

# Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary 1863-1963

by Immanuel P. Frey

[This history of our Seminary was written at the request of the Seminary Centennial Committee, by the Reverend Immanuel P. Frey of Denver, Colorado.]

It is only fitting and proper that we take note of the hundredth anniversary of our theological Seminary. The history of our Synod is intimately bound up with it. It is not too much to say that what our Synod is today can largely be traced back to our Seminary. A similar close relation between synods and their seminaries can be observed in the history of all church bodies.

Whenever the seminaries stood for conservatism in doctrine and practice, whenever true Bible teaching was inculcated upon their students, which showed itself in the *publica doctrina*, in the teaching and practice of those church bodies in general. If, on the other hand, the spirit of liberalism crept into the seminaries in the course of time, the same spirit was soon noted in the clergy who received their training in such an atmosphere. If the fountain is polluted, what can you expect of the waters that spread to the nooks and corners of a church body?

That is why the teaching and training received at its seminary has far-reaching effects on an organization. For the graduates of its seminary ultimately set the pattern in doctrine and practice. In the things that really count, we may say, the history of a synod is largely the history of its theological seminary.

Up to this year no larger history of our Seminary has been produced. Much has indeed been written concerning our Seminary, mostly in an incidental way, such as the thorough work that Professor John P. Koehler has done in his *Geschichte der Wisconsin-Synode*. He did not set out to write a history of our Seminary but the history of the Wisconsin Synod, yet in the course of writing this he had perforce much to say about the history of our Seminary.

As far as I know, the only express history of our Seminary previously written in our circles was *Das Evang. Luth. Seminar zu Wauwatosa, Wis.*, written by Dr. Adolf Hoenecke. This was published in booklet form in 1903. Thus far, the Seminary had issued no annual catalogs, as they have been since then. Dr. Hoenecke filled the gap with his brief history, which in its strictly historical part covers only 11 small pages in the brochure.

Much of the rest of the booklet was in the nature of our present-day catalogs, containing a list of the professors and their subjects, the curriculum, list of students, and the names of the members of the Board.

For the historian one of the most interesting features of the booklet is a complete list of all the graduates of the Seminary up to that time together with a list, in most cases, of the congregations that they had served since their graduation. This makes for interesting reading for those interested in the services that the old graduates rendered in our circles.

His history of the Seminary is divided into three natural historical eras: *The Seminary in Watertown until 1868, The Seminary in Connection with Concordia Seminary at St. Louis, 1869–1877, The Seminary Since Its Revival, First in Milwaukee and Then in Wauwatosa, 1878–1903*. Under each of these periods he touches on some of the outstanding facts.

The assignment given to the present writer by the Centennial Committee was to write a *critical* history of our Seminary by gathering somewhat detailed information from the archives of our Synod. This I have tried to do. The reader will keep in mind that the writer is not a professional historian and that he labored under the handicap of great distance from the sources and of limited time to do research work on the subject.

## I. The Theological Atmosphere When Our Seminary Was Founded

To appreciate the spiritual growth of our Synod, to which our Seminary contributed so much, we must reach back and investigate the background against which the Synod came into being.

Our Synod was organized in 1850 by products of the German mission societies. It is no secret that our Synod in its early history was unionist and was both orally and in print denounced as such by the *Alllutheraner* (Old Lutherans) in this country, particularly by the Missourians. That our fathers left themselves open to that charge is easily explained by their training.

The mission societies and the schools that they maintained were what we today would regard as unionist. The entire movement was a revolt against the rationalism and liberalism that prevailed in most of the churches of that day. To counteract these trends both the Lutherans and the Reformed whom stood for the Bible as God's Word and salvation alone through the blood of Christ formed these mission societies. They were bent on training missionaries who would proclaim the saving Gospel of Christ to lost sinners. The difference in confession between Lutherans and Reformed did not prevent them from joining hands in what they regarded as the one thing needful. They were willing to disregard differences such as obtained in the doctrine of the Lord's Supper in order to win souls for Christ. That was the spirit, which prevailed in the mission societies and their training schools, and it is small wonder that the products of those schools breathed the same spirit. They were not out to build primarily a Lutheran Church or a Reformed Church but to make people partakers of the salvation of Christ.

As an example we take Johannes Muehlhaeuser. He received two years of training in a mission house, worked as a baker in Austria and Hungary, and on the side studied the Bible with all whom he could gather and tried to win them for Christ. He did this until he met with such opposition from the authorities that he had to leave after spending some time in prison. The head of the mission society recommended him for work in America. In 1837 he arrived in New York and was to work as a parochial school teacher. It was impossible, however, to organize a school there. In the course of time he was colloquized and ordained as pastor of the General Synod in Rochester, New York. Here he served for ten years and then came to Milwaukee, where he founded and served Grace Church.

He wanted to be a Lutheran, but he was willing to overlook differences between Lutherans and Reformed in the interest of winning souls for Christ and in opposing Rationalism and Catholicism.

In 1850 Muehlhaeuser together with two other emissaries of German mission societies founded the Wisconsin Synod and became its first president and leader. It was founded on the Bible and all the Lutheran Confessions, the Book of Concord in its entirety, but in practice the distinctions between Lutherans and Reformed were largely disregarded, and so the Synod left itself open to the charge of unionism. Not purity of doctrine but the winning of souls became the watchword. The State of Wisconsin with its many German immigrants furnished them with great opportunities, more than the small synod could handle. For our purposes the thing that should be noted is that unionist practice was characteristic of the work of our Synod in its early days.

As already indicated, that made the leaders of the Wisconsin Synod the target for the violent criticism of the Old Lutherans, especially the Missourians, who were always stressing the need of purity of doctrine, *reine Lehre*. The Wisconsin men for their part claimed to be true Lutherans and denounced the Missourians as too rigorous, legalistic, and Pharisaic in attitude.

It is evident that the Wisconsin men squirmed under these charges of unionism because they really wanted to be a truly Lutheran church. It is even evident that in some cases at least there was a feeling of envy and admiration of the Old Lutherans. The great traveling missionary Fachtmann, on one of his tours of Northern Wisconsin, came into contact with some of the Old Lutheran laymen in the membership of congregations served by our Synod. In one of his reports to President Muehlhaeuser he referred to them as the salt of the earth. These early Wisconsin Synod men were groping for true Lutheranism but were not able in those pioneer days to shake off the grip of unionism that they had inherited from the mission societies that had sent them out. They were also well aware that if they went all the way in forsaking their unionism, they would forfeit the financial support of the German mission societies. The reports which regularly had to be made to these mission societies are full of assurances that they would not adopt the rigorous methods of the Old Lutherans.

But in spite of this pressure the trend toward true Lutheranism was becoming more and more noticeable at the beginning of the second decade of our Synod's history. That was due to the attitude of some of the new

arrivals whom were more conservative than their predecessors. The influence of Missouri no doubt also played a role in the new trend.

The one who perhaps exerted the most influence in that direction was Philip Koehler, who had arrived in Wisconsin in 1854 and first came into prominence as pastor in Hustisford. There in the Northwestern Conference he found a number of likeminded men, such as Bading and Reim. These men worked as a leaven for conservatism in doctrine and practice, though their influence was gradual, but they were still resentful of Missouri's charge of unionism. This new movement toward true Lutheran orthodoxy may be said to have come to the foreground in the Synod with Bading's election to the presidency in 1860 as a successor to Muehlhaeuser, who retired because of advanced age. Muehlhaeuser had not pretended to be a theologian. His forte was the winning of souls and the gathering of new congregations for the Synod. He seldom took part in theological discussions. He rarely spoke but sat quietly by. Neither did he actively oppose those who were striving for a stauncher type of Lutheranism.

## **II. First Steps Toward the Founding of a Seminary and Its Actual Establishment**

That was the theological atmosphere when the first demands for a synodical seminary arose. The Synod was not yet altogether free from the spirit of unionism, but it was on its way.

In considering the actual founding of the Seminary it may be well to recall first of all the source from which the little Synod had recruited its pastors in the pre-seminary era.

The greatest source of supply was, of course, the German mission societies. A continual complaint of the President in his presidential addresses was the lack of workers to gather in the harvest. He was continually being besieged by requests from various parts of the state to send desperately needed pastors, many of whom he was unable to supply. Consequently many congregations were lost to the Synod and fell into the hands of sects and pastoral frauds, which were roaming the country in great numbers.

This was vigorously called to the attention of the mission societies, which were thus made aware of the need. They responded nobly, so that the bulk of the Wisconsin Synod pastors were products of these mission societies. But it was not enough. The shortage of pastors was a continual refrain in the early synodical reports. There were never enough workers to go around.

Other desperate measures were taken to supplement the supply. Men who were not theologically trained but seemed to have some aptitude for pastoral work were pressed into service and licensed as pastors, without actual ordination, but often with such tragic results that the use of licentiates was abolished after a short trial.

Others whose training was still incomplete were placed under the supervision of a local pastor or of entire conferences, the Northwestern Conference especially. They were in that way given additional instruction and training, and after they had proved themselves were recommended to the Synod for ordination. In this way a few additional workers for the Synod were obtained.

But all this was not enough, and the Synod recognized the need of more thorough theological training of its new pastors. Ways and means of accomplishing this were investigated. When Heinrich Sieker of Newtonburg near Manitowoc offered himself for theological training, the Synod approached Gettysburg Seminary in Pennsylvania, which not only received him but also gave him financial help to finish his course. The Synod by resolution gratefully acknowledged this aid. Sieker became active and prominent in our Synod and later became President of the Minnesota Synod.

Later another student by the name of Suhr was sent to Gettysburg Seminary. Apparently he did not finish the course, as nothing further is heard of him in the synodical reports. It is clear that this procedure did not do much to relieve the pastoral shortage.

A permanent solution of the problem seemed at first to have been found when in 1857 Illinois University at Springfield, Illinois, offered the Wisconsin Synod an opportunity to establish a German theological professorship. This institution was being sponsored by two synods of the General Synod in Illinois. At first our fathers seemed inclined to avail themselves of this offer. However, the matter was finally dropped, chiefly, it seems, because of the fear that the German professorship would not amount to much in an otherwise

English-speaking institution. How much confessionalism played a role is not apparent. At any rate in 1860 our Synod by resolution withdrew from the project. The Missouri Synod later purchased the property and turned it into the practical theological Seminary at Springfield.

The failure of the Illinois University plan together with similar ventures which had been explored helped the Synod to think seriously of the establishment of a theological seminary in its own midst. Opinions in favor of such a move had been voiced at several synodical conventions.

In his first presidential report in 1861 President Bading urged the Synod to consider whether the time had not come to take steps toward the founding of its own seminary. The result was that a committee was appointed to study the feasibility during the coming year and report on it at the next convention.

In his 1862 report President Bading stressed the matter more strongly than ever, and the report of the Seminary Committee was discussed at length. Some of the reasons given in favor of the project were the influence of the Catholics and the inroads made by the *Albrechtsbrueder* and German Methodists, who were attracted by the vacancies among the German Lutherans. Only a third of the Evangelical Germans were being served by a Lutheran ministry, and the load was too heavy for the present pastors. It was reported that 13 congregations were desperately in need of pastors. To send their students to the seminaries of the Missouri and Iowa Synods was considered impossible because these synods were too exclusive; in fact, the German mission societies had warned against becoming involved with the likes of Missouri.

The convention was unanimously in favor of founding its own seminary and possibly a college. Ways and means were considered. It was decided to begin in a small way by renting a house, and also to start gathering a building fund for a permanent building. Muehlhaeuser was to lay the matter before the brethren overseas on a trip that he was making to Germany and to solicit their financial support. Provision was made for incorporation so that property could be legally held. Milwaukee or vicinity was considered the logical site for the proposed seminary. After these and similar discussions and decisions, final action was postponed until the 1863 convention.

