

THE TOLEDO COLLOQUY OF THE IOWA
AND OHIO SYNODS - Results and trends
for the future.

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The history of the American Lutheran Church is long and involved. Many peoples and synods from widely-varying backgrounds have joined together to make up this portion of American Lutheranism. The one small aspect of that history that will be covered in the following pages concerns the discussions that were held between the old Ohio and Iowa Synods. The conference held in Toledo, Ohio, in the year 1907 will be of primary interest. By briefly observing what occurred in the years preceeding the meeting, the meeting itself and the theses that were produced, one can get the flavor of the situation and see a trend developing. The theses that resulted reveal a doctrinal trend that would go on to characterize the relationship between the two Synods.

In an article of the 1907 Quartalschrift, Adolf Hoenecke wrote that the theses were a very definite compromise. "Es sind, wenn man sie naeher prueft, Kompromissthesen."¹ There can be little doubt as to the meaning of his words and his evaluation of the conference results. In view of Prof. Hoenecke's remarks, a question would rise up before us. What can be observed in the conference of Toledo that would call for such a judgment? What doctrinal trends and tendencies can be seen from the resulting theses?

BACKGROUND TO THE CONFERENCE

In the year 1881, the Ohio Synod withdrew from the Synodical Conference. This was the time of the Election Controversy and it was with regard to the term intuitu fidei that Missouri and Ohio had a falling out. Not long after that a meeting was proposed by G. Fritschel, of the Iowa Synod, in which representatives of Ohio and Iowa would convene to discuss doctrinal differences. The two synods were now both in opposition to Missouri and it was thought that they could be drawn closer together by the discussions.

The meeting was held from August 8 to 10, 1883 in Richmond, Indiana. The basis of the discussion was a set of theses prepared by Fritschel, appropriately called the Richmond Theses. The subject of the theses involved the main areas of doctrine in which questions had previously arisen. The six theses took the headings; the Church, the Ministry, the Symbols, Open Questions, Chiliasm and the Anti-Christ, and Predestination. The debates took three days to complete and after they were completed, evaluations of the results were mixed. "The only evaluations of the meeting are from members of the Iowa delegation who claimed that the discussions revealed complete agreement in all articles of faith..."² More conservative evaluation is probably closer to the true nature of the situation. "...the first tangible evidence of mutual willingness to work toward fellowship."³

In the year following the conference, the atmosphere was anything but united. On the one side, Iowa urged that the two synods join forces and oppose Missouri. But within the Ohio camp, the feeling was not quite the same. The above mentioned opinion of Iowa appeared in the publication Kirchliche Zeitschrift. In answer to that article, H. H. Allwardt, an Ohio district president and former Missouri man, warned that the two positions were not the same. The main point of issue involved the matter of Open Questions. The idea that fellowship need not be agreement on every doctrine, but that there are doctrines which are open to differences of opinion and therefore not fundamental to unity. Allwardt pointed out that this matter as it stood was divisive of fellowship. "The first necessary step, therefore, toward closer relations between Ohio and Iowa is for Iowa to drop its whole "Open Question" theory."⁴

Fritschel of Iowa wrote a reply to this article, in which he defended the idea of fundamental doctrines. "The essential issue in the whole dispute is not what makes a doctrine a divine truth but rather how much unity there must be in order to preserve church fellowship."⁵ The verbal exchange continued on through another set of articles, without much real value.

"Since the two men could not agree even on the definition of the point at issue, no progress could be expected from the journalistic exchange."⁶

In the Ohio convention of 1886, V. Pres. Schuette proposed that formal negotiations continue between the two synods. The invitation was extended to Iowa and drew some unexpected results. The Iowa reply was the following, "Grossman stated that Iowa saw no need in view of its many public doctrinal utterances, to prove its orthodoxy at a colloquy."⁷ The offer for the colloquy was promptly recalled by Ohio.

It seems to have been the prevailing anti-Missouri sentiment that led to the correspondence several years later between Grossman of Iowa and Pres. Loy of Ohio. Iowa made an effort in this way to reassure Ohio of their willingness to meet in colloquy. The meeting was scheduled for St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Michigan City, Indiana. Since Iowa was not sure that such a meeting to discuss formal doctrinal matters was even necessary, it was decided that Ohio would prepare the theses to serve as the basis for the discussion. Prof. H. Ernst was given the assignment to prepare the statements. The subject matter was the same as in the Richmond Theses and the theses were presented from a Ohio point of view. When Iowa protested the implied accusing tone of the statements, they were recalled and rewritten to be an objective statement of what Ohio felt was necessary as a basis for fellowship. Iowa also prepared theses statements of their own to be read in the discussion of each point.

The theses themselves which Ohio prepared show that even then already, Iowa view points were beginning to be expressed in Ohio. The statement on Open Questions read, "Complete agreement in all non-fundamental articles cannot be attained here on earth, but is, nevertheless, the goal after which to strive."⁸ The doctrine of the anti-Christ was called, "... a question on which varying opinions may be held without terminating church fellowship."⁹ The article concerning chiliasm was changed from

"...but according to our conviction has no basis in God's Word" to "...but can no more be definitely proved from the Scripture than can the spiritual interpretation."¹⁰ Each one of these changes shows gradual softening of the stricter confessional language, to a tone of near ambiguity. One of the most noteworthy changes that occurred in the course of the conference, concerned the thesis on Chiliasm. Part of the thesis read, "Since God's Word plainly teaches that Christ's Kingdom on earth is to be a spiritual kingdom of grace and of the cross until the last day, that there is to be only one visible return of Christ for judgment and only one general resurrection of believers and unbelievers at the last day,..."¹¹ This portion was completely dropped when Iowa protested its inclusion. One voice within the Ohio camp objected strongly to this change, and when he was overruled, H.H. Allwardt refused to take any further part in the conference.

The final delcaration of the conference appeared to lay the foundation for fellowship in the near future,

Resolved, that the representatives of each side inform their synods of this result, with the declaration that in case this is accepted by both synods, it is our conviction that the following are necessary consequences:

- 1) That pulpit and altar fellowship be recognized by the two synods.
- 2) That no opposition altars be erected, but that we recommend to our members who may go to places where there are congregations of the other synod to unite with these.
- 3) That the synods take steps that no unbrotherly opposition manifest itself in mission fields of these bodies.¹²

Reception of the results of the meeting ran very hot in both synods. In Ohio the chief opponents of the resolution were Allwardt and Klindworth. Klindworth had been a former Iowa Synod pastor who had raised charges of false doctrine in the matter of chiliasm within the Iowa Synod. He had been placed under church discipline for his charges. At that time he broke from Iowa and entered the Ohio Synod, without first

clearing up the charges against him. He was received into the Ohio Synod by Allwardt and installed as a pastor. This continued to be a point of contention between the two synods throughout this period of colloquy and debate.

In 1896 a convention of the Wisconsin District of the Ohio Synod adopted the following resolution in view of the constant word battling that was going on within the Ohio Synod.

Inasmuch as we cannot agree on the doctrinal and confessional stand of the Iowa Synod, but instead have aroused great unrest and even danger among ourselves which could lead to the most serious consequences, we resolve, for the sake of peace in our own midst, not to pursue the question of unity with honorable Iowa Synod any further, but to declare the matter dropped.¹³

Within the Iowa Synod the opposition was also loud and strong. It was the general consensus that the theses were too tight and confining. Deindoerfer wrote, "There can and will be no peace, as long as one part of our Lutheran Church sets the boundaries of confessional and doctrinal unity as narrowly as has been done and still is done."¹⁴ In view of sentiment such as this coming from the leaders of Iowa, it is only understandable that the convention of 1896 refused to act on the resolution.

