (April 1871), 97—106; *ibid.*, XVII (May 1871), 129 to 141.

⁴⁵ [Martin] G[uenther], "Vorwort," *Der Lutheraner*, XLIII (Jan. 1, 1887), 1.

⁴⁶ E. g., F[rancis] P[ieper], "Vorwort," *Lehre und Wehre*, XXXIII (Jan. 1887), 1—7. F[rancis] P[ieper], "Vorwort," *ibid.*, XXXVIII (Jan. 1892), 1—7; *ibid.*, XXXVIII (Feb. 1892), 33—40.

G. G., "Die Angriffe der modernen Theologen auf Gottes Wort," a series appearing in Vol. XLII of *ibid.*, concluded in XLIII (Jan. 1897), with an article captioned "Die moderne Theologie hat kein Gottes Wort mehr."

⁴⁷ G. Stoeckhardt, "Die Bibel das unfehlbare Gotteswort," *Der Lutheraner*, XLVIII (Aug. 16, 1892), 133, 134; XLVIII (Aug. 30, 1892), 141—143; XLVIII (Sept. 13, 1892), 149—151; XLVIII (Sept. 27, 1892), 157 to 159; XLVIII (Oct. 11, 1892), 166, 167.

3, 16., sie ist das Wort des groszen majestä-tischen, allein weisen Gottes, sie ist die Wahrheit, Joh. 17, 11., und darum unfehl-bar, sie ist das Wort, das alles richtet und von niemand gerichtet werden darf; das Wort, unter welches alle Welt sich beugen muss." 48

W. Willkomm read an essay to the con-vention of the Ev. Luth. Free Church in Saxony in 1911, "Ueber die wörtliche Ein-gebung der ganzen Heiligen Schrift mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der modernen Einwände." 49 To sacrifice the verbal in-spiration and complete inerrancy of the Scriptures meant, wrote Bente, to open the floodgates of rationalism, to abandon sound principles of exegesis, and to endanger such doctrines as the deity of Christ. The Lu-theran Symbols become meaningless. "Alle diese Lehren, auch die fundamentalsten, geraten darum ins Schwanken von dem Augenblick an, da die wörtliche Inspiration und völlige Irrtumslosigkeit der Schrift in Frage gezogen wird." 50 Verbal inspiration was denied within the General Synod and the General Council, it was said. "Auch die Lehre von der Inspiration betreffend ist in der americanisch-lutherischen Kirche erst noch Einigkeit herzustellen." 51 To grant infallibility and inerrancy in *theologicis* but

not in *non-theologicis* was not enough for sound Lutheranism.⁵²

The Missouri Synod, like *Lehre und Wehre*, was not *charakterlos*. Anchored in the theology of the 16th century, fortified with fidelity to the Lutheran Confessions, *Lehre und Wehre* maintained the inerrancy of the Scriptures and their verbal inspira-tion.⁵³ Against Hofman, Frank, Luthardt, and others it insisted that the Scriptures are the only source of doctrine. It upheld the *Schriftprinzip*. Thereby it was safe-guarded, too, it was said, from indifference and unionism, secure in its reliance on Scripture alone.⁵⁴ Verbal inspiration was accepted *a posteriori* as well as *a priori*. The entire Scriptures are verbally inspired; therefore also the *Realien* were given by divine inspiration: history, geography,

⁵² Ibid., p. 87. "Astronomie, Geologie, Physik, Chronologie, etc." are mentioned specifically.

⁵³ F[riedrich] B[ente], "Vorwort," *ibid.*, I (Jan. 1904), 6: "Sie bekennt sich zur Verbal-inspiration und Unfehlbarkeit der ganzen heiligen Schrift. Sie bekennt sich zur Bibel, nicht bloss sofern sie Gottes Wort ist und Wahrheiten enthält, sondern weil sie in allen Worten und Lehren Gottes Wort ist und darum nur Wahr-heiten birgt und gar keine Irrthümer und Widersprüche. Und das auch nicht bloss in den streng theologischen Materien, sondern auch in ihren zahlreichen historischen, chronologischen, geologischen, biologischen und astronomischen Angaben." This is the first instance found by the present writer of this enumeration in Mis-souri Synod literature and may be regarded as the forerunner of paragraph one of the 1932 *Brief Statement*.

In a review of R. Fr. Noesgen's *Die lutheri-sche Lehre von der Inspiration* (Guetersloh: Verlag von C. Bertelsmann, 1909) F[riedrich] B[ente] criticized him for not upholding the historical, geological, and similar pronounce-ments of the Bible. *Lehre und Wehre*, LV (Dec. 1909), 550, 551.