The opening of a seminary was the main business before the 1863 convention. It was decided to open the Seminary in the fall of that year. First the location had to be settled. Watertown and Milwaukee were the chief rivals. The committee that had been appointed recommended Watertown as the site. The Secretary of the Synod reports in considerable detail the speeches made on the floor in favor of one or the other site. Among the points reported in favor of Watertown were these: The geographical center of the Synod, property cheaper, fewer distractions for the students, the likelihood of more donations of provisions by the many rural congregations in the area, etc. The advocates for Watertown put on a real campaign. The pastors from the Milwaukee area spoke strongly in favor of that city. They cited the cultural advantages afforded by a large city and stressed that Milwaukee was in the market for a college and would give financial support.

After a long discussion a vote was taken and it turned out 45 to 19 in favor of Watertown. Later the matter was reconsidered, but the decision remained the same. It was expected that the city of Watertown would raise at least \$2,000.00 for the institution. If not, the resolution was to be rescinded.

Bading was asked to take a collection trip through Germany and Russia to gather funds for a building, and he met with considerable success in doing so. Eichler, the agent for the Berlin Mission Society, however, threatened that these collections would be withheld if the demands for strict Lutheranism in the Wisconsin Synod continued.

A committee was appointed to examine applicants for admission to the planned Seminary. Pastor E. E. Moldehnke, a graduate of Halle University in Germany, who had been serving as *Reiseprediger* (traveling missionary) of our Synod, was called as theological professor to open the new Seminary, and he accepted with the understanding that he first continue his missionary duties for another three months. Eichler of the Berlin Society wrote that he considered Giese better qualified for the position, but this recommendation was not followed. There seems to be some doubt as to whether the position of Professor Moldehnke involved a

permanent call or was only an appointment for the current school year. As to his qualification for the position, Professor Koehler characterized him as a man devoted to *multa*, who therefore did not accomplish the *multum*, though zealous and devoted to duty. About the soundness of his theology there is little information available. It is a fact that later he became a member of one of the eastern synods. His salary was \$500.00 a year.

The Seminary was opened September 1863 in Professor Moldehnke's home with two students, one who soon had to be dismissed. The only student who remained was Albert Siegler, who finished his studies at our Seminary. The date of his ordination is given by Dr. Hoenecke as 1868. He is listed as having held pastorates in Menomonie, Wisconsin, Columbus, Wisconsin, Lewiston, Minnesota, Two Rivers, Wisconsin, and Norfolk, Nebraska. Some of our older pastors will remember him as a prolific contributor to the *Gemeindeblatt*. He was, however, not the first graduate. That honor belongs to H. Hoffmann, who was ordained in 1865 and served Wisconsin pastorates in Portage, Town Herman, West Granville, and Siloah Congregation in Milwaukee. He had received some previous theological training in Germany before entering our Seminary.

Mrs. Moldehnke fed the students until November 1864, when a Mrs. Koester took over that duty. Students did the janitor work and also collected foodstuffs from neighboring congregations. It appears that the professor interrupted his instructions from time to time to go on collecting expeditions.

In the summer classes were held five days a week from 7:30 A.M. to 12:00 noon and from 1:00 P.M. to 5:30 P.M.; in the winter from 8:00 A.M. to 12:00 noon and from 1:00 to 6:00 in the afternoon. At first there was no summer vacation, but this was soon changed to make it possible for the students to earn some money and to do some private studying.

The subjects which were taught were: Dogmatics, Church history, New Testament, and Latin four times a week in the morning; German and mathematics twice a week in the morning; in the afternoon Greek, English, Latin, history, geography, and Symbolical Books four times a week; Hebrew twice a week. Friday was used for repetition, debating, criticism, German, Latin and Greek grammar, Homer, and geometry. Friday evening after 8:30 was given to extemporaneous speaking.

Perhaps the greatest problem the school had to face was the lack of support. The Synod had founded a seminary but seemed apathetic toward it. Income for the first year of operation was \$1,141.20, expenditures, \$1,847.08. Contributions of food were more liberal, especially of flour, some of which could be sold. The lack of financial support was largely due to the poverty of the people, aggravated by the Civil War.

So the beginnings of the Seminary were not too auspicious, with only one student permanently enrolled and with general apathy on the part of the constituency of the Synod.

The Seminary, of course, had no library of its own, but Dr. Moldehnke made his private library available. In 1865 Prior Steinmeyer of Berlin sent a shipment of valuable books with a promise to send more.

Before the opening of the Seminary it had been expected that the Minnesota Synod would avail itself of it in training its future pastors, but President Heyer expressed preference for a seminary in Philadelphia.

The 1864 Synod Convention wrestled with the problems that were connected with the new Seminary and deplored the general lack of interest that had been displayed concerning it. Steps were taken to remedy the situation. A committee was appointed to promote the support and financing of the Seminary. It was resolved to issue a pamphlet dealing with these matters and to have 5000 copies printed for general distribution among the congregations.

There was an increase of enrollment the second school year. Fourteen students entered at the beginning, but three later had to be dismissed because they could not meet the requirements.

The Synod always had in mind to provide a building of its own for the Seminary and also for the preparatory school or college which was to serve as a feeder. This intention was carried out when our present Northwestern College was founded, or, as it was known until 1910, Northwestern University. Tracing the history of this school is not part of the present assignment except insofar as it was connected with the Seminary. In the early years the College and Seminary were under one roof. The affairs of the Seminary were, in fact, administered by the Watertown Board even up to the time of the Seminary's location at Wauwatosa.

The 1864 Synod Convention took final steps to provide a permanent building. Five acres were purchased for \$600.00. Ground for the new building was broken on the present Northwestern College campus July 22, 1864. The cost was to be around \$10,000.00. Thus the erection of the structure widely known as “The Old Coffee Mill” was on its way. It could be dedicated and put to use September 14, 1865. The total cost of the three-story building was \$16,906.07. Except for a few hundred dollars it was debt free on the day of dedication. It had been planned to use the money that Bading had collected in Europe for this building, but when it was found that these collections had been earmarked for endowments, the congregations had to finance it.

During the 1864–1865 school year the “Gardner House,” still standing at 814 North 4th Street, continued to be used for Seminary purposes. After the new building became available, the third floor was used for Seminary purposes.

In the fall of 1865 there were eight students. It appears that there was a breakdown of discipline in the course of the year. At any rate, the Board recommended to the Synod the appointment of Pastor Adolf Hoenecke as Inspector, and in 1866 the recommendation was adopted. At the same time he was made a theological professor.

These actions moved Dr. Moldehnke to resign. In spite of pleas to reconsider his resignation he refused to do so. It is difficult to ferret out the reasons for the resignation. It does not seem to have been personal animosity toward Hoenecke, for he himself had at an earlier date suggested him as professor of German in the school. The most plausible explanation is that he considered the appointment of an Inspector a reflection on his administration and construed it as a vote of lack of confidence in him. So he faded from the scene, soon returned to Germany, and later took over a pastorate in New Jersey.

The result was that Hoenecke took over the teaching in the Seminary.

### **III. The Hoenecke Era**

When the subsequent period is referred to as the Hoenecke Era, it is done in a wider sense, for there was, as we shall see, a period of eight years when the Wisconsin Synod Seminary did not exist as a separate entity, so that Hoenecke was not active as a theological professor.

In the 1866–1867 school year there were only four theological students and there was little improvement in Seminary enrollment the following year. The reasons for the decrease are not quite apparent. The transfer of some students to the St. Louis Seminary may have had something to do with it. Though there are no records on that, it is known, for instance, that the original student, Siegler, spent a year studying in St. Louis.

It might be added here that in 1865 the *Gemeindeblatt* was called into being, chiefly, it appears, to stimulate and keep alive interest in the institution. Moldehnke was named chief editor, Hoenecke served as his editorial associate. After Moldehnke’s resignation from the school and at the same time from the editorship of the paper, Hoenecke assumed the chief responsibility for the *Gemeindeblatt*.

The following years were marked by attempts of the Wisconsin Synod to establish church fellowship with other synods. The Minnesota Synod had developed alongside the Wisconsin Synod and both had much the same practice. However, the Minnesota Synod was associated with the liberal General Synod, from which Wisconsin had shied away. In 1869 a colloquium was held between representatives of the two synods, which because of the membership of the Minnesota Synod in the General Council did not lead to a merger; but they did recognize one another as orthodox. This mutual recognition was ratified by the Wisconsin Synod convention in 1871. As a result there was an understanding that Minnesota students would be accepted at our Seminary provided that the Minnesota Synod would give financial support.

There was also some flirting with the Iowa Synod. At the 1867 Wisconsin Synod convention some Iowa men were present as fraternal delegates, and the eschatological questions peculiar to the Iowa Synod were discussed. The same year Missouri and Iowa had a formal colloquy but failed to agree because of a difference of attitude toward the so-called Open Questions, such as the teaching on the Millennium, the Antichrist, the

final conversion of the Jews, and Sunday observance.

The Iowans took the position that Scripture does not speak decisively in regard to these questions, and therefore it was permissible for members of the same church to hold opposing views on them without disturbing fellowship relations. Dr. Walther and his fellow-Missourians took the position that Scripture had spoken clearly on these matters. Hence they maintained that those who believed and taught a future thousand-year reign of Christ on earth, who questioned that the Pope was the Antichrist, who expected that all the Jews would finally be converted to Christ, and who held that the Old Testament Sabbath regulations were still binding in the New Testament were guilty of crass false doctrine. To the Missouri Synod persistent adherence to these false doctrines was therefore divisive of church fellowship. The discussions foundered on these opposing positions and kept the two synods apart as long as the Iowa Synod existed.

Wisconsin representatives and leading Iowa theologians had a colloquy in St. John's Church in Milwaukee. It seems that the position of Wisconsin had not quite jelled in the previous years. There appears never to have been any real taste for the Iowa aberrations among Wisconsin Synod men, yet many felt drawn to Iowa because of its staunch testimony over against the compromising position taken by the General Council. There is a record of a private Wisconsin inquiry as to whether Iowa would accept Wisconsin Synod students without binding them to the Iowa position on the Open Questions. No decision with regard to the Open Questions was reached at the above-mentioned colloquy, but our Synod gradually turned against fellowship with Iowa, largely, it seems, because Hoenecke shared the position of Walther and the Missourians and became more and more vocal in expressing it. Under God we have him to thank for it that our Synod in future years maintained the Scriptural position on this subject.

It is apparent that Lutheran orthodoxy had made great headway in the Wisconsin Synod and that it was drawing closer to Missouri. We have already noted that Wisconsin had regarded Missouri in the early years as too rigorous, legalistic, and exclusive, while Missouri had treated Wisconsin as thoroughly unionist. This animosity was aggravated by intersynodical cases in the congregations existing side by side, in which one accused the other of stealing or trying to steal its members. These factors made for poor relations and kept the two synods from understanding one another. But in the course of time there were closer contacts among the pastors of the respective synods, which finally resulted in more cordial relations.

This led to a colloquy between Wisconsin and Missouri in St. John's Church, Milwaukee, in October 1868. The meeting revealed a full accord, which in 1869 was officially acknowledged by the Wisconsin Synod. After the colloquy Walther remarked that if they had previously known about Wisconsin what they now know, they might have come together ten years before. Hoenecke was largely responsible for this accord. Walther was much impressed by Hoenecke's theology. He confided to someone: "I have my eye on this young man and expect great things of him in the future." Wisconsin and Missouri were now in full pulpit and altar fellowship. This vitally affected the future history of our Seminary.

The 1869–1870 school year of the Seminary opened with 11 students. Six were released into the ministry in the course of the year, so that in March, 1870, only five students remained.

In his report in June, 1869, the president of the Synod suggested that consideration be given to the advisability of joining our Seminary with the St. Louis Seminary. This was prompted very likely by the small enrollment and the difficulty of financing the work of the Seminary. Why should separate seminaries be maintained when the two synods were now in full church fellowship? A floor committee appointed to study the matter advised in favor of the proposal.

