

The Northwestern Lutheran

Rev. C. Buenger
Jan 18
65 N. Ridgeway

The Lord our God be with us, as He was with our fathers.

Him not leave us, nor forsake us. 1 Kings 8: 57.

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No. 15

SOMETIME

Sometime, when all life's lessons have been learned,
And sun and stars forevermore have set,
The things which our weak judgments here have spurned,
The things o'er which we grieved with lashes wet,
Will flash before us, out of life's dark night,
As stars shine most in deeper tints of blue;
And we shall see how all God's plans are right,
And how what seems reproof was love most true.

And we shall see how, while we frown and sigh,
God's plans go on as best for you and me;
How, when we called, He heeded not our cry,
Because His wisdom to the end could see.
And e'en as prudent parents disallow
Too much of sweet to craving babyhood,
So God, perhaps, is keeping from us now
Life's sweetest things, because it seemeth good.

And if sometimes, commingled with life's wine,
We find the wormwood, and rebel and shrink,
Be sure a wiser hand than yours or mine
Pours out this potion for our lips to drink;
And if some friend we love is lying low,
Where human kisses cannot reach his face,
Oh, do not blame the loving Father so,
But wear your sorrow with obedient grace!

And you shall shortly know that lengthened breath
Is not the sweetest gift God sends His friends,
And that, sometimes, the sable pall of death
Conceals the fairest boon His love can send.
If we could push afar the gates of life,
And stand within, and all God's workings see,
We could interpret all this doubt and strife,
And for each mystery could find a key.

But not to-day. Then be content, poor heart!
God's plans like lilies pure and white unfold;
We must not tear the close-shut leaves apart,
Time will reveal the calyxes of gold.
And if, through patient toil, we reach the land
Where tired feet, with sandals loosed, may rest,
When we shall clearly know and understand,
I think that we will say, 'God knew the best!'

—May Louise Smith.

COMMENTS

Hero and Hero-worship

In a lecture on this subject Thomas Carlyle said: "It is a great thing for a nation that it gets an articulate voice; that it produce a man who will speak-forth melodiously what the heart of it means! Italy, for example, poor Italy lies dismembered, scattered asunder, not appearing in any protocol or treaty as a unity at all; yet the noble Italy is actually one: Italy pro-

duced its Dante; Italy can speak! The Czar of all the Russias, he is strong, with so many bayonets, Cossacks and cannons; and does a great feat in keeping such a tract of earth politically together; but he cannot yet speak. Something great in him, but it is a dumb greatness. He has no voice of genius, to be heard of all men and times. He must learn to speak. He is a great dumb monster hitherto. His cannons and Cossacks will all have rusted into nonentity, while that Dante's voice is still audible. The Nation that has a Dante is bound together as no dumb Russia can be." Carlyle's vision is prophetic. The Italy which in his day was poor, dismembered, and scattered, did realize its unity even politically. Great Russia is in these very hours giving proof that it is a "dumb monster" which even the powerful Czar could not weld into a unity. Perhaps Carlyle with the poet's insight into deep things did not underestimate the value of a great hero who can speak for his people in thus pronouncing Russia dumb because it had no hero. And whether it be always true, or not, that a nation to be great must have its hero, so much is always true: the nation that has a true hero can never be deprived of greatness.—The hero may be a man of arms, as Alexander, a Napoleon, a Washington; or he may be a poet, a Dante, a Shakespeare, a Goethe; or he may be a prophet, a great spiritual leader, like Israel's Moses and Isaiah. The hero who most fully accords with the definition of Carlyle, and we are inclined to accept his definition as a most excellent one, is our own Luther. He "spoke-forth melodiously what the heart of his people meant"! And his people were not of any particular race or station, the people for whom he raised up his voice were the down-trodden children of God. Not German is Luther in his larger significance, he is the great voice of humanity, when it is filled with understanding of God's truth out of God's Word. When the Holy Spirit fills you with the joy of Salvation, your happiness may seek in vain for words to sound your joy. Here the hero becomes your spokesman, just as the poet sings your thoughts which you could never clothe into words, but recognize as soon as his genius has transformed your vague and shapeless musings into realities of beautiful forms. Luther spoke for the soul that has found Christ, the Savior from sin. He spoke as no orator, no poet spoke before on these great themes. If Germany seemed to be galvanized into enthusiasm at the sound of his voice it was because Germans could understand his words.