⁵⁴ F. B[ente], "Vorwort," *ibid.*, I (Jan. 1904), 1—20.

⁴⁸ [Martin] G[uenther], "Vorwort," *ibid.*, XLVI (Jan. 1, 1890), 1.

⁴⁹ See the notice in *Lehre und Wehre*, LVII (Dec. 1911), 545, regarding the *Verhandlungen* of this church body.

⁵⁰ F. B[ente], "Vorwort," *ibid.*, LX (Jan. 1914), 1—11; the quotation is from p. 7.

⁵¹ F. B[ente], "Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches," *ibid.*, I (Jan. 1904), 39 f., with quotations from the *Lutheran World*, *Lutheran Church Review*, and the introduction of Haas' *Biblical Criticism*.

Lehre und Wehre, I (Feb. 1904), 85—87, with citations from the *Lutheran Church Re-view*.

geology, astronomy, psychology, pedagogy, biology, etc.⁵⁵ The Bible is God's Word, not merely *abgeleitetes Wort Gottes*, as a speaker stated at the Conference in Oslo (1925). Only when the Lutheran Church remains firm in its conviction that the Bible is the Word of God will she be true to her own character and sure of her strength.⁵⁶ When voices were raised in the United Lutheran Church of America which maintained the verbal inspiration, inerrancy, and authority of the Scriptures, they were hailed with joy.⁵⁷ However, that leading theologians within the United Lutheran Church spoke of discrepancies in the Scriptures and denied verbal inspiration in favor of grades of inspiration caused no little concern within the Missouri Synod.⁵⁸

In 1925 the *Theological Monthly* published an article which contended that "the Bible teaches that it is in all its parts the Word of God and in no parts the word of man."⁵⁹ The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are "an infallible record" of God's revelation to man.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ P. E. Kretzmann, "Die Inspiration der Realien," *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, I (Jan. 1930), 21—32.

⁵⁶ F[rancis] P[ieper], "Ist die Heilige Schrift direktes oder nur 'abgeleitetes Wort Gottes?'" *Lehre und Wehre*, LXXII (July 1926), 193—200.

⁵⁷ [Th.] E[ngelder], "Die Inspiration, Irrtumslosigkeit und Autorität der Schrift," *ibid.*, LXXV (April 1929), 97—100.

⁵⁸ F[rancis] P[ieper], "Vorwort," *ibid.*, LXXI (Jan. 1925), 6.

⁵⁹ Peter C. Krey, "Every Word Is Truth, a Defense of Verbal Inspiration," *Theological Monthly*, V (March 1925), 68—74; the quotation is from p. 71 and is italicized in the original.

⁶⁰ Clarence E. Macartney, "The Authority of the Holy Scriptures," *Theological Monthly*, V

At the dedication of Concordia Seminary (1926) J. W. Behnken, at that time President of the Texas District, disclaimed the theological aberrations of the age and pleaded for a retention of the Scriptures and the doctrine of *sola gratia*:

One of the cancerous diseases which have developed in many theological institutions today is this, that some professors have joined the ranks of Modernists, evolutionists, higher critics, etc. By the grace of God this shall never happen at our new Concordia Seminary. May God ever keep our seminary firm and decided in its stand for the truths of the Bible, especially the cardinal truth of salvation by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith, that it may ever be a training camp to send forth battalion after battalion of stalwart warriors who in the face of modern Bible-undermining, Christ-denying, faith-destroying attacks will valiantly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints and with the sword of the Spirit gain one victory after another for the Lord Jesus Christ, to the glory of God and the salvation of many immortal souls.⁶¹

The question of Bible criticism was faced not only in quasi-learned articles, popular presentations, and sermons. Investigations of the findings of the critics were made in scholarly presentations. L. Fuerbringer examined the various theories con-

(Oct. 1925), 294—300, esp. p. 295. This is "an address delivered at the Quadrennial World Convention of the Alliance of Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian System, Cardiff, Wales, June 29, 1925" (p. 294). It was reprinted from the *Princeton Theological Review* (July 1925) "as evidence that others think about the authority of the Holy Scriptures as Lutherans do" (p. 300).

