

The Confessional Lutheran Emigrations From Prussia And Saxony Around 1839

[Since 1989 is the sesquicentennial of these emigrations, the Quarterly is pleased to present this study of the movement to which not a few WELS members and congregations trace their roots. Further installments will follow in subsequent issues.]

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The year 1989 marks the 150th anniversary of the arrival in America of two rather large companies of confessional Lutheran emigrants. In 1839 about one thousand emigrants from Prussia settled in and around Buffalo, New York, and Milwaukee and Freistadt in Wisconsin. That same year approximately eight hundred emigrants from Saxony settled in St. Louis and Perry County, Missouri. Among other things, these two groups had in common that they were strict, confessional Lutherans. They had left their homelands because of conflicts with their governments and because they had come to the conviction that it was necessary for them to leave in order to preserve their historic Lutheran faith. In the case of the Prussians, several other larger and smaller companies followed them for the same reason. The total number of these confessional Lutherans in these emigration companies is estimated to have totaled between five and seven thousand people.

In several ways they were, in spite of their size, insignificantly small groups. Whether one compare them to the total population of Germany at the time or only to the total of Germans who emigrated for all causes, their numbers were not large. They even constituted only a minor portion of all the confessional Lutherans who were protesting the religious situations in Prussia and Saxony at the time. Once they arrived in the New World, they comprised only a small portion of the German Lutherans here.

But numbers alone are not always a reliable guide to the importance of a group. These particular immigrants soon had an influence far out of proportion to their numbers. Their arrival led to the organization of the Buffalo Synod among the Prussian emigrants in 1845. The Saxon emigrants were among the founders of the Missouri Synod in 1847. The relationship of these two bodies to each other brought about the organization of the Iowa Synod in 1854. All three with their emphasis on confessional Lutheranism exerted a considerable influence on the synods around them in the Midwest and beyond. The Wisconsin Synod, organized in 1850 in conscious opposition to the Buffalo and Missouri Synods, which were already present in Milwaukee, noted the conservative, confessional emphasis of those bodies and, reflecting on its own confessional stance, gradually altered it until, in 1868, it found itself in agreement with the Missouri Synod.

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, appropriately, is giving major emphasis this year to the arrival of the Prussian and Saxon immigrants in 1839. They played a most important role in Missouri's founding and early history. But members of the Wisconsin Synod, too, have good reason to refresh their memory regarding the events and decisions that brought these groups to America. Hence, a study of these two emigrations, their backgrounds and results in America is indeed appropriate.

Part I

THE PRUSSIAN EMIGRATIONS

Frederick William III and the Prussian Union

The emigrations of the "Old Lutherans," the confessional Lutherans who found it impossible to remain in Prussia about 1839, were a direct result of the establishment of the Prussian Union. This is usually described as the merger of the Lutheran and Reformed churches in Prussia which was brought into existence on June 25, 1830, or a similar event that preceded it on October 31, 1817.

On this earlier date, the 300th anniversary of the beginning of the Lutheran Reformation, Frederick William III, the King of Prussia, ordered that the court and garrison church at Potsdam, where he worshipped, and which actually consisted of a Lutheran and a Reformed congregation, be merged. This merged congregation was directed to hold a communion service to observe the Reformation anniversary. In announcing this merger, the king suggested that it would be most appropriate if all other Protestant congregations in Prussia would likewise become "Union" congregations. Then on June 25, 1830, in observance of the 300th anniversary of the presentation of the Augsburg Confession, the king *ordered* that all Protestant congregations in Prussia become "Evangelical Christian" congregations, dropping the designation Lutheran or Reformed.

It should be kept in mind, however, that the merger or union of Lutheran and Reformed churches in Prussia suggested in 1817 and ordered in 1830 was not a new idea with Frederick William III. This was rather the culmination of continuing efforts on the part of the Prussian rulers working toward the elimination of the distinctions between the Lutherans and Reformed in their realm.

The Reformation had been introduced into Brandenburg in 1539 under Elector Joachim II. His successor, John George, had signed the Formula of Concord in 1577, so that Brandenburg appeared to be one of the strictly Lutheran territories at that time. The situation changed in 1613, when Elector John Sigismund announced he was converting to the Reformed faith. In the Palatinate and other duchies where there had been such a change, the whole duchy had changed to the Reformed faith with its ruler. If John Sigismund had hopes or plans for the same thing to happen in Brandenburg, he had to lay them aside. Strong opposition to such a move by the clergy and laity and even his own wife made it apparent that such a development was not possible, at least for the immediate future.

One might ask what persuaded the Elector to become Reformed. He declared it to be a matter of conviction on his part. That may have been the case. But there were several other factors which very likely influenced him. When he announced his conversion, he gave expression to the hope that in the lands of Electoral Brandenburg whatever remained of papistic superstition or other human, uncommanded devotion in church and school would henceforth be discarded. It was the dawn of the scientific age, when a rationalistic influence was at work which preferred that religious position which was most readily grasped by human understanding and which was the most antipapistic position possible. It might also be mentioned that at the time a politically ambitious Brandenburg was turning toward the West, especially toward the prosperous Netherlands, toward England and toward France, as models of progressive, up-to-date statehood.

In 1617 John Sigismund issued a *Confessio Sigismundi* as an official statement of his beliefs. Very likely he hoped that this would have an influence on his subjects. The *Confessio* was not strictly Reformed. It rejected double predestination. It seemed to aim at meeting the Lutheran Confessions half way regarding the sacraments, using definitions as much like the Lutheran as the Reformed faith in any way found possible, as if in the hope that the Lutherans of the land might also come halfway. That did not happen. Lutheran theologians and pastors were alert and warned their members against the errors of Calvinism still to be found in this document.

The next effort by the Hohenzollern rulers in the direction of attempting to bridge the doctrinal gap between the Lutherans and Reformed was made under Frederick William I, the "Great" Elector, who ruled from 1640 to 1688. He issued an edict which restricted what pastors might say from the pulpit or in the classroom of a polemical nature. It was forbidden to quote from the writings of individual theologians in discussing doctrinal differences between the Lutherans and the Reformed. Only official public confessions were to be referred to. Furthermore, it was forbidden to demonstrate the logical consequence of a given disputed doctrine. Preachers and theologians were thus severely limited in their efforts to demonstrate the errors of the opposing confessions.

The ostensible reason for this edict was to reduce and control the polemics being presented from Prussian pulpits in that age, which were at times excessive. But another result of the carrying out of the edict would be that the people in the pews would be less informed about and less aware of the doctrinal differences between the Lutheran and Reformed faiths. It tended to encourage the view that these difference were of little or no significance. It was these restrictions on polemics that Paul Gerhardt, who certainly could not be described as a strident polemicist, refused to heed. As a result, he was removed from office.

During the reigns of Elector Frederick III, who in 1701 took the title King Frederick I of Prussia, and his successor, King Frederick William I, a number of changes were ordered in the Lutheran liturgy in Prussia. Exorcism was abolished in the rite of baptism. Private confession was done away with. Crucifixes were removed from altars, as were the traditional paraments. The pastors no longer wore traditional vestments. Bread was substituted for the host in the communion service. The chanting of the liturgy was dropped. No Lutheran could object that these changes in rites and customs were scripturally intolerable. Yet all of these changes were in the direction of making the Lutheran worship service more like the Reformed service.