When his message reached other lands where the Word of God was not dead, there was the same response. For Luther was the hero of the oppressed soul. And wherever there are oppressed souls he is even today their hero and their prophet. And all this without curtailing the sphere of the Word itself. We must hear the voice of God from God's mouth and from no other source; but having heard we cannot fail to respond to Luther who ever will remain the best type we know of the man who has heard God's voice. So is Luther our hero. To make him out nothing more than a teacher, is to miss the vital spark of his mission; a teacher indeed, but a hero-teacher. To see in him but a German hero is wide of the mark again. No merely national hero could inspire millions and millions of men, ordinary men and women, of other race and language, like Luther did. Much of the admiration accorded Luther is at best unintentional disparagement. One who knows Luther is hurt by the insistence with which some of Luther's admirers point to him as the great destroyer of Rome's superstition. If Luther had done but that, he would not be a hero. Heroes are always constructive, not destructive. When Luther attacked the rottenness of Rome he never for a moment lost sight of his end: the preservation and re-establishment of God's truth. Every step he took in the gigantic combat with Rome was forced upon him against his will by the necessity of preserving the Truth. Some will not credit it that Luther loved Rome; he did. He never to his dying day ceased to think of it with loving regret that it had elected to remain untrue to its glorious trust. The more one knows of him, the more it will appear that Luther is a hero in what he did no less than in what he refused to do. The very sanity with which Luther is honored by his most ardent disciples is proof of his heroic qualities. It does not occur to the Lutherans to make him out a saint. Saint Luther sounds unutterably strange to our ears, our lips can hardly form the words. Yet many are called saints that deserve the title far less than did Luther. But in that sense Luther will never be a "saint." He is too much one of us. As little as we would think of signing a letter "Saint Jones," so little do we think of calling him Saint Luther. We love to call him "Father" Luther, but not in the Roman way where "father" is a title given every priest. He is Father Luther, as we call every aged Christian brother "father"; it is a term of endearment and of respect. It means: "I am proud and grateful to be of your kind." Such hero-worship is wholesome; it will not worship the hero at the expense of the Christian idea and it will help the "worshiper" to attain maturity in his Christian estate by holding up before him the best possible example of a poor sinner who has become rich in Christ. Such hero-worship will not make proud Christians, it will make Christians as humble as Luther was himself in

all spiritual things, but strong in the strength of Christ, whose power is strong in the weak. Luther is our hero, but Jesus Christ is our Savior, in Him we glory that He has given us a Paul, an Apollos, a Cephas, a Luther. "Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; **all are yours; and ye are Christ's;** and Christ is God's." II Cor. 3: 21-23.

H. K. M.

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"Lo, the Mortician!" Under this head the last issue of the Sunday Sentinel prints the following: "Why will some ultra-modern undertakers persist in making of their eminently respectable, indispensable and even consolatory profession a Comic Figure?"

A lack of the sense of humor, one may suppose. Consider this excruciating advertisement in an Iowa paper by a firm of "morticians":

'A funeral service conducted by us is noted for its simple, dignified grandeur. The talents of our well-directed organization make each funeral ceremony a decidedly artistic achievement.'

Now that is actually inserted and paid for in all seriousness as a bid for customers! Charles Dickens, who poked much fun at undertakers (they got him at last), never conceived anything more inherently burlesque than that prospectus of the Iowa firm that advertises to put you away with 'dignified grandeur,' and to make your funeral a 'decidedly artistic achievement'—like a Paris gown or a trombone solo. Even Dickens' comic undertaker, Mr. Mould, showed some sensibility when he qualified a puff of his establishment with the feeling reflection:

'How much consolation may I, even I, have diffused among my fellow-creatures by means of my four long tailed prancers, never harnessed under ten pound ten.'

No sensible, self-respecting man wants to be exploited after death or to have the remains of a dear relative exploited as an object d'art or the centerpiece of an 'artistic achievement' by a firm of undertakers bent upon turning the ceremony into an occasion for the display of the artistic resources of their own establishment.

It can not be too often repeated or too clearly understood that the chief interest of a well conducted funeral centers about the late lamented and the bereaved family, and not about the arrangements of the undertaker—and we make no exception in favor of 'morticians' of artistic temperament and the professional ambition to make their achievements the last word in funerals. Surely something is due to the position of the bereaved household, and even the not unimportant function of the clergyman is to be considered.

