

# The Need of Christian Education by Means of Parochial Schools.

Being the abstract of a paper read before the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference by PROF. J. SCHALLER, of New Ulm, Minn., and thoroughly discussed by that representative body of Lutherans at their meeting of August, 1900, at Bay City, Mich.

The Synods composing the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America practically stand alone among Protestant churches on the question of the need of parochial schools. No other church body is as emphatic as they in declaring that state schools and Sunday schools are not sufficient for the education of Christian children; no other church body is as fully convinced as they are that we must have parochial schools for our children; no other church body has treated parochial schools as a matter of faith and conscience; no other church body has acted upon this conviction even approximately as much as they. It easily follows, that our reasons for this position are not generally known, and that we are frequently misunderstood when we disapprove of state schools, and urge the establishment of parochial schools in all our congregations. Hence it behooves us to make public declaration of the principles upon which we stand, in order that our concept of true Christian education may become more widely known and appreciated at something like its full value.

On the other hand, we are painfully aware of the fact that there are still among us quite a number of congregations and single members of congregations who fail to realize, in its full extent, the necessity of establishing and maintaining parochial schools. If this were not the case, there would be very few parochial schools without regular teachers, and considerably more energy and effort in establishing such schools would be observable. Thus the circumstances of our own household make it imperative that we should continue to set forth our convictions on this important question.

In the following pages we shall endeavor to show—

1. That Christian families, as a rule, are in urgent need of some institution by which the Christian education of their children becomes a matter of co-operation;
2. That, under the conditions prevailing in our country, the public school is utterly inadequate for the purpose, and that even the Sunday school and the confirmation classes are unable fully to meet all requirements;

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3. That, therefore, the Christian congregation, quite aside from its general duty of spreading the word of the Gospel, owes it as a debt of true charity to furnish opportunities for Christian education by establishing parochial schools;

4. That the future existence of our congregations will in great part depend on the prosperity of our parochial schools, because membership will increasingly come by internal growth, and because our colleges and seminaries must rely on Christian schools to furnish their pupils and students; and,

5. That patriotic duty requires the establishment and maintenance of parochial schools, because none but a Christian education is the true foundation for all civic and social virtues.

### I.

The Creator, having established the first family in the garden of Eden, declared its primal purpose to be the continuation of the human race by the procreation of children. This purpose obviously includes the duty of education, which is thus laid upon parents by force of a natural law. The deplorable fact that sin has entered into the world, far from removing that duty, serves to enhance it powerfully and gives it a new scope. Not education merely, but *Christian* education must be the aim of Christian parents who desire to do their full duty by their offspring. Original sin is an element of corruption in our children, and though we are convinced that they have been born again by virtue of the sacrament of Baptism, yet we know that regeneration does not include the total destruction of sin, but rather that the "old man," Eph. 4, 22, clings closely to the nature of our children as long as they remain in the flesh. Hence Christian education involves incessant warfare against the evil propensities which ever crop out in the hearts of our children, and never-ending diligence in protecting and strengthening the life of faith, together with its fruits. We repudiate utterly the educational systems of such Rationalists as *Jean Jacques Rousseau*, the *Philanthropists*, and those American educators who follow their lead, who start out from the false proposition, that a child is good by nature, and conclude that the real task of the educator consists in keeping away from the child that which is bad, and in developing rationally the good which is in him by nature. Any one who has recognized the utter corruption of human nature by the fall of Adam, will readily calculate the results which must necessarily follow an education based on the principle outlined above. "By their fruits ye shall know them!" No person can truly educate children, unless he proceed to the task with the well-defined intention of giving battle, with the weapon of God's Word, to the evil which is born in children. Considering that the innate evil must be fought against even for purposes of this bodily life, how should we hope to be spared the necessity of the fight when the things of the Spirit are at stake which the natural man receiveth not, and which are foolishness to him? 1 Cor. 2, 14. No Christian parent will seriously doubt that the education we owe our children is a *Christian* education.

That the task of providing such an education primarily devolves upon those to whom the children have been given; that children are entrusted to their parents as priceless treasures by God, whose gift they are; that the bodily, mental, and spiritual training of children is a sacred duty which fathers and mothers cannot, dare not evade: these propositions might well be regarded as self-evident truths. Addressing the Jews who were living as exiles in the land of their captivity, Jeremiah exhorts them to seek the peace of the city whither the Lord had caused them to be carried away, Jer. 29, 7, and the preceding verses show clearly that they were to do so chiefly by providing for their families, and by educating their children. His advice presupposes the universal duty of rearing children in such a way that they may become useful members of society. Yet this is not the only, not even the highest aim of education. It is of far greater importance that children should finally enter eternal life, and this blessed goal parents should never lose sight of in education. It is the will of the heavenly Father that not one of these little ones shall perish, Matt. 18, 14, but rather that they shall come unto the knowledge of the truth, 1 Tim. 2, 4. Being true vicars of God as regards the rearing of their children, parents are under moral obligation to take all care that their children may not perish, but come to a knowledge of that truth which alone can save them. Given a father, or a mother, who rejoices in the blessing of true faith in Christ and is firmly convinced that there is salvation in no other, neither is there any other name given unto men whereby they may be saved—given a *true Christian*, could we for a moment believe that he would permit his children to grow up without endeavoring, by all means in his power, to bring his child to enjoy the same God-given assurance? Will a *Christian* parent discover any more important work than to preach the Gospel of salvation to his children?

The Word of God clearly bears out our position as to the relative value and need of bodily and spiritual training. You will rarely discover, either in the Old or the New Testament, more than a passing remark, that parents ought to provide for the bodily requirements of their children; but wherever the education of children is touched upon you will find powerful admonitions to take care of children's souls. For proof, let one quotation suffice: "Ye fathers, bring your children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," Eph. 6, 4. It appears that God well knows how readily even Christian parents, owing to their sinful nature, will be so taken up with anxious care for the bodily welfare of their children that they are sadly inclined to neglect their precious souls.

In full agreement with the Word of God our Lutheran confessions have declared the Christian education of children to be the prime duty of parents. The *Greater Catechism* has it that, "if we wish to have good, useful men for both spiritual and secular government, we must truly spare neither diligence, trouble, nor expense to teach and educate our children so that they may serve both God and the world, and not merely be intent upon gathering money. For God can very well feed them and make them rich without our aid, as indeed He does every day. But He has given children and has entrusted them unto us, that we may raise and rule them accord-

ing to His will; He would have no need of father or mother for any other purpose. Therefore, let everyone know that it is his duty above everything else, if he desires not to lose the grace of God, to raise his children that they may fear and know God, and, if they are talented, to let them learn something and study, so that they may be employed wherever there is need."

In 1524, Luther sent forth a ringing call "to the councilmen of all cities of Germany, that they should establish and maintain Christian schools." He sets forth the reasons why Christian parents should not rest content if their children obtain worldly knowledge and training, but should consider religious instruction of paramount importance. In this connection he says: "The third reason, doubtless, is the highest, namely, the command of God who so often through Moses urges and demands that parents should teach their children; as also the 78th Psalm says, v. 4 f.: 'He commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children, and to teach their children's children.' This is also shown by the Fourth Commandment, in which He so strictly enjoins children to obey their parents, that disobedient children were even to be sentenced to death by a court of law, Deut. 21, 21. And what reason is there that we older people should live, if it were not for the purpose of guarding, teaching, and training the young folk? It is not possible that the giddy youngsters should teach and train themselves; therefore did God entrust them to us who are old and know by experience what is good for them, and He will most severely call us to account concerning them. Therefore also Moses commandeth and saith, Deut. 25, 7: 'Ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee.' . . . It is a sin and a shame, that we have come to such a pass, that we must even urge, and must urge ourselves, to train our children and young folk, and to seek their best, when our very nature should urge us to do so, and even the manifold examples of the heathens teach us. There is no soulless animal but takes care of its young and teaches them what is due them. . . . What if we had and were doing all else, and were perfect saints, but would fail to do that for which we chiefly live, namely, to take care of the young folk? Moreover, I truly believe that out of all outward sins not one will weigh so heavily upon the world before God, and call for more terrible punishment, than this very sin which we commit against the children by not educating them."

The foremost educator of the seventeenth century, Amos Comenius, a truly pious man, not only urged the necessity of thorough education, but also based his admonition upon religious considerations. In his greatest book, the *Didactica Magna*, he writes as follows: "The Holy Scriptures teach us above all, that there is not under the heavens a more effective means of bettering the state of human corruption than the right way of educating young people. Solomon, having traced all the mazes of human error, and having deplored the fact that all this mischief cannot be undone, nor the defects enumerated, suddenly addresses the young people and exhorts them to remember their Creator in the days of their youth, to fear Him, and to keep His commandments, this being the whole duty of man, Eccles. 12, 1. 13. And in another place he says: 'Train up

a child in the way that he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it,' Prov. 22, 6. Hence David says: 'Come, ye children, hearken unto me, I will teach you the fear of the Lord,' Ps. 34, 11. But also the heavenly David, the true Solomon, the eternal Son of God, sent from heaven to renew our estate, has indicated the same way with outstretched arms, as it were, saying: 'Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God,' Mark 10, 14. To the others, however, He said: 'Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven,' Matt. 18, 3."

This duty which parents have as regards their children, is at the same time a lofty privilege which no one may either take from them or curtail. In modern times, the State frequently claims the education of children as one of its prerogatives. The idea is not new. Centuries ago, when the Spartans aspired to the leadership of ancient Greece, they established the rule, that at the age of seven years boys should be taken from their parents, and should be educated in state schools at state expense. Though there is no tendency, at present, to push the matter to the same extreme, yet it practically amounts to the same thing to establish and defend the position that children are the property of the state, and that, therefore, the state has the first duty to teach and train children: The principle underlying this position is decidedly false, an overpassing of the bounds which limit state power.

Again, when a Christian congregation has established a parochial school, this must not be taken as an indication that parents are thereby relieved from their duty toward their children. Parents must not even be deprived of the right to decide whether they will, or will not, make use of the advantages offered by such a school, although in most cases it will be easy to convince a Christian parent that the parochial school is the only right place for the education of his child.

But as no one may relieve parents of the duty of furnishing their children a Christian education, so they must not endeavor to saddle this burden upon someone else. They may, indeed, make use of every good opportunity which offers them assistance in the task, but the responsibility for their children remains with them first, last, and always, even though other persons are lending them a helping hand. It cannot be emphasized too decidedly and too insistently, that parents may not, and ought not, try to evade their duty.