Yet in regard to basic doctrinal differences, Lutheran pastors and theologians continued stubbornly to resist the inroads of Reformed ideas and customs. During the Age of Pietism, usually noted for its deemphasis on doctrinal differences and doctrinal controversy, Spener and Francke insisted on the retention of the basic Lutheran doctrines and customs.

Under Frederick II, "the Great," who ruled from 1740 to 1786, the long-held Hohenzollern objective of merging the Lutherans and Reformed into one church was not actively pursued. As a Deist, Frederick did not greatly concern himself with Christian doctrine or the separation of Lutherans and Reformed. In Prussia "everyone can be saved according to his own ideas—so long as he pays his taxes," he is supposed to have said. But even if there were no overt efforts to advance the union of Lutherans and Reformed during Frederick's reign, the cause of union nevertheless advanced quietly on its own. For rationalists who did not believe in miracles or in the inspiration of Scripture or in Christ's atoning death for sins, the doctrine of the Real Presence and the other doctrines which had separated the Lutherans and Reformed for centuries really did not matter.

We come to Frederick William III and the actual introduction of the Prussian Union. He was born in 1770 and reigned from 1797 to 1840. A man handicapped throughout his life by shyness, a lack of self-confidence, and indecisiveness, he was not particularly well suited to rule a rising power like Prussia in a revolutionary age. He often was jealous for his royal authority and his royal dignity. He lacked the intellectual gifts of Frederick the Great. To his credit it should be said that he was honest, a lover of justice, given to a simple life-style, a faithful husband and loving father. He was not a hedonist like his father and had no liking for the luxurious, self-indulgent, often morally reprehensible life-style of his father. In contrast to the skepticism and cynicism of his great-uncle, Frederick the Great, he had a simple, sincere Christian faith with a strong bent toward Pietism. He apparently was sincerely troubled by the fact that he could not commune with his beloved wife, Louise, who was a Lutheran, or that as *Landesvater*, as he styled himself, he could not commune with the vast majority of his subjects.

Already in 1798, just a year after the start of his reign, Frederick William III issued a Cabinet Order, a royal decree, in which he expressed the opinion that a new joint agenda was liturgically desirable and would also bring the two confessions closer together in spite of the intractable differences that had separated them for so long. He called for the reactions of the leading theologians of the land and received generally favorable responses. He then appointed a royal commission to prepare such a joint agenda. This would prove to be a pet idea of his the rest of his life.

In 1808, in connection with other major governmental reforms brought on by the Prussian collapse during the Napoleonic wars, the traditional forms of church government, the Lutheran Supreme Consistory and the Reformed Directory, were abolished. The administration of the churches was entrusted to a *Kultusminister*, a minister of religious affairs and education. As a result of this reorganization, the king himself became the highest administrative authority over the church, the *summus episcopus*.

The Prussian church government was reorganized again in 1815 following the defeat of Napoleon. Consistories were reintroduced, but with a major difference from the older order. Each province now had one consistory which was non-confessional in nature and which administered the affairs of all faiths—Lutherans, Reformed, Catholics, Mennonites, Moravians and Jews. Frederick demonstrated that he did not hesitate to act as the *summus episcopus*. Although it was the nineteenth century and the age of revolutions and of growing interest in democracy, Frederick William III ruled with an eighteenth century kind of absolutism.

Then on September 27, 1817, in preparation for the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the Reformation, as has already been mentioned, the first of the "Union Cabinet Orders" was issued. The king

announced that he was joining his ancestors in making an earnest endeavor to unite the separated Reformed and Lutheran Churches into one "Evangelical Christian Church." He noted that this had been prevented in the past by insuperable difficulties presented by a sectarian spirit, but now it was hoped that non-essentials could be pushed aside and a true religious union of both churches which retained the essentials in which both confessions were in agreement could be attained.

In this hoped-for union, the Reformed Church would not be absorbed by the Lutheran Church, nor the Lutheran by the Reformed, but both would be absorbed into a revived Christian Church. Frederick assured everyone that it was far from him to press this union upon anyone, or to decree or determine anything in the matter. It would be of true value only if it proceeded from personal conviction, if it had its roots in the union of the heart. Fine sentiments these were, indeed. Frederick should have held to them.

As stated at the outset, Frederick announced that he would celebrate the 300th anniversary of the Reformation with the former Reformed and Lutheran court and garrison congregations at Potsdam united as one Evangelical Christian congregation and partake of Holy Communion with it. He expressed the hope that his example would be followed in spirit and in truth in all Protestant congregations in the country.

Many Protestant congregations in Prussia did indeed follow the example of the congregations in Potsdam in 1817. The union of the Lutherans and Reformed in Prussia, which had been sought after so long by the Hohenzollern rulers, took a big step forward. For Frederick the merger of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches was a simple matter. The differences that had separated the two confessions for almost 300 years and had caused so much debate and controversy were merely "external differences." They were not divisive of fellowship. They had not been divisive of fellowship for Zwingli at Marburg either. In spite of intractable differences regarding the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, Zwingli had pleaded with Luther to accept the hand of fellowship he offered. It had been Luther who adamantly refused.

Another step toward a complete union of the confessions was taken at Christmas in 1821, when a common or Union agenda appeared. As stated earlier, Frederick William III had appointed a commission to edit the agenda. But when he became impatient with the slow progress of the commission, the king began to take an ever larger part in the work himself. The final product was to a large extent the work of his hands. He had meanwhile become quite an expert in liturgies himself.

It is reported that Frederick looked on the liturgy in the church service. as being for the church much like what a parade is for the military, a public demonstration of its skills, its mental attitude and state of readiness. The king became very irritated when young rationalistic pastors departed from the traditional, ordered liturgy and substituted worship materials of their choice and making, often on a moment's whim, with little forethought or preparation. Frederick hoped and intended that the new agenda would eliminate such practices.

The new agenda evoked a less than positive reaction. For some it was too Catholic, for others too Lutheran. For confessional Lutherans it was less than Lutheran. The king had indeed studied Luther's liturgies and the other old Lutheran agendas very carefully. His liturgy was no doubt a considerable improvement over what was being thrown together haphazardly by uninformed and indifferent rationalistic pastors and yet was passing as Lutheran liturgy in many churches of the day.

But that did not change the fact that this new liturgy and agenda were intended by the king to be used by both Lutherans and Reformed in the "Evangelical Christian Church," which he was trying to bring into being. Nor would other liturgical values outweigh the fact that in the critical words of institution in the Lord's Supper Frederick's liturgy used the intentionally noncommittal formula: "Our Lord Jesus Christ said, Take eat" For a Lutheran who knew the history and confession of his church this was clearly a compromise, clearly a refusal to use or to confess Luther's uncompromising proclamation of the Real Presence of our Lord's body and blood in the sacrament.

At Christmas 1821 the new agenda was sent out in limited numbers primarily to military chaplains. But several months later all Protestant pastors in Prussia received a copy and were directed to use it in place of their traditional agenda. This action precipitated a vehement controversy throughout Prussia. Not only was the agenda criticized from all sides for what were perceived to be its liturgical failings, but many pastors and

theologians, including such a notable and influential figure as Schleiermacher, objected strongly that the king was overstepping his legitimate sphere of activity in forcing an agenda of his own making upon the church.