Within the Ohio Synod, a small pro-Iowa group could be seen around the turn of the century. An example of the thinking of this group can be taken from the following excerpt from an article entitled, "What Doctrines Justify Schism?", published in 1902. The author is Conrad Gohdes.

Wherever it (chiliasm) is found among American Lutherans, it is only in a diluted condition. We cannot expect disciplinary action against a brother otherwise Scriptural in his views and spiritual in his life, because he entertains mildly chiliastic views having no bearing upon the general tenor of his teaching. Such as refuse to recognize the Iowa Synod under the pretext that it harbors chiliastic views, either lack acquaintance with the nature of chiliasm or take liberties with the eighth commandment. We are convinced that from this quarter there is no

obstacle to union either with Iowa or the General Council.¹⁵

It such a softening of views that will become even more evident in the conference at Toledo.

The one other event that helped to set the stage for the Toledo meeting was the Inter-Synodical meetings that were held from 1903 to 1906. It was not through the meetings themselves that the situation was improved, but through the fact that Iowa and Ohio were both united against the members of the Synodical Conference, most notably Missouri. "Throughout all five of the great meetings the Ohioans and Iowans had stood together and had upheld each other on all major points of dispute with Missouri. Such fellowship in a common cause could not but strengthen the bond between the two synods."¹⁶

The final impetus to arrange the colloquy at Toledo came from a resolution by the Washington District of the Ohio Synod that a meeting be arranged in order to work for the unity of the two synods. The district felt that they could be much more effective in mission work if the two synods were working together instead of opposing each other. This resolution was passed at 1906 Ohio convention at Ft. Wayne. The Ohio men chosen to represent their synod in the discussions were Stellhorn, Schuette, Ernst, Allwardt, Th. Mees and H.P. Dannecker.

The men chosen by Iowa to represent their synod were Richter, M. Fritschel, Reu, Proehl, Seehase and Ide. The conference was slated for February 13-15, 1907, at St. John's Lutheran Church of Toledo, Ohio. St. John's was a church of the Iowa Synod.

THE CONFERENCE

Before the actual conference began, Iowa in a pre-colloquy meeting, decided on a substantial change in conference policy. Iowa was responding to requests from other parts of the synod to lay out the basic approach to the whole discussion before discussing specific points. Iowa requested that the colloquy

begin by pursuing Thesis IV, Open Questions. Iowa was looking for the assembly to specify what doctrines it felt were obligatory to fellowship and what doctrines would permit a variety of opinion. Allwardt of Ohio protested very vigorously to this, although it was passed by the majority of the assembly.

When the colloquy opened, F. Richter of Iowa assumed the position of chairman. Mees of Ohio was the English secretary and Reu of Ohio was the German secretary. There is no written record of the colloquy, but the discussion apparently proceeded with only a minor amount of disagreement and uproar. The sessions were conducted on the schedule of two a day for three days. The sessions were opened with prayer and joint worship, and thus even before the outcome of the colloquy was final there was a practicing of fellowship. In the March 2, 1907 edition of the Iowa Synod, Kirchen-Blatt, Richter gives a report of what occurred at the conference. He refers to the way the sessions were opened with prayer. "...die eine jede mit Gesang, Schriftlektion und Gebet von Herrn Pastor S. Poppen eroeffnet und mit Gesang und Gebet geschlossen wurde."¹⁷ Richter also comments on the general tone of the conference as free and friendly. "Die Verhandlungen wurden in einem friedfertigen und freundlichen Tone gefuehrt."¹⁸

As the discussions proceeded, it appears that both sides were willing to compromise to reach an agreement on what they felt the final theses should include. One author comments, "In all of the negotiations the Iowa Synod was more ready than the Joint Synod of Ohio to allow for differences of interpretation and variations in practice."¹⁹ This is apparently the nature of the situation for Richter himself reports that the differences that remained after the discussions and during them, were in themselves devisive. Even before the theses were ratified by the individual ^{synods}, he already spoke of the two being fully united in faith.

Die Differenzen wurden allseitig klar und bestimmt herausgestellt und nicht etwa vertuscht, um nur auf jedem Fall das Ziel

zu erreichen; es war aber offenbar und wurde uns wieder offenbar, dass die Differenzen nicht kirchentrennender Art sind, dass vielmehr die Synoden von Ohio und von Iowa in der Glaubenslehre und im Bekenntnis einig sind.²⁰

The first question to be considered was the one on Open Questions, Thesis IV. It was on this point that Allwardt of Ohio protested very vigorously and thus revealed a split in the Ohio delegates. This split was pointed out by Iowa as a defense for their statement on fundamental and non-fundamental doctrines. Iowa looked at the varied opinion within the Ohio camp as a concrete example of the variance of opinion that can exist within a fellowship. Thesis IV is summarized as follows, "...where differences exist on matters which do not endanger the essence of the faith, they do not affect church fellowship unless the errorists obdurately and persistently contradict the divine Word."²¹ The thesis was essentially unchanged from the thesis in the Michigan City statements.

Thesis I shows some changes from the previous one. Ohio conceded the idea of the visible church even more than in the past. The thesis states that the church is "the communion of true believers" (See Appendix II). The second statement of clarification to this statement, however, brings out the idea of the visible side to the church. "Common participation in the means of grace is the necessary form of the church's appearance and the infallible mark of its existence; and in so far the church is visible." (cf. Appendix II) This last phrase is closely aligned with what Iowa had been saying all along. The statement from the Michigan City Theses, of 1893 states as its third point, "The fellowship of the means of grace is the necessary form in which the Church appears and is an infallible sign of its presence." (cf. Appendix I) Thus the Toledo Thesis moves closer to what Iowa had been saying with reference to the church and at the same it moves away from the Michigan city thesis.

The other thesis to be changed somewhat is the second one

which has to do with the Ministry. The discussion revolved around the relationship between the believer and the called minister in the use of the means of grace. The Toledo section is noticeably longer and speaks to the matter of the individual Christian as a member of the universal priesthood of believers.

The other theses are for the most in tact as they first appeared as the Michigan City Theses. In the fifth thesis the paragraph which spoke of the Anti-Christ was removed. The reason for the omission is not readily apparent. Meuser feels that it was excluded because the variance in interpretation was not significant enough to warrant inclusion.²² Perhaps this doctrine of the Lutheran church would be classified by the colloquy as an open question in which a variety of opinion is possible and thus it would not be divisive of fellowship to them.

After the theses had all been worked through and the final wording approved, a resolution was adopted by the delegates. It stated that the delegates should take the results of the colloquy back to their own synods and explain them so that they might be acted upon. After both synods had acted upon the theses, fellowship would immediately take effect and all unbrotherly activity in the mission fields would cease. The following is the resolution as it was printed in the Kirchen-Blatt, of July 6, 1907 (cf. Appendix V);

Beschlossen, dass die Kolloquenten beider Teile ihren respektiven Synoden dies Resultat mitteilen mit der Erklaerung, dass, falls dies Resultat von den beiden Synoden anerkannt wird, nach ihrer Ueberzeugung daraus folge:

- 1) Dass damit von selbst Kanzel und Altar-gemeinschaft zwischen den Synoden zu recht besteht;
- 2) Dass wir keine Gegenaltaere errichten, sondern vorkommenden Falls unsere verziehenden Gemeindeglieder zu der an dem betreffenden Ort befindlichen Gemeinde des einen oder des andern Teils erweisen;
- 3) Dass die Synoden Veranstaltungen treffen, dass auf dem Missionsgebiet unbruederliche Reibereien vermieden werden.

RECEPTION OF THE THESES

In a concluding paragraph to his report on the colloquy, F. Richter referred to the proposed fellowship as a goal for which they had implored the Lord of the church that it might be realized and put into practice between the two synods.