⁶¹ F[rancis] P[ieper], "Mitteilungen aus den Reden, die bei der Einweihung unserer Sankt Louiser theologischen Anstalt gehalten wurden," *Lehre und Wehre*, LXXII (Sept. 1926), 273.

nected with the origin of the books of Moses.⁶² F. C. Pasche concerned himself with questions of the transmission of the Scriptures and of the infallibility of the Scriptures.⁶³ Walter A. Maier joined the St. Louis seminary faculty in 1922. With a firsthand acquaintance with the writings of the higher critics and a thorough knowledge of Semitics, he examined the critical interpretation of the Psalms and found it wanting.⁶⁴ He reached the same conclusion with respect to Is. 1:18.⁶⁵

The extreme emphasis during the second half of the 19th century and the first three decades of the 20th century on the form of Scripture by the polemicists of the Missouri Synod is understandable in the light of the developments in contemporary theology. This emphasis is reflected in *A Brief Statement*. It did not mean, how-

ever, that the men of this age knew nothing of the function of Scripture or that they minimized the saving power of the inspired Word of God. To them it was a living Word.⁶⁶ Now, however, the situation called for a defense of its verbal and plenary inspiration; they would not fail in defending the ramparts they felt called on to protect. Theology to them has three characteristics: it teaches only the Word of God; it teaches that the forgiveness of sins or justification is received only by grace, for Christ's sake, without the deeds of the Law, alone through faith; it makes the believer certain of the grace of God.⁶⁷ The Modernists or Liberals were scored for their refusal to accept the Scriptures⁶⁸ and for their rejection of the atoning sacrifice of Christ on the cross.⁶⁹

Confessional Lutheranism, they believed, required them to defend the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. The Lutheran Confessions upheld the doctrine of inspiration, although not *ex professo*. In common with the Reformers of the 16th century they regarded the Bible as the Word of God.⁷⁰ Luther identified the Bible with the Word of God and taught no other

⁶² L[udwig] F[uerbringer], "Die neuere Pentateuchkritik," *ibid.*, XLIX (Feb. 1903), 33—37; *ibid.*, XLIX (April 1903), 97—104; *ibid.*, XLIX (May 1903), 133—141; *ibid.*, XLIX (June 1903), 161—168; *ibid.*, XLIX (July and August 1903), 214—227; *ibid.*, XLIX (December 1903), 359—364; *ibid.*, L (Feb. 1904), 69—75; *ibid.*, L (March 1904), 110—121; *ibid.*, L (April 1904), 155—164; *ibid.*, L (May 1904), 208—214; *ibid.*, L (June 1904), 259—266; *ibid.*, L (July and Aug. 1904), 309—321; *ibid.*, L (Sept. 1904), 410 to 419; *ibid.*, L (Nov. 1904), 507—513.

⁶³ F. C. Pasche, "Finden sich in der Schrift Schreibfehler?" *Ibid.*, LXVII (May 1921), 140—154; F. C. Pasche, "Die Schrift redet immer wahr," *ibid.*, LXVII (June 1921), 172 to 180; *ibid.*, LXVII (July 1921), 200—208.

⁶⁴ Walter A. Maier, "The Pre-Israelite Psalms—the Historical Basis for a Readjustment of the Higher Critical Theories Concerning the Psalter," *ibid.*, LXXI (June 1925), 229—237.

⁶⁵ Walter A. Maier, "Vagaries of Tendential Exegesis as Illustrated by the Interpretation of Is. 1:18," *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, III (March 1932), 175—180.

⁶⁶ See, e.g., "Die Lehre von den Gnadenmitteln," *Der Lutheraner*, XLIII (Sept. 1, 1887), 133—134.

⁶⁷ F[ranz] P[ieper], "Drei Merkmale der rechten Theologie," *Lehre und Wehre*, LXXV (Oct. 1929), 289—293.

⁶⁸ J. T. Mueller, "Lehrfortbildung und Lehrzerstörung," *ibid.*, LXXI (June 1925), 191 to 201.

⁶⁹ W. H. T. Dau, "The Meaning of Calvary in the Minds of the Modernists," *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, III (Feb. 1932), 85—95.