By way of defense the king emphasized that he had drawn much of the material in this agenda from the liturgies of "Father Luther" himself. Opponents countered that material also was drawn from the compromise liturgy drawn up in 1548 in connection with the Leipzig Interim. The controversy raged on for some time with a flurry of papers and pamphlets being issued pro and con. Surprisingly, the king himself engaged in writing pamphlets in defense of his agenda. He also used every means at his disposal to gain increased support for this his *Lieblingswerk*. He went so far as to bestow medals and awards in an attempt to swing people over to his side. Those who opposed the agenda were definitely given to feel that they were out of favor with the king. Finally, in 1829 a revised edition of the agenda was issued, which included more materials from the historic Lutheran agendas. With this the agenda controversy began to die down.

Other steps were taken by the government to further the merger of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches. Since 1820, candidates for the first theological examination were required to declare whether they were willing to join the Union. They were assigned to congregations without consideration of the confession of the congregations unless the congregation objected. All religious services for men in the military were conducted as Union services without regard to the confession of the individual serviceman. Only those teachings were taught by military chaplains which were agreed upon by both confessions. The theological faculty at the new university of Bonn was specifically established as a Union faculty. The ordination vows of the candidates with which they had previously pledged their faithfulness either to the Lutheran or the Reformed Confessions were changed into a single vow for all Protestant candidates pledging faithfulness "to the three Ecumenical Symbols and the other Symbols of the Evangelical Church."

In 1830 all superintendents and general superintendents were instructed by a Cabinet Order to "direct their attention and their influence toward this, that the two names which distinguish the two Evangelical confessions, Reformed and Lutheran, *be given up* and exchanged for the name 'Evangelical' by clergy and congregations."

Over against questions and objections which began to be raised about these procedures, the king and top church officials insisted over and over again that the historic confessions were not being changed, that no individual or congregation was being forced to give up the traditional confessional beliefs. It was also asserted baldly and repeatedly that the new agenda had nothing to do with the Union. Thus the process of bringing about a unified, undifferentiated "Evangelical Church" moved ahead step by step.

A climax was reached when in April of 1830 a Cabinet Order was issued which gave directions for the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the presentation of the Augsburg Confession. All Protestant churches in Prussia were *ordered* to observe this festival with the celebration of Holy Communion. The order of service for Holy Communion in the new agenda was to be used so that the same rite would be used throughout the land. This was commended as a most effective way to "confirm or solidify the union of the confessions."

In fact, it had the opposite effect. This union by government order marked the beginning of serious and widespread protest and resistance to the Union. The 1830 Cabinet Order and the resulting observance of the anniversary with the celebration of the Lord's Supper according to the new agenda may be viewed as the high-water mark in the Hohenzollern efforts to bring about an absorptive or consensus union of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches of Prussia.

By February 1834, another Cabinet Order was issued which was intended to quiet the protests and resistance of those who were already being called "Old Lutherans." This order was described as a concession to the protesters. It marked a change of direction or strategy for the king and his advisors. The historic effort of the house of Hohenzollern to bring about a complete union of Lutheran and Reformed Churches, to achieve a single, unified confession of faith with the abolition of any and all confessional differences, was given up. It was declared that the two confessions would retain their old meaning and force for the respective churches. The Union was to be only an expression of moderation and gentleness. It was to be a union only of church government and agenda, and it was strongly emphasized that "joining the Union was a matter of free choice."

But the use of the new agenda would continue to be mandatory for all Protestant churches in Prussia. Protesting and separating Lutherans were not to be permitted to form a separate religious society. Lutherans and Reformed were required to offer each other fellowship in the participation in the Sacrament. Failure to follow the order would be dealt with severely.

Although the Cabinet Order of 1834 may have been styled as a concession to the strict confessional Lutherans to quiet their opposition, it was not effective. Candidates still had to declare whether they would accept the Union in order to be admitted to the final theological examinations. Ordination vows continued to refer not to Lutheran and Reformed Confessions, but to the "Evangelical Confessions." Pastors continued to be appointed to congregations regardless of whether they were of the same confession as the congregation, unless the congregation objected. Thus, while the government claimed to have given up its efforts of bringing about a single unified church and confession, some efforts intended to bring this about still were being made. At best, the position of the government had to be called contradictory and confusing.

Confessional opposition and government repression

Frederick William III's effort to merge the Lutheran and Reformed Churches of Prussia into an "Evangelical Christian Church" as an appropriate way of observing the 300th anniversary of the Reformation found much support. The noted theologian, Schleiermacher, had already spoken favorably of such a merger some years earlier. As a result of the influences of Pietism and Rationalism, the great majority of Lutherans either favored the merger or were indifferent toward it. Since the days of Zwingli, the Reformed had not considered the differences between the two confessions as divisive of fellowship, so the relatively small number of Reformed people in Prussia favored the move.

Also outside Prussia there were positive responses to the proposal of union. In the duchy of Nassau, for instance, word of the plans for the Prussian Reformation celebration was received even before the proclamation was issued publicly in Prussia in September. By the time of the Reformation festival, church leaders and clergy there had held the necessary meetings, made the necessary plans and preparations and established a Union church in Nassau.

But the Prussian Union also met with opposition from various sources. Perhaps the first opponent to address a wider public was the powerful preacher from Kiel in Schleswig-Holstein, *Klaus Harms*. This son of a miller had spent his teen years as a farm hand. He didn't take up preparation for the ministry until he was nineteen. Rationalism was the predominant influence in his theological training. When he finished his studies, he was, in his own words, "among the most heterodox" of graduates.

But through the study of the Bible, the Lutheran Confessions and Lutheran theology Harms in time came to a heartfelt faith in the Savior and a soundly Lutheran theology. He also developed into one of the most effective preachers in all Germany. In his sermon for the Reformation Festival in 1814 he described the deplorable conditions of a church ruined by Rationalism and exclaimed: "May another Luther soon arise."

For the 300th anniversary of the Reformation in 1817 Harms republished Luther's Ninety-Five Theses and added another ninetyfive theses of his own. In the latter he attacked the Rationalism which was so prevalent in the church of the day. Reason, he said, had become the pope and Antichrist of the day as far as faith was concerned, and conscience (a conscience functioning without regard to the Scriptures) had become the people's pope and Antichrist as far as their actions were concerned. Harms also directed the often ironic comments of his theses against the Union of Lutheran and Reformed Churches: "As a poor maiden the Lutheran Church is now to be made rich by being married." "To say that time has removed the wall of partition between Lutherans and Reformed is not a straightforward mode of speech. It is necessary to ask which fell away from the faith of their church, the Lutherans or the Reformed. Or both?" "If at the colloquy at Marburg in 1529 the body and blood of Christ was in the bread and wine, it is still so in 1817." Harm's theses quickly became known all over Germany and prompted widespread discussion and reflection concerning the advisability of the Union. One theologian called them a very bitter medicine, but one called for by the spiritual malady of the times.

Harm's criticism of the Union came from Schleswig-Holstein, from outside Prussia. He himself never had to deal with it on a personal level. That was not the case with *Johann Gottfried Scheibel*, another early opponent of the Union. Scheibel lived and worked in Breslau in the province of Silesia for most of his life. Breslau was an early center of opposition to union, and Scheibel was at the center of that opposition.