Diese Thesen werden nun den beiden Synoden auf ihren Versammlungen zur Annahme vorgelegt werden. Stimmen dann die Synoden zu, so wird damit zugleich die Kirchengemeinschaft in Altar und Kanzel-gemeinschaft zwischen beiden Synoden aufgerichtet, ein Ziel dessen Verwirklichung wir vom Herrn der Kirche ernstlich erfliehen.²³

It was in pursuit of this goal that the matter was brought before the Iowa Synod convention in Mendota, Illinois, June 20-25, 1907. The Bericht from that convention reports what went on with regard to the Toledo Theses. In his president's report, Pres. Richter mentioned one of the reasons that he felt Iowa and Ohio should join together. As a result of the Inter-Synodical meetings, Iowa became even more convinced that they stood shoulder to shoulder with Ohio in opposition to the Synodical Conference. (cf. Appendix III)

Die Intersynodalen Konferenzen der letzten Jahre jedoch brachten Vertreter beider Synoden zusammen und offenbarten, dass Ohio und Iowa Schulter an Schulter standen im Kampf gegen die falschen Lehren der Synodalkonferenz bezugs der Erwaehlung und Bekehrung.²⁴

He also included in his report an exhortation to the delegates to attend to this important matter of considering the Toledo Theses and the great task of setting up the union with Ohio.

Gehoert es zu den wichtigen Aufgaben einer ev. luth. Synode, mit anderen Synoden und Teilen unserer teuren Kirche kirchliche Gemeinschaft zu pflegen oder wo immer moeglich aufzurichten so ist es offenbar, wie wichtig die Verhandlungen ueber die Thesen von Toledo sind, da ja ihr Absehen darauf geht, die Kirchengemeinschaft mit der ehrwuerdigen Synode von Ohio aufzurichten.²⁵

In the body of the convention report is a copy of the theses and the resolution of the delegates to the colloquy.

The report states that the theses were read by Pastor L. Seehase and then explained by him.²⁶ The theses were thoroughly discussed on Friday, Saturday and Monday and each thesis was accepted by the convention. During the course of the convention Richter read a letter from ex-Pres. Deindorfer. In the body of the letter, he expressed the joy that filled his heart when the results of the Toledo colloquy were made known to him. It was also his expressed hope that the convention of the Synod in the coming summer would accept the theses and remove whatever stood in the way of full agreement. (The letter was dated February 25, 1907.)²⁷ With the theses received, the Synodical report ends with the note that the three proposals for the implementation of fellowship were also accepted. "Endlich stimmt die Synode den drei von den beider seitigen Kolloquenten adoptierten Vorschlaegen zu."²⁸

An article in the Kirchen-Blatt of July 6, 1907 described what happened at the synod convention. It narrates how thesis for thesis the assembly accepted the statements, after small differences were removed. This continued until the fourth thesis on Open Questions was read. On this point the whole assembly made a unanimous vote of approval for this most important point in the Iowa doctrinal viewpoint. The report reads, (cf. Appendix V)

These fuer These wurde besprochen, die wenigen Bedenken, die sich zeigten, wurden beseitigt und These fuer These wurde angenommen. Nach besprechung der vierten These, von den Offenen Fragen, die den Standpunkt der Synode darlegt, wie sie ihn seit den Tagen ihrer Gruendung bekennt und festgehalten hat, erhob sich die ganze Versammlung und bekannte sich einmuetig dazu. Es war ein feierlicher Augenblick und eine tiefe Bewegung durchzog aller Herzen.²⁹

Thus the acceptance in Iowa was widespread. The convention dealt with the theses as a matter of great importance and accepted them with only minor discussion of adverse ideas. These theses agree favorably with the Iowa Synod itself and it is just this point that Pres. Richter brings out in his Kirchen-Blatt report. "Wer die Geschichte der Iowa Synode kennt und die

Thesen ihrem Inhalt und Zwecke nach recht versteht, der konnte kein anderes Resultat erwarten, es waere denn die Synode sich selbst untreu geworden. Das ist aber, Gott sei Dank, nicht geschehen."³⁰

The reception of the theses in the Ohio Synod was somewhat different than it was in Iowa. There was a mixed feeling as the anti-Iowa men continued to speak against the theses. Klindworth published a pamphlet under the title, "Die Thesen von Toledo, O., beurteilt und beleuchtet." He pursued the idea that the theses carried false doctrine. He traced the origin of the theses and tried to point out that Ohio had been led to accept Iowa doctrine in the discussions and the theses that they were now considering. He exhorts his own synod, "Ohio, hold that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."³¹

Because the Ohio Synod would not meet in convention until the summer of 1908, the following action was reported in the Lutheran Standard of July 6, 1907; (cf. Appendix IV)

As the Ohio Synod will not convene until August, 1908, President Schuette has referred the matter to the several districts for their consideration.³²

The article goes on to exhort the districts to prompt action, in view of the fact that the Iowa Synod had already unanimously accepted the theses.

Let every District fall in line, encourage the good work that now seems to promise so much, and prepare the way for a happy decision at the meeting of 1908.³³

This article continues to exhort the districts and to point out the benefit in mission work that would be derived from a union between the two synods.

...if these Synods can come to terms of hearty co-operation in the work of the church, it would be a wonderful advantage in many respects. Especially would such friendly co-operation be an advantage in missionary work, for there would then be no clashing of interests, and the whole cause would thus be materially strengthened.³⁴

If exhortation to action was not enough, the writer goes on to

lay it upon the consciences of the readers that this must needs be carried out.

What a tremendous power for good there would be in a truly united Lutheran church. And what righteous excuse can there be for so much division and antagonism among the members of the Lutheran household?³⁵

The matter was turned over to the districts for consideration. In the great majority of the districts, the theses seem to have been approved without a great deal of trouble. The Washington District, which had petitioned for the Toledo conference to take place, passed the theses quite readily. This fact was noted in the Iowan Kirchen-Blatt of July 20, 1907. They reported that the theses were accepted and that the district as a whole supports them and hopes for synodical union on this basis.

Der Washington Distrikt der Ohio Synode teilt uns durch seinen Sekretär mit, dass er folgende Beschlüsse einstimmig gefasst hat:

- 1) Wir freuen uns, dass die Toledo Thesen von den Vertretern beider Synoden einstimmig angenommen worden sind.
- 2) Wir bekennen uns als Distrikt zu diesen Thesen.
- 3) Wir hoffen, dass beide Allgemeine Synoden sich zu diesen Thesen bekennen werden, und ferner dass auf Grund dieser Einigkeit in der Lehre mit der Zeit eine nähere Verbindung stattfinden möge.³⁶

The reception in the Wisconsin District of the Ohio Synod was not quite as warm as it was elsewhere. Wisconsin had been noticeably careful in its evaluation of the negotiations with Iowa. In regard to the Toledo Theses, they were just as careful. A paper was presented by Pastor Doermann in which he tried to upset the goal of adoption of the theses and eventual union with Iowa.³⁷ The discussion of the theses reached their peak when the fourth thesis on Open Questions was considered. This thesis was eventually rejected by Wisconsin, but the other theses passed their scrutiny and were accepted.

The hopes expressed in the article of the Lutheran Standard of July 6, 1907 were not to come true for yet sometime. Even though the theses were passed by the majority of the districts

the synod as a whole failed to approve the theses in their convention of 1908. Principal among the reasons to hold off in the establishment of full fellowship seems to have been Iowa's contact with the General Council. Ohio was very careful to avoid contact with the doctrinally liberal Council. It was not until Iowa dropped out of the Council and the Council itself joined the LCA, that Ohio voted to unite with Iowa. Not until 1918 did the resolution that so many Iowans wanted to hear, actually come about. The resolution of the 1918 convention of Ohio read as follows;

Resolved, that Joint Synod declare that such fraternal relations now exist between us and the Iowa Synod, as necessarily imply the mutual recognition of the existence of pulpit and altar fellowship. 38

Therefore it took many years for complete fellowship to actually be established. It was not until many of the anti-Iowa men in Ohio had departed from the scene, that the final union was established.