No; the vainglorious disposition of the Iowa 'mortician' to regard himself and his firm as the 'whole show' on these melancholy occasions is to be regretted, and the subject should be taken up at the next convention.'

The editor who wrote the above certainly touches on a subject that needs to be discussed in our day, but we do not expect much change to result from a discussion of the matter at the next Undertakers' Convention. The undertakers of the above kind are supplying a demand; as long as there is a demand for such services there will in all likelihood be plenty of people willing to furnish them. The love for "posing" and masquerading is wide-spread, and no occasion seems sacred enough to interdict its exercise. When our generation sees the hollowness and the hypocrisy of "making a show" of themselves and their dead the "mortician" will automatically sink to his true level.

G.

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Are we to be Persecuted? The Nebraska state council of defense has felt it necessary to publish a statement in which together with other

charges against other persons, the Lutherans were given official warning that their course during these war times was considered "disloyal activity and passivity that has tended to give aid and comfort to Germany as an enemy."—Nothing specific is charged. The nearest the arraignment comes to making specific charges is the allegation that "the conspicuous representatives of the Lutheran church have very generally, and it may be said, almost universally, refused to cooperate with several efforts made by patriotic organizations for the support of the government. On the contrary they have very generally and privately discouraged the American cause and have shown marked partiality for the cause of America's enemy."—What can happen in Nebraska may happen in any other state; for that reason a discussion of the charges is not out of place. It is not our intention to protest our innocence, or to assert that the Nebraska Lutherans were innocent of wrongdoing. To take this vague and scurrilous attack as seriously as that would lend countenance to the thought that there is something to it.—It is merely the outgrowth, on the one hand, of illconcealed dislike for the Lutheran church. This dislike obtains in times of peace no less than now. It has nothing, or very little, to do with the German character of the Lutheran church, but it is engendered by some of the characteristics which an outsider first notices when observing Lutheran practice. We point out three such offensive Lutheran practices, that is, they are offensive to the self-appointed guardians and exponents of "American liberty and tolerance": first, our outspoken criticism of the lodge and fraternalism; secondly, our policy of tenaciously clinging to our own schools; and thirdly, our refusal to be party to the

unionism which the so-called American churches are forever substituting for Christianity.—There may be other prominent causes for dislike, but these three are unquestionably the foremost.—On the other hand, the cause for lack of cordial understanding on the other side is due to a very profound ignorance of these principles for which Lutherans contend untiringly. It is quite usual that we know little or nothing about those things which we instinctively dislike. They do not like us, therefore they do not want to know anything about us. In the American character this is a heritage particularly of our British connections. This state of affairs provides ideal conditions for persecution against which it is wellnigh useless to protest. It is advisable, however, to bear in mind that the only sure way to triumph over unjust persecution is renewed energy and zeal to be true to your own principles. Those unfortunates who try to escape from persecution by outwardly conforming to the wishes of the persecutors, are not winning the good will they seek. They are not respected but suspected. Conscious of your own worth and public righteousness, you will win the respect of our enemy if you convince him, by remaining true to your principles, that you never were wrong.—Our critics will find that the most patriotic Lutherans will very often refuse to cooperate with certain "patriotic organizations" for the simple reason that they do not conform to our high standard of patriotism and in the end they will be forced to admit that patriotism is not a patented article which can only be procured under copyrighted trade marks. Our critics grow peevish because we sometimes refuse to give encouragement to efforts which they heartily approve. Their peevishness should not annoy us; Lutherans are accustomed to think for themselves and know very well why they do not encourage certain enterprises—and it is for the good of the common country that there are such discriminating citizens left.—The best advice in the face of this threatened persecution is this: do not let the faulty Americanism of our critics make you less the American that you are now.

H. K. M.

AUGSBURG CONFESSIO

Article XVI—Of Civil Government

"Of Civil Affairs, they teach, that lawful civil ordinances are good works of God, and that it is right for Christians to bear civil office, to sit as judges, to determine matters by the Imperial and other existing laws, to award just punishments, to engage in just wars, to serve as soldiers, to make legal contracts, to hold property, to make oath when required by the magistrates, to marry, to be given in marriage.