Scheibel was born in Breslau in 1783. His father was the rector of the St. Elisabeth Gymnasium (High School) and assistant inspector of the schools in Breslau. The father had resisted and opposed the inroads of Rationalism into the city and province. He was orthodox in his theology and serious about putting his faith into practice in his daily life. Thus young Johann Gottfried grew up in a home marked by a wholesome, vibrant Christianity. The father took great care in supervising his son's education. From 1801 to 1804 the younger Scheibel left the sheltering circle of home and family to pursue the study of theology at the University of Halle. One can imagine that the parents viewed the entrance of their son into the academic world with some concern. A majority of the theological faculty at Halle at the time were rationalists. It is reported that student life at Halle had deteriorated seriously since the days when, under Francke, Halle had been the stronghold and center of Pietism. It is said that one-third of the students at Scheibel's time became infected with sexually transmitted diseases while at the university. Yet Scheibel resisted these temptations. He retained his orthodox theology and lively Christian faith and spurned the temptations to the flesh to which so many students succumbed.

While at the university Scheibel pursued a personal interest in history, but, following the wishes of his father, he continued to prepare for the holy ministry. When his university days were over, he spent several years as a private tutor as was customary and then was called as an assistant pastor at St. Barbara's church in Breslau. When a university was established in Breslau in 1811, Scheibel was appointed a professor extraordinary, i.e., an untenured assistant. He also became an assistant pastor at St. Elisabeth's church, where his father taught, and in time became a tenured professor at the university.

Scheibel's strict Lutheranism left him out of step with the majority of the faculty and students at the university. He at times expressed sharp criticism of opponents of the Lutheran faith he held so dear. This did not help his popularity either. In his pastoral work at St. Elisabeth's, however, his faithfulness, pastoral concern and skill made him increasingly beloved by the members.

Scheibel felt very strongly that the Reformed Church from the beginning had placed reason above faith. Consequently, when Frederick William III called for the union of the Lutheran and Reformed faiths in an "Evangelical Christian Church," Scheibel at once announced that his conscience would not allow him to join such a church. When the new agenda was published, he rejected it at once because it altered not only Lutheran rites but Lutheran doctrine. The new ordination vow likewise was the object of his criticism. He pointed out that the king had no right to interfere in church matters. Pastors were becoming mere servants of the state. When the new agenda was rejected by the pastors and church boards in Silesia, Scheibel was delighted. But in the end they yielded to the royal will and accepted it.

In time the king in Berlin became aware of Scheibel's continuing strong opposition to union. Again reflecting his strong interest and concern about the acceptance of the agenda, the king himself became involved in the preparation of a pamphlet entitled, "Luther and the Prussian Church Agenda," which was intended to refute and silence Scheibel. But Scheibel would not be silenced. Rather, he increased his public criticisms of the agenda and Union. Highly indignant, the king from then on refused absolutely to read or to listen to any protests, petitions or memorials written by Scheibel and his supporters.

As has been mentioned earlier, the spring of 1830 brought the order to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the presentation of the Augsburg Confession by means of Union services using the new agenda in all Protestant churches of Prussia. Scheibel submitted a petition to the king asking to be excused from the Union festival services with the joint celebration of the Lord's Supper by Lutherans and Reformed. He requested permission instead to conduct a festival service using the old Wittenberg agenda in a small side chapel of St. Elisabeth's church. Not only was the petition refused, but Scheibel and two other like-minded assistant pastors were suspended for two weeks.

With their beloved pastor no longer allowed to minister to them publicly, Scheibel's supporters in and around Breslau, who by then numbered about 2300, began to think of themselves as the true Lutheran church

and the Prussian state church as no longer Lutheran; and they began to function as a separate and independent congregation. A committee of sixteen was appointed by this group to appeal Scheibel's suspension, first in Breslau and then in Berlin. They asked to be recognized by the government as the Lutheran church in Prussia.

By way of response the government now denied Scheibel the right to baptize or even to administer Holy Communion to the sick and dying among his followers. In response to another appeal, the government offered to grant the dissidents the right to function as a Lutheran congregation with the right to use the traditional Lutheran communion liturgy, provided they would obey the government and otherwise use the new agenda. This offer was refused. Finally, in March of 1832 Scheibel asked for an end one way or the other of his suspension. He then was removed from his position as assistant pastor at St. Elisabeth's in Breslau. Thereupon he resigned from his tenured professorship at the university and left Prussia to settle in Dresden in Saxony.

The move from Breslau to Dresden actually involved only a trip of a little over a hundred miles, not far by our standards, and he still was in Germany. But Breslau had been his home all his life. He looked on Silesia as his homeland and his trip to Saxony as a going into exile. He left behind his supporters—his congregation—as well.

In Dresden he wrote a history of the dissident movement in Breslau and the formation of the independent congregation, and he continued to carry on a very active correspondence with many of the opponents of the new agenda and the Union throughout Prussia. At the Reformation festival in 1833 he preached a sermon which included a sharp attack against the Union and the Reformed Church. As a result, the Saxon government denied him any further use of pulpits in Dresden. Upon the invitation of a sympathetic and concerned layman, Scheibel moved to the village of Hermannsdorf and carried on his correspondence and other writing against the Union and agenda from there. By 1836 he was forced to move again and now was provided a residence in Glauchau in the duchy of Saxe-Schoenberg, thanks to the effort of the conservative Lutheran leader, Rudelbach. But here, too, by 1839 it became impossible for him to work, and he left Saxony for Nuernberg in the kingdom of Bavaria. After the death of Frederick William III in 1840 and the accession of his son Frederick William IV, who was more tolerant toward the confessional Lutheran dissidents, he hoped that he would be granted permission to return to his native Breslau. But that did not happen. He died "in exile" in Nuernberg in 1843.

Posterity has little noted nor remembered Johann Gottfried Scheibel. But confessional Lutherans certainly have reason to honor his memory. From 1817 to 1830 he was the most outspoken and effective critic of the Union. He is rightly called the first leader of the Old Lutherans. Most others were taken in by the assurances of the Prussian government that the Lutheran Church could safely live and work within the Union with its Confessions unchanged and its doctrines intact. Scheibel correctly saw and publicly stated that Frederick William's statement in the Cabinet Order of 1817 that the differences which divided the Lutherans and Reformed were nonessential, was, in fact, elevated to a fundamental principle in the Prussian Union. The Lutheran understanding and teaching about the sacraments could no longer be presented as the scriptural truth, but merely as one of several valid private or group opinions.

Scheibel fought the Union by means of published writings, personal correspondence, personal testimony and by direct appeals to Prussian officials all the way up to the king. In the end, he left Prussia, apparently because he felt no way was left to carry on his activities effectively. The opposition of most of the other men who opposed the Union took other forms. The Cabinet Orders of 1830 and 1834, as has been mentioned, required that all Protestant pastors in Prussia use the new agenda. Convinced that this was contrary to the will of God, a growing number of confessional Lutheran pastors acted contrary to these orders and continued to use the old agendas which had been in use in Prussia formerly. Most often these men had a core of members in their congregations who agreed with this procedure. A considerable number of laymen who wished to remain faithful to their Lutheran faith preferred, even insisted, for example, that their children be baptized according to the rite of the old Lutheran agendas. Both pastors and lay people deliberately rejected the Union agenda and continued in the use of the old orthodox Lutheran agendas. Thus they consciously and intentionally transgressed the law.