WHAT CAN BE SEEN FROM THE TOLEDO CONFERENCE?

Adolf Hoenecke writes that the Toledo Theses are in no uncertain terms a compromise. Another author writes, "The Toledo Theses are in fact an interesting combination of the viewpoints of both synods."³⁹ When looking at the theses themselves this becomes apparent. The first thesis on the Church carries the double view that Iowa had maintained from the beginning. Indeed it appears as though the Iowa viewpoint comes through quite well in not only the first thesis, but in many of the others as well. The very fact that Thesis IV was allowed to stand, was a concession to the Iowa Synod. The idea of open questions was brought by them to the first meeting between the two synods. The fact too that the article on the Anti-Christ was dropped would lead one to see Iowa's guiding hand in the

theses.

Hoenecke ponders thesis I and concludes that Ohio has been lead into an Iowa trap to accept such a thing.

Man muss sich billig wundern, dass die Ohioer namentlich die aus der Synodalkonferenz stammenden, in dieser Sache, die doch wahrlich nicht irrelevant ist, den Iowaern ins Garn gelaufen sind.⁴⁰

This can be applied to many points in the discussion. The one fact that comes up and appears to have been the basis for union as much as any other, is the fact that they both had a common enemy. They were both standing opposite to the Synodical Conference and especially the Missouri Synod. Richter pointed this out in his address to the 1907 convention of the Iowa Synod, as he spoke of Ohio and Iowa standing shoulder to shoulder in the fight against Missouri. This is the same point that Hoenecke makes all the way through his article as he points out how Ohio was simply going against what the Synodical Conference upheld. They were united by a common enemy and by working hard and compromising the hard lines that each formerly held, a union was born.

In the Toledo conference one can see the future of the two synods as they seek for fellowship, not on the basis of complete doctrinal agreement, but on the treacherous footing of fundamental articles. Once a precedent such as this is laid, and a thesis such as the one on open questions is accepted, it is nearly impossible to turn back to a solid Scriptural and confessional foundation. The slight differences of opinion soon become great differences and soon there is no continuity in the church's teaching. The true basis for fellowship is lost and the result is little more than a political arrangement to work together, while teaching what one wants. The present condition of the ALC can be seen already in Toledo in 1907.

In regard to the doctrine of conversion, which has become the subject of debate in connection with the predestination controversy, we confess that conversion as the implanting of new spiritual life is not one-half, or one-fourth, or even one-thousandth part the result of the cooperation or self-determination of the good conduct of man, or that it is dependent on this in the sense that it is caused thereby, but conversion is entirely a work of the Holy Ghost who by His almighty power of grace produces new life in us through the means of grace; but the Holy Ghost by no means works conversion merely according to the good pleasure of His electing will and in doing so overcomes even the most determined and persistent resistance in the elect; rather, such a persistent resistance makes conversion in time as well as election in eternity impossible.

The Richmond Theses are quoted in S. Fritschel, "Die Thesen des Colloquiums von Michigan City," KZ XVII (1893), 166, 169ff.; XVIII (1894), 2-5, 8f., 10f., 43; "Die Thesen von Michigan City nothemanal," KZ XX (1896), 29.

APPENDIX V

The Michigan City Theses, 1893

Thesis I. *The Church*

- 1) The Church in the proper sense is the fellowship of true believers which is established and grows through the means of grace.
- 2) According to its real essence the Church on earth is and remains invisible.
- 3) The fellowship of the means of grace is the necessary form in which the Church appears and is an infallible sign of its presence.

Thesis II. *The Office of the Ministry*

- 1) The administration of the means of grace is not the privilege of a special class, but is a right which Christ originally and immediately gave to His whole Church, i.e., to every believing Christian.
- 2) The Ministry is an office based upon a special command of the Lord in force for all times, and by the call transferred to certain persons to administer the means of grace publicly in the name of the congregation.
- 3) The call is a right of that congregation in which the minister is to exercise the functions of the office. Ordination is only a public and solemn confirmation of the call and only an apostolic-ecclesiastical rite.

Thesis III. *The Symbols*

- 1) The Symbols are binding only as far as the doctrines of faith contained in them are concerned, but in regard to all of these without exception.
 - 2) Since the doctrine of Sunday as contained in the Symbols is a doctrine of faith revealed in the Word of God, it cannot be excluded from the number of those which are obligatory.
- The representatives of Iowa submitted the following declaration in reference to Thesis III, b: "We make a distinction between the doctrine of Sunday as taught by the Symbols and its further theological development on the question whether the third commandment makes the celebration of one day out of seven mandatory or not. A difference of opinion on this question exists in the ranks of the orthodox teachers of our church. A negative answer to this question is, indeed, according to our convictions, a correct deduction

from the Symbolic teachings in regard to Sunday. But as this has not been expressed as a doctrine in the Confessions and was not intended to be, and in addition does not have the character of a doctrine of faith, we cannot accept it as a binding part of the teaching of the Symbols nor consider the opposite view as a departure from the binding doctrines of the Symbols."

Thesis IV. *Open Questions*

- 1) All doctrines clearly and plainly revealed in God's Word are, on account of the absolute authority of the divine Word, definitely settled and binding on the conscience, whether they have been symbolically defined or not.
- 2) No departure from the clearly revealed truths of Scripture can be regarded as legitimate in the Church, whether these be fundamental or non-fundamental, important or seemingly unimportant.
- 3) Complete agreement in all doctrines of faith is the indispensable condition of church fellowship. Persistent errors in any article of faith always causes division.
- 4) Complete agreement in all non-fundamental doctrines cannot be attained here on earth, but is nevertheless to be the goal after which to strive.
- 5) Those who oppose the Word of God knowingly, persistently, and stubbornly, even in subordinate points, thereby overthrow the foundation of the faith and must be excluded from church fellowship.

Thesis V. *Chiliasm and Antichrist*

- 1) All chiliasm which makes the kingdom of Jesus an outward, earthly and temporal kingdom of glory, which teaches a visible return of Christ before the last day for the destruction of the Antichrist and the establishment of this kingdom, and which maintains the resurrection of all believers before the last day, is to be condemned as in glaring opposition to the analogy of faith.
- 2) The idea that the reign of Christ and His saints mentioned in Revelation 20 is yet to be expected in the future and that the first resurrection there mentioned is a bodily resurrection of certain individual believers unto eternal life, does not indeed conflict with the analogy of faith, but can no more be definitely proved from the Scriptures than can the spiritual interpretation.
- 3) Since all the marks of the Antichrist as mentioned in the Scriptures are found united in the Roman pope, we with our Confessions consider him the Antichrist prophesied in II Thessalonians 2. Whether on the basis of this passage a combination of all that is antichristian is yet to be expected in one concrete individual, is a question in regard to which different views are possible without thereby severing the bonds of church fellowship.

Thesis VI. *Predestination and Conversion*

- 1) We find that the church-dividing factor in the Missouri doctrine of predestination is the severance of the universal gracious will of God and the special counsel of election into two *contradictorie voluntates* formed apart from and beside each other, whereby the basis on which our salvation rests is made unsure and the different departures from the Lutheran doctrine, which under other circumstances could be favorably interpreted, become fundamental errors.
- 2) In regard to the doctrine of conversion, which has become the subject of debate in connection with the predestination controversy, we confess that conversion as the implanting of a new spiritual life is not one-half, or one-fourth, or even one-thousandth part the result of the cooperation or self-determination of the good conduct of man, or that it is dependent on this in

the sense that it is caused thereby, but conversion is entirely a work of the Holy Ghost, who by His almighty power of grace produces new life in us through the means of grace; but the Holy Ghost by no means works conversion merely according to the good pleasure of His electing will and in doing so overcomes even the most determined and persistent resistance in the elect; rather, such a persistent resistance makes conversion in time as well as election in eternity impossible.