They condemn the Anabaptists, who forbid these civil offices to Christians. They condemn also those who do not place the perfection of the Gospel in the

fear of God and in faith, but in forsaking civil office; for the Gospel teaches an eternal righteousness of the heart. Meanwhile, it does not destroy the State or the family, but especially requires their preservation as ordinances of God, and in such ordinances the exercise of charity. Therefore, Christians are necessarily bound to obey their own magistrates and laws, save only when commanded to sin, for then they ought to obey God rather than men. (Acts 5: 29.)"

The Anabaptists, of whom our article makes mention, from a false conception of the Gospel believed submission to any temporal government incompatible with the freedom of a Christian. The truly spiritual, they held, form a community on earth that must hold itself strictly aloof from the world. Muentzer, one of the exponents of their views, declares it impossible to teach people the truth so long as they are under the rule of princes. But Rome is also involved in this issue; it teaches the temporal sovereignty of the pope, and, on the other hand, declares that Christian perfection cannot be attained by those who remain in the ordinary walks of life, but by those only who withdraw from the world, vowing poverty, celibacy, etc.

Against these wrong views the Augsburg Confession states clearly from Scripture the true relation between State and Church.

The State—

Civil government is an ordinance of God.

Prov. 8: 15: "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice."

Dan. 2:21: "He . . . setteth up kings."

Rom. 13: 1: "For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God."

John 19: 11, Jesus to Pilate: "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above."

1 Peter 2: 13: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake." But Scripture does not teach a certain **form of government** as divinely ordained. The **functions** of civil government are briefly indicated in our article. It deals with none but temporal, civil, social, and economic affairs. Luke 12: 14: "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" Rom. 13: 7: "Render therefore to all their dues; tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor."

Acts 19: 28: "Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any man, the law is open, and there are deputies; let them implead one another."

The **purpose** of all government is defined in 1 Tim. 2: 2: "That we may lead a **quiet and peaceable life** in all godliness and honesty." Civil authorities are to establish and maintain order and discipline; restrain evil men; protect the rights and the property of the individual and of the nation; regulate commerce; and, in general, promote the temporal welfare of the public.

But in no instance does Scripture commit spiritual matter into the hands of civil government. This is to protect Christians in their rights just as it protects other citizens. (Paul's appeal to Caesar.)

Civil government derives its **authority** from its divine institution. (See texts quoted above.) Though it does not apply the revealed law, as Carlstadt demanded, but draws on human reason, to which Scripture still ascribes certain powers, and on the natural law, unwritten in the heart of every man and actuated by his conscience, we are bound to obey for the Lord's sake. Rom. 12: 5: "Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." Civil government has legislative and judicial powers. It has the authority to enforce its laws to the extent of using the sword against the offender at home and against the foreign foe as well. Rom. 13: 4: "For he (the power) beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." The government has the right to call its subject to arms.

But its authority is limited by that of God: "We ought to obey God rather than men." Acts 5: 29.

The **means employed** in civil government is the law. The authorities cannot rely on persuasion, they must compel obedience.

This leaves the government an entirely temporal, external thing, a thing of this world.

The Church—

The Church, on the other hand, is purely spiritual. "They condemn also those who do not place the perfection of the Gospel in the fear of God and in faith, but in forsaking civil offices; for the Gospel teaches an eternal righteousness of the heart."

The Gospel has to do solely with the heart of man, which it turns to Christ in a living faith and fills with love toward Him. "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation; neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for behold, the kingdom of God is within you." Luke 17: 20, 21. "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Rom. 14: 17.

Christianity is not the observance of certain ceremonies; it is not a certain form of outward life; it is faith in Christ Jesus. The Church is spiritual; its possessions are spiritual; its aims and hopes are spiritual; its work is spiritual.

The Church has nothing to do with politics, economics, hygiene, or social conditions. The Church is not the law maker or monitor for the State. The Church does not depend for its existence and progress on any certain form of government. The Church is and must remain purely spiritual.