It usually did not take long before government officials became aware of this and took appropriate action—as they saw it. Police and other officials were sent to question pastors and people to determine whether

accusations and suspicions were correct. When a pastor was found to be guilty of using some other agenda instead of the new one, he was suspended from office. That meant that the required government authorization to function as a pastor in Prussia was withdrawn. If a suspended pastor was caught conducting church services or in other ways ministering to his people in a pastoral function, he was imprisoned. When lay people were caught attending services conducted by a suspended pastor, they might be fined, have cattle or other possessions confiscated or be sent to jail for short terms. Increasingly the Prussian government made use of police surveillance to identify pastors and lay people who were acting contrary to the Cabinet Order and, if possible, to catch them in the act of doing so. Police would follow suspected pastors as though they were dangerous criminals, spying on them and recording their every movement.

As a result, these people, especially the pastors who were determined to serve their members according to the traditional Lutheran rites, "went underground." "Illegal" services using the old agendas were held in people's houses, in barns, in woods or quarries, anywhere officials were less likely to find worshipers. Pastors caught repeatedly using the forbidden agendas were sentenced to increasingly longer prison terms. One man served a term of four years. The government, following the king's reactions, was determined that all Protestant pastors use the new agenda or cease to function as pastors. The king and with him the government officials were equally determined that these stubborn dissenters, these Old Lutherans, would not be allowed to withdraw from the state church and establish a separate and independent Lutheran church or society. On this point the king was absolutely adamant, and Prussian officials with their customary efficiency did their utmost to assure that the king's will was carried out. For the police, these Old Lutherans who refused to obey this clear command of the king rated with rebels and seditionists.

A most notable instance of excessive police efforts to suppress the Old Lutherans occurred in September 1834 in the village of Hoenigern. Having received word that the local pastor was using the old agenda, officials sent a letter to the elders of the village and of the congregation summoning them to a meeting with government representatives on a certain date. A slight typographical error was made. The officials meant to invite the "community- and church-elders" to the meeting. The hyphen after "community" was omitted. When the officials arrived at the village on the date announced for the requested meeting with the elders, they were met by some 2000 people - not only the elders, but everyone in the community. The officials found it prudent to withdraw without taking the actions planned.

The villagers, of course, knew they could expect the officials to return, most likely with reinforcements. It was December 23 when they did so. With them came army troops—300 infantrymen and 200 cavalry. The approximately 200 villagers who were on guard and who attempted to keep the officials away from the church were easily driven away. The church door was broken open, and the church was seized by the soldiers. There would be no more illegal use of the old agenda in Hoenigern.

Word of this incident spread quickly not only through Prussia and all of Germany but through much of Europe also. Prussia had previously for a long time been noted for its religious tolerance. Not only the Reformed Huguenots but Catholics, Jews, Mennonites and Moravians had been allowed to settle in Prussia and practice their faith according to the dictates of their conscience and religion. But this small number of Lutherans who wished to continue worshipping according to the agenda and rites that had been in use in Brandenburg/Prussia for generations were suppressed with increasing severity.

As with the persecution of the church in the early centuries of its history, so here again the persecution caused by Frederick's fanatical determination to have all Lutherans and Reformed in one "Evangelical Christian Church" did not wipe out the opposition. Rather, the movement, while experiencing the greatest growth in Silesia and Pommerania, spread into other Prussian provinces - Posen and Brandenburg - and into Saxony as well. Exact statistics are not available, but it is said that between twenty and forty pastors were imprisoned at one time. "Flying pastors," as these men were called who moved from village to village ministering to those who with them wanted to hold to the old Lutheran rites and doctrines, carried on a kind of circuit rider ministry, usually just one step ahead of the police. Sooner or later the police caught up with them, and they spent time in prison—only to take up their undercover ministry again once they were freed.

Not surprisingly, these pastors and their little flocks drew together. Breslau was the place where the opposition had begun under Scheibel. It became the center of the movement. Pastors who joined the movement were reordained by Scheibel or some other leader, pledging themselves to all of the Lutheran Confessions. Correspondence from Scheibel and other leaders such as Eduard Huschke and Henrik Steffens plus visits back and forth by these pastors as they moved about disguised as journeymen craftsmen helped unify and solidify the group.

After the death of Frederick William III in 1840, the group could begin to function openly, and in 1845 they were allowed to exist and function as a separate Lutheran church. Informally they came to be referred to as the "Breslau Synod." More formally they took the name the Evangelical Lutheran (Old Lutheran) Church. By the beginning of the Second World War they had spread to most parts of Germany and numbered 60,000 members, 180 congregations and 80 pastors. They maintained informal ties with the conservative Lutherans in the Lutheran state churches in other parts of Germany. Their theological students were trained in part at Breslau and in part at the state universities. Our Wisconsin Synod was in fellowship with the Breslau Synod from 1949 to 1972. A portion of the church body still exists in the German Democratic Republic (East Germany). In the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) they became a part of the Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church (*Selbstaendige Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirclze*—SELK) in 1972. Efforts were made to reach full doctrinal agreement and establish church fellowship between the WELS and SELK. These efforts came to naught, however, as SELK proved to be unwilling to commit itself fully to biblical inerrancy and the scriptural principles of fellowship.

Amid the stress and tribulation brought on by Prussian oppression, the topic this church body wrestled with even before it could enjoy an open existence was the question of emigration. Since the Prussian government would not allow these people to worship using the old agenda, as they felt conscience-bound to do, and also refused them the possibility of existing and functioning outside the Prussian Union, it is not surprising that the thought of emigrating to some other country suggested itself quite early. By 1835, as we shall see, emigration was being seriously and actively considered by August Kavel and the groups he served. But was that the correct thing to do according to Scripture? Did Scripture require emigration, since the government did not permit worship in accordance with the Lutheran Confessions? Or did the Scriptures forbid it, or did they leave it up to the individual to decide?

Scheibel and the other leaders in Breslau came to the conclusion that one should bear the persecutions patiently in the hope that conditions would improve when a new king came to the throne. Kavel, Johann Grabau and the others who came to favor emigration took the view that since the king adamantly refused the dissidents the right to worship according to their conscience using the old agenda and since he just as unbendingly refused them permission to form a separate and free Lutheran church in Prussia, the God-pleasing thing according to the Fourth Commandment was to leave the country and find a place to live where it was possible to worship according to Scripture and the Confessions and the dictates of conscience. Scheibel and his supporters seem to have been influenced also by the hope of establishing a fairly strong free Lutheran in Prussia to take the place at least to some extent of the state church, which had ceased to be Lutheran. The emigrants in effect turned their backs on the state church which persecuted them and looked for and hoped for a new and better life in the New World.

The controversy became quite heated, especially in 1838, and soured the relationship between those who decided to emigrate and those determined to stay. Both sides quoted many Bible passages, but often the argumentation was unconvincing on both sides. In the end, the Breslau leaders granted that the decision to emigrate was a matter of personal choice and really not decided by Scripture. They correctly insisted that those who decided to emigrate had no scriptural warrant to claim that emigration was necessary for one's soul's salvation. By 1845, when the Free Church was given the right to exist and function openly, emigration for confessional reasons came to an end, and the debate died out.

We turn now to the actual emigrations and emigration leaders. If we give special attention to the clergymen who led these emigration companies, it is because they were very influential in organizing these groups and leading them to the New World, as well as in founding the communities that developed in their new

homes and in organizing the church bodies that had their origins in those communities. It is only natural that we turn first to the earliest of the large emigrations, the one which traveled to Australia in 1838.