The Michigan City Theses are quoted in *CTM XIII* (1893), 306-309.

APPENDIX VI

The Toledo Theses, 1907

Thesis I. *The Church*

The Church, in the proper sense of the term, is the communion of true believers which is established and grows through the means of grace. From this it follows:

- 1) According to its real essence the Church is and remains invisible on this earth.
- 2) The fellowship of the means of grace is the necessary form of the Church's appearance and the infallible mark of its existence; and in so far the Church is visible.

Thesis II. *The Office of the Ministry*

1) The rights and duties of the spiritual priesthood comprehend not only the general command and call that believers reduce to practice their fellowship in the Gospel and their right and title to the means of grace and accordingly teach and admonish one another in every manner, but also that without special call they preach the Word to heathens and unbelievers and in case of necessity administer the Sacrament of Baptism; and then also, that they establish the office of the Ministry, inasmuch as this office has been originally and immediately given by Christ to the whole Church.

2) The office of the Ministry rests upon a special command of the Lord, valid throughout all time, and consists in the right and power conferred by special call to administer the means of grace publicly and by commission of the congregation.

3) The call (to the pastorate) is a right of the congregation within whose bounds the minister is to discharge his office. Ordination is a public and solemn confirmation of the call and is but an apostolic churchly custom or order.

Thesis III. *Attitude to the Confessions*

1) A binding subscription to the Confessions pertains only to the doctrines of the faith therein set forth, and to all these without exception.

2) Whereas the doctrine of Sunday as taught in the Confessions is a doctrine revealed in God's Word, it is not to be excluded from the body of obligatory dogmas.

Thesis IV. *Open Questions*

1) All doctrines clearly and plainly revealed in the Word of God are, by virtue of the divine authority of that Word, dogmatically fixed as true and binding upon the conscience, whether they have been symbolically defined or not.

2) There is within the Church of God no authority whatever for departing from any truths clearly revealed by the Scriptures, whether they are considered fundamental or non-fundamental, important or seemingly unimportant.

3) Complete agreement in all articles of faith is the indispensable condition of church fellowship. Persistent error in an article of faith always causes division.

4) Complete agreement in all non-fundamental doctrines cannot be attained here on earth, but is nevertheless the goal after which to strive.

5) Those who oppose the Word of God knowingly, persistently, and stubbornly, even in subordinate points, thereby overthrow the foundation of the faith and must be excluded from church fellowship.

Thesis V. *Chiliasm*

1) Any chiliasm which conceives the kingdom of Christ as an external, earthly, and worldly kingdom of glory or which teaches a resurrection of all believers before the last day, is directly contrary to the analogy of faith and is to be rejected as such.

2) The belief of some, that the reign of Christ and His saints referred to in Revelation 20 is an event belonging to the future and that the bodily resurrection there spoken of is a physical resurrection of some believers unto eternal life, is indeed not contrary to the analogy of faith, but can no more definitely be proved from Scripture than can the spiritual interpretation.

Thesis VI. *Predestination and Conversion*

1) We find that the church-dividing factor in the Missouri doctrine of predestination is the severance of the universal gracious will of God and the special counsel of election into two *concordatorie voluntates* formed apart from and beside each other, whereby the basis on which our salvation rests is made unsure and the different departures from the Lutheran doctrine, which under other circumstances could be favorably interpreted, become fundamental errors.

2) Concerning conversion, which has been drawn into controversy in connection with the doctrine of predestination, we confess that, viewed as the placing or planting of a new spiritual life, conversion does not consist of or depend to any extent whatsoever on any cooperation, self-determination, or good conduct on the part of man, but that it is wholly and solely the work of the Holy Spirit, working the same by His gracious power in the means of grace. On the other hand, however, we deny that the Holy Ghost works conversion according to the mere pleasure of His elective will or accomplishes it in the elect in spite of the most willful resistance; but we hold that by such stubborn resistance both conversion in time and election in eternity are hindered.

The Toledo Theses are quoted in F. W. Stallhorn, "Das Kolloquium zu Toledo, Ohio," *ZZ XXXVI* (1907), 166-168.

APPENDIX VII

The Chicago Theses, 1919

(Doctrinal Portion)

I. In regard to the Work of Christ, Redemption, and Reconciliation:
Jesus Christ, God and Man, has not only for the benefit of, but in the

des General Kongilis reisen sollte, um so mehr, da das General Kongili Herr Dr. G. C. Mettemeyer als seinen Vertreter zum Begräbnis unlers Direktors Probst nach Dubuque abgeordnet hatte. Ich reiste deshalb nach Milwaukee und konnte den Verhandlungen des General Kongilis noch zwei Tage beiwohnen und hatte Gelegenheit den Dank der Synode für die beim Feingang und Begräbnis des Herrn Direktors Probst erwiesene Teilnahme auszusprechen und die Segenswünsche für das General Kongili zu übermitteln. In diesem Jahre wird das General Kongili im September in Buffalo, N. Y., tagen und zugleich das Jubiläum 40jähriger Bestehens feiern. Ich empfehle der ehrwürdigen Versammlung, von diesem bevorstehenden Jubiläum gebührend Notiz zu nehmen.

Zu den wichtigsten Ereignissen des verflorenen Synodaljahres gehöt

das Solloquium zu Toledo, Ohio.

Das im Jahre 1893 zwischen den Synoden von Ohio und Iowa zu Michigan City, Ind., abgehaltene Solloquium hatte seinen Zweck nicht ganz erreicht. Zwar hatten die beiderseitigen Solloquenten eine Reihe von Thesen angenommen, aber diese Thesen fanden in beiden Synoden Widerstand und wurden Anlaß zu einer heftigen Debatte in den kirchlichen Blättern. Sinesolgewissen ruhte die Revisionskommission Die Interynodalen Konferenzen der letzten Jahre jedoch brachten Vertreter beider Synoden zusammen und offenbarten, daß Ohio und Iowa Schüler an Schüler waren im Kampf gegen die falschen Lehren der Synodal-Konferenz bezugs der Erwählung und Bestehung. Es zeigte sich dabei aufs neue, daß kein eigentlicher Grund vorliegt, weshalb die Synoden von Ohio und von Iowa sich die kirchliche Gemeinshaft nicht gewähren können. Als nun die Allgemeine Synode von Ohio auf ihrer Besammlung in Columbus im August des vergangenen Jahres ihren Jahres-Dr. G. S. S. Schritte beauftragte, Schritte zu tun, aufs neue Unterhandlungen mit unlerer Synode anzuknüpfen und als Herr Präses Dr. G. S. S. Schritte bei mir anfang, ob ich dazu bereit sei, stimmte ich gern zu. Im Fort Mahone, Ind., kam ich gelegentlich der Interynodalen Konferenz mit Herrn Präses Dr. Schritte zusammen, und wir vereinbarten ein neues Solloquium, auf dem die Thesen von Michigan City besprochen werden sollten. Eine jede der beiden Synoden sollte einzeln ihre Schritte durch sechs Solloquenten vertreten sein, und das Solloquium sollte in dem Schulhaus der Gemeinde unlers Pastors G. Koppen zu Toledo abgehalten werden. Ich ernannte für dies Solloquium den Missionsprediger der Allgemeinen Synode, Herrn Pastor G. Probst, den Di-

rector unlers theologischen Seminars, Herrn Prof. Dr. Griffith, Herrn Prof. Dr. Klein, Herrn Pastor Q. Seelke und Herrn Altritätsprediger N. Kinnick. An Stelle des letzteren trat dann Herr Pastor G. C. Sobe, da Präses Kinnick krankheitsbedingt ablehnen mußte. In den Besprechungen hielten wir unter uns eine Vorversammlung in Dubuque ab.