⁷⁰ [P. E.] K[retzmann], "Unsere Bekenntnisse und die Lehre von der Inspiration," *Lehre und Wehre*, LXXI (Oct. 1925), 351—354.

doctrine of inspiration than verbal inspiration, they maintained.⁷¹

The attacks on evolutionism and the social gospel stemmed from their fidelity to the Lutheran Confessions and the Scriptures. As early as 1861 an essay appeared by a writer of the Missouri Synod against the theories of Charles Darwin as advocated in his *Origin of Species* (1859).⁷² In 1900 *Lehre und Wehre* again carried an essay on evolution.⁷³ Nine years later another series had the caption "Evolution and the Bible."⁷⁴ Th. Engelder in a lengthy essay in *Lehre und Wehre* in 1912 warned against *die trunkene Wissenschaft*. Modern theology and modern science belonged to this category, according to him.⁷⁵ They want to rob the Christian of his faith, his

Bible, his Savior.⁷⁶ The doctrines of man's innate depravity and the redemption are denied by the evolutionists, who also rejected, of course, the Genesis account of creation.⁷⁷ They denied the Scriptures. The writer maintained his belief in the divinity and the integrity of the Sacred Record. "Wir nehmen jedes Wort der Schrift an, wenn auch alle Welt sich dagegen auflehnte."⁷⁸ The scientists themselves admit that they are advancing hypotheses.⁷⁹ These are often illogical.⁸⁰

The heaviest attacks against evolution by a Missouri Synod theologian were made by Theodore Graebner. His *Evolution*⁸¹ and *Essays on Evolution*⁸² ran into several editions. It remained, however, for his massive *God and the Cosmos*⁸³ to bring the most reasoned and documented attacks against this theory. Surveying the modern scene—the work was a distillation and compilation of notes made during three decades or more—it was an apologetic against various modern forces. Although the work did not appear until 1943 it may be regarded as a product of the Middle Period of Missouri's history. Missouri's attitude on evolution during that time can perhaps be best summarized in the words

⁷¹ F[ancisc] P[ieper], "Vorwort," *ibid.*, LXXIV (Jan. 1928), 7—9. F. Pfotenhauer, "Synodalrede," *ibid.*, LXXV (July 1929), 193 to 195, too, maintained the dependence of the reformers on the Scriptures for the formulations of the Lutheran Confessions.

⁷² [C. H. R.] L[ange], "Die biblische Schöpfungsgeschichte und die geologischen Erdbildungstheorien," *ibid.*, VII (Feb. 1861), 39—43; *ibid.*, VII (March 1861), 68—74; *ibid.*, VII (April 1861), 98—102.

⁷³ F[riedrich] B[ente], "Evolution," *ibid.*, XLVI (Jan. 1900), 8—15; *ibid.*, XLVI (Feb. 1900), 38—47; XLVI (May 1900), 135—141; *ibid.*, XLVI (June 1900), 164—170; XLVI (July and Aug. 1900), 217—239.

⁷⁴ J. Hoeness, "Die Evolution und die Bibel," *ibid.*, LV (July 1909), 289—299; *ibid.*, LV (Aug. 1909), 351—359; *ibid.*, LV (Oct. 1909), 454—464; *ibid.*, LV (Nov. 1909), 499 to 510; *ibid.*, LV (Dec. 1909), 546—550.

⁷⁵ Th. Engelder, "Die trunkene Wissenschaft; was sie will, und warum wir wenig Respekt vor ihr haben," *ibid.*, LVIII (Dec. 1912), 541—553; *ibid.*, LIX (Jan. 1913), 17 to 27; *ibid.*, LIX (Feb. 1913), 70—77; *ibid.*, LIX (May 1913), 215—222; *ibid.*, LIX (June 1913), 256—267; *ibid.*, LIX (July 1913), 306 to 312; *ibid.*, LIX (Aug. 1913), 358—362; *ibid.*, LIX (Sept. 1913), 403—412.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, LVIII (Dec. 1912), 543.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 549 f.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, LIX (Jan. 1913), 17 ff. The quotation is from p. 22 and is in italics in the original.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, LIX (Feb. 1913), 70 ff.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, LIX (May 1913), 215 ff.

⁸¹ Theodore Graebner, *Evolution* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1922).

⁸² Theodore Graebner, *Essays on Evolution* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1925).

⁸³ Theodore Graebner, *God and the Cosmos: A Critical Analysis of Atheism, Materialism, and Evolution* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1943).

of one of Graebner's colleagues in the journal which Graebner edited:

"Christian evolution" is neither Christian, agreeing with the teachings of the divine Word, nor is it an evolution; it is simply a myth.⁸⁴

In the face of the cries that the church should accept the findings of science the Bible was held up as the only source of truth; besides that, the speculations of science changed from time to time.⁸⁵ "God's Spirit has spoken to us through the Bible, speaks to us through Christian preaching, and creates that response in our hearts which we call faith," it was pointed out, a faith that will cling to the pronouncements of the Word of God.⁸⁶