Kavel, Fritsche and the emigration to Australia

August Ludwig Christian Kavel, leader of the first large confessional Lutheran emigration from Prussia, was born in 1798 in Berlin. His parents were humble and pious. He paid for much of his secondary and university education by his own efforts. He was noted in his school days for being unusually industrious and pious. He avoided all worldly amusements. The experience of spiritual trials and temptations led him to a deep appreciation of the grace of God, which through Christ gained full and free forgiveness for all people's sins.

In 1826, on completion of his theological training and a successful period of working as a private tutor, he passed his second examination for the ministry. He was ordained and installed in the church in a small village by the name of Klemzig in the eastern part of the province of Neumark, near the boundaries with Posen and Silesia. He found a congregation that was spiritually very sluggish. But his preaching of sin and grace, of the need for repentance and forgiveness and God's offer of forgiveness through faith in Christ proved highly effective. It soon led to a spiritual renewal in the congregation. Although we have few details about Kavel's background and education, it is evident that a goodly measure of Pietism influenced him. This showed itself in his preaching and also in the contacts he developed with members of the conventicles he found in the area around Klemzig.

Whether in these conventicles or elsewhere, Kavel came into contact with followers of Johann Gottfried Scheibel and with Scheibel's writings. Kavel had been ordained according to the Union rite and had pledged faithfulness to the "Evangelical Symbols." When the revised agenda was introduced in 1829 Kavel used it for some time without protest. But during the year 1834 he apparently became convinced by Scheibel's writings that he could not in good conscience continue to do so. In January of 1835 he wrote to the Supreme Church Council in Berlin and informed them that his conscience no longer permitted him to use the new agenda or serve in a Union church. By way of explanation he wrote:

A union which is not grounded on the Word of God inevitably brings with it indifferentism in a number of articles of faith...Conscious departing from God's Word is sin. The Union promotes such indifferentism in theory and practice, in practice through the introduction of a worship book sanctioned by the principle of indifferentism and because the pastors no longer are bound by the symbolical books.¹

Surprisingly Kavel continued to serve his congregation and was permitted to do so until Easter. When he preached his final sermon on Easter Monday, police were waiting outside his door; and at the end of the service Kavel and his followers were locked out.

In reporting his case, church officials praised Kavel for having carried out his ministry faithfully. They noted that the congregation had flourished during his pastorate.

Requiring to vacate the parsonage, Kavel readily found living quarters with members who agreed with his stand. When he and his followers were forbidden to use the church, they held services in cottages, in barns and at times out in the woods. He applied for and was received into membership in the Old Lutheran Church. When punitive measures were taken against him and his flock, they seem rather soon to have begun to consider emigration. Russia was considered first as a possible refuge, but the idea was quickly dropped, apparently because of unsettled political conditions there. Twice in the fall of 1835 the members appealed to church officials, asking that they might be permitted to have a truly Lutheran pastor. Both appeals were denied.

In December Kavel wrote to Prof. George Huschke in Breslau informing him that he and his members were considering emigrating. The Old Lutheran leaders appealed to Kavel and his people not to do so.

¹ Hebart, Theodore J., *The United Evangelical Lutheran Church in Australia: Its History, Activities, and Characterization, 1838-1938* (North Adelaide, South Australia: Lutheran Book Depot, 1938), p 36.

Faithfulness to God's commands, they said, required that one remain where God had placed him, fight for the truth and patiently endure whatever persecution the government might inflict. A number of Kavel's people had been fined quite heavily for participating in services conducted by suspended pastors. Kavel responded that it might be preferable that those who had been thus persecuted emigrate to some other land. If they remained, he argued, they might be tempted to backslide and return to the Union church. As has been mentioned earlier, the theological debate over this question of whether to emigrate or not went on well into the 1840s. One leader in Breslau compared emigration to bloodletting; it would weaken the church that remained.

Early in 1836 Kavel traveled to Hamburg in the hope of finding a shipping company that would advance credit for their trip to those who wished to emigrate. He failed to find any there but was directed to a merchant in England by the name of George Fife Angas, who might be willing to help.

Angas proved to be a godsend for Kavel and his fellow emigrants. He was a pious Baptist, a "Dissenter," whose ancestors had experienced government oppression for their beliefs in the past. Hence he was sympathetic at once, to the cause of these oppressed Prussians. Angas was also a manufacturer and merchant with worldwide connections. At the time he was negotiating with one of the directors of the South Australian Company with a view to establishing in Australia a refuge for Dissenters. Honest, industrious people like these Prussians, he pointed out, would make very suitable settlers.

Kavel and Angas struck up a warm friendship. Angas sent his secretary to Klemzig to assist the Kavel followers in their preparations for emigration. Kavel meanwhile remained in London for almost two years. Most likely it was not prudent for him to return to Prussia. He spent his time doing mission work among the German seamen and in the considerable German colony in London. Meanwhile, preparations were completed in Prussia for the emigration. Barges were hired to transport the people to Hamburg. Angas sent a ship that was to transport them from Hamburg to Australia. But excitement turned to dejection when the government refused to issue the people emigration permits. Improper procedure was given as the reason.

Again in 1837 a lengthy appeal was submitted to the king detailing the Old Lutherans' objection to the Union and to the new agenda. Assurances were given that all government requirements would be met and that the future welfare of the group was adequately provided for. Angas sent his secretary to Berlin to act as an attorney for the group. But all proved futile. The representatives who submitted the appeal even were arrested and imprisoned for a time. Another petition was submitted to Berlin protesting the disruption of their worship services by the police and pointing out that this was contrary to the law. This petition too was rejected by officials.

Prussian officials did all they could to obstruct the emigration efforts and to dissuade lay people from leaving. But efforts to obtain emigration permits continued. Finally, by the end of 1837 all the obstacles had been overcome. But now difficulties cropped up in England. The South Australian Company had experienced some financial reverses and now was not willing to finance the Lutheran emigration. In many instances the financial situation of the prospective emigrants also had deteriorated in the intervening time. Some people had sold all their possessions in preparation for the trip. During the lengthy delays they had to live off the funds they had hoped to use for travel and to establish a home in Australia. But now Angas proved that his was truly a Christian generosity. He decided to finance the trip to Australia himself—at an outlay of eight thousand pounds. The voyage could begin.

Before passing on to the voyage itself it might be of interest to hear some of the comments made by the king in response to the appeals from Klemzig:

It is impudent to talk of violation of conscience. Such talk has its roots either in obstinate insubordination or in blind faith in fanatics who mislead religiously inclined souls for personal ends. I shall know how to drive these reactionaries back to their proper confines....I have been sorely pained that these people, now blinded and duped by heresies and fanaticism, obstinately harbor the delusion that the Old Lutheran doctrines are to be suppressed, and that they propose to go to Australia whither fanatical heads intend to lead them with the purpose of giving free course to their fanatical and utopian plans for religious liberty.

Retract, you who are being misled. There still is time to desist from taking a step which you will certainly have cause to regret, and which can accrue neither to your temporal nor eternal welfare.²

The first group of about 250 emigrants began their journey to Australia on June 8, 1838. They left Hamburg on July 8 and picked up Pastor Kavel at Plymouth on the 20th of that month. They reached Adelaide, South Australia, on November 20. Two other ships followed at short intervals. The total number of emigrants in this first company was 596. Twenty-six did not live to see their new home in Australia.