Das Solloquium fand vom 13. bis 15. Februar in Toledo statt. Ich habe darüber in Nr. 5 des kirchlichen Blattes berichtet und die von den Solloquenten angenommenen Thesen veröffentlicht. Diese Thesen liegen nun dieser Versammlung zur Verhandlung und Annahme vor. Deshalb habe ich auch von einer andern Vorlage für Versprechungen für diese Versammlung abgesehen. Gehört es zu den wichtigsten Aufgaben einer ev.-luth. Synode, mit anderen Synoden und Teilen unlerer Kirche kirchliche Gemeinshaft zu pflegen oder wo immer möglich aufzurichten, so ist es offenbar, wie wichtig die Verhandlungen über die Thesen von Toledo sind, da ja ihr Nstehen darauf geht, die Kirchen-gemeinshaft mit der ehrwürdigen Synode von Ohio aufzurichten. Wir bitten deshalb auch den Herrn der Kirche, uns dazu seinen werten heiligen Geist reichlich zu geben, damit sie unlerer hier in Amerika so geriffenen Kirche zum Segnen dienen möchten.

Die dritte Stufe der Söhneigenen Agende, die ja unlerer Agende ist, ist schon fast ein Jahr lang vergriffen. Da nun das Verlagsrecht der Buchhandlung, die diese Agende herausgegeben hat, verläuft ist und in unlerer Synode sich der Wunsch vielfach geäußert hat, mancherlei Veränderungen bei einer neuen Ausgabe der Agende vorzunehmen, so glaube ich, es sei nun an der Zeit, daß die Synode die neue Ausgabe ihrer Agende selbst in die Hand nehme und dabei alle die wichtigsten Verbesserungen ihrer Gemeinden berücksichtige. Damit aber die Ausgabe der neuen Agende sich nicht zu lange hinausziehen mußte, habe ich eine Kommission ernannt, die dieser Verammlung eine Vorarbeit dazu unterbreiten soll. Die Mitglieder dieser Kommission sind: Herr Dir. Dr. Griffith, Herr Prof. Dr. Polting, Herr Pastor Geo. Meng und Herr Pastor D. Griffith.

Im Bereich unlerer Synode wird an vielen Orten auch englische Gemeinbeit getan. Englische Klassen in der Sonntagsschule, englische Sonntagsschulen, englische Gottesdienste sind eingerichtet worden. Die Allgemeine Synode sollte meines Erachtens von dieser Arbeit Kenntnis erhalten, sie sollte dafür sorgen, daß bestimmte Agenden, Katechismen, Gesangbücher u. s. w. gebauht werden und diese so wichtige englische Arbeit überwachen und überall hin gesunde Bahnen leiten. Zu dem Zweck habe ich anfangs dieses Jahres Fragebogen ausgesandt. Eine Zu-

Lutheran Standard.

ORGAN OF EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN JOINT SYNOD OF OHIO.

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Editorial Department.

IOWA AND OHIO.

For a number of years the Iowa Synod and the Joint Synod of Ohio have realized that they are quite near each other in doctrine and practice. There also has been a growing conviction that these two bodies should be able to agree upon a plan for co-operation in Church work. Some years ago an effort was made in that doctrine, but it was not very vigorous, and the matter was allowed to take a rest. Within the last year the prospects have seemed more favorable than ever before, and it was agreed that representatives from the two Synods should hold a conference and report the result of their deliberations. This Joint Committee held a meeting last February, at Toledo, Ohio, and in addition to those appointed to attend the conference, there were present during the session many pastors from the respective Synods. As a means of leading to a better understanding on the part of all concerned, five theses had been prepared for discussion, and presenting those points concerning which it was thought there might be a lack of harmony. After a careful consideration of the different subjects thus presented, the five theses were adopted by the Committee, and it was resolved to submit this action to the respective Synods.

As the Ohio Synod will not convene until August, 1908, President Schuette has referred the matter to the several Districts for their consideration. But the Iowa Synod has already taken action on this important subject; at a general convention of that body held last month at Mendota, Illinois, the Toledo theses were unanimously accepted, and we cherish the hope that the Ohio Synod may see its way clear to do the same. Let every District fall in line, encourage the good work that now seems to promise so much, and prepare the way for a happy decision at the meeting of 1908. For the information and convenience of our readers, we herewith present an official copy of the theses as adopted by the Joint Committee.

The document reads as follows:

I. THESES. THE CHURCH.

The Church, in the proper sense of the term, is the communion of true believers as it is begotten through the means of grace and as by their use it edifies itself. From this it follows:

- a.) According to its real essence the Church is, and remains invisible on this earth.
- b.) Common participation in the means of grace

is the necessary form of the Church's appearance and the infallible mark of its existence; and in so far the Church is visible.

II. THESES. THE OFFICE OF THE MINISTRY.

a.) The rights and duties of the spiritual priesthood comprehend not only the general command and call that believers reduce to practice their fellowship in the Gospel and their right and title to the means of grace, and accordingly teach and admonish one another in every manner but also that without special call, they preach the Word to heathens and unbelievers, and, in case of necessity, administer the sacrament of baptism; and then also, that they establish the office of the ministry, inasmuch as this office has been originally and immediately been given by Christ to the whole Church.

b.) The office of the ministry rests upon special command of the Lord, valid throughout all time, and consists in the right and power conferred by special call, to administer the means of grace publicly and by commission of the congregation.

c.) The call (to the pastorate) is a right of the congregation within whose bounds the minister is to discharge the office. Ordination is a public and solemn confirmation of the call; and is but an apostolic churchly custom or order.

III. THESES. ATTITUDE TO THE CONFESSIONS.

a.) A binding subscription to the Confessions (of the Church) pertains only to the doctrines of the faith therein set forth, and to these all without any exception.

b.) Whereas the doctrine of Sunday as taught in the Confessions is a doctrine revealed in God's Word, it is not to be excluded from the body of obligatory dogmas.

IV. THESES. OPEN QUESTION.

a.) All doctrines revealed clearly and plainly in the Word of God are, by virtue of the divine authority of said Word dogmatically fixed as true and binding upon the conscience whether they have been symbolically settled as such or not.

b.) There is within the Church of God no authority whatever for departing from any truths clearly revealed by the Scriptures, be their content considered fundamental or non-fundamental, important or apparently unimportant.

c.) Full agreement in all articles of faith constitutes the irremissible condition of church-fellowship. Persistent error in an article of faith must under all circumstances lead to separation.

d.) Perfect agreement in all non-fundamental doctrines, though not attainable on earth, is, nevertheless, an end desirable and one we should labor to attain.

V. THESES. CHILIASM.

a.) Any Chiliasm which conceives the kingdom of Christ to be something external, earthly and after the manner of the kingdoms of the world, and which teaches a resurrection of all believers before the day of judgment shall come, is a doctrine directly contrary to the analogy of faith and is to be rejected as such.

b.) The belief of some, to-wit, that the reign of Christ and His saints referred to in Rev. 20, is an event belonging to the future, as also that the resurrection

mere spoken of is to be understood as a bodily resurrection of some believers unto life everlasting, is an opinion which, though not incompatible with the analogy of faith, cannot be strictly proven from Scripture no more than the spiritual interpretation of said passages can be shown to be the true one.