But does not this fact place the Church at variance with the State? Jesus tells us, Matt. 22: 21, that it does not: "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's. And

our Confession says: "Meanwhile, it does not destroy the State or the family, but especially requires their preservation as ordinances of God." There will be no conflict, so long as both, Church and State, remain within the sphere assigned them by the Lord. Spiritual life is not dependent on outward conditions. A Christian may be rich or poor; master or slave; subject to a despot or citizen of a republic; married or unmarried. Though spiritual, he lives in a material world and enjoys with thanksgiving the material blessings he receives from the hand of his Father. Among these are the blessings of a good government and of a happy home. He is the last to want to destroy the State or the family, as he regards them as ordinances of God for his good, ordinances that must be preserved. Rom. 13: 4: "For he is the minister of God to thee for good." When Paul stood in danger of being scourged without just cause, he saved himself by urging his right as a Roman citizen, Acts 22: 25-28. (His final appeal to Caesar, Acts 25: 11.)

The Christian can submit himself to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, and render even a heathen government the obedience of love, and not that of mere fear. He can, and should, take a hearty interest in the welfare of the State and render his country every service. He can hold public office, high or low, without denying his Christianity. He is a true patriot, a loyal citizen; and he is that for the very fact that he is a Christian.

For the Church, though it has nothing to do with civil affairs and holds itself aloof from politics, social reform movements, etc., is not without influence on the State. But this is an indirect influence, exerted by the Church through its individual members, as they take an active part in the affairs of this life. In our article we read: ". . . and in such ordinances the exercise of charity." While the Church concerns itself solely with the spiritual upbuilding of the individual in faith and in the love and fear of God, the individual Christian carries this love toward God into his daily life. In this love he serves his Father in Heaven in the home and in the workshop; as an employer or as an employee; as the head of a nation or as its humblest citizen. This love gives his life its direction; it controls his thoughts, words, and deeds. In this love he will serve his God also in rendering faithful service to civil government, the ordinance of God. There is no conflict of duties, unless the civil authorities ask him to do that which is against the will of God. In that case the Christian must refuse to obey and suffer the consequences in patient submission to the will of God, in honor of Him who is King over all.

J. B.

—"Afflictions are blessings, when we can bless God for afflictions."

WHO WILL TAKE THEIR PLACE?

We report in this issue the death of three ministers of the Wisconsin Synod, two of whom died in the service; and we ask, Who will take their place? In asking this, we are not thinking of the immediate successors in office of the pastors Viestenz and Hinnenthal. The vacancies that have been created by their death will undoubtedly be filled; but that means that two other congregations will have to suffer the loss of their minister; then, if these two call successfully, two more will be affected—and so on. It is evident that in the end one or two congregations will have to wait.—For what? Why, for the graduation from the Seminary of the class of 1918. But what, if there were no class of 1918; or if this class should, as is frequently the case, prove too small in number to supply the wants of our large synod? Then these two congregations, and others, would simply have to remain unsupplied and we would be compelled to curtail our work in the various mission fields. The cause of the Lord would suffer. The threatening dearth of ministers is the grave problem that confronts us in these days. Even now we have to refuse men to fields that need them sorely. And we hope to grow; for do we not all pray and labor for the growth of the Church? Ten years hence, God being gracious, we shall need many more men than we need to-day. We cannot simply take men from other walks of life; the minister must be carefully educated and trained for his work. Neglect of a thorough training were a calamity for the Church. We cannot depend on others to furnish us the trained men we require; we have to see to it that we have every year a sufficient number of well trained young men to supply the ever growing needs of our synod. Where shall we get them? Remember that the class of 1918 for which many a congregation will be waiting was started in 1908. If we want to prepare for the needs of 1927 we must begin in 1917; that is, now!

We have at present but small classes in our preparatory department at Watertown, and classes dwindle away as they advance in their course. Something must be done **now** to fill the Sexta of our colleges with boys that are able and willing to prepare for the ministry. Something will have to be done next year to bring in more. Every succeeding year will require still greater effort in that direction. Then something will have to be done year after year, and all the year round, to keep those boys in the college; they must be prayed for, encouraged, and supported, if they need financial help. This all applies as well to our Teachers' Seminary at New Ulm and to the wants of our parochial school.

Then let us go to work. What we have been preaching and hearing in this year of jubilee ought to awaken us to our duty and make us ready for work

and for sacrifice. Naturally, our preachers and teachers should take the lead, being better informed as to the needs of our Church than many of our parishioners. There is no doubt that they will make every effort to win students for our institutions: But they cannot very well kidnap the boys we need; our Lutheran parents will have to rise to their duty. Who is to take the place of those who drop from the ranks? You Lutheran parents certainly want some one to do it; why not send your son? Why rely on other parents; by what right do you expect them to do what you decline to do?