On Sunday, November 25, 1838, the first worship service was held in the new land, and worship services continued regularly thereafter. On 150 acres rented from Angas a village was laid out in German style with one long street. Houses were built on each side of the street, close to and facing the street, with the land for each family stretching out behind the house. A church and school and houses for the pastor and teacher were built in the center of the village. This settlement was called Klemzig. It was named after their home in Brandenburg. At the start of the rainy season several months after the arrival of the emigrants, gardens and field crops were planted. It soon became evident that the land on which they settled was quite fertile. The English settlers had until then engaged only in raising cattle. Most of their food supplies were being imported. So the German settlers at once found a ready market for their surplus garden produce.

A second village, Hahndorf, was established in the hills some distance from Klemzig. It was named after the captain of the second ship which had brought emigrants because he had been most kind and helpful to his passengers. Here too a church was built and an active church life established. In both villages services were held Sunday mornings and evenings and on Wednesday mornings. A mission service was held on the first Monday evening of the month. The Lutheran Confessions were studied on Wednesday evenings. Bible Class was held on Thursday evenings. A prayer meeting was held on Friday evenings and *Kinderlehre*, instruction for the children, was held on Sunday afternoons. Confirmation instructions were held daily in the school for the children of confirmation age. Schools were operated in Hahndorf and the village of Glen Osmond as well as in Klemzig.

On May 23 and 24, 1839, the elders from all three villages met, adopted a constitution and established a synod. It is worth noting that Kavel did not, like Grabau in America, try to make the *Kirchenordnungen* of Pommerania, Saxony or Brandenburg, an essential basis for the new document. The doctrinal basis was the Lutheran Confessions, which were affirmed as a correct exposition of the Scriptures. In the constitution Kavel seems to have tried as much as possible to follow the example of the first Christian congregation in Jerusalem. Although this first Australian Lutheran constitution was revised from time to time, the basic document continued in use into the twentieth century.

At the second synodical meeting in 1840 an invitation was sent to Old Lutheran relatives, friends and neighbors in Prussia urging them to come and settle in Australia. In the letter of invitation Kavel also pointed out the need for an additional pastor to assist and eventually succeed him. At least in part as a result of this invitation another 274 emigrants together with Pastor Gotthard Fritzsche emigrated to Australia, arriving in South Australia on October 28, 1841.

The leader of this party, *Gotthard Daniel Fritzsche*, also deserves our attention. He was born in Liebenswerda in the Kingdom of Saxony in 1797. His family was of a conventional piety. His gymnasium (high school) training was received in Dresden, but for his university education he went to Breslau in Silesia. Here he came under the influence of, and attended many of the lectures of, Scheibel. Under that influence he came to a deeper faith in Christ and became a convinced confessional Lutheran. After the completion of his theological education at Breslau, he spent the customary period as a private tutor. But because he declared himself against the Prussian Union at his first examination, he could not expect a position as a pastor in the Prussian state church. Instead he entered the ministry of the Old Lutherans and became a "flying pastor." Like the others who did this, he traveled about in disguise dressed as journeyman craftsman moving from one small group of Old Lutheran people to another, holding services secretly, baptizing, ministering to their sick and dying,

² *Ibid*, p 31.

encouraging and admonishing, while at the same time always on the lookout for the police, who were out to arrest him for performing the functions of a pastor without the required Prussian authorization. After a time his health began to suffer under the stress of this difficult life, and he finally left Prussia and moved to Hamburg. There he came into contact with a considerable number of Old Lutherans who came from the area in Brandenburg which Kavel had served. They wished to emigrate to Australia but lacked a pastor to accompany them as the Prussian government required before it would issue emigration permits.

Fritzsche himself was not inclined to emigrate, but eventually he yielded to the pleas of the people who did and agreed to serve them as pastor and lead them to Australia. Shipping and finances had to be found. A Hamburg shipping firm was soon located which was ready to provide a ship and transport these people to Australia. Fritzsche made a trip to England and visited Kavel's friend, George Fife Angas. But Angas was not able to provide financial assistance to these German Lutheran emigrants at this time. A lady was found, however, who lent the group 270 pounds. The trip to England proved to be not particularly fruitful for the would-be emigrants. They were doubly delighted and grateful then when a prosperous Lutheran lady right in Hamburg provided the 1,800 pounds still needed to finance the trip. This second party of confessional Lutheran emigrants to Australia set sail on July 11, 1841. Illnesses proved more severe on this trip. Over fifty did not live to see their new home in South Australia.

This second party of emigrants was welcomed most heartily by the original group upon their arrival on October 28, 1841. The newcomers were taken temporarily into the homes of those already settled there. Good care and abundant fresh food soon restored all to health and vigor. With the help of the earlier settlers, the villages of Lobethal and Bethanien were laid out and homes built for all the newcomers. Pastor Fritzsche decided to live at Lobethal, which was located quite near to Hahndorf. Several months after his arrival he married Dora Nehrlich, to whom he had become engaged in Hamburg, and who, with her mother, had accompanied him on the journey from Hamburg to Adelaide. She died only three years later after the birth of a stillborn child. Kavel had lost his wife, a young English woman, in December 1841 under similar circumstances after only one and a half years of marriage.

In 1842 a new settlement was begun on a large new tract of land purchased from Angas near Bethanien. It was named Langmeil after a village in Brandenburg from which some of the emigrants had come. Kavel now strongly urged the original settlers at Klemzig and Hahndorf also to move to Langmeil as there was more good land there for expansion. There was strong resistance at both Klemzig and Hahndorf to leaving homes and villages that had so recently been built at great effort. Especially the wives are reported to have resisted moving. Kavel's urging of these people to move caused considerable tension and hard feelings between the people and their pastor for some time. Eventually, Langmeil and the nearby town of Tanunda became one of the largest settlements of Lutherans in all of South Australia.

For the first several years after Fritzsche and the second company of emigrants arrived in Australia there were harmonious relations between the two groups, but by 1846 disagreements arose which led to a rift between Kavel and Fritzsche and their respective followers. This rift would continue until 1960. One subject which caused disagreement was a set of "Protestations" which Kavel issued in 1846. In them he expressed reservations or disagreement with certain statements in the Lutheran Confessions which he found to be in conflict with the constitution he had written for the little Lutheran church in South Australia. Kavel now referred to this church constitution as an "Apostolic Constitution." It allowed for no power over the church by the civil government. He rejected any passages in the Lutheran Confessions which seemed to allow the civil government any power in the affairs of the church. Fritzsche, on the other hand, refused to grant the constitution of the Lutheran Church in Australia authority above the Confessions.

Another source of growing friction and the point of disagreement that precipitated the split between Kavel and Fritzsche was millennialism. Kavel had for some time engaged in a study of the biblical prophecies concerning the end of the world. He preached on some of the texts he studied. Through laymen Fritzsche learned of Kavel's millennialistic views and in turn began preaching against millennialism. This disagreement was discussed at the conventions of 1844 and 1845 without any resolution being reached.

When the 1846 convention approached, Fritzsche invited two Lutheran missionaries who had been sent to work among the Australian aborigines by the Dresden Mission Society to attend the convention even though they were not members of the church. They attended and took an active part in the discussions. They disagreed with Kavel about his "Protestations" against the Confessions. Kavel objected to their participating in the convention and demanded that their relationship to the church and to the "Apostolic Constitution" be clarified before they were permitted to participate in other discussions. This led to a vehement debate on church government. Kavel and his supporters walked out of the convention, which was being held at Bethanien. They then held their own convention at Langmeil. Fritzsche and his supporters continued at Bethanien. There now were two separate churches.