Such are the theses in question, and as they have been unanimously accepted by the Iowa brethren, it will be of interest to note a few facts in reference to that aggressive Lutheran body. The German Iowa Synod was organized in 1854, and our Almanac for 1907 reports its numerical strength as follows:

Ministers, 485.
Congregations, 890.
Baptized members, 155,000.
Communicants, 94,513.
Parochial Schools, 411.
Parochial School Teachers, 52.
Parochial School Pupils, 10,942.
Sunday-schools, 508.
Sunday-school Officers and Teachers, 1,821.
Sunday-school Scholars, 23,714.

From these figures it will be observed that the numerical strength of the Iowa Synod is nearly equal to that of the Joint Synod of Ohio, and that if these Synods can come to terms of hearty co-operation in the work of the Church, it would be a wonderful advantage in many respects. Especially would such friendly co-operation be an advantage in missionary work, for there would then be no clashing of interests, and the whole cause would thus be materially strengthened.

This step in the right direction again forcibly reminds us of the importance of Church unity. What a tremendous power for good there would be in a truly united Lutheran Church. And what righteous excuse can there be for so much division and antagonism among the members of the Lutheran household? Not for a moment would we think of yielding a single point of revealed truth nor do we believe that any other Lutheran would be willing to do so, but it ought to be possible to bring about a greater degree of harmony among those who claim to accept the doctrines of the Bible as stated in the Augsburg Confession. The logical sequence of an honest and intelligent acceptance of that Confession is not hopeless division and hostility, but true unity and peace. It is gratifying to note that, all in all, the Lutheranism of this country is vastly more pronounced than it was years ago, but it certainly is true that much more could be done to promote the real growth of our beloved Church without and within.

* * *

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT.

People do not always like to hear the truth, nor do they always profit by the truth when they have heard it. But very frequently it is the bitter dose that will do the most good, and that which pains and exasperates may serve an excellent purpose. Here are a few observations that might prove helpful to many Christians, and there are many clergymen who ought to give them conscientious study. From the *Lutheran Witness* we copy the following:

"The statement has been making the rounds of the Church papers that Roscoe Conkling, in early life, severed his connection with the secret societies, and that he was led to do this through learning that the influ-

ence of the lodge was used in the effort to defeat the ends of justice. As solicitor, or district attorney, he was prosecuting a man in court, when the accused gave the hailing sign of distress and expected Conkling to drop the prosecution. Conkling became disgusted and promptly left the lodge.

"Corroboration of this charge against the lodge is found in the Associated Press reports of the trial that is going on, at this writing, in Boise, Idaho,—the Steunenberg murder trial. In the reported testimony the following passage is found:

"Police officers of Ogden established the arrest there in June, 1903, of Steve Adams and A. T. Williams. They were sealed in an eastbound car loaded with fruit. When arrested for trespass, each had a brace of revolvers. When released through the influence of a detective to whom Adams appealed as a Mason, they went straight to the office of the Western Union and sent a telegram to Haywood in Denver."

"The statement is made and sworn to that men arrested for wrongdoing were released from custody by the officer because they were brethren in the lodge. Is the lodge a menace to our institutions? Can a Christian countenance an institution that perverts justice?"

* * *

NOTES AND GLEANINGS.

THE following beautiful prayer of Fenelon cannot but prove a help to many: "Lord, I know not what I ought to ask of Thee; Thou only knowest what I need; Thou lovest me better than I know how to love myself. O, Father! give to Thy child that which he himself knows not how to ask. I dare not ask either for crosses or consolations; I simply present myself before Thee; I open my heart to Thee. Behold my needs which I know not myself; see, and do according to Thy tender mercy. Smite, or heal; depress me, or raise me up; I adore all Thy purposes without knowing them; I am silent; I offer myself in sacrifice; I yield myself to Thee; I would have no other desire than to accomplish Thy will. Teach me to pray; pray Thyself in me."

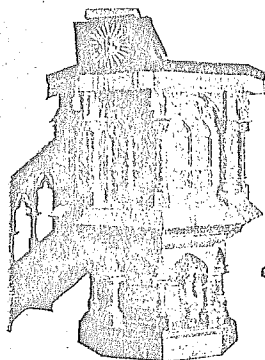
* * *

SPEAKING of the Sunday problem and its difficulties, *The Christian Work* says:

"The status of Sunday legislation in this country is somewhat peculiar. Here, for example, action is taken against the Sunday theaters at the very time when a bill permitting amateur baseball games on Sunday has been advancing at Albany. The sweeping resolutions passed by the Presbyterian General Assembly, last Friday, do not recognize the distinctions which laymen are making more and more between different kinds of Sunday amusements. But two of the new suggestions illustrate how hard it is in these days to set off one day in the week absolutely by itself. The denounced Sunday newspaper, for example, is not a product of Sunday work. Yet the General Assembly sees clearly the 'overlapping' principle when it asks colleges and seminaries to omit Monday morning recitation. It asks employers to pay off their men on Friday, that the temptation of a Saturday night with money in the pocket and a holiday ahead may be removed from the workingman. To protect Sunday completely, in other words, the work of the days before and after must be affected. To persuade the public generally to accept this necessity is the insurmountable difficulty of the Sabbatarian at present."

Uebersicht über die Versammlung der Allgemeinen Synode zu Mendota, Ill.

Gehalten vom 20. bis 25. Juni.



Mendota, Ill., ist in der Synode wohlbekannt. Hier befand sich unser Predigerseminar 15 Jahre lang und viele Pastoren sind von Mendota hinausgezogen auf ihr Arbeitsfeld. In Mendota auf dem kleinen Gottesacker unserer Gemeinde sind die Gräber unserer teuren Väter und Lehrer. Dort haben wir die Doktoren Gottfried und Siegmund Fritschel, und vor zwei Jahren auch Doktor W. Brühl zur Ruhe bestattet.

Wir richten sich die Gedanken vieler in der Synode, so oft die Erinnerung an unsere unvergesslichen Lehrer in ihren Herzen wieder lebendig wird. Als es nun bekannt wurde, daß die Synode in Mendota tagen sollte, da erwachte in vielen Herzen der Wunsch: da teile ich auch dabei sein. Dazu kam, daß in Mendota über die Thesen von Toledo verhandelt werden sollte. Die ganze Synode erkannte die Wichtigkeit und Bedeutung dieser Sache und wer es irgend erlangen konnte, der wollte mit eignen Ohren hören, was die Versammlung darüber zu sagen hatte. So kam es, daß neben den 134 stimmfähigen Mitgliedern der Versammlung noch 60 bis 70 Gäste nach Mendota eilten. Die lieben Mendotaer, deren Gastfreundschaft längst bekannt ist, öffneten ihre Häuser und nahmen die 200 Gäste mit offenen Armen auf und haben sie aufs trefflichste beherbergt und bewirtet. Ist gewiß eine große Leistung und als am Schluß der Synode die Versammlung der lieben Gastgeberin den Dank votierte, da erhob sie mit großer Freude und dankerfülltem Herzen.

Das war ein munteres Treiben am Abend des 19. Juni auf dem kleinen Rasenplatz bei der Kirche, wo die Synodalen sich begrüßten und Abschied nahmen. Die Damen der Kirche, wo der liebe Frauenverein die Gäste der Synode bewirtete. Alle Bekannte und Freunde, die sich seit ihrer Seminarzeit in Mendota nicht mehr gesehen hatten, reichelten sich die Hände und das Gespräch war kein Ende. Bis in die Nacht blieb man zusammen.