This statement is not in contradiction to that other position which we hold, that the ministry of the Gospel as instituted by Christ carries with it the obligation of looking after the spiritual welfare of children, including their Christian education and training. Parents are under obligation to educate their own children. As soon as a congregation has been established, all children within it are placed under the spiritual care of the pastor; for not only did Christ command Peter to feed the lambs as well as the sheep, John 21, 15, 16, but He also commands His church to teach all those who are baptized to observe all things whatsoever He hath commanded His disciples, Matt. 28, 20. Hence the person who fills the office of minister to the congregation may not shirk the task of gathering

the little children about him and teaching them the Word of God in such a manner as may be suitable to their understanding. But even when the pastor, or a special school-teacher employed by the congregation, conscientiously does his special errand in regard to the children, the duty of parents is not less imperative. Under all circumstances will it remain a divine injunction that *fathers must bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, Eph. 6, 4.

The truth of the foregoing argument being admitted, we are at once confronted by the fact that the Christian home cannot accomplish this sacred task unaided. There were times, in the long ago, when family instruction was amply sufficient for purposes of education. We may well assume that schools in the modern sense of the word were not needed in the days before the Great Flood. The hoary, venerable patriarchs whose lifetime extended over the greater portion of ten centuries were surely the most apt as well as the most experienced instructors of their children, and their children's children, through many generations. Among the later patriarchs, Abraham is expressly described as the educator of his children: "I know that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord; to do justice and judgment," Gen. 18, 19. Jacob "erected an altar, and called upon the name of the strong God of Israel," Gen. 33, 20, teaching his children to know this name, and to adore it. It appears that this manner of educating children was to be the rule among the chosen people of Jehovah. Moses enjoined all Israelites to teach the words of God diligently to their children, to talk of them when they sat in their houses, and when they walked by the way, when they lay down, and when they rose up, Deut. 6, 7, 20—25. These instructions were obeyed among the children of Israel, as may be collected from Deut. 32, 7, and Ps. 78, 1—5. The Book of Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, both from the fertile pen of Solomon, are addressed to young people and seem to have been intended for use in the home. Parental instruction must have been continued through all the centuries of the life of the Jewish nation, since we hear from Paul that his pupil Timothy had known the Scriptures from a child, having been taught by his grandmother and his mother, 2 Tim. 1, 5; 3, 15.

As the centuries rolled by, the simple conditions of life which then prevailed, have gradually given place to very complex relations, which preclude the possibility of parents fully educating their children in the home alone. So manifold, as a rule, are the demands of daily life upon both parents that they lack even the strength and the time for the great task of education. Furthermore, though we are proud of the fact that education has gradually been extended through all classes of our people, yet it would be difficult to find many families in which the task of instructing and training children could be performed efficiently by the parents alone. Though it be true that God will not impose a task without also furnishing the needful skill to perform it, yet we must not extend this truth beyond reasonable bounds. In most cases, the God-given common sense of parents will lead them to see that they cannot accomplish the education of their children without aid from outside

of the family. This truth is all the more evident if we consider that education, in order to satisfy all demands, cannot be accomplished except by steady, unremitting influence extending over many years.

Admitting the urgent need of the Christian family to find assistance in the education of children, we might consider the practicability of engaging private teachers for the house. It is not impossible to find persons who are both capable and willing to engage in the work of educating the children of one family in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and their services would doubtless prove to be effective for the desired purpose. And yet, quite aside from other considerations, how many families would be found able to afford the expense of a private teacher? Since help must be found, there remains but one way out of the difficulty: *The Christian education of children must needs be made a co-operative undertaking in which many families unite for this one special purpose.*

In this respect, conditions have not changed in the least since Luther's days. We quote once more from his address to the councilmen of German cities: "There are manifold reasons why parents do not educate their children in a Christian way: *First*, some are not pious and upright enough to do it though they might; but like the ostrich, they harden themselves toward their young ones and rest content with having brought forth their children; they will do no more. Now, these same children are to live among us, and with us, in one commonwealth. Hence neither reason nor Christian charity should be willing to let them grow up untrained, to be a poison and infection for the other children, so that finally the whole city would be corrupted, even as it happened at Sodom, Gomorrhah, Gaba, and in several other cities. *Second*, the greatest number of parents are sadly unfit for this work and do not know how children should be trained and taught; for they themselves have learned nothing more than to take care of their bodies, and those who are to teach and train children in the right way must be able men. *Third*, though parents were sufficiently skillful and were willing to do it themselves, they find neither time nor opportunity by reason of other occupations and the demands of the household. Thus arises the universal necessity of having common educators for the children, unless every family were willing to have a special teacher for its own purposes. This, however, would be too onerous for common people, and many a promising boy would be neglected by reason of poverty. *Moreover*, many parents die, leaving orphans behind them; and if experience were not enough to show us how they are taken care of by guardians, we might learn it from the fact that God calls Himself, Ps. 68, 6, the Father of the fatherless, they being forsaken by everyone."

## II.

Since our social and civil conditions are such that the family cannot accomplish the education of children according to all requirements, we are constrained to examine those institutions which have already been established for the joint education of children. Our attention is at once called to the *public school*; but the members of churches will also point to their *Sunday schools* and to their con-

*firmation classes* as important factors in the great work of education. Let us try to discover how much, or how little, these several institutions answer the purposes of *Christian* education.

The public schools of our country differ widely in character from the state school which is the pride of Germany, the cradle of the Reformation. Religious considerations gave rise to the establishment of common schools for all the people in the days of Luther and his immediate successors, and the schools of Germany have ever continued to be conducted under the effects of that first impulse. They are religious schools. The best period of each school-day is reserved for religious instruction; religious thought is supposed to influence the choice of material in other branches of school work, and to dominate all ethical instruction as long as the child remains at school. Thus the German state has accepted religious instruction as a part of its duty toward the children of its citizens. Conservative in everything, the German people retain to this day that form of school management which Luther first suggested as a makeshift demanded by the pressing need of the times. What is really a most undesirable encroachment of the state upon the rights and duties of the church and the family, has come to be considered quite the best arrangement in the old Fatherland.

In our own country, the state school has of necessity developed in an entirely different direction. Our public schools are, and ought to be, non-religious. It is a fundamental principle of our civil law that church and state must be kept entirely distinct, that an encroachment of one upon the functions of the other must be carefully avoided. The state must not require a certain religious profession on the part of its citizens; it must not interfere in any way with freedom of conscience. It follows as a natural consequence that the state may not undertake the religious training of children, for this is as much a matter of conscience with parents as the establishment of any certain form of religious worship. Moreover, if the public school is to be a real common school, acceptable to all the people, religious instruction in any definite form—call it denominational, if you will—may not be introduced, because then it would be impossible for families entertaining different religious views to use the school for their children. Given the principle of religious freedom, it will follow as a matter of necessity that the public school must be non-religious.

To define the status of the public school over against the needs of the Christian family, we call attention to three important facts which appear to us to be decisive.

1. *Religion as a branch of instruction is excluded from the public school on principle.*

Here and there the attempt has been made to introduce at least the reading of the Bible as a regular feature of school work. But as often as educators and officers of the state school discuss this question seriously and without passion, they finally arrive at the conclusion, that the reading of the Bible may be admitted on account of the unquestionable literary, historical, and moral value of the divine Book, but that every use of the Bible must at once be discontinued as soon as protested against, because—the Bible is a re-

ligious book. *The Bible, therefore, is excluded from the public school on principle*; the nature of the school does not even admit of the concession, that a portion of the holy Book be read now and then for purposes of instruction. The matter is well put in an editorial of the *School Journal* of January 27, 1900: "The school is the gathering ground for children of every form of religious belief, and it is absolutely necessary that whatever offends citizens should be omitted. If the people want reading of the Bible, well and good; let that be done without comment. If, however, there are objections, let even this go. It is the business of the parents and the churches to look after the children's religious instruction. The common school must really be the *common* school." In an official circular, embodied in the Report of the United States Commissioner of Education for 1889—90, the former state school superintendent Kiehle of Minnesota says: "The Bible is a religious book, and as such it has no place in the public schools to promulgate religious doctrines; but having merit of great historical, moral, and literary value, it may be used for those qualities. If, however, to any class of persons this is obnoxious, the board should require the discontinuance of its use." (Report, p. 1158.) From this we are surely permitted to conclude that religious instruction can never be thought of in our public schools. Without the use of the Bible, religion of any kind would be a delusion.

2. *The public school lacks the one instrument by which real education can be accomplished.*

This follows from the preceding demonstration. "Fear and admonition of the Lord," the basis of all true educative influence, cannot prevail except where the Word of God is the dominant and acknowledged authority. But the public school closes its doors to the Word of God; on its part, it knows not of the "fear and admonition of the Lord." Some public school-teachers here and there may exercise a Christian influence over their pupils, because they themselves are Christians; but they are the exceptions which prove the rule, and as far as their influence is really educative, they are working entirely outside of their proper sphere as teachers of the state school. If any citizen object to such influence on the part of the teacher, the teacher must cease trying to Christianize his, or her, pupils. Yet it is admitted on all sides, that neither knowledge nor skill is education in the true and full sense of the word without religiousness. Religion will form and beautify the character, while all other branches of instruction appeal mainly to the intellect. Lacking this one instrument of education, the public school never educates in the real sense of the word. The results of our public school education are before everybody's eyes; they are terrifying to every impartial observer. The question, Does the public school educate—improve—lift up the masses? has been answered in the negative by every investigator whose views are entitled to any respect.

That this statement may not appear to be without proof we shall quote several educators who are quite above the suspicion of pandering to the demands of any church or denomination. Thoughtful men who still consider the public school the pillar of safety of our

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Union, are compelled to admit that all results of the system have been negative, as far as true education is concerned. Hence you will hear them advancing some scheme or the other to get some religion, if ever so little, into the state school. They point to the fact, that religious differences are gradually being eliminated; that denominational boundary lines are kept up with increasing difficulty; that sectarian dislike is giving place to what they are pleased to call "a spirit of universal brotherhood." From these observations they conclude that, while religion will remain, special denominations and creeds will gradually disappear, and they hope that even now the time is at hand for agreeing what parts of any religion, and how much of them, may be taught in the public schools. Whoever takes up this line of argument as his own betrays his utter failure to grasp the meaning of the word religion; he discloses in his own person a fair specimen of what public school education amounts to. That precisely must be the result of non-religious education: to remodel the very idea of religion. There is no Christian religion without distinct confession; he who cannot confess his belief may certainly be held to be without belief. He who is willing to adapt his faith to the faith of others—has no faith, for faith is conviction of truth. But of course, there is no need for special confession of faith for him who considers religion to be merely a general system of morality. And morals alone, not a religion of definite kind, not the Christian religion, is intended whenever you hear public school educators demanding religious instruction for the public school. Observing that the education of American youth is woefully deficient, they advance morality as the cure.