Because of their stance toward the Holy Scriptures, the denial of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, and the abandonment of the essentials of the Christian faith, Modernism and Liberalism brought forth the severest kind of condemnation by Missouri Synod writers. Such basic doctrines as original sin, the deity of Christ, the substitutionary atonement by Christ were declared to be in jeopardy unless the inerrancy of the Scriptures were maintained.⁸⁷ It was said, e. g., that the doctrine

of the Virgin Birth is in danger of being set aside if the Lucan account is regarded as an interpolation.⁸⁸ Perhaps the resolutions of the Walther League in 1923 will serve to summarize the stand of the Missouri Synod:

We believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, whose inerrancy not only in matters of doctrine, but also in every other statement, no matter to which field of knowledge it refers, is unquestioned. . . . We believe the Book of Genesis and the first page of the Bible to be God's own record of the creation of the world, holding this position as a point of faith. . . . We represent sound Lutheran fundamentalism in upholding not only a few of the basic principles and doctrines of the Bible, but all of them, from Genesis to Revelation, no matter whether in so-called conformity with our reason or not.⁸⁹

The rise of the social Gospel was not noticed immediately. One of the first notices of the social gospel by the Missouri Synod came in a brief reference to a state-

Wehre, LXXIII (Aug. 1927), 225—234; *ibid.*, LXXIII (Sept. 1927), 264—268. See also F[ancis] P[ieper], "Vorwort," *ibid.*, LXXII (Jan. 1926), 1—8.

Pieper (1852—1931) found in Adolf von Harnack (1851—1930) the German theologian whose views he most persistently attacked. See, e. g.: F[ancis] P[ieper], "Das Wesen des Christentums nach Professor Harnack," *ibid.*, XLVII (Nov. 1901), 321—327; *ibid.*, XLVII (Dec. 1901), 353—359; F[ancis] P[ieper], "Vorwort," *ibid.*, XLVIII (Jan. 1902), 1—7; *ibid.*, XLVIII (Feb. 1902), 33—38; *ibid.*, XLVIII (March 1902), 65—69.

⁸⁸ [Th.] E[ngelder], "The Troubles of the Interpolationists," *Theological Monthly*, IX (May 1929), 136—142; *ibid.*, IX (June 1929), 165—170; *ibid.*, IX (July 1929), 204 to 210.

⁸⁹ F[riedrich] B[ente], a review of "Resolutions Adopted at the Thirty-First International Convention of the Walther League," *Lehre und Wehre*, LXIX (Oct. and Nov. 1923), 322.

⁸⁴ [Wm.] A[rndt], "Can Evolution and Christianity Be Harmonized?" *The Lutheran Witness*, XLII (June 5, 1923), 186.

⁸⁵ F[ancis] P[ieper], "Zur Evolution als 'feststehender Tatsache,'" *Lehre und Wehre*, LXXI (Sept. 1925), 324—328.

"Evolution und die Bibel," *ibid.*, LXXI (Dec. 1925), 427—430.

Th. Engelder, "The Shifting Sands of Science," *CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY*, III (July 1932), 481—489.

⁸⁶ Theodore Graebner, "Is the New Science Hostile to Religion?" *ibid.*, III (Dec. 1932), 917—921.

⁸⁷ J. H. C. Fritz, "Der moderne Unglaube inmitten der äusseren Christenheit," *Lehre und*

ment in the *Lutheran Observer* in 1910 regarding the social tasks of the church, as formulated by Rauschenbusch.⁹⁰ Soon, however, the new chiliasm of the social gospel found its opponents in the Missouri Synod. They called it unscriptural, the product of evolution, new theology, socialism, and fraternalism (lodgery). They deplored its emphasis on social service, unionism, politics, the emancipation of women, social reforms, and so on.⁹¹ Social service ("to save the crops of his parishioners as well as their souls") is the product of the false concepts of the kingdom of God, it was said.⁹² Hence the social gospel was designated as *die moderne Diesseitstheologie*. Walter Rauschenbusch, Harry Emerson Fosdick, Henry Churchill King, Gerald B. Smith, R. Hunter, R. W. Sellars were identified among the leaders of the movement and largely condemned.⁹³

The power of the Gospel was magnified. Not the social gospel but the Gospel of the cross, Pieper taught in an eloquent essay, is the power of God. This Gospel gives the certainty of the grace of God and of salvation. It effects sanctification and good works and especially Christian prayer. It brings false doctrines to naught; it supplies the ability to endure the trials and tribulations, the cross, that comes to the followers of the Christ. It rescues the believers from the terrors of death. It engenders a joyful

anticipation of the Last Day. Because the Gospel brings these blessings, he prayed that it might be maintained without falsifications of any kind.⁹⁴