Am Donnerstag morgen fand die gottesdienstliche Eröffnung der Synode statt. Die fremdbliche Kirche füllte sich schnell. Herr Präses C. Traßburger hielt uns eine eindringliche Weisrede, Präses der Allgemeinen Synode predigte und tiefbewegt empfingen die Synodalen das heilige Abendmahl. Es war eine feierliche Stunde, in der uns so recht der Einigkeit des Glaubens und Bekenntnisses und der Liebe, die uns

alle umschlingt, bewußt wurden und freuten. — Anstatt der Lehrveranstaltungen, die sonst die ersten Vormittags-Sitzungen einnahmen, standen diesmal die Thesen von Toledo auf der Tagesordnung.

Diese Thesen sind den Lesern des Kirchenblattes bekannt; sie haben sie in Nr. 5 bereits kennen gelernt. Herr Pastor L. Seehase hatte es übernommen, sie der Versammlung in Mendota vorzulegen und sie nach ihrer Entstehung, ihrem Inhalt und ihrer Bedeutung zu erklären. Es ist das einmütige Urteil der ganzen Versammlung, daß er dies in meisterhafter Weise getan hat. Mit gespannter Aufmerksamkeit und innerer Anteilnahme folgte die ganze große Versammlung seinen klaren, wahren und überzeugenden Ausführungen. These für These wurde besprochen, die wenigen Bedenken, die sich zeigten, wurden beseitigt und These für These wurde angenommen. Nach Besprechung der vierten These, von den Offenen Fragen, die den Standpunkt der Synode darlegt, wie sie ihn seit den Tagen ihrer Gründung bekennt und festgehalten hat, erhob sich die ganze Versammlung und bekannte sich einmütig dazu. Es war ein feierlicher Augenblick und eine tiefe Bewegung durchzog aller Herzen.

Als alle Thesen die freudige Zustimmung der Synode gefunden hatten, legte der Referent noch folgende drei Vorschläge, in denen sich die Kolloquenten in Toledo geeinigt hatten, der Versammlung vor:

„Beschlossen, daß die Kolloquenten beider Teile ihren respektiven Synoden dies Resultat mitteilen mit der Erklärung, daß, falls dies Resultat von den beiden Synoden anerkannt wird, nach ihrer Ueberzeugung daraus folge:

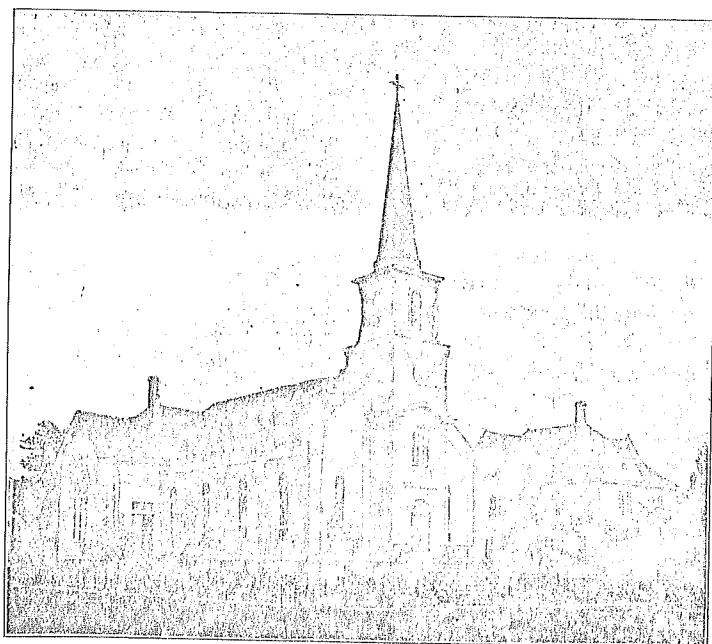
1. Daß damit von selbst Kanzel- und Altargemeinschaft zwischen den Synoden zu Recht besteht;
2. Daß wir keine Gegenaltäre errichten, sondern vorkommenden Falls unsere verziehenden Gemeindeglieder zu der an dem betreffenden Ort befindlichen Gemeinde des einen oder des andern Teils erweisen;
3. Daß die Synoden Veranstaltungen treffen, daß auf dem Missionsgebiet unbrüderliche Rivalereien vermieden werden.

Diesen Vorschlägen, die ja nur den Zweck und das Ziel des Kolloquiums aussprechen und den sehnlichen Wunsch, den kirchlichen Frieden zu fördern, seiner Erfüllung nahe bringen wollen, stimmte die Synode gern und freudig zu. Zum Schluß legte der Vorsitzende noch einmal alle Thesen samt den drei Vorschlägen der Versammlung vor.

Wieder erhoben sich alle in dieser feierlichen Stunde und einmütig und einstimmig bekannte sich die ganze Synode zu allen Thesen von Toledo und ihren in den drei Vorschlägen ausgesprochenen Folgerungen. Es konnte ja auch nicht anders sein. Wer die Geschichte der Iowa Synode kennt und die Thesen ihrem Inhalt und Zwecke nach recht versteht, der konnte kein anderes Resultat erwarten, es wäre denn die Synode sich selbst mitren geworden. Das ist aber, Gott sei Dank, nicht geschehen.

So reicht dann die Synode von Iowa der ehrwürdigen Ohio Synode die Bruderhand hin.

Ein anderer Gegenstand, der für unsere Synode von sehr großer Bedeutung ist, und



Kirche und Pfarrhaus zu Mendota, Ill.

NOTES

- ¹A. Hoenecke, "Die Toledoer Unionsthesen", Theologische Quartalschrift, Vol. 4, No. 2, April, 1907, p. 118.
- ²Fred W. Meuser, The Formation of the American Lutheran Church (Columbus: The Wartburg Press, 1958) p. 76.
- ³Ibid. p. 76.
- ⁴Ibid. p. 78-9.
- ⁵Ibid. p. 81.
- ⁶Ibid. p. 82.
- ⁷Ibid. p. 83.
- ⁸Ibid. p. 88.
- ⁹Ibid. p. 89.
- ¹⁰Ibid. p. 89.
- ¹¹Ibid. p. 92.
- ¹²Ibid. p. 95.
- ¹³Ibid. p. 104.
- ¹⁴Ibid. p. 101.
- ¹⁵Ibid. p. 113.
- ¹⁶Ibid. p. 115.
- ¹⁷Kirchen-Blatt, der evangelische Lutherischen Synode von Iowa u. a. St.. Vol. 50, No. 5, March 2, 1907, p. 68.
- ¹⁸Ibid. p. 68.
- ¹⁹John H. Tietjen, Which Way to Lutheran Unity? (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1966) p. 107.
- ²⁰Kirchen-Blatt, Op. Cit., p. 68.
- ²¹Meuser, Op. Cit., p. 118.
- ²²Ibid. p. 119.
- ²³Kirchen-Blatt, Op. Cit., p. 69.

²⁴Bericht von der Vierundzwanzigsten Allgemeinen Synode der Evangelische Lutherischen Synode von Iowa und andern Staten, Mendota, Illinois, 20 bis 25 Juni, 1907, p. 12.

²⁵Ibid. p. 13.

²⁶Ibid. p. 112.

²⁷Ibid. p. 112.

²⁸Ibid. p. 112.

²⁹Kirchen-Blatt, Vol. 50, No. 14, July 6, 1907, p. 221.

³⁰Ibid. p. 221.

³¹Meuser, Op. Cit., p. 122.

³²Lutheran Standard, Organ of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and other States. (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern) Vol. LXV, July 6, 1907, p.424.

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³⁴Ibid. p. 425.

³⁵Ibid. p. 425.

³⁶Kirchen-Blatt, Vol. 50, No. 15, July 20, 1907, p. 244.

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³⁸C.V. Sheatsley, History of the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Ohio and other States. (Columbus: Lutheran Book Concern, 1919) p. 285.

³⁹Tietjen, Op. Cit. p. 108.

⁴⁰Hoenecke, Op. Cit. p. 119