During the previous month a joint committee of Missouri and Wisconsin had looked into the matter of combining the two seminaries and had worked out regulations which should be adopted if the venture were entered upon. The gist of the proposed concordat was that Missouri should actively participate in Northwestern University, provide a professor for the faculty, and contribute to the financial support of the school. Wisconsin was to participate in the Missouri Seminary, provide a professor and contribute financial support. Each synod was to retain management of its own institution. The Synod adopted this arrangement.

Six Wisconsin theological students entered the Seminary in St. Louis in March, 1870. The Wisconsin Synod Seminary had closed its doors and was now a part of the Missouri Synod institution.

How did the agreement entered into by Missouri and Wisconsin work out? Missouri carried out its part of the agreement and immediately sent Professor Stellingma to serve as professor at our Watertown College. Prof. Hoenecke in his brief historical sketch of the Seminary covers the Wisconsin Synod action in one sentence: "The actual transfer of Professor Hoenecke to St. Louis could, however, not be carried out." At a special synod convention in January 1890 it was urged that Professor Hoenecke move to the Seminary in St. Louis. This was not carried out. One of the reasons given was the critical need at our Watertown college, and it is said that Dr. Walther agreed that Hoenecke could be of greater service there. That, however, was not the only reason. One potent reason was the old Wisconsin Synod bugaboo: Shortage of money in the synodical treasury, in this case lack of funds to finance the professorship at St. Louis. At the regular Synod convention in 1870 the Board recommended that because of financial straits no professor be sent to St. Louis and that Professor Hoenecke be called into the active ministry. The Synod approved this suggestion, hoping, however, that a professor could be sent to St. Louis later. Professor Hoenecke accepted the call of St. Matthew's Congregation in Milwaukee the following summer.

The 1871 presidential report stated that the Wisconsin Synod students at St. Louis were given the best of care, and at the same time it expressed regrets that the financial situation in the Synod prevented the sending of other students who were in need of support.

The combining of the two seminaries might easily have become a permanent arrangement and might eventually have led to the disappearance of the Wisconsin Synod from the scene as a separate synodical body. In fact, a situation soon arose which could easily have led to just that. The Synodical Conference, of which the Wisconsin Synod was a charter member, had resolved upon the establishment of state synods in place of the existing synods of the Synodical Conference and upon a general theological seminary to be used by all.

In 1877 the Wisconsin Synod formulated its approval of the proposed plan (which implied the dissolution of the existing general bodies and their reorganization into smaller synods with geographical boundaries), and expressed its willingness to cooperate—in the following resolutions:

1. The Synod approves and sanctions the original plan of uniting all orthodox Lutherans now constituting the Synodical Conference into independent autonomous state synods.
2. It also declares its readiness to enter such union into a State Synod of Wisconsin provided the possibility is precluded that this state synod in turn become a district of one of the existing general synods, and thus forfeit its independence and autonomy.
3. It, however, considers a merging (of our Synod) into one of the existing general synods as neither commanded by the Word of God, nor as essential and necessary for true unity, nor yet as wholesome and beneficial for our Synod and our congregations.

The Wisconsin Synod was not ready to be the only synod to give up its existence.

This moved the Wisconsin Synod to consider the reopening of its own separate seminary. The advantages of having its own seminary were discussed at length. The Secretary of the Synod gave a rather complete transcript of the discussions. They may be summed up as follows: It would be possible to recruit more students. Ten to thirty students might be expected. Three theological professors could teach them. They could be better instructed than in a large seminary. There would be closer personal touch with the individual student.

A resolution favoring the reopening of the Seminary was presented. Hoenecke stated that organic union was not necessary to preserve the bond between those united in doctrine and practice, and that the desire to remain independent did not imply departure from *reine Lehre*, as the Missourians had implied. Action on a motion to reopen the Seminary in September 1878 was left to the decision of a pastoral conference to be held in August.

The 1878 Synod heard the report of the committee appointed the year before. It recommended that Hoenecke and Eugene Notz be called as theological professors, to rent a large home or two smaller houses in



Milwaukee for seminary purposes, to open in September with students having a satisfactory classical training and to reduce the faculty in Watertown by one. The Synod adopted the recommendation. Seven pastors declared their opposition to it. It was reported that \$1,100.00 had already been subscribed for the first year. Hoenecke and Notz were duly called. It was to be a theoretical seminary, with exceptions for practical students, arranged for the present for a three-year course. The management of the Seminary was to be under the Watertown Board.

According to the 1879 Report, the Seminary had been opened the fall before with six students. Owing to an illness of Professor Hoenecke, Professor A. L. Graebner had been called as an additional professor. He came from Missouri circles and was serving as professor at Watertown. Hoenecke was carrying a double load; in addition to his professorship he also served as full-time pastor of St. Matthew's.

It was reported that two small houses at the northeast corner of Hubbard and Garfield Streets had been rented for seminary purposes at \$20.00 per month. Purchase of a more adequate building was authorized. The Board was instructed to purchase the Eimermann Park property on Fond du Lac at 13th and Vine Streets (later used by the Milwaukee Lutheran High School) for \$7,000.00 and to have the building on the property remodeled at an estimated cost of \$2,500.00. For this purpose \$3,395.00 were already subscribed at the time of the convention.

At the 1880 convention of the Synod it could be reported that the remodeling of the building had been completed and that it was in full use. It provided dormitory facilities for the students, living quarters for Professor Notz, a refectory, and two classrooms. There were 12 new students, making a total of 18. Three students were to be given final examinations at the end of the year. Foodstuffs were donated in such quantities that the feeding of the students cost the Synod only \$65.00.

In 1881 sufficient income was reported to cover the costs and even to reduce the debt. Six new students had been admitted to the Seminary, three entered the ministry at the end of the year. With seven new students from Watertown the total enrollment in 1882 was 22. In the course of the year ten students had been released for work in congregations, leaving only 12 at the Seminary at the end of the year.

The 1883 Report stated that nine new students had entered, so that the total enrollment reached 21. Because of the shortage of pastors four were released into the ministry before the end of the year, one had discontinued, 16 students remained.

At the beginning of the following school year five students entered, to which five more were added later. Six students were in the practical department. Total enrollment: 24. A number of students were again released into the ministry during the year. At the end of the school year there was a total of 16 students.

This may suffice to give a picture of the enrollment during the Milwaukee phase of the Seminary. It is striking how many students had to write their examinations during the course of the final year and be released in advance, in order to meet the great demand for workers in the field.

In 1887 Professor Graebner accepted a call to the St. Louis Seminary and Pastor G. Thiele was installed as his successor.

One more change deserves to be noted. It has already been stated that Professor Hoenecke served as pastor of St. Matthew's Congregation in addition to carrying a full load at the Seminary. Because of delicate health he in 1889 tendered his resignation as professor at the Seminary. However, after he had been given a full-time call to the Seminary, he accepted it and from thenceforth served the Seminary exclusively. What a tremendous loss it would have been if our Seminary had lost his services! It is difficult to understand how he, never in robust health, carried the double burden as long as he did.

It will be necessary at this time to digress and take up one of the great controversies that shook the Synodical Conference to its very foundations during the course of the Milwaukee era of our Seminary. That was the well-known *Gnadenwahlstreit*, the Election Controversy.

The Election Doctrine as it is taught in the Bible has always been a deep mystery, which human reason cannot fathom and solve. The intriguing question has ever been: *Cur alii prae aliis?* (Why were some elected by God and others not, though according to Scripture all were of equal guilt?) To make the Doctrine of Election

more palatable to human reason some of the old dogmatists had coined the expression: *Intuitu Fidei*. In other words, it was asserted that God in eternity was moved to choose certain ones unto salvation because He foresaw that they would eventually believe, so making the future faith of the believer partly the cause of his election.

In 1878 Dr. Walther attacked this term as *schief*, as inadequate. That was surprising, as Dr. Walther had given dogmatists respectability in the church of America, for dogmatics was his chief subject at the St. Louis Seminary. It should be noted, however, that he put the Scriptures and the Confessions ahead of the dogmatists.

He took the position that the *intuitu fidei* took something away from the free and sovereign grace of God. Professor F.A. Schmidt, Walther's former colleague but now professor at the Norwegian Seminary at Madison, Wisconsin, attacked Walther on this account, and the Ohio Synod withdrew from the Synodical Conference in 1881 in protest against Walther's position. The Norwegian Synod withdrew in 1883 from the organization though not from the fellowship of the Synodical Conference in the hope of settling the predestinarian controversy in its own midst. In January 1881 the theological faculties within the Synodical Conference together with the presidents of the constituent synods had held a colloquy at our Seminary in Milwaukee. When after five days of discussion no unanimity had been reached and the representatives of the Ohio Synod had to leave, the colloquy was closed with silent prayer. The Ohioans, though disavowing all synergism, took the position that there was something in those finally elected which accounted for their election, that, for instance, some resisted the Holy Ghost less than others. They in a sense made the believer's own faith the cause of his election, while Walther and his followers recognized faith as the result or fruit of election. Those remaining in the Synodical Conference were falsely accused of Crypto-Calvinism, as though they, like Calvin, had taught a predestination of God to damnation as well as to salvation. Stelhorn, who had once been Missouri's professor at Watertown but now was professor at Ft. Wayne, was one of Walther's chief opponents. He was now called to Capital University of the Ohio Synod.

All of this is mentioned in the historical presentation of our Seminary because our Synod and our Seminary had to take sides in this controversy. Professor Hoenecke without hesitation took his place at Walther's side and fought shoulder to shoulder with him as one who represented the true Scriptural teaching on the subject. He wrote many articles in the *Gemeindeblatt* of that period setting forth his views, gathered directly from the Scriptures. He was thus largely responsible for the doctrinal position which our Synod took in the matter and which it holds to this day.

After this brief excursion into the Election Controversy we must return to development within the Seminary itself.

Though the enrollment was small according to modern standards, the facilities of the building were not adequate. Dr. Hoenecke remarks that there were times when it was difficult to find sufficient room for the expanding needs of the school. In addition the condition of the Seminary building was such that the state authorities demanded major repairs.

This forced the Synod to consider a building program either at the present location or a new one. A committee was appointed to study the matter and to publish its findings in the *Gemeindeblatt* by September. A pastoral conference was to be held in October to make a definite decision.

The majority decided in favor of the Wauwatosa site. It involved a vacant property of three acres offered by the Pabst family free of charge. The offer carried the provision, however, that when the property was no longer used for educational purposes, the proceeds of the ensuing sale should be divided equally between the Synod and the Pabst estate. The site later chosen by Downer College in Milwaukee was also seriously considered. This was five times as large as the Wauwatosa property, and the deed had no strings attached, but it was finally rejected because there were no adequate streetcar connections.

The Synod in November 1891 authorized the acceptance of the Wauwatosa site, about a mile west of Washington Park and about the same distance east from what was then the Village of Wauwatosa.

The cost of the Seminary building and two professorages were set at \$40,000.00. Construction work was

almost immediately begun. The cornerstone bore the date of 1892. It was later removed and incorporated in the foundation of the Seminary at Mequon. A third professorage was added in the fall.

The buildings were dedicated September 17, 1893, before a great concourse of people estimated at 5,000 worshipers. Praeses von Rohr and Dr. Hoenecke preached the festival sermons. The latter stressed loyalty to the truth of Scripture as opposed to making a show before the world and to heeding the cry for progress also in the field of theology. In his address to the student body at the actual opening of the Seminary the next day he spoke along similar lines, as still vividly remembered by Professor John Meyer, who entered as a student that year.

Financially the picture was not too rosy. Treasurer Knuth had to make an urgent appeal for funds in the December issue of the *Gemeindeblatt*.