Says Mr. Kiehle: "It may be said in reply to those who deny the competency of the state to instruct and train its youth in morals, that the source, authority, or basis of any law or truth necessary to the welfare of the state is not a question in which the state is interested, or one to be settled, before the state can appropriate it to its own use. Neither is the state bound to deny itself the advantage of systems of truth, simply because there remain questions upon which scholars differ. . . . This principle applies with equal reason to morals. Without considering the question of the basis of moral obligation, or who are its authoritative exponents, it may be assumed that, whatever the source, the world is in possession of a large body of morals, the reasonableness and authority of which are beyond question, and these truths, as the common property of our civilization, the state may wisely incorporate in its system of instruction and practice. The basis of all effectual teaching in morals must be in training, as distinguished from moral instruction. Hence the virtues of courtesy, self-denial, and the like must first be made known to the child by example, and be developed in his character through those activities that belong to the social relations of child life, children with children and their elders. That this is by far the most important part of the teacher's work, and without which the memorizing of precepts will be of little amount, will not be questioned. But following and based upon this, these experiences should be formulated into those principles and precepts which will have an ever enlarging application as the child's relations and responsibili-

ties become more extended." (Report U. S. Commiss. of Ed. for 1890—91, p. 1052 f.)

This quotation shows the futility of the argument it contains. It is suggested that the state enrich its system of teaching and education by adding "morals" to the branches already taught. Only such moral truths are to be inculcated the reasonableness and authority of which are beyond dispute. The state is to declare that murder, theft, and adultery are sins, and that courtesy, self-denial, and charity are virtues. The children are to be educated to eschew the former, to practice the latter. But this is neither religion nor morals. Morality requires the authority of God to be ultimately binding; morality also has ever been, and ever will be, the offspring of religion. In the field of ethics, the state is powerless to decree, or abrogate, a truth.

This is clearly seen by other educators who demand more and better things for the public school. We quote former state school superintendent Finger of North Carolina: "Besides practical intellectual training, we insist upon moral and religious development. Of course we cannot give religious instruction except in a general way, all denominational or sectarian teaching being excluded. But there is a common and indisputed ground for all to stand upon. No person rises to the full stature of manhood until he chooses to model his life according to the eternal principles of right, and this is only tantamount to saying, until he chooses to please God. Love and fear of Him must be made to result in reverence for Him and in obedience to His will. . . . All obedience in the family, the school, or the state should be insisted upon because such obedience is in accordance with the fundamental principles of right. I do not mean to discuss the foundation of obligation—whether a given course of conduct is right because it results in good, or whether it is right because it is commanded by the great Creator of all things. The Ten Commandments embody great principles, obedience to which results in good to those who obey and to all men, and at the same time they have the divine approval." (Report U. S. Commiss. of Ed. 1886—87, p. 201.)

It may seem to be a good idea to many parents that their children are to be taught obedience to the great fundamental laws laid down in the Ten Commandments, and that they are to be told that they must submit their own will in fear and love to the will of the Creator. But will any one dare to say that this is the essence of *Christian* religion? Where is the place of Christ in this scheme of instruction? It is not one step in advance of almost any heathen religion of the more elaborate class. The Ten Commandments are law; used as an educative principle, they can produce nothing better than slavish subjection. The Gospel of Christ alone will produce fear, love, and reverence of God, and obedience to His commandments. The Law without the Gospel is not the life-giving Word of God, especially if it is not even taught as being an expression of the holy and just will of God. We prefer the view-point of Luther who says: "Where the Holy Scriptures do not rule, there I truly advise no one to put his child."

3. *The public school cannot direct and lead its pupils toward the end of all true education, which is salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.*

In all human undertakings the aim not only dictates the means employed, but also gives character to the entire action. Education is no exception to this rule. The aim of any Christian school will be salvation through Christ; in it, the teacher's duty will be to employ all those means of education which will lead his pupils to a knowledge of Christ. The public school, being non-religious, knows nothing of salvation through Christ; hence its aim cannot be to make its pupils true Christians. Representative educators of the public school know of no higher aim of common school education than to make their pupils good citizens of the state; in most cases, the only aim of the teacher will be to furnish his pupils with the knowledge necessary for—making money. The almighty dollar is as much the god of our public schools as it is of the grain and stock exchanges. The schools of the ancient Roman republic had as high an aim of education as our modern American public school, and for the same reason: the religion of Jesus Christ was an unknown quantity in them.

But if a school on principle denies Christian religion a place in its plan of study; if it knows nothing of the Word of God as the only true instrument of education; if its aim falls below the aim of Christian religion—there is sure to be one more objection against it from the standpoint of the Christian family. In preserving a deep and lasting silence concerning the Word of God and the salvation of Christ, the public school bears witness against Christ and against the Word of God. Or do you think that a child whose teachers year by year do not, and may not, tell him a word of Christ, will appreciate the importance of the Savior's work? He will rather arrive at the conclusion, that the knowledge taught in the public school is the highest attainable; for does he not hear the praises of the public school continually sounded in his ears? Christ *must* become to him a person of minor importance; the things of this life will seem to him the one thing needful.

This is not theory; there is abundant proof at hand everywhere that these conditions result from public school education almost as a matter of necessity. But if the silence of the public school concerning Christ may become, and has often become, a serious menace to the spiritual life of a Christian child, how will you expect a child to be protected against modern disbelief and agnosticism which holds almost complete sway in our public schools? The modern text-book and reader is to show the result of modern science; as a consequence, you will easily discover Darwinism, pantheism, and materialism broadly set forth to be consumed by the child. Watch the work of the public school teachers when they assemble in convention; you will hardly read a single report which does not proclaim some alleged scientific truth which is in direct contradiction to the Word of God. The teacher is expected to teach the so-called achievements of modern science, and there is no reason to suppose that he does otherwise. Even those branches which might serve to demonstrate the wisdom, goodness, and glory of the Creator, such

as history and geography, must needs serve the purpose of aggrandizing human prowess, if they are not made directly subservient to teach unbelief.

Considering all these points which we have urged, it plainly behooves a Christian parent to make very sure whether he ought to send his children to a public school. He must remember that the public school will never help them to become true Christians. Let him see clearly that to put them into the public school will seriously endanger their spiritual life and eternal welfare. So great is this danger that Christian parents cannot be too earnestly warned not to expose their children to it carelessly or recklessly. If they must absolutely use these schools, let them be sure to warn their children directly against the dangers which threaten them there; let them not forget to offer the two last petitions of the Lord's Prayer in earnest supplication for their children. They must not rest content with having warned their children; they must not feel secure in the fact that the children have been taught Christian faith and Christian life. Any new thought which is offered to the youthful mind is readily accepted, and if it is an untruth, if it is a soul-endangering error, it will the more readily find fruitful soil in the human heart. But put the question in this form: Can the public school furnish what the Christian family must require of an educational institution? And the answer will be: Most decidedly not! The public school does not meet the requirements of Christian education; generally speaking, it is diametrically opposed to it.

We are next to discuss the educative value of two educational institutions established by the church. The Sunday school and the confirmation classes offer an opportunity to learn the Word of God; in fact, religion is their proper and only sphere of instruction. Looking at them in this light alone, we will readily admit that they are vastly superior to the public school as educative forces. But we are now particularly interested in the question whether these institutions are quite sufficient to fill the demand of the Christian home for Christian education.

The Sunday school may properly stand first in this discussion because it is an almost universal adjunct to Protestant churches in America. We are not discussing the value of an arrangement which has been found necessary on many of our missionary stations in sparsely settled districts of the far West, where children, for want of better opportunities, are gathered together on Sunday to receive some rudimentary instruction in German, Bible History, and the Catechism. Our subject is the Sunday school in the common meaning of the term, established in a self-supporting congregation, where the children of the congregation, and as many more as can be induced to attend, are instructed in religion by the pastor and several assistants. As a rule, the Sunday school presents quite a series of very weak points: The teachers are usually recruited from among the lay members of the congregation, and as the older, more experienced members generally refuse to do the work, it must be done by young people, chiefly by young girls. Such teachers are

entirely too immature for the high purposes to be attained. It is vain to expect good, thorough instruction in matters pertaining to the Word of God from persons whose knowledge of Scripture is at best imperfect, if not faulty. This serious drawback has led to the custom that the pastor discusses the Sunday school lesson with the teachers some time during the week and thus secures some uniformity of thought. There are also a number of periodicals devoted to this preparatory work and intended for private study by the teachers. In this way, the results of Sunday school teaching are no doubt considerably enhanced; but these very devices demonstrate that the Sunday school teachers, as a rule, cannot be trusted to do their work unassisted.

To this lack of Christian and biblical knowledge must be added lack of experience in teaching, and lack of teaching ability. Of the work of teaching *Luther* says that "it requires peculiar, good persons who understand teaching; they are select people." This deficiency is all the more disastrous, since the Sunday school requires a very great amount of instruction to be accomplished in very brief time. It certainly would task the skill of the most accomplished and thorough teacher to realize in the half hour of Sunday school instruction what ordinarily cannot be attained except by daily instruction and continual practice.

The third defect is the lack of a good plan and system of instruction. As a rule, Sunday school teachers will discuss and explain portions of the Bible according to some selection. In a Lutheran Sunday school, the Catechism would come in for a share of the time, and its text would be thoroughly memorized, though there would hardly be time for any kind of instructive explanation. But no Sunday school will find time to combine educative results, to demonstrate the cohesion of the different members of doctrine, and to thoroughly practice that which has been studied.

But even if in any way these defects of the Sunday school could be removed, it would still remain true that even an ideal Sunday school would never offer those opportunities which a Christian father must furnish his children. We cheerfully admit that the power of the Word of God as taught in the Sunday school may have such an influence over a child as to make it a Christian, and to lay the foundation for wider knowledge to be acquired later on. Nor do we deny that Sunday school work has, here and there, been visibly crowned with good success. But it is not now the question what the Holy Ghost may accomplish by the power of the Word; we are taking counsel at present as to what *we* can, and should do for the Christian education of our children, and we find the Sunday school to be wanting. Parents who are ready to rest content with Sunday school education, either by reason of carelessness or from other causes, must not try to justify their course by showing that in some instances the Sunday school has brought forth good results.

There can be no doubt as to the fact that one hour a week of religious instruction is not sufficient to "raise children in the fear and admonition of the Lord," as parents are enjoined to do. Set yourself the task to straighten a small tree which has begun to bend and lean over, and you will not expect any appreciable results from

tying the tree to a post for one hour each week; you will keep the tree tied to the post for weeks, perhaps for years at a time. If you would suggest to a father that his children would receive their full share of business knowledge by having a single lesson in arithmetic each week, he would surely become angry at what he might consider a reflection upon his intellectual capacity. But a hundred thousand fathers, Christians so-called, are willing to let it go at one hour of religious instruction a week. In God's affairs, the smallest contribution, the smallest effort, the smallest sacrifice is deemed amply sufficient.