The Gospel and the sacraments were defended as the means of grace against the teachings of the Modernists. "May God in His mercy preserve us from the destructive powers of Modernism, especially in its denial of the means of grace!"⁹⁵ The means of grace are the bearers of the grace of God, it was emphasized; "they offer, they convey, they seal, to the believer the benefit of Christ's vicarious atonement."⁹⁶ The Modernists erred in the *doctrine* of the means of grace and concerning the outward form of the means of grace. In denying the inspiration and infallibility of the Bible they reduce the teaching that the Gospel is a means of grace to an absurdity, it was said, and eliminate the sacraments as gifts of God for the forgiveness of sins.⁹⁷

Faith in the forgiveness of sins which Christ, the incarnate Son of God, obtained for all men by His substitutionary atonement (*satisfactio vicaria*) and which is proclaimed by His Word in the church, this is fundamental in the Christian faith, Pieper maintained, as he examined the Unitarians, the Romanists, the Calvinists, the Arminians, the synergistic Lutherans (so he called them), the deniers of the

⁹⁰ F[riedrich] B[ente], "Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches," *ibid.*, LVI (April 1910), 186 to 187.

⁹¹ [Th.] G[raebner], "Kirchlich-Zeitgeschichtliches," *ibid.*, LXI (Nov. 1915), 521.

⁹² [Th.] G[raebner], "Paragraphen über den neuesten Chiliasmus," *ibid.*, LXI (Aug. 1915), 337—350.

⁹³ P. E. K[retzmann], "Die moderne Diesseitigkeitstheologie," *ibid.*, LXVI (June 1920), 270—277.

⁹⁴ F[ranz] P[ieper], "Die Kraft des Evangeliums," *ibid.*, LXXIII (Nov. 1927), 321 to 334; *ibid.*, LXXIII (Dec. 1927), 363—369; *ibid.*, LXXIV (Feb. 1928), 40—53; LXXIV (March 1928), 69—83.

⁹⁵ P. E. Kretzmann, "The Means of Grace with Special Reference to Modernism," *Theological Monthly*, IX (Nov. 1929), 335.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 321.

⁹⁷ For the entire essay see *ibid.*, IX (Oct. 1929), 289—303; *ibid.*, IX (Nov. 1929), 321 to 335; *ibid.*, IX (Dec. 1929), 362—368.

God-ordained means of grace, and the detractors of the inspiration of Holy Writ, and found them wanting in a clear testimony. Those who denied the inerrancy of the Scriptures also as a rule, he maintained, denied the *satisfactio Christi vicaria*.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ F[rancis] P[ieper], "Das Fundament des christlichen Glaubens," *Lehre und Wehre*, LXXI (Aug. 1925), 286; see p. 288: "Alle Leugner der Inspiration der Heiligen Schrift, das heisst, alle welche die Schriften der Apostel und Propheten nicht Gottes eigenes unfehlbares Wort sein lassen, stossen damit das Fundament des christlichen Glaubens um. Das ist so gewiss, so gewiss Christus bezeugt, dass alle Christen bis ans Ende der Welt durch der Apostel Wort, das wir in ihren Schriften haben, an ihn glauben werden, und Christi Apostel lehrt, dass die ganze christliche Kirche bis an den Jüngsten Tag in *allen* und in jedem einzelnen ihrer Glieder auf den Grund der Apostel und Propheten erbaut

This was their glory, a glorying in the Cross of Christ, the glory of the Mis-sourians of the Middle Period. For the sake of the Gospel they combatted the forces and the theological trends of their age. *Sola Scriptura, sola gratia, sola fide* were their watchwords.

St. Louis

(To be continued)

ist. Wenn in einem Leugner der unfehlbaren göttlichen Autorität der Schrift noch der Glaube an Joh. 3, 16 und 1 Joh. 1, 7 sich findet, so ist das eine Inkonsequenz, die jederzeit in verderbliche Konsequenz umschlagen kann." For the entire article see *ibid.*, LXXI (Feb. 1925), 33 to 37; *ibid.*, LXXI (March 1925), 75—82; *ibid.*, LXXI (April 1925), 97—107; *ibid.*, LXXI (May 1925), 129—134; *ibid.*, LXXI (July 1925), 249—263; *ibid.*, LXXI (Aug. 1925), 282—288.