A few words should be said about the arrangement of the new Seminary building. It was two stories high with full basement and a spacious attic. On the first floor were two classrooms, a chapel and a faculty room, study rooms and a lavatory in each of the two wings. The second floor was much the same except that the center unit formed an aula or large hall, a part of which housed the library in later years. The attic was eventually furnished to serve as further sleeping quarters for the students. In the basement, which was to a great extent above grade level, there were kitchen and dining room, living quarters for the help, a washroom with facilities for bathing, and a recreation room.

The Wauwatosa Seminary opened in September 1893 with 31 students, the largest enrollment in the history of the Seminary up to that time. Sixteen of these were new students. The reports make special mention of the fact that five of these new students had transferred from Dr. Martin Luther College Seminary in New Ulm, Minnesota, which had been opened by the Minnesota Synod the fall of 1884. When in 1892 the three Synods of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan joined to form the *Allgemeine Synode* (General Synod), Dr. Martin Luther College discontinued its theological course. Henceforth this institution was used to train parochial school teachers for the new federation, and the Minnesota Synod trained its theological students at the Wauwatosa Seminary.

Of the 31 students entering the new Wauwatosa Seminary eight are listed as being in the practical department. There seem to have been students taking the practical course throughout the years that the Seminary had functioned. Before the Seminary was opened in Milwaukee it had been specified that applicants should have a classical training. Yet practical students were present even into the Wauwatosa era. The reason was the desperate need of more preachers in this period of our Synod's history.

Details appear to be lacking as to this practical course and no doubt it varied according to circumstances and the previous training of those enrolled in it. The reports are very meager as to this matter. Several times some of those taking the practical course are mentioned by name. A Jacob Frey is mentioned as having been given a colloquy in 1883 and as being released into the ministry in Minnesota. In 1884 students Denninger and Schlei are listed. Otherwise I found no students in the practical course mentioned directly by name.

It seems, however, that the Synod always had its misgivings about the practical course and clung to the objective of a full classical training for all of its theological students. At the 1897 Synod it was decided to close the practical department, though the Synod expressed appreciation of the services rendered by the products of this department. Exceptions have seemingly been made, since so-called *Hospitanten* or special students were occasionally accepted. Sometimes the training of a student was extended beyond the normal three years.

In 1887 Pastor G. Thiele, a fellow student of Hoenecke at Halle University, became the successor of Professor Graebner in the faculty. He served until Easter 1900 when he resigned and was pensioned by the Synod. Professor John Ph. Koehler of Watertown took over his classes in the fall of the same year. However, he soon had to be given a furlough of a year for health reasons. During the vacancies Professors Hoenecke and Notz had to take over un-staffed courses in addition to their own.

An innovation was introduced in 1897 when Pastor R. Adelberg was called as instructor to give the students at least some training in the use of English theological terms. He served until 1900, after which Pastor J. Jenny served in a similar capacity for a time. These teaching appointments were not considered permanent calls.

In the summer of 1902 the Seminary suffered a heavy blow. Professor Notz fell out of the window of his

house and after months of suffering died in February of 1903. Pastor Aug. Pieper became his successor the fall of that year.

The Seminary had been laboring under the handicap of an inadequate theological library. Having been appraised of this, the Synod in 1897 urged its pastors and teachers to remember the library with donations of money and books. The 1899 Joint Synod Convention for the first time allotted a definite amount, \$200.00, for library expansion. After Professor Notz's death Mr. Ferdinand Kiekhefer donated the professor's library, valued at \$1,000.00, to the Seminary. Since then books have been slowly but regularly added, so that now an adequate library exists.

We have already noted that up to this time the Seminary was under the management of the Watertown Board. In 1899, however, it was decided to place it under a board representing all the synods within the *Allgemeine Synode*. The first Board consisted of the following: for the Wisconsin Synod: *Praeses* von Rohr, ex officio, Pastors J. Bading, Th. Jaeckel, Chr. Dowidat, C. Jaeger, A. Pieper, E. Hoyer, Messrs. W. H. Graebner, C. Noerenberg, F. Kiekhefer, and W. Schulte; for the Minnesota Synod: *Praeses* C. Gausewitz, Pastors C. J. Albrecht and W. Haar; for the Michigan Synod: *Praeses* J. Klingmann.

Professor Hoenecke is known in our circles by the title of *Doctor* Hoenecke. He received that title on September 8, 1903, on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the reopening of the Seminary at Milwaukee. The title was conferred both by our own Northwestern University and by Concordia Theological Seminary at St. Louis. Dr. Franz Pieper, who received his doctorate at the same occasion, represented the St. Louis faculty. The ceremony was held in the aula of the Wauwatosa Seminary with 700 people present. Obviously they could not all conceivably have found room in the aula. *Praeses* Gausewitz preached the sermon on that occasion. In conferring the title upon Professor Hoenecke Dr. Pieper addressed the recipient in classical Latin, while Dr. Hoenecke responded in church Latin. The original of this response in his own penmanship is in the possession of his grandson on the Seminary faculty, Professor Gerald Hoenecke.

Below follow the enrollment figures for the Wauwatosa era. To complete the picture the enrollment figures for the Mequon period, up to the present date, are also added.

### Seminary Enrollment

<i>Wauwatosa Era</i>	<i>Mequon Era</i>
1893–1894— 32	1929–1930— 67
1894–1895— 36	1930–1931— 66
1895–1896— 40	1931–1932— 72
1896–1897— 35	1932–1933— 66
1897–1898— 32	1933–1934— 60
1898–1899— 25	1934–1935— 63
1899–1900— 24	1935–1936— 53
1900–1901— 35	1936–1937— 62
1901–1902— 41	1937–1938— 56
1902–1903— 38	1938–1939— 69
1903–1904— 30	1939–1940— 68
1904–1905— 29	1940–1941— 69
1905–1906— 29	1941–1942— 60
1906–1907— 33	1942–1943— 60
1907–1908— 35	1943–1944— 63
1908–1909— 42	1944–1945— 69
1909–1910— 50	1945— 65
1910–1911— 56	1946–1947— 53
1911–1912— 63	1947–1948— 48
1912–1913— 59	1948–1949— 45

1913–1914—	57	1949–1950—	57
1914–1915—	51	1950–1951—	55
1915–1916—	47	1951–1952—	67
1916–1917—	46	1952–1953—	85 (8 v.)
1917–1918—	46	†1953–1954—	92 (12 v. & 1 st.)
1918–1919—	57	†1954–1955—	112 (17 v.)
1919–1920—	61	†1955–1956—	102 (23 v. & 1 st.)
1920–1921—	57	†1956–1957—	98 (21 v. & 4 st.)
1921–1922—	49	†1957–1958—	87 (11 v. & 1 st.)
1922–1923—	49	†1958–1959—	84 (11 v. & 2 st.)
1923–1924—	55	†1959–1960—	81 (17 v. & 2 st.)
1924–1925—	56	†1960–1961—	79 (13 v. & 1 st.)
1925–1926—	42	†1961–1962—	74 (11 v. & 2 st.)
1926–1927—	40	†1962–1963—	95 (15 v. & 1 st.)
1927–1928—	41		

1928–1929— 53

The number of graduates at the various sites is as follows:

At Watertown—	11	At Wauwatosa—	493
At St. Louis—	20	At Mequon—	824
At Milwaukee—	121		

Total number of Seminary graduates to 1963                      1,469

What we have described as *The Hoenecke Era* ended with Dr. Hoenecke's death. At the beginning of the Christmas vacation in 1907 he became ill, and the Lord called him home on January 3, 1908. Thus our Synod lost the man who exerted more influence upon the theology and doctrinal position of our Synod than anyone else in its entire history. Since 1866, except for the period from 1870 to 1878 when our Seminary was joined with the St. Louis Seminary, he had served as a theological professor. A career of so many years has left its deep imprint upon the development of our Synod.

Before closing our consideration of this era it will be necessary to give a brief biography of Dr. Hoenecke and to make at least an attempt to set down some of his personal characteristics and to evaluate his theology. There is considerable literature available on this subject. One is the introduction which Professor John Schaller, Hoenecke's successor at the Seminary, wrote to Dr. Hoenecke's book on Dogmatics. Another is the evaluation of him that Professor John P. Koehler, for several years Dr. Hoenecke's colleague at the Seminary, published in the *Quartalschrift* soon after his death. Professor August Pieper, also Dr. Hoenecke's colleague for a time, has given us the most detailed biography on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Dr. Hoenecke's birth. This covers four installments in the *Quartalschrift* of 1935 and 1936. Another source of information might have been his former students, of whom a number are still living and some still in the active ministry in our circles. It was possible to draw on this latter source only to a very limited degree.

Adolf Hoenecke was born February 25, 1835, in Brandenburg, Germany, the son of William Hoenecke, a hospital inspector for the Prussian military authorities. His father was no churchman and evidenced no interest in spiritual things. His mother was a Christian, but seems to have exerted no direct influence upon her son in choosing the ministry as a profession. Young Hoenecke attended the elementary schools in his home city and after completing his elementary course entered the *Gymnasium* in the same city. When he had finished that course, he was faced with the need of choosing a profession. At first he felt drawn to the career of a botanist. In fact, he retained his love of flowers and their culture throughout his life.

He himself never seems to have considered entering the ministry until the occasion when he happened to visit the musician and composer Thomas Taeglichsbeck. A pastor who made a comfortable living in the

ministry was also present as a guest, and *Taeglichbeck* suggested to the young Hoenecke that the ministry would be just the thing for one of such a frail physique as his. That seems to have appealed to him. At any rate, he decided to prepare himself for work in the ministry. There seem to have been no spiritual reasons whatsoever which moved him to make that choice. It is a striking instance of God working in a mysterious way His wonders to perform. God used the suggestion of one who was not a believer himself to provide the Wisconsin Synod with its great theological teacher. In the final analysis God directed the choice of Hoenecke's profession. All his brothers followed the example of their father and entered the military service.

Hoenecke chose the University of Halle to pursue his theological studies. But he was not yet ready for that because he had previously studied no Hebrew. Consequently he first enrolled as a student of philosophy and in six months by dint of serious study acquired enough knowledge of Hebrew to enter the theological department.

At Halle he came under the influence of positive Christian professors. In speaking of his student days he also liked to mention the Old Testament scholar Herman Hupfeld and Professor Julius Mueller. But the one who seems to have influenced him the most was Professor August Tholuck, who served as *Studentenvater* (dean). Young Hoenecke received no financial help from home and had a difficult time to make ends meet. Tholuck saw to it that he received a free noon meal and threw some opportunities his way to make a little money on the side. But even this was not enough, so that he also found it necessary to give some private instructions. Tholuck took a great interest in him and predicted a great future for him. It was his fond hope that young Hoenecke might some day make his mark as a great theological teacher.

When Hoenecke had passed his examination *pro candidatura*, he took a temporary position as a private tutor in the home of a nobleman in Berne, Switzerland, and remained there for several years. Here he met his future wife, the daughter of a Reformed pastor. Lack of the necessary funds prevented him from getting married at once. In fact, it was not until he had spent two years in America that he had enough money to send for his fiancé. On her arrival, Pastor Bading married them.

One of the requirements for entry into the public ministry was for the candidate to become acquainted with the German public school system. Consequently Hoenecke left Switzerland and came to Wittenberg, where he did work in the Luther School connected with the theological Seminary in that city.

He passed his final examination in Magdeburg. In the report given of him in this connection is the notation that he had a special gift for popular preaching, which his later ministry in America abundantly verified.

While Hoenecke was completing these steps toward entering the active ministry, Professor Tholuck kept in touch with his protégé. He urged him to prepare himself for a theological professorship by studying the works of the dogmatists, which Hoenecke faithfully did. If Hoenecke did not become a theological teacher, Tholuck at least wanted him to serve in the German Evangelical Church. This was a *Unionskirche*, a combination of Lutherans and Reformed. Each pastor was permitted to preach his own faith as long as he did not engage in polemics against the other confession.