In this we see an evidence of Calvinistic tendency which holds in low esteem the Word of God as presented to our hearing, and consequently considers thorough, continuous instruction in religious truth a superfluous effort. "The Spirit," they say, "the inner light works conversion." Hence all Reformed denominations consider the Sunday school amply sufficient for the religious instruction of children. A Lutheran is, or should be, of a different cast. He knows quite well that his child will not be converted by merely memorizing the Catechism, Bible texts, and hymns; but he is also convinced that the Word of God is the only means by which the Holy Ghost will do His gracious work. Basing on this conviction, he demands thorough religious instruction for his child, and will not be satisfied except with the greatest amount attainable.

The objection might here be raised that, though the Sunday school in itself is not sufficient, its work will be aided and perfected by the religious instruction obtainable in the family. Yet this point is not well taken as to actual facts. It is notorious that parents who are well content with Sunday school alone, will not supplement its work during the week by a diligent use of the Word of God at home. How should they, being graduates of the Sunday school, find it necessary to do more for their children than they themselves received? Moreover, the pupils of the Sunday school attend non-religious state schools during the week; what if the influence of Sunday school should happen to be counteracted by the influence of the day school, as it most certainly will?

To summarize: If the members of a Christian congregation permit the Sunday school entirely to supplant the Christian day school, they will surely fail to carry out the admonition to "let the Word of Christ dwell among them"—among children as much as among adults—"richly in all wisdom," Col. 3, 16. Such a congregation will not answer the description of the church at Corinth, "That in everything they are enriched, in all utterance, and in all knowledge, so that they come behind in no gift," 1 Cor. 1, 5, 7.

This fact is well sustained by the doleful complaints which have quite lately been uttered in those sections of the Protestant church where the Sunday school is the only means of religious education for young people. Gross ignorance of matters divine is the rule, and not the exception, among those denominations. In 1897, the *Presbyterian*, an influential church paper, told of a contest arranged in a Presbyterian Sunday school at Los Angeles, Cal. The school at that time consisted of 280 members, counting teachers and pupils, and a prize was offered to any one who would be able to recite the



Ten Commandments without further preparation, and without error. Only four members of the school made the attempt; none of them gained the prize. In its issue of December 16, 1899, the *Churchman*, a paper of the Episcopalians, offered the following bit of news: In the question box of Harvard University a student one day deposited the query: "Where can I find something about Samson?" The reply was: "In the Book of Judges." On the following day, the first question was supplemented by the anxious inquiry: "But where will I find the Book of Judges?" The inquirer had to be told that it is a part of the Bible. In a certain college for girls, a pupil proposed the puzzling question: "What are the Ten Commandments which I find mentioned so often in Chaucer?" Some time ago, many papers published the results of certain tests made by Dr. C. F. Thwing, president of the Western Reserve University of Chicago. The test questions were submitted to 85 students, male and female, all coming from families who were connected with churches of various Christian denominations. A fourth part of all these young people knew nothing of the crown of thorns, and the manna; thirty were unable to place the striking of the rock, the angel who wrestled with Jacob, and Jacob's ladder; about forty could not remember the story of Esau, of Ruth, of Cain's mark, of the angel in the empty sepulcher. Strange to say, all the girls excepting three knew of Lot's wife, and all but ten knew of the serpent, while 22 of the 34 young men could remember neither. Hezekiah's shadow proved an insoluble problem to 75 of the 85 students, Jonah's gourd silenced 65, Joshua's moon and Peter's sheet were each too much for 60 of the number.

Though we may readily admit that it would be unfair to deduct a truth derogatory to all Sunday schools from this truly astounding ignorance of Bible history which is the principal subject of teaching in Sunday schools, yet nobody will successfully deny that these examples show the Sunday school to be entirely inadequate for securing Christian education. This is decisive as to the value of the Sunday school in our country where there is such extreme danger of being led into religious error. We need Christians who are firmly grounded and well fortified in religious knowledge, who know the truth and are able to distinguish it from religious falsehood—and the Sunday school will not, cannot furnish them.

In some of our congregations, even in some of the oldest, Sunday schools have been established side by side with the parochial day school. How are we to regard this arrangement? Ought the necessity of a Sunday school be conceivable even where the day school flourishes? Ought we not simply direct the children to go to the parochial school? Do we not, in establishing Sunday schools, seem to admit the idea that their meager instruction is sufficient? Our previous demonstration has shown that we would never be ready to make the admission indicated in the last question. That, however, does not imply the impossibility of doing a simple service in cases of necessity. If you are unable to satisfy the hunger of a beggar, you should not send him away from your door, but give him what little you can give, and ask God to let it be blessed unto him. In times of scarcity, poverty-stricken parents who feed their

children scantily with crumbs and crusts of bread will not be harshly judged; we would rather approve their manner of sharing meager sustenance with their offspring. Applying the simile, we would say: If a congregation is so small, scattered, and poor, and so far away from other congregations of their faith that they cannot establish a day school, they ought not be condemned for beginning a Sunday school, choosing a teacher, the best man they can find, from among their own number. But it is a different matter if parents who live in affluence would feed their children with the food of scarcity. They would justly be called heartless and tyrannous, and could not justify their acts by referring to our opinion concerning poor parents who can barely keep their children alive in times of scarcity. Again applying the simile: If parents think that they are doing their full duty by their children in sending them to a Sunday school while a Christian parochial school offers opportunity to feed them richly and daily at the plenteous board of their God—such parents choose hunger and want for their children and will bear, together with their poor children, the curse of their evil deeds. For education by the Sunday school will always remain the treatment of a child in times of scarcity. Yet there are great numbers of parents who have no spiritual compassion for their poor children. If they permit us to give their children a fragment of the Bread of Life once a week, we must not refuse to give on Sunday what they refuse to accept during the week; we must even on Sunday distribute from our rich stores. Then we will pray that God may bless the gift an hundredfold, and we will keep our eyes open during the week lest some wicked hand take from the children what they have received, hoping for an increase of their spiritual life even from so small a measure of spiritual nourishment. But we carefully guard against the thought that whatever is enough for such spiritual mendicants, is also enough for our own children.

Another consideration may prompt a congregation to establish a Sunday school by the side of the Christian day school. To continue our simile of before: There are low-grade soup houses, unclean places, where an unhealthy atmosphere prevails, where poisonous food is dealt out; should not parents guard their children against the danger of entering such places? And to make the application: In many localities, there is serious danger that our children may be induced to visit the Sunday school of one, or even of several, sects where religious falsehoods are spread before them. Should we blame a Christian congregation if, in order to protect their children and to keep them, they open a Sunday school beside their own day school? Circumstances vary at different places, and may quickly change in any locality. The result of many observations may be summarized thus: In some places where our congregations opened Sunday schools beside their day schools, great disappointment and sad discomfiture was the outcome; in other localities, however, the Lutheran Sunday school has proved to be a valuable missionary institution. But let us never forget that even the most gratifying results in this direction will never make the Sunday school a *sufficient* means for the Christian education of youth. *Luther* not only says: "Where the Holy Scriptures do not

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rule, there I truly advise *no* one to put his child," but he also adds: "Whatever does not deal with the Word of God *continuously*, must go to ruin."

Most of the arguments urged against the sufficiency of the Sunday school for religious education will also show the insufficiency of that instruction which is given in our *confirmation classes*. Many parents, particularly in the country districts, find full consolation in the thought that their children will have the best kind of religious instruction while the pastor is preparing them for the solemn rite of confirmation; hence they do not feel uneasy if their children grow up in complete ignorance of religious matters until they reach their twelfth or thirteenth year. There can be no doubt that the instruction given in the confirmation classes is far more efficient than any that can be given in the best Sunday school. It is intended to be the crowning work of long-continued, thorough religious instruction in the day school. Profound knowledge of religious truth, true faith based on firm conviction, burning zeal for God's work may be taken for granted as characteristics of those who teach catechumens. Close observation will show that pastors exhibit particular ardor in beginning and carrying to a successful end this difficult and arduous labor. Moreover, a pastor must be skilled in teaching; he will be quite able, therefore, to attain the purpose of instruction. But mark well, it is not the purpose of instruction in the confirmation classes to teach children the A B C of religious knowledge. And then, look at confirmation classes as they actually are in most cases. Children will be sent for instruction though they have but the scantiest knowledge of religion, if any at all; many members of the class may not even be able to speak and read the language in which instruction is given. It is deplorable, but is it astonishing that all efforts of the pastor to obtain fair results go for nothing? Though a number of the catechumens may come from the parochial school, yet the pastor will inevitably fail to get the class beyond the rudiments of knowledge; he will never be gratified with the conviction that his class comes to the altar with fair knowledge and deep understanding of Christian doctrine. No father would ever be foolish enough to think that his son might become proficient as a blacksmith, a tinner, or a carpenter, in an apprenticeship of six months, working an hour, or three half-hours every day; yet there are many parents who seem to believe that such a period of instruction is quite ample for attaining that highest knowledge which is of everlasting importance. They do not think over it. They follow the bent of their old nature, which sees little necessity for spiritual instruction. Lead a parent to see this matter in the true light, and you will force conviction upon him. He will recognize the inexcusable neglect of which he becomes guilty by permitting his child to go without thorough religious instruction until it is old enough to enter the confirmation class. He will never thereafter feel content with the six months' instruction afforded his child by this institution of the church.

Our church loses a great number of catechumens every year shortly after confirmation. But how could it be otherwise? The pastor did his duty by them conscientiously; he sowed the good

seed of the Word most diligently; as far as he could judge, every one of his class pronounced the sacred promise at the altar with full conviction and holy joyfulness. But even while he speaks to them for the last time before taking their pledge, his thoughts will turn back to those who formerly were confirmed in the same place, and he will be constrained to plead with the young Christians before him to beware of falling from grace, to remain steadfast in faith. Yet he sees many reasons why his saddest fears should be realized. As the young people pass from out his hands they enter upon the most dangerous portion of their lives. From that day they will leave the shelter of their home and will be exposed, more than they ever were, to the temptations of the world. Their bodily development will more than ever before furnish temptations of the flesh.

Our Lord has taken pains to show us the danger of those who are not firmly grounded in faith. Read what He says of the seed which fell upon stony places, Matt. 13, 5. 20. 21: "He that receiveth the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the Word, and anon with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the Word, by and by he is offended." And Luke 8, 12: "*These have no root; which for a while they believe, and in time of temptation fall away.*" So do many of our young Christians fall away, because the Word was not firmly and deeply planted in their hearts. It would be wrong, to be sure, to think that there is no need to fear for the welfare of those young people who have regularly attended the parochial school. Being exposed to the same danger as the others, they may also fall away. But we are arguing with parents, chiefly with those who despise the parochial school, or see no need for its work. They may point out pupils of the religious school which have fallen from faith later on. Yet this will never excuse them for exposing their children to all the perils and temptations of life without any spiritual armor to protect them. If *their* children are finally and eternally lost they must not blame the pastor's instruction in the confirmation class. *Theirs* alone is the responsibility if their children are unable to stand in the hour of temptation; it was *their* duty to see to it that their children were sufficiently prepared for the fight of life.