Do not tell us that the salary of ministers and teachers is so low that you do not want to expose your child to a life of constant privation. We know that our congregations are often unmindful of what the Lord says on this matter; we know that the men whose death this issue reports did not amass wealth; but neither did they starve. Ever true to His promise, the Lord provided for them; and He will continue to provide for those who have in them lost their human provider. One of these men had grown old in the service, and of the other we hear that he returned to the work as soon as he had sufficiently recuperated. There must have been something that attracted them to the ministry and kept them in it. Yes, there is something that makes this work dear to the heart of a Christian: the pleasure of serving the Savior in the cause that is so dear to Him; the pleasure of leading men to Him in whom they find comfort and peace and life. There are joys in the life of a minister or parochial school teacher that far outweigh the burden of care and sorrow the faithful servant of the Lord may have to bear. If you want your son to enjoy a full, rich, and useful life, send him to college and prepare him to serve the Church as a minister or a parochial school teacher.

Then think of eternity—what a joy is theirs who see before the throne of God the fruit of their labors, souls in eternal bliss; what a glory! “And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.” Dan. 12: 13.

Who will take the place of those the Lord has called to their rest, who will help to swell the ranks of those at work in the vineyard of the Lord? Let every Lutheran boy who is able respond to the call of his Savior, and may no Lutheran parent prove unwilling to give his son to the Lord for service in the church or the school!

J. B.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE WISCONSIN SYNOD

The Wisconsin Synod held its sixty-seventh annual convention from July 11th to 18th at St. Matthew's church in Milwaukee (the Rev. A. Bendler, pastor). This synodical meeting will for more than one reason stand forth from others in the memory of those who

took part in it. As far as furnishing quarters to the delegates was concerned, it was an experiment—each congregation being expected to bear the expense of caring for its own delegation. If numbers prove anything the plan was a success: there were present 213 pastors and professors, 54 teachers, and 114 lay delegates.

The convention of this year was notable primarily for its being a jubilee synod, commemorating the four hundredth anniversary of the Reformation; this idea stood in the foreground throughout the sessions—from the opening service to the hymn at close. The Rev. A. Spiering, first vice-president, preached the opening sermon on Is. 35: 1-4. He dwelt on the church's cause for rejoicing and emphasized that even the thunders of the world combat should not hush the Christian's song of praise. The jubilee note was dominant, too, in the address with which the president, the Rev. G. E. Bergemann, opened the first business session. He pointed to Luther as an eminent example of those of whom it is written: “Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.” Heb. 13: 7. The doctrinal papers read treated of the same great central thought which filled all hearts. The first, read by the Rev. John Meyer of Oconomowoc, was a treatise on one of the most, if not ~~the~~ most, precious of Luther's writings—“On the Freedom of a Christian.” The truths for which Luther here bears witness against the pope were set forth in such a masterly way that we ask our readers to read this treatise when it comes to their hand in the Synodical Report to be published later. The second paper is also worthy of a careful perusal by our readers. In the same the Rev. L. Kirst of Beaver Dam dwelt on “the one thing needful” (Luke 10) as the power, the main-spring, and the doctrine of the Reformation.

The climax of our synodical jubilee celebration was reached in the Sunday services at the Auditorium. The festival committee had spent much time and thought on the arrangements for this great day, nor was their work in vain. A large number of Lutherans took part in both of the services held. Four speakers spoke to them on the blessings of the Reformation. In the afternoon the Rev. G. E. Bergemann gave a German address on 2 Cor. 5: 18-21, and the Rev. A. Bendler spoke in English on Luther the preacher and teacher. In the evening the Rev. J. Brenner delivered an English address on the text 1 Pet. 2: 5. Dir. A. Schaller of the Theological Seminary followed, speaking in German and treating the text Rom. 14: 17, 18. A large mass-chorus, directed by Prof. C. Voss, sang songs of praise and added materially to the festival character of the occasion. The immense audience joined in singing the Luther-hymn “A Mighty Fortress is Our God.” (To be continued.)

PASTORS, ATTENTION!

Many of our members have already enlisted, and others will soon be drafted. In order that their spiritual wants may not be neglected, our synod instructed Pres. Bergemann to appoint a committee which is to take charge of this matter, acting in concert with a similar committee of the Missouri synod.