Tholuck was a convinced Lutheran, but he had no scruples about serving in such a unionist body. Hoenecke, on the other hand, was beginning to have doubts about it and became more and more convinced that it was contrary to true Lutheranism and true Christianity to serve in such a unionist church body. Over this he and his former teacher came to the parting of the ways.

At this time an urgent plea for pastors came to Germany from America. We have already noted that most of the pastors in the early days of our Synod were provided by the German mission societies. Also the Berlin Mission was active in this work and issued appeals to candidates for the ministry to go to work in America. Candidate Hoenecke decided to volunteer, without knowing too much about conditions there.

On the strength of a call from the congregation in La Crosse, Wisconsin, Hoenecke was ordained and sent to America, arriving there in 1863. When he arrived, he found that La Crosse had already been supplied with a pastor, but soon he received and accepted a call to Farmington, a few miles south of Watertown. Other biographical data concerning the places where he lived and which he served are listed in the course of the historical account already given.

The church authorities assured the candidates who accepted a call to America that if they later wished to return to Germany, they would be given a call there. Hoenecke, after he had been in Farmington for a while, wrote the authorities in Germany that he did not want such provisions made for him. In the little congregation that he served he found ample time to devote himself thoroughly to the study of the Scriptures, the Confessional Writings, and Lutheran Dogmatics. At the time of Hoenecke's arrival in this country the Wisconsin Synod had about 35 pastors and 80 congregations or preaching places.

With his emigration to America there seemed little hope that Professor Tholuck's ambition that Hoenecke become a theological professor would reach fulfillment. It looked as though his destiny was to be a rural pastor. The Lord, however, had greater things in view with him, and it was not long, as we have seen, before he blossomed out as a theological teacher. He was peculiarly fitted for this position, not only because he had acquired a first-hand acquaintance with the field of theology, especially the field of dogmatics, but also because he was equipped with singular mental gifts.

All his biographers and all who knew him paid tribute to the keenness of his intellect and his clarity of expression. He had a razor-sharp mind and had the ability to express his thoughts in a clear and logical manner. Yet he did not attain the place he holds in the history of our Wisconsin Synod because he pushed himself forward and had a high opinion of his own theological capabilities. He was and remained a humble man.

Hoenecke was quiet, retiring and peace loving. There was nothing pugnacious about him. As Professor Koehler reports, he was also not chummy by nature. Partisanship was foreign to him. Administration did not interest him very much. There was a lack of emotionalism. He did not, unlike so many orthodox *theologians*, go heresy-hunting, but was thoroughly evangelical in dealing with those who were tinged with error. Just this was a valuable gift in the early days of our Synod when there was so much evidence of immaturity in theology. But in his quiet and incisive way he won many a battle for Scriptural truth in the critical days of our history. He was, as Professor Koehler notes, a man who kept our Synod on a true course. With his clear understanding of Scripture and his clarity of expression he aroused the admiration of men even outside of our Synod. We are told that in later years when they had become acquainted with him and his way of presentation, the Missourians marveled that a Wisconsin man could present a matter so correctly and convincingly in such an engaging manner.

Clarity of thought and expression was one of his outstanding characteristics. When he came together with some pastors and discussed a text, he loved to work out an outline for a sermon on the spot, and those who heard it were surprised how adept he was at covering the text in a few clear statements. One student reports hearing him preach a Mission Festival sermon with "Ephphatha, Be opened" as his theme. In his sub-parts he stated that this was addressed first to the ears, secondly to the heart, and thirdly to the pocketbook. Yet in spite of his clarity his writing and teaching required close attention. There was intricacy in it because of the depth of thought expressed. His lectures were of such a nature that brilliant students derived much profit from them, but at the same time the less gifted students likewise got much out of them.

Hoenecke's strength lay not in the administrative field but in his grasp of Scriptural truth and in his teaching ability. Others executed in the synodical field what he taught. Someone has said that he forged the bullets that the practical Bading shot. At every critical stage of our Synod he was largely instrumental in keeping it on the right paths. We have already noted how that was the case in the concordat which our Synod formed with the Missourians, also over against the Iowans with their Open Questions.

His peculiar strength evidenced itself also in the Election Controversy. This can perhaps best be illustrated by quoting part of Professor Pieper's article in free translation: "In the late seventies and in the eighties he had occasion to prove his leadership in our Synod. I refer to the terrible but ultimately blessed time of the Election Controversy. It shook our Synod to its very foundations. A considerable number of our most prominent pastors and professors were inclined to jump to Ohio. The decisive battle came in 1881 in La Crosse. Hoenecke took his immovable position at Walther's side. Also in this matter he did not act as a storm trooper, but he had with infinite care thoroughly worked through every phase of the doctrine. He did not, as many opponents did, agitate in the Synod. At the Seminary he performed the duties of his office in quietness. In the *Gemeindeblatt* he wrote little but quietly, clearly, and firmly. Privately he stated: Walther's doctrine is not

Walther's but that of the Scriptures, of Paul, of Luther, and of the Formula of Concord: the teaching concerning the *intuitu fidei* is a dogmatical aberration. Walther in his zeal has made some extreme statements, which must be corrected, but he stands directly upon Scripture, and his opponents are following human reason. With him we stand on Scripture. Some Missourians are hard to bear, but in theology we are one flesh and blood with Walther, therefore there dare be no talk of separation from him. He persuaded Walther to write a clarification of doubtful sentences and held our Synod on the right track, though a small number, who never really were of us, separated from us. Humanly speaking, our Synod would at that time have been torn asunder if Hoenecke's unpretentious but genuine, pristine Lutheranism had not held us together."

Dr. Hoenecke was by call and training a dogmatician. He had worked himself into that branch of theology and was thoroughly acquainted with it. And yet his approach was not from dogmatical formulations. He always went back to Luther and above all the Scriptures themselves. Professor Koehler notes that Hoenecke was more critical of the dogmaticians than Walther was. Schaller calls Dr. Hoenecke a *Bibeltheologe*, a Bible theologian.

What he stood for in theology is most apparent from his book on Dogmatics. The Synod had long urged him to publish it, but he always put it off until shortly before his death, when it was too late to put it into proper form. The work was far from finished when the Lord called him home. After his death his sons, Walter and Otto, for a number of years worked on the notes which he had left behind, until his dogmatics finally appeared in printed form. Naturally it was published in German, a fact that has prevented most of our modern generation of pastors from becoming personally acquainted with it.

It is one of the ablest works published in America and has also been widely read and studied outside of our own synodical circles. Often quoted with appreciation on points of doctrine, it will remain a lasting monument to the theology for which Dr. Hoenecke stood.

Rich samples of his Scriptural theology are also found in the papers that he read at various synodical meetings, his regular contributions to the *Gemeindeblatt* and the *Quartalschrift*, his published sermons and outlines.

The theology of our Synod is under God largely what Dr. Hoenecke believed and taught. No single individual has exerted influence among our fathers to the extent that Dr. Hoenecke did.

#### **IV. The Last Half Century**

The passing of Dr. Hoenecke left a great void in the Seminary faculty. His son Otto, then pastor of Bethel Church in Milwaukee, took over the teaching of Dogmatics until the vacancy could be filled.

The finding of a successor posed quite a problem. It involved not only the selecting of a new teacher of Dogmatics, but particularly the choice of a new director president of the Seminary. The logical solution would seem to have been the appointment of one of the remaining professors, Koehler or Pieper, to the presidency, but there seemingly was no willingness to make a choice between the two. Professor Bente of St. Louis was called, but he declined. Thereupon Professor John Schaller of Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota, was chosen and he accepted.

He was the son of Professor Schaller in St. Louis. He had attended our college in Watertown and had taken his theological course in St. Louis, as had also Professors Koehler and Pieper. Since 1889 Schaller had been Director of Dr. Martin Luther College, where he had specialized in teaching pedagogical subjects and religion. He had been highly respected as a teacher there.

Up to this time and for some years thereafter the Seminary faculty never exceeded three men. During the Hoenecke-Koehler-Pieper period this represented a strong faculty. With the calling of Schaller the Seminary



again had three outstanding professors, whose combined influence did much to shape the nature of our Seminary. Koehler and Pieper had by this time gained valuable experience in teaching their subjects and had made their influence felt on a synod-wide basis. Koehler's subjects were chiefly History and New Testament Exegesis and Pieper's, Old Testament Exegesis and Isagogics. Schaller took over the subjects that Hoenecke had taught: Dogmatics, Homiletics, and Pastoral Theology.

Both Koehler and Pieper were exceptionally gifted men and strong characters whose teaching had tremendous impact on the students. And yet in their natural make-up they were totally different. In this they complemented one another. It would almost seem impossible to have found a man who fitted better into this particular picture than the genial Schaller with his great tactfulness. Together these three men formed a great triumvirate in the history of the Seminary.

Every theological faculty has had its particular emphases, depending on the times and conditions in the church. Under Hoenecke we had the formative years. The great need was to make ours a truly orthodox synod, to emphasize purity of doctrine and sound Lutheran practice. By the time of Hoenecke's death this had been accomplished.

Now the faculty saw the pendulum swinging in the other direction. They saw the danger of a dead orthodoxy in which all the right doctrines were upheld and defended against all comers but which threatened to degenerate into a mere formal profession with the living spirit departed. The dogmatical approach threatened to take over the religious thinking. This approach seemed to be the trend in Missouri, which had been orthodox long before Wisconsin. Pure doctrine and sound Lutheran practice had been the great aim when the Missouri Synod was organized, and Dr. Walther with his tremendous influence had seen to it that true orthodoxy was preserved. After Walther's death Franz Pieper had become the theological leader, and he continued along the same lines. His subject was Dogmatics, and the Missouri men were trained in the theological way of thinking. Franz Pieper was the big man in the Missouri Synod. Missouri also had one of the greatest exegetes ever produced in America in Dr. Stoeckhardt, but he never was appreciated in Missouri to the extent that he was in Wisconsin as a result of the emphases by the Koehler-Pieper-Schaller combination.

Under these men the great slogan became: Back into the Scriptures, to counteract the danger of a dead and formal orthodoxy. Not that they did not appreciate Luther and the Lutheran Confessions, which they certainly did and emphasized. Nor was it that the study of Dogmatics was considered valueless. They realized that it was necessary for the students and future pastors to obtain a general overview of theology. They, however, warned against the purely dogmatical approach. But it was inevitable that some of the students would misunderstand their teachers and become prejudiced against Dogmatics, think it to be useless and even harmful, and feel that a study of Dogmatics reflected upon their theological acumen. To say the least, Dogmatics became largely an unpopular subject.

It is necessary to say this in order to understand that our faculty at that time was striving primarily to inculcate on the students a theology which had its roots directly in the Scriptures in order to combat a dead orthodoxy, which they saw rearing its head in our circles. Exegesis and Isagogics became the all-important subjects. The aim was to lead the students into the Scriptures directly and to evaluate everything according to that standard. Theoretically that had always been the policy in the orthodox Lutheran Church but in practice the shortcut was often taken. Our faculty at that time stressed the historical-exegetical approach.

All three of the professors were great scholars and thorough theologians but each with a different temperament, each supplying what the other lacked, and each exercising peculiar influence upon the students.

Professor Koehler at first glance impressed the students as an austere man and as of a reserved nature, but at the same time he had a gift for talking with the students and influencing them privately. His chief talent seemed to be the laying down of the fundamental principles of the Gospel. It appeared at times that he intentionally did not make his statements too specific, so that the students would do their own thinking. Consequently they were not always likely to understand him at first but after months, perhaps even years, the fuller meaning would gradually dawn upon them. His lectures were never dull but always stimulating. He put great stress on the revelation of God's ways in history, pointing out that the formulations of theology are not

static, but represent a constant struggle of God's unchanging truth against the ever-changing attacks of error. This made also church history a vital subject at our Seminary and the study of history a prominent feature in the pre-seminary training of ministerial students in our Synod.