### III.

We are now ready to demonstrate, not only that a Christian congregation may discharge its educational duties through the *parochial school*, but also that, under the circumstances, it must be considered a congregation's *sacred duty* to establish and maintain such a school.

It will, however, first be necessary to show that the Christian parochial school, and it alone, can be considered an adequate and sufficient institution for the Christian education of youth by united efforts.

A parochial school, being intended for the Christian education of youth, must be a *religious* school. Among the branches taught in it, religion takes first rank and stands foremost in every respect. Whatever is opposed to Christianity is rigidly excluded; whatever

would serve to curtail religious instruction is carefully eliminated. Bible History and the Catechism are the center around which all other branches of instruction are grouped. Religious concepts, religious thoughts control instruction in all the other branches. On the program for any day's work, religious instruction takes first place and claims a goodly share of the most valuable part of the school day. For to teach children the ways of the Lord is the highest and most important purpose of such a school.

Again, in a Christian parochial school, the Word of God in its entirety is the one means of education, the one instrument of forming thought and guiding action. The state school must needs confine itself to so much of God's Law as is known and acknowledged by natural man, and may not even, as American educators have shown us, base the demands of this Law upon the will of God, but must give them all the force they may have by setting forth their usefulness. In the parochial school, the complete Word of God is taught and applied as God's own revelation to man. The divine Law is presented, not merely as a collection of useful precepts, but as a complete statement of the will of God; as a mirror which discloses our sinful impurity; as a guiding rule according to which a new-born man lives in fear and love of God, as before the face of the Almighty. But above all, the Gospel of Christ, persistently ignored and implicitly denied in the state school, sheds its sweet and precious light over the pupils of the parochial school. The Savior's work is discussed as the salvation of sinners; every admonition is enforced by permitting the child to see that he, being a blessed child of God through Jesus Christ, ought to recognize the commandments as the will of his heavenly Father, and gladly keep them. Religious instruction in the parochial school is not merely a training of the intellect, does not merely store up memories of religious truth, but chiefly endeavors to influence the heart, and to regulate the will by the Word of God. Thus, Christian education culminates in the endeavor to lead children to subject their will to the will of God. They are to say truthfully: Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth; not my will, but Thy will be done. They are to live in faith, and to exhibit their faith in holiness of life. The education of the parochial school is in the right direction.

In order to educate in all directions, however, the parochial school must also take up the teaching of secular knowledge. Some of our congregations have been maintaining so-called schools of religion in which, for weeks and months at a time, all teaching is exclusively religious. Schools such as these are not what we call parochial schools. In the parochial school, children are to be educated in every direction, for life on earth not less than for life in heaven; they are not only to be brought into communion with God by faith in Jesus, but they are also to be taught how to exhibit this faith by love of their fellow men; they are not only to receive the powers of a new life, but they are also to learn how to employ these powers rightly in the service of God and of their neighbor. It is God's will that the talents which He has given our children be developed for useful application. Therefore they must also be well trained in secular knowledge. A parochial school does not fulfill its mission un-

less, while developing Christian faith in its pupils, it also enables them to perform their every-day work in a Christian manner.

But here an objection of great apparent force might be raised. Why not have our children acquire secular knowledge in the state school, while we, at the same time, look after their spiritual education in our religious schools? Is it not quite the same thing whether they learn the various truths of worldly wisdom in a state school, or in a parochial school? It will not be difficult to show that there is a world-wide difference, in the way of teaching the knowledge of this world, between the public school and the parochial school. To be sure, the parochial school teaches precisely the same history, the same geography, the same natural science, as does the public school; but it gives its instruction, always and under all circumstances, in the spirit of the Bible. Everywhere, its pupils are taught to recognize God as the first, the one moving cause. In nature study, He is set before them as the almighty Creator and Preserver of all things, whose kindness and wisdom shine forth from all nature around us. In geography, the children are told that the earth is a wondrous work of God, who has made, arranged, and ornamented it. In history, they learn that the Lord God rules the destinies of empires, kingdoms, and republics according to His own master will. In United States history, particularly, their attention is called to the fact that the exalted position of our beloved country in the council of nations is not, in the last instance, due to the energy and wisdom of Washington, Lincoln, and other heroes of our people; they are protected against idolatrous hero-worship by learning to see that these great men performed their work under the ruling guidance of God, who, at the right time, called them to their places and smoothed their way before them. Any Christian will be ready to acknowledge that only this way of teaching secular facts will insure a Christian understanding. Children will most certainly be led into error and suffer spiritual shipwreck, if the knowledge of this world is presented to them in the spirit which has obtained full sway wherever the Word of God has ceased to be the pole-star of science and scientists. The conclusion is plain: To do its full service, a parochial school must teach *all* things which it is necessary that a Christian citizen should know.

There is no institution outside of the parochial school in which Christian parents may find real and satisfactory assistance toward the education of their children. There, the children receive their daily portion of the Bread of Life, the Word of God; there, they make daily progress in Christian knowledge and deeper understanding of divine truth; there, the concepts and ideas furnished by the Word of God become so firmly established in their minds as to exert a dominating influence. All this is carried out according to some plan which has been prearranged with professional care. At the beginning of the school year, the teacher takes up the thread of thought and carries it through the many months of teaching, until he has accomplished what he set out to do. He will be able to say: During this year, the children have learned this matter and that; next year, we shall reach such and such a point, and when the children have passed through the school, they ought to know pre-

cisely so and so much. To carry through a program of this kind, which dominates the entire school work, is not possible unless school be held day after day, without interruption.

Our deliberations now lead us to declare that, compared with the state school, the Sunday school, the confirmation class, and the school of religion, the parochial school is the only institution which truly corresponds to the need of the Christian home. It is the only satisfactory way of educating Christian children by united efforts.

It is quite possible that such a school be established by a congregation, independently of the state; it has been done in many cases, and has fulfilled every fond anticipation of results. If that be true, no Christian congregation can well escape the duty to take hold of this work and carry it to a successful issue, as a labor of love. But why should this duty fall upon the entire congregation, without the exception of a single member? Does not the education of children call for special efforts on the part of parents? Why not let the parents in the congregation look out for the establishment of a parochial school? This idea has been carried out in a number of cases. Seeing that the congregation as a body could not be induced to open a school, the parents combined to form what might be called a school society, and opened a school which otherwise did not differ from a genuine parochial school. An arrangement of this kind, however, can hardly claim to be ideal. To illustrate: If some members of a congregation happen to be in bodily need, it is not the correct thing to form a benevolent society within the congregation, with the purpose of rendering the needed assistance; the Bible has it that, if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, and all should help bear the burden, everyone according to his ability, 1 Cor. 12, 26. There is want and suffering in the matter of Christian education, and it calls out to all members of the congregation for united efforts of relief. Our children are in faith by Baptism, to be sure, but they need instruction for the strengthening and deepening of their faith, their hope, their charity. They are in need of being rightly instructed with regard to their Christian walk in life. Parents are in need, since they, alone and unaided, cannot do for their children what is urgently necessary to do. Hence, the simplest rule of charity compels the congregation to take hold of the work; they cannot deny this charity to the parents and the children among them.

No better instance than this can be found for a forceful application of the parable of the Good Samaritan. In this parable, Christ teaches us that whoever is in need, no matter who he may be, is our neighbor, having a divine claim upon our love and active charity, even if our service should happen to require sacrifices and encounter all manner of difficulties. Every member of a Christian congregation is a true neighbor to the children who stand in need of Christian education. It matters not whether a member have children of his own, or not. Would they not justly be likened to the priest and the Levite in the parable, if they passed by the children in their urgent need? Should they say: "What concern to me are other parents' children? I have taken care of my own, and am glad to be rid of the trouble"? Could there be a more appalling display of utter selfishness? And yet it is this very selfishness which in many

cases prevents the establishment of a parochial school, or blights its progress. It is the spirit of Cain who, when God asked him, "Where is Abel, thy brother?" dared to make answer, "I know not; am I my brother's keeper?" To refuse aid in establishing a Christian parochial school is nothing less than to say in effect: "What does it concern me whether other people's children are saved, as long as my own boys and girls enter the kingdom of heaven?" Is there a Christian congregation that would not, with all energy, endeavor to stamp out such selfishness from among its members?

To make real headway against this fatal indifference it will be well to recall several Scriptural injunctions which are pertinent. Rom. 12, 5 we are told: "We, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members of one another." As the members of the body are of help to one another in all things which are needed for the preservation and strengthening of the body, so Christians, being members of the body of Christ, of the church, ought to help and serve one another in love. In the same chapter, the apostle sets forth a particular way of demonstrating this love, describing Christians as "distributing to the necessity of saints," which means to say that the needs of saints, of Christians, should more especially appeal to us and call for our most earnest endeavors to render assistance. It is true that the passage in question primarily refers to bodily need; but if even the bodily needs of our fellow Christians claim our help, how can we escape the duty of providing for their spiritual needs? Christian parents and their children are saints of Christ who call upon us to "distribute to their necessity" in the matter of Christian education. The necessity is at hand, without a doubt; how is it about the distributing of gifts? Let the great number of Christian children answer who pass through their youth without so much as knowing that there are Christian schools, as distinguished from the non-religious schools of the state. Here there is need that we "above all things have a fervent charity among ourselves," and that we, "as every man has received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God," 1 Pet. 4, 8, 10.

Every member of the congregation is a debtor to Christian youth as to the establishment and maintenance of parochial schools — and the pastor is no exception. In very truth, being the person to whom the office of public preaching of the Word is entrusted, his official position requires him to be a teacher even unto the little ones of Christ. But if this were not so, even then he would have a debt of charity to pay. Being the bishop of the congregation who must make sure that children receive Christian education in the families, he knows better than anyone else how very little the home will do, and can do, in this direction. It should, therefore, be taken for granted that no person in the congregation will be more convinced than he of the necessity of the parochial school, or more eager to have it established. His time, his talents, his strength will gladly be offered for the service. Among German Lutherans of the Synodical Conference it is the rule, rather than the exception, that ministers take upon themselves the burden of school work. They do so for charity's sake, and feel themselves personally called upon

to do so, because among the members of the congregation there are rarely found persons of greater skill and more serviceable knowledge for school work.