The following have been appointed:

Rev. John Brenner, 814 Vliet St., Milwaukee, Wis., chairman.

Rev. Otto Hagedorn, 404 Thomas Ave., Milwaukee, Wis.

Mr. Ernst von Briesen, 401 Germania Building, Milwaukee, Wis.

Pastors will kindly send the names of such members to the chairman of this committee, stating correctly in which department of the service they are to be found.

JOHN BRENNER.

OBITUARY† **Pastor Christian Sauer, Jr.** †

After an illness of six years, Pastor Christian Sauer, Jr., son of the Rev. Christian Sauer and his wife Elizabeth Weimar, was called home on June 26th, at the age of thirty-three years, five months, and twenty-seven days.

Pastor Sauer was born at Wonewoc, Wis., on Dec. 29, 1883. In 1898 he entered Northwestern College, from which he was graduated in 1904. After having finished his course at the Seminary in Wauwatosa in 1908, he accepted the call of the congregation in Arcadia, Wis. In 1909 he left Arcadia for Oakfield, Wis., where he labored faithfully till 1911, when his failing health compelled him to resign.

He was buried at Juneau on June 29th, Prof. John Schaller and the Rev. W. Pifer officiating.

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† **Pastor Henry J. Viestenz.** †

On July 6th, another faithful worker in the vineyard of the Lord was called to his eternal rest, Pastor Henry Viestenz dying after an operation, to which he had found it necessary to submit.

Rev. Viestenz was born in 1863 near Buffalo, N. Y. From his early youth he had been determined to prepare for the ministry. At the age of twenty he began his studies at Northwestern College, later entering the Seminary, then in Milwaukee. In 1892 he was called to Sauk Co., Wis., to serve the parish of Greenfield, Caledonia, and Merrimac. These congregations had no parsonage. So Rev. Viestenz took up his residence at Baraboo, until he had with his own hands erected the necessary parsonage.

In 1895 he removed to Clifton, Wis., where he labored till 1913, when his failing health compelled him to seek the milder climate of the Pacific coast. Having regained his strength, he preached, for a time, at

Tacoma, Wash. Ten and one-half years ago, his first congregations called him back to Sauk Co. Leaving Arcadia, Wis., where he had been stationed for two years, he followed the call and has now, at the age of fifty-four, ended his labors as a preacher of the Gospel where he had begun them.

The burial took place on July 9th, the following ministers officiating: H. Mueller, F. Pöpp, J. Mittelstaedt, H. Zimmermann, E. Mayerhoff, and A. Siegler. The pastors W. Kansier, J. Freund, H. Reimers, J. Wiening, and Prof. Fr. Meyer acted as pall bearers.

Rev. Viestenz is survived by his widow, formerly Miss Anna Eber of Baraboo, one daughter, the wife of Rev. R. Lederer, one grandchild, four brothers, and two sisters.

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News of the death of Rev. Wm. Hinnenthal of Kaukauna, Wis., has reached us. We hope to be able to give a full report in our next issue.

REPORT OF MEETING OF DISTRICT SYNOD OF NEBRASKA

On Thursday, June 28th, 1917, the District Synod of Nebraska met in its 14th annual session to transact business, at Norfolk, Nebr., by invitation of St. Paul's Church and its pastor, John Witt.

Synod opened with the customary Divine services, in which President, Rev. Theo. Braeuer of Hadar, preached a forceful sermon from Psalm 126, verse 5. At 2.30 P. M. synod went into business session, organizing with brief devotional followed by roll-call of ministers and teachers, and presentation of credentials by congregational delegates. Thereupon the chairman's report upon the work, progress, changes of the past year, was heard. It was followed by the appointment of committees and the reading of the order of business.

Rev. John Haase of St. Paul, Minn., who had appeared as representative of the chair from the Joint Synod, was given the floor to explain the aims and working methods and advantages of a closer consolidation and centralization for the four synods forming the now reorganized Joint Synod. He pleaded for the ratification of the proposed revisions of the old constitution as also for uniformity in constitutions governing the districts.