One of Koehler's pet targets, as well as that of the other two professors, was legalism and a mechanical Christianity. The following were some of his favorite remarks: *Das Evangelium schafft seine eigenen Formen* (The Gospel creates its own forms); *Keine Macherei* (Don't try to promote the Gospel cause with all kinds of gimmicks). A favorite injunction in his exegetical classes was: *Keine Wortklauberei* (Don't try to squeeze out of the text what is not there). He frequently used the expression: *Evangelische Ermahnung* (Evangelical admonition). Thereby he meant to warn the students against turning the Gospel injunctions into New Testament rules of the Law, and to teach them an evangelical approach to Christian sanctification. The great stress was on being evangelical and acting according to the spirit of the Gospel.

Professor Pieper was an altogether different type of personality, though sharing the same theological approach. He was a thorough extrovert. His was a dramatic personality, and he had a dramatic way of speaking and lecturing. The students often sat spellbound before him. One of his outstanding gifts was to inspire enthusiasm for the ministry. With his leaning toward hyperbole he would shout: *Wir muessen ganz Amerika lutherisch machen* (We must make all of America Lutheran). He knew how to speak in pictures and in such concrete ways that it would stick. For instance, in describing the difference between a Lutheran and a Calvinist, he once expressed it to his class in this way: "When the Lutheran sees Jesus, he exclaims: 'What a wonderful Savior He is,' while the Calvinist after looking at Jesus exclaims: 'Come, let us serve him.'" His lectures on the picturesque and dramatic passages in Isaiah were unforgettable.

Professor Schaller had traits that, as we have said, fitted well into this picture and enabled him to serve as a balance wheel. He had a genius for getting along with people and never went to extremes. The three worked together as a unit. Schaller had some big shoes to fill as the successor of Dr. Hoenecke and had to prove his worth to the students and to the Synod in general. After he had had time to work himself into his new position, he did prove himself. Students who had heard about Schaller's theological ability from his former pupils at New Ulm were inclined to take this appraisal with a grain of salt, but gradually learned to share it. He did have to contend with the prevailing prejudice against Dogmatics, of which we have already spoken.

Schaller was also the teacher of Homiletics, and for that position he was peculiarly equipped by the clarity of his mind and by his knack for grasping the fundamental thought of a text and its intent. He personally was an outstanding preacher, who was noted for the richness of his thought and the cordiality of his delivery. In those days the professors did only occasional outside preaching, Schaller more than the other two. Usually they were found sitting in the pew in their home congregation. Whenever Schaller did preach, the students also learned something about effective preaching from him. He did not on the whole have quite the impact of the other two professors on the character of our Seminary, if for no other reason than that due to his early death his tenure as a professor was much shorter.

Toward the end of the first decade of the present century Professor Koehler began to stress the importance of good church music. This was in line with his position as teacher of history, which also deals with all forms of ecclesiastical art. Before this, reference to good church music had been largely incidental in the lectures. Professor Koehler at this time stimulated general interest in the matter through an essay on congregational singing before a convention of the *Allgemeine Synode*.

There was another development toward the promotion of good church music. In Milwaukee Lutherans had organized the A Cappella Choir, which devoted itself to good Lutheran church music. This choir soon achieved great fame because of the excellency of its renditions. Its director, Boeppler, was chiefly responsible for this. Professor Koehler for a time served as the president of this organization. Boeppler took over the music at the Seminary for a brief time. His successor as director of the A Cappella Choir was another excellent musician by the name of Salbach. During his incumbency Professor Koehler lectured to the choir on good Lutheran church music. The Seminary Board prevailed upon Professor Koehler to promote this matter among the students. This led to the formation of a student choir, with female voices recruited chiefly from among the students of the Milwaukee Lutheran High School, which met for rehearsal weekly in Immanuel school hall of

Milwaukee. This was popularly known among the students as the *Heiratsbureau* (marriage bureau) because a number of students met their future wives on these occasions. Professor Koehler's chief purpose was to demonstrate the superiority of the objective hymns of the 16th century over the more subjective and sentimental hymns of later centuries. To promote this idea in wider church circles the choir gave public concerts in one of the halls of the Milwaukee Auditorium, at which Professor Koehler lectured on the Lutheran chorale. The first lecture was delivered in 1911. These lectures continued for several years but then for some unexplained reason ceased.

This was the first real attempt to promote the knowledge of good congregational singing among the students as future leaders in our church. For a number of years after Professor Koehler's work in music, pastors and teachers of our Synod supplied leadership in this field, until Professor Hilton Oswald of Watertown was called in 1945 to divide his time as a music professor between Northwestern College and the Seminary. Because of the need of confining his work to Northwestern College, this arrangement was discontinued in 1960. During the next two school years Pastor Kurt Eggert, pastor of Gethsemane Lutheran Church of Milwaukee, taught the Church Music courses and conducted the Seminary Chorus on a temporary basis. The department of Church Music was again permanently staffed in 1962, when Professor Martin Albrecht, who had served for many years in the music department of Dr. Martin Luther College, was called. In this way provision was made for the permanent training of the students to recognize and appreciate good Lutheran church music.

From time to time controversies arise in the church in which the theological faculties become involved, in fact, in the very nature of the case take a leading part. During the Koehler-Pieper-Schaller era it was the *Kirche und Amt Streit*, the controversy over the Church and its Ministry.

This had its roots outside our own Synod in the so-called Cincinnati case, involving two pastors, the brothers von Schlichten, who had been suspended by the Missouri Synod Central District officials. In 1904 these pastors and their congregations applied for membership in the Wisconsin Synod. A number of our pastors were of the opinion that these men had been improperly suspended and fraternized with them. The application to Wisconsin led to some negotiations between Missouri and Wisconsin committees. The outcome of it was that it was decided not to receive them into membership because the Missouri Synod had not completed its dealings in the matter.

That led to a discussion, first in our own circles, on the validity of a synodical suspension and then branched out into a special study of the Church and its Ministry.

The gist of the matter was the question whether a synod is Church with full exercise of the Keys or whether only the local congregation is Church in that sense. The view had gradually developed that a synod was a man-made institution and that only the local congregation existed as a divine institution. The development of this view went back to the writings of Dr. Walther in the controversy with the Buffalo Synod about Church and Ministry. In that controversy the Buffalo Synod men took the position that only the ministerium, the clergy, was the Church and that the congregation had to take orders from the ministerium. In that controversy Dr. Walther defended the divine rights of the congregation, maintaining that it had the full power of the Keys. The question whether also a synod was Church was not an issue in the controversy between Missouri and Buffalo. Dr. Walther had naturally stressed the divine rights of the local congregation over against the idea that the decision of the clergy was final, whether the congregation had a voice in it or not. From this many had drawn the conclusion that the local congregation alone was the possessor of the Keys and the only divinely instituted body in the Church. This gave rise to the idea that synodical suspension was only a human and not a divine act.

Along the same lines the idea had taken root that only the parish ministry was divinely instituted and that all other offices in the Church, such as that of the parochial school teacher or synodical official, derived their powers from the parish ministry and were only auxiliary officers, not existing by divine institution.

This matter became a burning question in our Synod. One of the Wisconsin Synod pastors published an article in which he espoused the prevailing view. Our Seminary faculty responded that it was not the locality of an organization that made it divine, but that the Church truly exists and has all the divine functions where only two or three are gathered together in the name of Jesus. On the other hand, they declared that the Lord did not merely institute the parish ministry but that He instituted the general Gospel ministry. This may take different

forms from time to time, according to the teaching of St. Paul in Ephesians 4: "He gave some, apostles, and some, prophets, and some, evangelists, and some, pastors and teachers." These were all forms of one and the same Gospel ministry and were equally divine and differing only in the scope of their call, not in essence.

The Seminary faculty, particularly Professor Pieper at first, published in the *Quartalschrift* what it regarded as the Scriptural teaching on the subject. As previously indicated, a number of prominent men in our own circles took exception. A Synod-wide pastoral conference was held in Manitowoc in September 1911, attended also by a great mass of Seminary students, at which Professor Pieper read an essay on the Doctrine of the Church, Synodical Discipline, especially Doctrinal Discipline. After that a prominent Wisconsin pastor printed an eight-page pamphlet against his position, which was later refuted in the *Quartalschrift*. There were repeated articles on that subject in the *Quartalschrift*. Gradually the position of the Seminary faculty was widely accepted and has now become the recognized doctrinal position of the Wisconsin Synod. Throughout this controversy the three Seminary professors stood shoulder to shoulder as one man.

The Missourians also became involved. Many mixed conferences were held in the Milwaukee area, in which not only the Wisconsin men but also the Missouri men expressed their views. Those who attended these conferences, as many Seminary students did, will not forget them. Even many of the Missouri pastors came to share the views of our faculty.

The St. Louis faculty under the leadership of Dr. Franz Pieper attacked our Seminary faculty's view of the Church and Ministry. A number of joint meetings were held in the course of the years. There was a written protest of the St. Louis faculty against the Wauwatosa faculty, which was threshed out on several occasions. The discussions did not lead to an agreement, but there was an understanding that the disagreement was not such as to warrant the charge of false doctrine. Finally in 1932 both faculties signed the *Thiensville Theses* dealing with this subject, but unanimity in both synods has not yet been achieved. Especially since the suspension of church fellowship between Wisconsin and Missouri in 1961, individual Missouri voices have been raised maintaining that Wisconsin has been guilty of false doctrine on the question of the Church and the Ministry.

While this controversy was raging, the instruction at the Seminary was going on in its normal way. In 1915 a significant change occurred in the faculty with the calling of Pastor Hermann Meyer as the fourth professor, the first time the faculty had been enlarged to that extent on a permanent basis. He was the brother of our present Professor John Meyer.

But our Seminary suffered a heavy loss when Professor John Schaller, its President, died February 7, 1920. He had not only been an able teacher but an outstanding administrator and had exerted a wide influence throughout the Synod. His service at our Seminary extended over a period of only twelve years. His importance was properly expressed in the choice of the funeral text, John 5:35, referring to John the Baptist: "He was a burning and shining light, and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light."

Another heavy blow descended upon the Seminary that same year when Professor Hermann Meyer was called home April 4 at an early age after only five years of service at the Seminary.

Professor William Henkel from Northwestern College and Professor John Meyer from Dr. Martin Luther College accepted calls to fill the two vacancies. Professor Koehler succeeded Professor Schaller as President of the Seminary.

The next great problem with which the Seminary was faced was the matter of future expansion of its facilities. It was realized that soon more room would be needed. It will be remembered that the Wauwatosa Seminary property was very confined as to space. Consequently our Synod gave serious thought to acquiring more property or to relocating.

In 1919 a realty company made available 13 adjacent lots for \$35,705 and held the offer open to September 1 until the Synod had had time to pass on it. The Synod appointed a committee of seven to purchase these lots if it was found that there were no restrictions in the deed and if the restrictions could also be removed from property in use. Since it was found impossible to remove the restrictions, the thoughts of the Synod turned to acquiring another site on which to build a new seminary.

In 1921 the Synod resolved to build a new seminary at a cost not to exceed \$500,000, and to dispose of

the Wauwatosa property. At the same time it decided to sell the previously acquired Bues farm located near the Soldiers' Home in southern Milwaukee. A building committee was appointed which consisted of Professor John Koehler, Pastor John Brenner, Messrs. F. Gamm, Ernst von Briesen, O. Sengbush, Theo. Buuck, and W. Bensemman, the latter replacing Pastor H. K. Moussa, who had originally been appointed. In 1923 it was decided that building could not begin until all the needed funds for it had been collected. Pastor John Brenner was directly in charge of collecting the money.