But as a pastor's work in church and school increases, he will urge the obvious fact that his school work must always remain incomplete, because he cannot possibly, at the same time, perform church work and school work in a satisfactory manner. Again, there will be many days when the pastor is called away from the school by ministerial work. The school suffers in consequence of many interruptions, and neither parents nor pastor feel satisfied with results. Such a state of affairs must not continue lest both the school and the congregation suffer serious loss. The growth of a congregation imperatively calls for the employment of a special teacher who may devote his whole time to the school alone.

There are other considerations which, though often overlooked, are nevertheless of consequence. If the school is to do efficient work, the teacher's thoughts must be given, from the first moment to the last, to the matters in hand. The very hours of leisure between the periods of school work should be devoted to the school and its advancement. In short, the school demands a man's entire energy and time. It is impossible that a pastor could answer this requirement. Even if he is present in school from the first call of the bell to the last minute of the program, yet his mind, his heart, his thoughts will generally be engrossed by other urgent business of the congregation, by pastoral duties of various kinds. A meager portion of his energy can be spared for the school in the best cases. There is no doubt that the school suffers continual loss as long as the pastor be the teacher. It ill becomes a congregation to lay a double burden upon their pastor, while they, at the same time, deprive their school of a much-needed special worker. Here again charity sets up a demand, and persistently calls for the employment of a regular teacher.

In consideration of these facts, the sacrifices which such an improvement calls for, ought not to be considered. It is an evil thing that Christians are ever ready to extend their ideas of economy into church work. How many needful undertakings, full of rich promises of divine blessing, have come to nought, merely because Christians, forsooth! carefully computed the amount of dollars and cents required! Naturally, the result would always be: It will cost too much! The love of money triumphs over charity and kills it. In the matter of parochial schools, love of money will say: The government collects school tax from us; are we not entitled to some return for the money? Should we be called upon to establish our own school at private expense? And forthwith the Old Adam decides that a parochial school is not to be thought of. But this is very characteristic of the Old Man, not of the New Man. Since the government lays taxes for the support of the state schools we are in duty bound to pay them, and we pay them willingly because the government demands their payment. Does this civil act give us a Christian privilege to use the state school? Not in the least, since we know that the state school is not what our children must have. The question of education lies on moral ground and must be decided accordingly.

We have a higher duty toward our children; what if this duty calls for sacrifices of a peculiar kind? Is it any the less a duty?

Let us reenforce our argumentation by some quotations from the writings of *Luther*, who surely will tell us how a *Lutheran* ought to argue in the premises. Addressing the councilmen of all German cities, he says: "Since God has looked upon us with such high favor, and has given us a great number of persons who are well able to teach and educate the young people, there is need that we should not ignore the grace of God, nor let him knock at our doors in vain. He stands before the door; it will be well with us if we open unto Him. He greets us; blessed is he who will answer Him. If we miss Him, and permit Him to go by, who will call Him back? Let us consider our former sad estate, and the darkness in which we were. I believe that Germany never did hear so much of God's Word as now; history, at any rate, does not show it. If we let it pass without giving thanks and due honor, there is serious cause to fear that we shall suffer even more terrible darkness and affliction. Dear Germans, do ye buy while the market is at your gates; do ye gather while the sun shines and the weather is good; do ye use the Word of God while it is at hand. For this ye shall know: The Word of God is like a passing cloudburst which does not return to the place where it has once been. It has been with the Jews; but it is gone, and now, they have nothing. Paul brought it to Greece; it is gone, and now, they have the Turk. Rome and the Latin country has had it; it is gone, and now, they have the Pope. And ye Germans must not think that you will have it forever; ingratitude and contempt will not permit it to remain. Therefore, let those who may, grasp it and hold it; idle hands must have a bad harvest."

There is not a word in this quotation which might not just as well have been written to us. Read it again, substituting "Lutherans of the Synodical Conference" for "Germans," and you will see! While you read it over, be sure to remember that *Luther* is speaking, not of the preaching of the Gospel in general, but precisely of the Christian school. The market at our door is the Christian school; we have the opportunity to buy, to gather, to hold what the grace of God is offering.

Writing to "The Christian Nobility of the German Nation," *Luther* has this to say: "Is it not reasonable that a Christian should, at the age of nine or ten years, know the entire holy Gospel which gives him his name, and his life? A spinner and a seamstress will teach her daughter the work of her trade in tender years. . . . O how unfairly do we treat the poor young people whose government and instruction is entrusted to us! Seriously shall we be called to account because we do not offer them the Word of God! Theirs is the fate which *Jeremiah* bewails, Lam. 2, 11. 12: 'Mine eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are troubled, my liver is poured upon the earth, for the destruction of the daughter of my people; because the children and the young swoon in the streets of the city. They say to their mothers, Where is corn and wine? when they swooned as the wounded in the streets of the city, when their soul was poured out into their mothers' bosom.' We do not recognize this deplorable misery that even now young people swoon and perish miserably

because of the lack of the Gospel which ought to be given and impressed upon them unremittingly.”

We have quoted *Comenius* before. He does not fail us on this point, and his words ring true and clear from the Scriptures. “Should there be any one who can show or think out a plan, or can ask God with flowing tears to show how the growing youth may be taken care of in the best way possible, let not such a one keep silence, but let him advise, think, pray. ‘Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way,’ says God Deut. 27, 18; cursed, then, also he who does not lead a blind man from the wrong path though he might do so. ‘Woe unto that man who offendeth one of these little ones,’ says Christ Matt. 18, 6. 7; woe, then, also unto him who might remove the offense, but does it not. ‘If thou meet thine enemy’s ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again,’ (Exod. 23, 4; comp. Deut. 22, 1), and would it please God if we should carelessly go by and fail to apply our hand when we see, not brute beasts, but reasoning creatures, not one or another, but the whole world going astray? Far be it from God! ‘Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood,’ Jer. 48, 10; and should we expect to be blameless if we take no thought of the abominable Babel of our disruption? Ah, thou who hast a sword by thy side, or knowest the scabbard wherein it is concealed, draw it forth and, that Jehovah may bless thee, assist in the destruction of Babylon!” (Didactica Magna.)

#### IV.

We have now arrived at the point where it behooves us to show that the church must look to the parochial school as a very important factor towards its preservation and continuance. For their continuous and healthy growth our congregations depend, to a great extent, upon the parochial school. And again, our seminaries, theological and normal, must look to the Christian school for a steady supply of students who may be educated for church work.

From the fact that Lutheran parochial schools are found practically nowhere else but in German Lutheran congregations, the impression has gone abroad that the aim of such schools primarily is the perpetuation of the German language. But this impression is altogether without foundation. Highly though Germans prize their native language; much as they desire that their children should be familiar with it, for its magnificent literature, if for no other reason; yet it would be outside of a Christian congregation’s sphere of action to establish schools for the sake of a language. Nor would many Germans be willing to spend any considerable amount of money for private schools of that kind. Parochial schools are primarily and above everything else *religious schools*, and their establishment must be suggested to English congregations with the same urgency as to German congregations. The time seems to be approaching rapidly when the English language will be the dominant tongue in the Lutheran church of America; yet though all preaching in the German tongue should disappear in our country some day, there would still remain the same urgent need of parochial schools. Hence it

will be well for us to get rid of false notions, and to obtain a clear conviction that parochial schools are, under present circumstances, a source of church life which we cannot ignore without laying ourselves open to the accusation of willful negligence.

It may be conceded that neither the existence of the church as a whole, nor the continuance of any single congregation, is dependent on such an institution as the parochial school. Conditions may not only be imagined, but they have actually existed when the Christian church had no parochial schools, and yet continued to increase in numbers. But such conditions do not obtain at the present time. There is no end to church divisions. A hundred sects are stretching forth their hands to capture the unwary Christian and to lead him into some fatal error. Rank atheism has made terrible progress among all classes of our population. All these influences are at work to undermine those congregations who stand firm upon the Word of God. To retain membership, to grow from within, from out of the Christian family, a parochial school is an unavoidable necessity for every Lutheran congregation.

Speaking of the existence of a congregation, two facts must be kept in view. As congregations consist of those who teach, and those who hear, of preachers and hearers, the existence of a congregation cannot be continuous, unless there always are a number of those who wish to hear the Word, and of those who may be chosen as ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. This twofold aspect of congregational life underlies our present discussion.

Many of our Lutheran congregations have heretofore received numbers of members from among those who came to our country from abroad. Home mission has almost been confined to work among Lutherans from Germany. They have furnished the material for many a new congregation, especially in the West; they also have been filling vacancies caused by death or other circumstances in our older congregations. To make these statements does not amount to declaring that no members whatever have been obtained by regular missionary work; but there is no doubt whatever that heretofore German immigration has been a very decisive factor in the growth of our congregations. This immigration has almost entirely ceased, and the prospects that it will ever regain its former volume, are certainly very poor. Whence will our congregations obtain their new members in future days? Every lover of the church will admit that this is a very serious question. Moreover, it is not only members that we need, but members who have attained a fair degree of spiritual knowledge; members who will stand by the pastor’s side as reliable assistants in the work of the church; members who are fit to undertake the administration of the congregation’s affairs in a conscientious manner for the common welfare of all; members who may know when to speak and what to say in the business meetings of the congregation; members whose sound common sense is thoroughly imbued with the true Christian spirit. In days to come we shall need more such members, and need them more urgently than ever before. Whence shall we get them?

We are persuaded that the Word of God is always powerful and never returns without result. But it will not return unless it is

first sent forth. Here our share of the work will be found. We must work and labor earnestly to spread the knowledge of the Gospel—spread it chiefly among our youth. It is an ancient axiom that he who hath the young people hath the future in his hands. Let us heed this truth, which applies in full force to the church. If the church wishes to make sure of its future existence; if a congregation of today desires that a congregation may remain in its place in after days: then must the church urge the establishment of parochial schools, and the congregation must needs take up the urgent work. Speaking from a human viewpoint, it is both desirable and necessary that the son and the grandson follow in the steps of the father and the grandfather, if they have been true and good members of the congregation; then let the son and the grandson be educated in a manner which alone gives promise of success in the desired direction.

On this point, *Luther*, in the *Greater Catechism*, has this to say: "If we desire to have good, skillful men, both for temporal and for spiritual government, we must truly regard neither diligent work nor expense in the teaching and education of our children, in order that they may serve God and humanity, and we must not only take thought how we may gather money and property for them. . . . If this were done, God would also richly bless us and graciously help us to educate men who would be of benefit to the country and its people; also well-educated citizens, chaste and home-loving women, who might thereafter educate pious children and servants. Here you should consider the murderous damage which will result if you neglect to do your duty in educating your child to be useful and blessed; you would also gather upon your head all sin and wrath, and thus earn hell from your own children, though you might otherwise be pious and holy."