Three morning sessions and part of the 4th afternoon session were devoted to a paper by Rev. Prof. Aug. Pieper of our Theological Seminary at Wauwatosa, Wis. In it was shown **Luther's teaching concerning Christian priesthood**. Under 5 subdivisions Luther's interpretation of the priesthood and its functions was set forth. The first thesis showed, that in opposition to the false distinction of the spirituality of the priest from the layman as taught by Popery, Luther held according to Scripture, that **every lay Christian is a true priest before God**. In the second

thesis was brought out, that the public office of the priest does not consist in a special office assigned by Christ to a select class, whereby they are delegated to teach, govern, and bring offerings. Rather the office is the **common ministration of those priestly privileges, which every individual Christian possesses.** The third thesis emphasized, that **the priesthood in the church is not given by Christ to "some select individuals" only; but it is an innate and inalienable possession and right of all Christians.** Therefore the private and public ministration of this privilege is on the one hand performed thru the working of the Spirit, on the other hand by the will and command of God. Thesis four pointed out, in order that the priestly office may be administered by special persons, the consent of the local community of priests is necessary, i. e., **such office requires the call of the pastor by the church.** The fifth and final thesis showed **the functions of the pastor not bound by special rules and laws,** as no divine ordinances, beyond those of moral obligations, were given for the outward forms of priestly ministrations in private and public. These forms, indeed, are freely directed and expressed according to prevailing conditions thru the spirit, which governs the church.

The four business-sessions brought much matter of importance before synod. The financial report for 10 months (synod met two months earlier this year) showed receipts of \$6,875.49 and disbursements of \$5,656.84. Report of our home-missions was main business discussed the second afternoon. It showed on the whole a healthy condition of growth in existing fields and expansion to new territory. Two more men could be called and placed in the field, one to fill a vacancy, the other to cover new territory. A necessary increase of salary was voted the three veteran men. The last two afternoon-sessions brought consideration of all other committee reports, some quickly ratified, others calling for much consideration. None took up more time than the report on matter of consolidation of synods into one centralized unit with subdivision into districts. The Synod stood ready to enter upon unification, with certain reservations in regard to directing its own missions, administration of its own funds and retention of its property.

Nebraska has many devoted friends of our Apache Indian Mission. As Rev. Edgar Guenther, veteran missionary and now director of the missions in Arizona, was present at synod to add a verbal report to that of the committee, the interest was animated and synod was ready to concur in the request for four more men in that field, so that two men can be maintained at every station, one devoting his time to the school and the other to the camps. Synod's five delegates to the meeting of the Joint Synod at St. Paul were instructed to give their vote in that direction. By vote all congregations were advised to take up a collection

among our school children to mark the grave of our sainted Harders by a monument.

Rev. C. F. Drewes of St. Louis, director of our negro-missions in the South, also was present and given time to place before us the needs of that field and given the assurance of our support as before. Nor were those forgotten in the pressure of appropriating for distant fields, who lay at our very door, our needy ministers and widows and indigent students. Having voted thanks to pastor and people of St. Paul's of Norfolk for their hospitality and accepted an invitation from Zion's of Clatonia for 1918, synod adjourned until August of next year. Communion services united us once more on the evening of the last day, July 2nd. Five days of profitable instruction and mutual strengthening to all were granted us. Many visiting brethren from the synods of Missouri and Wisconsin were present as our guests, so that by actual numbers we never had a larger assembly to boast of.

In conclusion may be added, that on Sunday of that week, July 1st, the joint Reformation Jubilee was observed by the two churches of Norfolk and all churches of the Missouri and Wisconsin synods in the vicinity. Weather conditions and roads being fine and autos in abundance, Norfolk perhaps never saw a greater crush of people than that day brought to the chautauqua grounds and the service tent erected there. The crowds were estimated from 5 to 6,000 in the afternoon. Morning services were given to a stirring sermon by Rev. Prof. Aug. Pieper based on Galatians 6: 7, and an address by Rev. C. F. Drewes. In the afternoon Rev. H. Hartmann of Louisville, Nebr., preached from Romans 1: 16 in the German language and Rev. Julius Gamm of La Crosse, Wis., spoke from Galatians 5: 3 in English. In the evening services, which were entirely in English, Rev. Martin Scheipps of Pierre, Nebr., filled the pulpit and was followed by Rev. Edgar Guenther in a talk on Indian Mission Work.

May the Lord have brought inspiration and steadfastness in the truth to all participants of these hours of rejoicing over the gift of the pure evangel as taught by Luther and the church bearing his name!

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