The Synod had a sizable debt at this time, and it was decided to collect for two purposes: the new seminary and the synodical debt. One third of the collection would be for the debt and the balance for the new seminary. Around this time the beautiful Van Dyke property was bought for \$40,000. This site comprising 32 acres was located only a short distance south of the old property on 60th Street, between Vliet and State Streets. In 1927 the Synod decided to sell the Van Dyke property, which was done at a profit of more than \$67,000. The reason evidently was that it was considered too valuable a property for the Seminary and that the sale would serve as a big step forward in financing the erection of the new seminary.

After the sale of the Van Dyke property the 80-acre Wille farm near the Village of Thiensville was bought for \$25,000 as the site for the new Seminary. Collections had not been moving along at a rapid pace, but after the sales of the above named properties and the sale of the old Seminary property for \$27,500 the building committee announced that sufficient funds were on hand to finance the new project.

The committee now devoted itself to working out plans for the new seminary building. Professor Koehler seems to have been chiefly responsible for the general design, appropriately incorporating features suggested by the Wartburg. On May 24, 1928, ground could be broken, and on July 22 of the same year the cornerstone was formally laid. Moving from the old Seminary began on June 10, 1929.

In the new seminary building all the various facilities including classrooms, library, chapel, dormitories, refectory and gymnasium, quarters for the maintenance staff, are connected so as to form one horseshoe-shaped structure with its open end on the north. The five dormitory sections provided room for 72 students. Originally the building complex included also living quarters for the President of the Seminary. Two additional dormitory units, with room for 32 additional students, are at present under construction as envisioned in the original plans.

Dedication services were held August 18, 1929, at which four dedicatory sermons were preached. A large throng of people from our congregations attended the services. Twelve thousand seats had been provided and were filled to capacity. The dedicatory offering amounted to \$4,000, which was earmarked for landscaping the Seminary grounds. That this money was judiciously spent, everyone who has had opportunity to visit the site will agree. Our Seminary probably has as beautiful grounds as any of the educational institutions in our country.

We now must touch on one of the darkest phases of our Seminary's history. In the early twenties a controversy arose which caused considerable disturbance in our Synod and which also vitally affected the Seminary faculty. That was the so-called protes'tant controversy, which finally led to the suspension of a number of pastors, chiefly in the Western Wisconsin District. It also led to the resignation of two professors at Northwestern College and the separation of two professors from our Seminary faculty.

For our purpose in this history we need not go into detail except to note that already in 1924 the controversy resulted in the dismissal from the Seminary faculty of the young professor G. Ruediger, who had been called to the Seminary only in 1921.

The Seminary faculty as such became more deeply involved by later developments in the controversy, in connection with the paper of Pastor W. F. Beitz on "The Just Shall Live by Faith." In it he castigated what he regarded as some of the evils in the Wisconsin Synod. This paper was first read at a conference in the Western Wisconsin District. It was sharply attacked by some, while staunchly defended by others, and became a burning question especially in that District. The praesidium of the District felt called upon to take action against it.

The Seminary faculty was drawn into the case by a request of the President of the Western Wisconsin District for a *Gutachten*, or theological opinion, on the Beitz paper. It should be noted that some seminaries frequently had given such "opinions." Our own Seminary faculty had generally not engaged in that practice.

In this case, however, it decided to accede to the request, perhaps in the hope that that might help to settle the controversy which was tearing our Synod apart. At any rate, the faculty decided that each professor write a review of the Beitz paper. Professor Pieper's paper was unanimously chosen as the most adequate, and he was charged with the duty of writing the formal *Gutachten*. In the copy that was finally adopted by the entire faculty Pastor Beitz was accused of judgment of hearts, of false doctrine especially with regard to the doctrine of repentance, and of a confused mingling of justification and sanctification.

It is claimed that when Professor Koehler as President of the Seminary faculty delivered the *Gutachten*, he requested that it be not published until he himself had had a personal discussion with Pastor Beitz. When he did meet with him, he found it had already been published.

Upon his return Professor Koehler withdrew his signature from the *Gutachten*. This resulted in a division within the faculty. He published a pamphlet known as *Die Beleuchtung*, which was responded to by Professor Pieper and Professor Meyer with a pamphlet known as *Die Antwort*. Thus the rift in the faculty became a matter of public concern.

Many members of the Synod agreed with the *Gutachten*, while a number of others vehemently criticized it as placing an interpretation on the Beitz paper that the author never intended.

Thus the Synod as such became involved in the affair, and steps were taken to try to heal the breach. A special Seminary Committee from within the membership of the Synod was appointed to settle the controversy within the faculty. In 1929 the Synod even adopted a resolution that no one in the service of the Synod should publish anything further on the controversy.

The Seminary Committee held a number of hearings. At its meeting in September 1929 it reported that Professor Koehler refused to appear before the Committee until the following things had been removed: 1) The slander of Beitz in the *Gutachten*; 2) The resolution of the Seminary Board that he (Koehler) could no longer work in blessing at the Seminary; 3) *Die Antwort*.

A delegation was sent out to discuss the matter with Professor Koehler. Upon their return they reported that Professor Koehler still refused to meet the Committee, expressing the opinion that such a meeting would result only in the heaping of sin upon sin. In that same meeting the Committee together with the Seminary Board resolved that Professor Koehler be given a leave of absence from the Seminary for one year, during which, however, he lived at the Seminary. After a number of further futile attempts to get together, Professor Koehler was dismissed from the Seminary faculty.

It is impossible to give a complete picture of the controversy here. There is a wealth of literary material from both sides. The above will perhaps suffice to give some idea of what led to the tragic separation of Professor Koehler from our Seminary.

Because of the above sad events the joy over the entry into the beautiful new Seminary was dimmed.

Another pall of gloom descended upon the Seminary as a result of the financial depression that was sweeping over our country: lack of calls for its graduates. For a number of years candidates had to “stand idle in the marketplace” of the Church and temporarily had to take secular employment whenever and wherever it could be obtained. The situation in this respect was especially bad from 1932 to 1935. In the latter year the synodical President reported to the Synod that 32 theological candidates were still without calls. This was a far cry from former days when the regular complaint was the shortage of pastors and the supply of candidates fell far short of the demand. Even now there was plenty work to be done but there was not enough money available to finance it.

After Professor Koehler’s severance from the Seminary Professor Pieper was made president of the faculty. He continued his work at the Seminary until late in 1940 when he fell and broke his hip. After that the Board relieved him of his classroom work but asked him to continue to write for the *Quartalschrift*. For several years he continued to live in the professorage and then made his home off the campus. He died December 23, 1946, after one of the most extended tenures as a theological professor in the history of our Seminary. He will always be regarded as one of the most gifted and talented teachers our Seminary ever had.

Through much of the history of our Seminary the German language was used as the medium of instruction. Beginning with Koehler, Pieper, and Schaller practically all the professors at our Seminary had received their education in schools of our own country and spoke English fluently, but were more at home in the German language.

There was little demand for English in our congregations during the first half-century of our Synod’s history. It is doubtful that there was a purely English-speaking congregation in our Synod before 1910. Only a few of our congregations had occasional English services. They were the exceptions rather than the rule and were even regarded by some as curiosities. By and large, our membership was reluctant about the use of the English language; some were even prejudiced against it and fought its introduction into our churches. The First World War reversed this trend when, in our country at large, everything German was looked at askance as unpatriotic. This led to the introduction of English services in many of our congregations, and it was necessary that our pastors become more bi-lingual. Because there was no truly Lutheran theological literature available in English at the time, the adoption of the English language posed some serious problems. There was the danger that our Synod would be influenced by Calvinism as the pastors were forced to rely on sectarian theological literature. Professor Pieper at the time wrote warning words in an article in the *Quartalschrift* about *Unser Uebergang ins Englische* (Our Transition into English). There was need of such a warning in those days.

I have no recollection of any subjects being taught in English at the Seminary fifty years ago except for one period of Dogmatics and the requirement of delivering one English sermon during the course at the Seminary. It was a blessing that the students had had a good English course at Watertown under Dr. Ott. However, those who were later forced to preach in English in their congregations were often at a loss for the right theological term to use since practically all their theological training had been in German.

The German language continued as a medium of instruction even after the transfer of the Seminary to Thiensville, yes, into the early forties. But for more and more of the students who entered the Seminary around this time German was becoming a foreign language so that a change had to be made. Soon the pendulum swung so far in the other direction that in 1946 it was found necessary to introduce a special course in the reading of the German Bible. In late years the graduates who can preach a sermon in acceptable German are extremely rare.

Another change of policy at the Seminary in the course of the years concerns the vicarage. During the Milwaukee phase of the Seminary there were so many emergencies in our congregations that students had to be released for longer periods of time to take care of them, and a number of students were even ordained into the ministry without having completed the full course, a fact that has already been alluded to. In the Wauwatosa phase this practice had practically died out, and it rarely happened that a student interrupted his studies for a year. The course was not arranged for that.

In 1924, several years before the removal to Thiensville, Professor Koehler was granted a year’s leave of absence from the Seminary to do research work in Germany for his proposed history of the Wisconsin Synod.

In the course of the years the size of the faculty was gradually increased until at the present time there are eight professors. Part of the later expansion was due to the division of classes. Formerly in some of the lecture courses two or three classes were combined. If for some reason a student dropped out for a year, he missed part of the theological pensum entirely. The present system makes possible a year of vicarage without loss in any subject.

It had never been the policy to have students spend a year as vicars, as was the practice in the Missouri Synod seminaries. In recent years, however, the increase of the number of professors and the consequent division of classes made it possible to send out students as vicars for a year. Now, however, vicarage of a year has been made obligatory unless valid reasons make it impracticable.

Still another change concerns the enrollment of married students. In the very early days there were indeed some married students, who had decided to prepare for the ministry later in life and were already married when they made the decision. It seems, however, that in almost every case they did not have their families with them but lived with the other students in the dormitory. (Fifty years ago even engagements of the students were forbidden by Seminary regulations.)

As an aftermath of the Second World War married students were again enrolled as exceptions to the general policy, but in the years since then the number of married students has increased considerably. It is realized that this constitutes a problem, and steps have been taken to cope with it. Married students live in their own apartments off the campus. This has taken the pressure off the dormitory facilities. If also all the married students lived in the dormitory, there would not be room to house them. Even as it is, the present and future enrollment has made it necessary to enlarge the dormitory.

In 1941 Professor John Meyer became the successor of Professor Pieper as the President of the Seminary. With advancing age he asked to be relieved of some of the administrative detail work, and the new office of Dean of the Seminary was created, with Professor E. Reim in charge. In 1953 Professor Meyer resigned as President, and Professor Reim was elected to succeed him. To complete the roster of Presidents it may be added here that Professor C. Lawrenz was made President in 1958 upon Professor Reim's withdrawal from the Synod and subsequent resignation from the faculty.

In 1957 it was decided to grant the B.D. degree to all students who complete the full Seminary course in an acceptable manner.

No major additions had been made to the Seminary building since its erection, though, of course, some renovations and minor improvements had to be made in the course of the years. In 1959, however, an addition was built to provide a more suitable president's office and to enlarge the faculty room.

For about the last twenty years our Synod has become seriously involved with The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod over issues concerning doctrine and practice. The Missouri Synod had, for instance, changed its traditional Scriptural position on Boy Scoutism; it began to make a distinction between joint prayer and prayer fellowship, and became more and more involved, officially and unofficially, in phases of joint worship and church work with Lutheran church bodies with who it was not in full doctrinal agreement.

Individual Seminary professors served on committees that dealt with the issues involved. One of these was the so-called Intersynodical Relations Committee, in which representatives of the four synods constituting the Synodical Conference regularly discussed the controversial issues. They also served on a number of temporary committees dealing with the existing problems between the Missouri Synod and our own. The Standing Union Committee of our Synod included all Seminary professors as well as the District Presidents. When a number of years ago the Synodical Conference resolved that committees from the four synods meet regularly to discuss the issues and to try to settle them, a sub-committee of our larger Union Committee was appointed to carry on the discussions for our Synod. On this sub-committee the Seminary faculty was largely represented. With the adoption of the revised constitution of our Synod a "Commission on Doctrinal Matters" consisting of ten members was created to function as the official body in all matters relating to church union. At the present time four Seminary professors are serving on this Commission. In addition the entire faculty is on the Advisory Committee on Doctrinal Matters. This will suffice to show that our Seminary professors have had a leading voice in dealing with the issues in the church union controversy with the Missouri Synod.