For the continuation of its existence, however, a congregation needs not only those who hear the Word, but also those who preach it. As long as Christ's command to "preach the Gospel unto all creatures" holds good—and it will hold good until the end of time—there will never be too many preachers of the Gospel. It is a sad symptom if a so-called overproduction of ministers occurs in a church. In fact, the word overproduction used in this connection is an evil, nasty, unchristian word which has already done untold damage to the Church of Christ. Christian ministers are not a product of our own enterprise and labor; but they are gifts of God, granted to His Church for the purposes of His kingdom, as St. Paul has it Eph. 4, 11, 12: "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." He makes this statement to explain what are the gifts of which he had declared in v. 8 that they were granted to men by Christ glorified, for their salvation. Among these gifts are the ministers of the Gospel. How shameful, then, to speak of an overproduction of ministers and teachers! God never gives His Church more workers than she needs, and He gives every one of them. The fault is not with the supply—the supply is in the hand of God. Whenever there seems to be an oversupply of ministers and teachers, we may take it for granted that our *demand* for such men should be

greater. Ours is the fault if we do not call for these gifts of God and put them to proper use. Let us, therefore, thankfully accept the blessing of God, which is poured out upon us whenever He offers a great number of young men willing and ready to do the work of church and school. Then the demand will not decrease, but increase continually under the grace of God.

But whence does the church obtain preachers of the Word? Of learned men in general Luther has it that they cannot be carved out of wood, nor fished up out of the water; but they must be educated and trained from early youth. We dare not expect that God will raise up, by special spiritual call, those men who are to preach among us. There is no promise to that effect. By God's power and grace a man may receive an inward call to the ministry in mature years and may successfully complete a course of preparatory study, so as to become able to serve the church as a valuable helper in the Vineyard of Christ, but we should not, we dare not count upon such special acts of providence. The divinely appointed way to obtain ministers of the Gospel is to train them for the work from youth. As a rule, God gives ministers to the church in the way in which He gave her Timothy who knew the Scriptures from a child and thus grew up to be a man of God, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, 1 Tim. 3, 15, 16. The young people who frequent the public school will not furnish us ministers and teachers as we need them. The state school pursues interests which, if not at variance with Gospel work, are not such, at any rate, as must stand in the forefront when the ministry is an aim of education.

Appreciation of the needs of Christ's kingdom, sympathy with Gospel work will never be implanted into children's hearts by the public school. On the contrary, as the public school education must inevitably nurse and strengthen selfishness in its pupils, we hear them and their parents, Christians all—in name—, making comparisons such as these: After diligent and earnest preparation, after spending great sums of money at college, after having been trained for nine years or more, a minister will receive an annual salary of \$400, or at most \$1000; a teacher, whose preparation requires a smaller output of time and money, will receive even less; hence it is a great deal more profitable to take a brief business course and then enter commercial life where the opportunities for making money and getting rich are practically unlimited. This is a most evil and dangerous way of thinking, of course, and one of which any true Christian would be heartily ashamed. But will you dare to expect that the public school should teach children to think in any other way? There is no other way for the church to make sure of having ministers than by having children attend Christian schools where they may learn to love the Word of God; where they are taught to say, with all sincerity of heart: "The law of Thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver," Ps. 119, 72. Then, and not till then, will they know that the work of a minister is the highest, noblest, most desirable work on earth, and will be ready to prepare for it, cost what it may.

In his sermon "that children should be kept at school," *Luther* says: "If it is true and certain, that God Himself has instituted the

ministry and established it with His own blood and death, it may easily be surmised that He requires it to be highly honored, and will not suffer it to perish, but will keep it unto the last day. For the Gospel and the Christian church must truly remain unto the last day, as Christ says Matt. 28; 20: 'Behold, I am with you all the days, even unto the end of the world.' But by whom is it to be kept? Oxen and horses, dogs and swine will never do it, nor will wood and stone; we men shall have to do it, for this office is not laid upon oxen or horses, but upon men. But whence are men to be taken for it, if not from those who have children? If you are not willing to raise your boy for this purpose, and if that other man is not willing, and if, in this manner, no father or mother is willing to give up a child to God for this purpose, what will become of the holy ministry? The old men who now serve in it will not live forever, but are daily dying away, and there are none to take their place. What will God say about it in the end? Think you it will be pleasing to Him that we so shamefully despise His divinely appointed office, dearly purchased for His praise and glory, and for our salvation, and permit it to fall to pieces and disappear through our ingratitude?"

In the same sermon, *Luther* addresses all Christian parents in this wise: "If God has given you a child apt and gifted for this office (the ministry), and you do not raise it for this purpose, but have regard to the belly and the needs of this life alone, and if you will then take to hand the list (of the high works of the ministry) as given above, and will look over its good poekts and miracles as enumerated, you will readily see what your piety and character amounts to. For as far as you are concerned, you take from God an angel, a servant, a king and prince in His kingdom, a savior and consoler of men in body and soul, property and honor, a captain and a knight against the devil, and you promote the devil's kingdom, so that he may keep the souls in sin, death, and damnation, and get more into it daily, and that the world may remain in heresy, error, peacelessness, war, and strife, and grow worse from day to day; and, moreover, that God's kingdom, Christian faith, the fruits of Christ's suffering and blood, the work of the Holy Ghost, the Gospel, and all service of God be destroyed, while all service of the devil and misbelief grows apace. All of which might not have happened, but might have been prevented, and even bettered, if your child had been trained for, and entered, the ministry."

And now, how about the growth of the parochial school system in our midst? Consulting our own statistics we cannot fail to notice that our schools have not by far increased in number as much as our congregations. The progress of parochial schools has ever been wavelike, ups and downs alternating. Our schools having flourished for quite a period, it is plain that they are at present standing still, or it would probably be better to say, they are going backward, relatively to the growth of our congregations. As we love our church, we must not close our eyes to the danger which threatens it precisely from this direction. If we are to apply a remedy, we must go to the root of the matter and try to discover the causes of this relative decrease of our parochial schools.

One chief reason, doubtless, is the increasing indifference to the Word of God, and the contempt of heavenly and everlasting blessings as against temporal and earthly treasures and honors. It is frequently considered quite sufficient for children to learn just enough of God's Word that they may be confirmed and looked upon as members of the congregation. They are supposed to have been rendered the greatest possible service if they have an extensive knowledge of worldly lore. And since people thus cease to take a heartfelt interest in the parochial school, it is easy for avarice to close the fist against such sacrifices as may be necessary for the improvement of the school. This side of the matter ought to be laid before the congregations ever again in the Sunday sermons. It would not be amiss to have one sermon in every year especially devoted to the question of the parochial school, in order that all parents may learn their highest duty: to bring their children to Christ. The application must then be made personally to the parents in every single case. With a heart full of compassion for parents and children, the pastor should urge the true conception of the need of parochial schools.

Another reason for the neglect of the parochial school may be found in the fact that the parents of the children who ought now to crowd our religious schools, remember that they made little progress in their own day when they frequented the parochial school, because these schools were in poor condition at that time. Quite without warrant they lay the fault to the school system rather than to the circumstances then prevailing, and continue to hold a very low opinion of the work of our religious schools. Hence it will be of the utmost importance to enable the parochial school to satisfy all fair requirements. Our teachers must be well trained, and must continue to study for their further improvement. Gradually, but steadily, good teachers must take the place of those pastors who are now doing school work. Both the congregations and their pastors must see to it that the school may claim the full confidence, and compel the respect, of all Christian parents.

Let us point out one more reason for the retrograde movement of our parochial schools. It is found in a social vice which has begun to find entrance even among those who still profess Christianity. It is the French vice of suppression of offspring—the two-children system—which has become so extremely prevalent in our country as to horrify even callous observers. Shameful though it be, its effects are beginning to be felt among those who belong to our church. Undoubtedly we must consider it one of the signs of the end of the world—of the days when, as Christ has foretold, men would be "as they were in the days of Noah." The school will naturally suffer where the families cease to grow at a natural rate.

Any thoughtful Christian will find food for earnest and prayerful thought in the consideration of what we have laid before him. There is much room for improvement—there is urgent need of a revival of our parochial schools. Would we sit idly by and see the wounds of the church without hurrying to her aid? Would we unmoved witness the steady decline when our united efforts might stay it?



## V.

It remains for us to demonstrate that, aside from all considerations of family and church, the maintenance of Christian schools is demanded by *patriotism*. The parochial school is so far from being a menace to the best interests of our beloved country, that it must rather be looked upon as *the very mainstay of all civil and social virtue*.

This proposition will appear quite untenable in view of the estimate which our people have been industriously taught to place upon the value of the public school. Americans share the vice of all great nations in that they are very much in love with, and have a very high opinion of, themselves. One of the centers around which the self-satisfaction of our people has made a sturdy growth is the public school. It is popularly accepted as a self-evident truth that not only does our government derive its vitality from the public school, but that civilization itself is deeply rooted in that much-admired institution. If we put forth the claim that our parochial schools alone are true nurseries of all those virtues which work toward the stability of any state, the work of the public school must necessarily be discussed in this direction.

It is generally admitted that no commonwealth will be able to maintain itself, and to develop in a satisfactory manner, unless its citizens have, and practice, those virtues which alone will insure the maintenance of the correct relations between, and conduct among, men. On reviewing the form, the method, and the aims of the public school we are forced to the conclusion that it cannot guarantee an observance of those virtues among the citizens of the Republic. The Word of God is neither a branch of study, nor is it a means of education. Whenever the public school endeavors to inculcate the virtues of the second table of the decalogue, it does not do so by showing that God requires them, but merely points out that this act or that one is considered bad, or good, by common consent of men, and that the person doing the act will benefit from it, or suffer in consequence of it, as the case may be.

To make any person truly virtuous, he must first be made a Christian. Even the holy Law of God cannot produce true virtue in sinful man, since it worketh wrath against God, rather than good deeds, Rom. 4, 15. Will civil law do any better? Surely not. The Gospel of Christ alone will implant virtue into the heart of man. The 119th Psalm, the grandest of all panegyrics of the Word of God, says v. 32: "I will run the way of Thy commandments when Thou shalt enlarge (i. e., console) my heart," console it with the precious word of the Gospel, and not when it is crushed by the smiting hammer of the Law. The same psalm teaches us vv. 98—102, that the wisdom which causes man to avoid evil ways and to do what is good, is put into our hearts by God's Word alone, not, however, by the demands and threats of the Law, but by the testimony of Him who is gracious and merciful and long-suffering and of great grace and truth, who showeth mercy unto a thousand generations, and forgiveth iniquity and transgression and sin. He who has this wisdom will submit his will entirely to the will of God. And this is true virtue: the habit of doing the good and avoiding the evil out of

a free will which knows of no influence but that of the Word of God. This true liberty of the will the Gospel alone can give us, since it offers and gives to all believers the liberty which is in Christ. Without the Gospel, no man can have it.

Whoever is not entirely blinded by preconceived ideas as to the greatness of the public school must admit that it does not accomplish what is expected of it, and there are observers, not from among the Lutherans of the Synodical Conference, who have voiced bitter complaints against the failure of the public school to implant social and civic virtue. The editor of the *Outlook* points to the fact, in the issue of December 2, 1899, "That most graduates of our schools and colleges pass through a course of study in which religion is disregarded, its place being taken chiefly by philosophy and ethics; in consequence thereof the pupil learns to know, to think, and to feel independently of any recognized religious element." In the *Lutheran Quarterly* for April, 1900, Mr. M. S. Young says that it is a hopeful sign that some of our leading educators begin to recognize the danger of neglecting the religious and moral education of our youth, and proceeds to quote President Harper of Chicago University, who says, in effect, that it is difficult to foresee what result the present educational methods will produce within fifty years; that the public school trains the mind, but not the moral side of the child's nature; that the Roman Catholic church insists upon removing this obvious defect while the Protestant churches disregard it entirely, relying upon the efficiency of their Sunday schools. President Harper justly considers our young people who grow to manhood and womanhood without being under religious influence, to be the greatest menace of our country, a greater one by far than the secession of the South forty years ago, or than the struggle between labor and capital, or than monopolies and trusts.

Among all educational institutions only the parochial school has the means to counteract all these serious dangers. Considering a few of those virtues which are of special importance for our civil and social life, let us try to discover how the public school and the parochial school, each in its characteristic way, seeks to implant them.

There is no higher civil virtue than *obedience to law*, and subordination is more important under our democratic form of government than under monarchical institutions. In a monarchy, the police power is developed to such a degree that subordination to law may at any time be enforced by physical means; but where personal and civil liberty is a constitutional privilege, where every citizen is conceded the utmost degree of liberty compatible with safety, it is a paramount requirement that every citizen obey the law from interior motives. The public school certainly teaches obedience to the law; but its demand is nothing further, and can be no more, than an empty rule, a requirement without the support of any convincing motive, or, at most, with the demonstration that it is wiser, because it is better and more advantageous, to obey the laws, than to resist or break them. The parochial school could also say: If you desire to be happy as a citizen, take care that you come not into conflict with the law. The motive is correct in itself; but it

will not guarantee obedience to the law whenever a person seems to see that something else is still better and more advantageous. To train a child to true obedience, it must be furnished with a higher motive, a motive beyond the limit of any doubt or hesitation. The paramount motive for obeying the law is the *will of God*. Tell a child that obedience to law is God's demand, and you will have supplied him with an unbending rule to go by. Hence the parochial school will take up Paul's admonition recorded in Rom. 13, 1—5. From this clear statement, the child will be shown that an unconverted man does not obey the law except for fear of punishment, while a Christian will obey for conscience' sake, since his conscience assures him that the government is in the place of God. He will obey the laws, no matter whether they please him, or not. He knows of only one exception: if any government publishes a law which is at variance with the Word of God, the Christian cannot be bound to obey such a law, because in giving it the government exceeds its authority. In this way the parochial school lays the foundation for the highest of civil virtues: obedience to the law.

A second virtue, indispensable to the welfare of any commonwealth, is *mercy toward our fellow men*, particularly as it is shown *in willingness to be reconciled, and in forgiving insults*. What does the state school teach in regard to this important matter? On examining the moral principles which the public school inculcates, we find hardly a trace of true mercifulness. The first principle of its morality is egoism. By nature, man will sometimes give way to his feelings and is pleased to find himself sympathetic even to the degree of giving money for some persons who have been particularly unfortunate; sometimes he will even waive some claim—if he may hope to reap a reward. But even in these best moments of his he is finally under the control of egoism. He knows no true, disinterested altruism. True mercy is derided by him; to give up his rights, to forgive a wrong seems weakness to him; he will rather claim it as an inalienable privilege to hate his enemy, and to reward a wrong with wrongdoing. The public school has no remedy for this natural perverseness. The religious school, on the other hand, will show from the words of Christ, as recorded in Matt. 5, 43—48, that any one who would be and remain a child of God, must be merciful, even as the Father in heaven is merciful; he must love, not only his friends and benefactors, but his enemies; he must not repay evil with evil, or reviling with reviling, but must bestow blessings in return for curses. The religious school teaches from 1 Tim. 2, 1—3, that a Christian must pray, not for himself alone and for his fellows in faith, but for all men, for the government and all its officials, though they be wicked and cruel as Nero was in those days. As a reason for this demand, children are told that, since Christ is the Savior of all men and has given Himself as a salvation for all, the hearts of his followers must likewise be filled with true love toward all men.

A third civil virtue is *regard for the rights of fellow citizens*. Properly speaking, the possibility of maintaining a republican form of government rests upon this virtue. It is a basic principle of our form of government that every citizen shall be accorded the fullest

measure of personal liberty compatible with the well-being of his fellow citizens, and good order in the community. The greater the liberty of each single citizen, and the less the restraint upon his movements, the more needful will it be that each citizen have due regard for the rights of his neighbor. As soon as he goes beyond a certain line, his neighbor's liberty will suffer. Our public school reflects the morality which obtains among our people in this respect; and as a general rule we find that a citizen's rights are left unhampered only in as much as they are not a restraint to others. This is particularly in evidence in business life. Though our whole people are suffering from the heartless oppression of monopolies and trusts, there are very few who see that the sinful tendency toward monopoly is nothing but a natural fruit of sinful self-love. Too many readily take it for granted that no business man can succeed in our days unless he take advantage of his customers. While it is plainly a requirement of trade that the seller be honest in his dealings with the buyer, we feel that the order has been reversed—it is the buyer's lookout not to be cheated by the seller. To be brief, it is a general tendency to encroach upon the rights of fellow men to the greatest possible extent, no matter how unrightfully he is treated in the process.

What has the Christian education of the parochial school to say on this point? It teaches with Paul, Phil. 2, 4: "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." And why? Because there is to be in us the same mind that was also in Christ Jesus, v. 5. Thus do we place this virtue, as we do all others, upon the only true basis, the imitation of Christ. This is not worldly wisdom, but Christians are not children of the world. The Gospel, as taught in the parochial school, will produce the free will to waive personal right out of love of a fellow man, and to spend a lifetime of work in his service. The teacher of a Christian school will impress upon his pupils the apostolic admonition, 1 Cor. 10, 24: "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." Though this demand, taken in its first meaning, as indicated by the context, refers to brotherly regard of a weak fellow Christian's infirmity, yet it plainly contains the general truth that a Christian must exhibit a careful regard of all the rights of his fellow men.

The arguments set forth above ought easily to convince any unprejudiced Christian mind that, besides the parochial school, there is no other institution in our country where children may be trained to a citizenship which is intrinsically good. For the virtues which we have discussed form the groundwork of all other virtues that are required in social and political life. If this be true, then the love of our country and its institutions will urge us to establish, maintain, and foster Christian parochial schools. The fact that our schools are commonly assailed and libeled as un-American institutions which are hostile to the prosperous development of the commonwealth, will not, must not cause us to hesitate. We defend our schools with the unshakable conviction that they are the best safeguards of civil order. We object to the imposition of Bennett and Edwards laws by which it is proposed to destroy our parochial schools and to force our chil-

dren into the state school, under the pretense that the state school alone fosters a spirit of true patriotism. Under constitutional pledges, we demand this liberty of conscience to have and to retain our parochial schools without any paternal restrictions on the part of the state as to their arrangement and operation. Though it be true that our schools now and then exhibit various external deficiencies; though we have no grand and imposing buildings to house them; though they are not particularly well supplied with school apparatus; though we may lack teachers of splendid gifts and liberal education; though our schools do no more than to raise our children in the fear and nurture of the Lord: they have the one thing needful, and are far away in advance of the grandest state schools. Should they be destroyed, their loss were a national calamity of incalculable seriousness; for then our country would soon become woefully destitute of citizens who would exhibit civic virtues from the sincerity of their hearts.

We quote *Luther* also on this point. "As I have remarked, though there were no soul, and though there were no need of (Christian) schools for the sake of Scriptures and of God, even then there would be sufficient reason for establishing the very best schools both for boys and girls everywhere, that the world has need of good, skillful men and women even for the sake of maintaining its external state—men, to be good rulers of the country and the people; women, to be good housekeepers and educators of children and servants. Now such men must come from among our boys, and such women, from among our girls; hence there is urgent need to give boys and girls appropriate instruction and education."

And again, addressing the German councilmen, he urges them as follows: "There is the greatest need, not alone for the sake of the young folk, but for the maintenance of both the spiritual and temporal estates, that this matter be pushed seriously and in good season, lest after a while, when we shall have neglected it, we be forced to let it alone though we might then be glad to do it, and thus forever suffer remorse for our neglect. For God provides bountifully, and offers a helping hand, and bestows whatever is needful for the purpose. Should we scorn His offers, we must share the condemnation of the people of Israel, of whom *Isaiah* says ch. 65, 2: 'I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, that provoketh me,' and *Prov.* 1, 24: 'Because I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I will also laugh at your calamity: I will mock when your fear cometh upon you,' etc. Let us beware of this. As an example, note what diligence *King Solomon* has exhibited herein; how much he has taken regard to the young folk, since, though he was engrossed by the duties of royalty, he even wrote a book for the young folk which is called *Proverbs*! And *Christ Himself*, how does He draw little children to Him! How diligently does He place them under our care, and even praise the angels who serve them, *Matt.* 18, 2 ff., in order to demonstrate to us how great is the service done by educating the young people well; and again, how dreadfully He is angered if they are offended and suffered to perish."

Finally, we quote *Comenius*: "Take hold of this work, ye priests, faithful servants of Christ, and rout evil with the two-edged sword entrusted to you, the sword of the Word. For unto this have ye been put into your office: to eradicate, to break, to destroy utterly what is evil, but to cultivate and to plant what is good, *Jer.* 1, 10. *Ps.* 101, 5. *Rom.* 13, 4, and elsewhere. But you have now ascertained that in resisting what is evil in human society you cannot have the best success except you resist it in the first period of life; that the tender trees which are to endure forever may best be obtained by planting and training new seedlings; that in place of a Babylon a Zion may be raised up most successfully if the living stones of God, the young folk, be quarried, cut, smoothed, and put into the heavenly building at an early age. Therefore, if we desire to have well-ordered and flourishing churches and states and families, let us first of all set in order the schools and cause them to flourish, in order that they may be true and living nurseries of men, nurseries of the churches, the states, and homes. Only in this way we shall attain what we aim at, never in any other way."