On several points the joint Synodical Conference Committee produced documents acceptable to all committee members, such as on the doctrine concerning the Scriptures and the doctrine concerning the Antichrist. The same may be said about the document on Justification, though the cessation of these committee meetings prevented the finalizing of this document. On other matters there was obvious disagreement, but also these were not carried to completion because it became evident that the root difference lay in the doctrine of Church Fellowship. Therefore it was resolved to concentrate on that.

It had always been the position of the Synodical Conference that not only pulpit and altar fellowship but also prayer fellowship should not be practiced between two church bodies still disagreed in doctrine. In 1944 the Missouri Synod resolved that meetings for doctrinal discussions could be opened with prayer even before doctrinal agreement had been achieved. When the Iowa and Ohio Synods proposed this as a condition for the resumption of doctrinal discussions shortly after the turn of the present century, the Missouri theologians as well as our Wisconsin fathers refused to accede to the request. There is a vast literature available in regard to this matter.

The Missouri Synod now reversed itself and took the position of its former opponents, though it set up at the time what it regarded as a number of safeguards. After this the discussions with the American Lutheran Church were regularly opened with prayer. In practice, however, the 1944 resolution had more far-reaching effects. It seemed to open the door to widespread prayer fellowship. Whenever Missouri men met with men of other Lutheran synods in seminars or other cooperative efforts, they thought nothing of opening the discussions with prayer. A rash of promiscuous joint prayer was the result.

These matters were now the main topic of discussion in the Synodical Conference joint committee meetings. The representatives of the other three Synodical Conference bodies presented papers on Church Fellowship, and these were thoroughly discussed over a period of several meetings. The Missouri Synod paper was long delayed for various reasons. When it was finally prepared and presented, it proved to be a mere restatement of the position the Missouri men had propounded and defended in the previous discussions. The Wisconsin Committee men found this position entirely contrary to the Scriptural teaching, and declared that an impasse had been reached. They so reported to their Synod. This led in 1961 to the suspension of church fellowship relations with the Missouri Synod.

A number of members of our own Synod felt that such a declaration should have been made long before and consequently resigned their membership in our own Synod. That directly affected our Seminary when Professor Reim in 1957 also severed his connection with the Wisconsin Synod and resigned from our Seminary faculty.

One of the problems at the Seminary has always been to have the students properly prepared for its courses. Those who obtained their full education at our synodical preparatory schools and at Northwestern College were generally qualified. But those who decided later in life to enter the ministry and had had part or all of their instruction in public high schools and colleges outside of our own circles were deficient, especially in languages. To correct this, Northwestern College years ago introduced a remedial course, in which such students had an opportunity to make up that deficiency. But it was found that there were applications from men for whom even this remedial course was not sufficient. Ways and means of accommodating such men have long been studied. In 1961 a seemingly satisfactory solution was found. Arrangements have been made with Bethany College of our sister synod at Mankato, Minnesota, where the course is more flexible, to prepare such special students for admission into our Seminary. Several enrolled in that course in the fall of 1962. Applicants must have the recommendation of a Committee on Special Admissions, which is made up of three Seminary professors. It is in the nature of an experiment, but it is hoped that it will eventually supply the church with more workers.

Seminary professors produce most theological books. In this field the professors of our Seminary have not been prolific. Their books have been few and far between. That is not due to the fact that they lacked the ability to write them but chiefly to a lack of a wide enough market to cover the cost of publication.

There have, however, been exceptions. Reference has already been made to Dr. Hoenecke's *Dogmatik*, which was published posthumously by his sons, Walter and Otto. This is one of the ablest works on that subject

produced in America. He had upon request published a book of sermons in German under the title: *Wenn ich nur dich habe*, as well as a series of Lenten sermons, which have been translated into English by the Rev. Werner Franzmann, bearing in German the title: *Ein Laemmlein geht und traegt die Schuld* and in the English translation the title *Glorified In His Passion*. These books are obtainable from our Northwestern Publishing House. In 1907 his son Otto prepared for publication some of Dr. Hoenecke's sermon outlines on the Gospels, Epistles, and free texts.

From the pen of Professor John Koehler we have his *Kirchengeschichte (Church History)* and his *Geschichte der Wisconsin-Synode (History of the Wisconsin Synod)*. He also produced a commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, which appeared in an English translation by Elmer Sauer in 1957.

Professor August Pieper published *Jesaias II*, a commentary on the second part of the book of the prophet Isaiah. This included the Hebrew text, the printing of which involved a difficult problem in typesetting, in which a number of Seminary students contributed their aid.

Professor Schaller already in his New Ulm days published an isagogical treatment of the entire Bible known as *Bibelkunde*, which was later translated into English under the name of *Book of Books*. During his days at our Seminary he published *Pastorale Praxis*, a book on pastoral theology. Finally he published also his *Christology*, the first book produced by one of our Seminary professors in the English language.

But if our Seminary professors have not been in the position to publish many theological books, they have been able for nearly sixty years to do much theological writing in the theological magazine which was called into being for that purpose: The *Quartalschrift*. The first number appeared in January 1904, and it has appeared every three months since.

The first issue contained theological articles by the three professors who constituted the faculty at that time, together with a foreword by Dr. Hoenecke, in which he set forth the purpose of the magazine. The first article was by Dr. Hoenecke on *Zum Wesen und Begriff der Theologie (Concerning the Essence and Concept of Theology)*. The second article was from the pen of Professor Koehler on *Die Analogie des Glaubens (The Analogy of Faith)*. Professor Pieper wrote the third on *Neuere Faelschungen des Schriftprinzips (Modern Corruptions of the Scripture Principle)*. All of these articles were continued in the next issue.

The *Quartalschrift* has since then carried many solid articles on timely theological subjects. For many years the articles appearing in it were almost exclusively from the pens of the members of our Seminary faculty. From these articles the reader could gain an insight into the theology for which our Seminary stood and which was taught in the classes. It serves largely as the same criterion today, though in late years there have been more contributions from writers outside of the Seminary faculty. Another valuable feature has been the historical notes in regard to developments in other Lutheran synods and the church at large as well as the book reviews published in it.

During much of its history the articles were almost exclusively in the German language, but with the transition of our Synod into English, articles in the English language began to appear and steadily increased in number until now for a number of years the English language has been used almost exclusively as the medium.

Even after all the articles were chiefly written in the English language, the original German name *Quartalschrift* was retained. In 1947 the sub-title "Theological Quarterly" was added. In 1960 finally the name *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* was officially adopted.

Another source of evaluating the Seminary faculty's theological thinking is found in the early catalogs. They not only gave information concerning the courses at the Seminary, the cost for the students and the like, but for many years included solid theological articles similar to those published in the *Quartalschrift*, which can still be read with profit. At least one of them has been reprinted in the *Quarterly* in English translation, and the faculty plans to translate and publish others of them.

Throughout most of its history the Seminary was known simply as "The Lutheran Theological Seminary," but in 1959 it became officially known as "Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary."

In late years the Seminary has also made its influence felt by holding Institutes for Pastors, usually during the summer vacation, at which various Seminary professors and an occasional outside professor or pastor lectured on timely theological topics.

In July 1960 a conclave of theologians was held at our Seminary. This included not only the doctrinal commissions of the four synods in the Synodical Conference and officials from the four bodies, but also theologians from overseas in fellowship with our Synod. The purpose was to discuss the problems agitating the Lutheran Church, with special emphasis on the Doctrine of the Church. A second conference of theologians was held in July 1962 with similar representatives except that the Missouri Synod had no official part in the discussions.

From almost the very beginning Seminary professors have been called upon to deliver the doctrinal essays at many of the synodical conventions. Since the size of the faculty has been increased and the Synod has been divided into districts, this is now the case more than ever. They have also in part made their influence felt beyond the confines of the Seminary by serving on the editorial boards of our synodical church papers and contributing regular articles.

We cannot close this history of our Seminary without making special mention of Professor John Meyer, who is still active on the faculty. Much of the history of our Seminary is inseparably interwoven with his teaching and influence. He has served the Seminary for more than 43 years, a longer period of continuous service than any other professor. Most of the pastors still active in our circles learned their theology at his feet. His teaching has for more than a generation had a greater impact than that of any other individual. Yes, his preparation of ministers goes back farther than his service at the Seminary; it goes back to his service at Northwestern College and Dr. Martin Luther College, where he was a professor for around twenty years and instructed future pastors in Latin and Greek in the pre-Seminary course.

Though he became 90 years of age early in 1963, he is still carrying a full teaching load. He is widely read in all the fields of theology, especially is he well versed in the teaching of Exegesis and Dogmatics.

He has brought a new approach to the teaching of Dogmatics. When he began his teaching career at the Seminary, the stress, as we have already heard, was on the exegetical-historical approach. The stress was on going back to and drawing directly from the Scriptures. When he was called to teach Dogmatics, he was mindful of that and has practiced it ever since.

A former student and present colleague at the Seminary described his method in the following words: "The Bible passages are studied in their context and then the dogmatical truths are drawn from these passages, the *sedes doctrinae*. As a secondary step, Professor Meyer then also adduces the quotations from the Lutheran dogmaticians, preferably from their original Latin, to show that the Lutheran dogmaticians stated the same thing in their own peculiar terminology. Hence he also acquaints the students with the terminology of the classical Lutheran theologians, the dogmaticians. In his teaching of Dogmatics Professor Meyer has tried to train his students to quarry the dogmatical truths of Scripture right out of the bedrock of Holy Writ. He has also felt that every generation must word these truths anew from Scriptures so that they may fit the particular problems and errors of our day"

Many years ago Professor Meyer was requested by synodical resolution to publish his Dogmatics in book form, but he has thus far declined on the grounds that this is not the time to publish a book on Dogmatics. However, his exegetical work on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, which has appeared in serial form in the *Quarterly*, will soon be placed on the market.

In conclusion, there is appended below a list of all the professors who have served our Seminary, together with their time of service:

E. Moldehnke, 1863–1866, in Watertown  
Adolf Hoenecke, 1866–1870 in Watertown; 1878–1908 in Milwaukee and Wauwatosa  
Eugene Notz, 1878–1902, in Milwaukee and Wauwatosa  
A.L. Graebner, 1878–1887, in Milwaukee  
G. Thiele, 1887–1900, in Milwaukee and Wauwatosa  
John Ph. Koehler, 1900–1929, in Wauwatosa and Mequon

August Pieper, 1902–1940, in Wauwatosa and Mequon  
John Schaller, 1908–1920, in Wauwatosa  
R. Adelberg, special instructor in English, 1896–1900, in Wauwatosa  
J. Jenny, special instructor in English, 1900, in Wauwatosa  
Hermann Meyer, 1915–1920, in Wauwatosa  
William Henkel, 1920–1929, in Wauwatosa  
John Meyer 1920– , in Wauwatosa and Mequon  
G. Ruediger, 1921–1924, in Wauwatosa  
Frederick Brenner, 1929–1940, in Mequon  
Max Lehninger, 1929–1952, in Mequon  
August F. Zich, 1931–1939  
Paul Peters, 1939–  
Adalbert Schaller, 1940–1952  
Edmund Reim, 1940–1957  
Carl Lawrenz, 1944–  
Hilton Oswald, part-time instructor in music, 1945–1961  
Frederic Blume, 1952  
Gerald Hoenecke, 1952  
Arthur P. Voss, 1954–1955  
Heinrich J. Vogel, 1956–  
Armin Schuetze, 1958–  
Martin Albrecht, 1962–