Some time later Kavel invited Fritzsche to discussions in an attempt to heal the breach. Fritzsche demanded that at the outset there be a discussion of the extent to which Kavel continued to uphold his "Protestations" against the Confessions. That ended Kavel's effort at reconciliation. Both went their separate ways. Kavel died in 1860, Fritzsche in 1863.

With the two original leaders gone from the scene, a meeting was arranged in 1864 of representatives of the Kavel and Fritzsche parties. This meeting led to a declaration of agreement in doctrine and the establishment of a joint mission among the aborigines. The mission did not prosper, however, and in 1874 a new controversy over calling candidates from the mission school in Basel led to a dissolution of joint work and fellowship.

The followers of Fritzsche eventually formed the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (ELCA). In the 1880s close ties were developed with the Missouri Synod. For a time theological students were sent to America for training. The Missouri Synod supplied some pastors, notably Caspar E. Dorsch and Carl Frederick Graebner, for the work of Australia. Graebner, incidentally, was an 1882 graduate of our Northwestern College in Watertown, Wisconsin.

The followers of Kavel formed the Evangelical Lutheran Immanuel Synod. The Immanuel Synod established ties with the Lutheran Victoria Synod and later the Queensland Synod. These bodies formed the United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia (UELCA) in 1921. Ties were maintained with the seminaries at Neuendettelsau and Hermannsburg in Germany and the Iowa Synod's Wartburg Seminary at Dubuque, Iowa. The ELCA and UELCA merged in 1966 to form the Lutheran Church of Australia, the only Lutheran body of any larger size in Australia today.

To round out this brief sketch of the confessional Lutheran emigration from Prussia to Australia it should be mentioned that there were several other groups which came in addition to the first two we described above. In 1844 some 200 arrived and settled in the Tanunda district. Two shiploads with 494 persons arrived in 1845. In 1846 there were three ships with 656 passengers; in 1847, four ships and 698 passengers. A third pastor, a man by the name of Oster, sailed out with the 1847 company, but he did not survive the sea voyage. Finally, to close out this listing of additional emigrant groups, mention should be made of a company of Wends, Lutherans of Slavic origin who had lived along the Silesian-Saxon border. They arrived in 1854. Another group of the same origin emigrated to Texas at the same time. They were the last emigrant group to list religious oppression as their cause for leaving their Prussian homeland.

Although large numbers of Germans continued to arrive individually in Australia from many parts of Germany in later years, these original Prussian Old Lutherans formed the nucleus of a number of sound congregations and of the two synods just described. These first emigrants were welcomed and appreciated by the English officials of the colony of South Australia. Already in May 1839 an Adelaide newspaper article spoke in glowing terms of the village of Klemzig and its residents. These people were described as notable for their "cheerfulness, cleanliness, industry, peacefulness, and piety." Their settlement was described as a "model of practical colonization."³ Governor Gawler described them as religious, well-behaved, loyal and industrious. Another newspaper article spoke of their outstanding attribute, their deep piety, "for in all they do they give all glory to God in prayer."⁴

³ *Ibid*, p 39.

⁴ *Ibid*, p 39.

Modern secular historians tend to downplay religious oppression and confessional faithfulness as the motives for these people's emigration. They emphasize such secular motives as better economic opportunities and freer social structures. While these advantages, no doubt, were not lost on these emigrants, it certainly was significant that their neighbors in a new land found their conduct to be entirely in keeping with their professed motives. If their claims to be seeking escape from religious oppression had been hypocritically used devices to attain their true and main objective of material gain, it doesn't seem likely that Kavel would have held all the church services and classes we mentioned. The people would have gone off on their own. The evidence, rather, suggests that these people were sincere and active Christians who believed that their Lutheran rites and Lutheran doctrine were being denied them by the Prussian government.

In Prussia these Old Lutherans endured and lost much for the sake of their faith in Prussia. It was to preserve and exercise their faith freely and teach it fully to their children that they emigrated to Australia and America. The decision whether to emigrate or not for the sake of their faith was, very likely, a difficult one, and a majority of the Old Lutherans did decide to remain in Prussia. But those who decided to emigrate certainly are deserving of our recognition and honor for their faithfulness to God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions.

Krause, Grabau, von Rohr and the 1839 emigration to America

After August Kavel perhaps the earliest advocate of emigration for the oppressed Old Lutherans was *Leberecht Friedrich Ehregott Krause*. He was an underground pastor. He was expected to lead the second emigration party out of Prussia, but he did not do so.

Krause's is a strange story. We know little about his early life. He was born in Silesia. He apparently received his education in Breslau. In 1831 he received a certificate of eligibility for a call into the ministry. In other words, he passed the first theological examination. He must have expressed a willingness to join the Prussian Union and use the new agenda. He served as a private tutor in Kozmin, a town in the province of Posen. He later said that the Lord led him there. In 1833 he moved to a town named Hermannsdorf, possibly as an assistant pastor, working with a Pastor Berger who had anti-Union sentiments.

Sometime in 1833 or 1834 Krause informed the superintendent of the state church in his area that he was convinced the Union was wrong. He withdrew from the state church and joined the Old Lutherans. About this same time the Pastor Berger with whom he served was suspended from the pastorate at Hermannsdorf and moved to Breslau. Krause moved to a town in Posen called Gross-Tschunkawe. There he lived with a man named Koschuetzki, who was an Old Lutheran. Krause began holding church services in the man's house. Soon gendarmes were posted outside the house watching the movements of Krause and the other people who came and went. Krause was assigned to serve the Old Lutherans in at least five towns in the southeastern part of Silesia. About 400 souls were placed under his spiritual care. He was ordained into the ministry of the Old Lutherans in May 1835 together with several other candidates by J. G. Scheibel. This occurred in Lobau in Saxony.

It is reported that in March 1835 he visited August Kavel in Klemzig in Brandenburg. Very likely the men discussed the possibility and advisability of emigrating. Kavel and his congregation were by that time actively investigating emigration. Krause had expressed an interest in emigrating in several letters written in the months just before the visit with Kavel.

Emigration no doubt came to be viewed even more favorably after July 1835 when he was arrested in a village named Schiebedawe for conducting an unauthorized church service. Until his trial he was kept in custody in an inn in Miltz. The trial ended with his being sentenced to a year's imprisonment in the jail in Miltz. It is recorded that Old Lutheran elders also were arrested for participating in unauthorized services. One elder was fined the one horse, the one cow and the 13 pigs he owned and in addition had to serve nine weeks in jail.

Having completed his jail sentence, Krause was moved to Erfurt in the province of Saxony. Here he is reported to have lived with an instrument maker named Schujahn. He could come and go pretty well as he pleased, but was kept under surveillance. Another Old Lutheran pastor named Wehrhan was also transferred to

Erfurt. Soon government officials were informed that a separatistic movement was developing in Erfurt. Krause was reported to live a rather withdrawn life. He spent much time studying. Afternoons he went out and often did not return until late at night. He received a considerable number of visitors. Krause looked up Grabau soon after coming to Erfurt and soon was observed to be associating with him frequently. Government officials then took steps to move Krause to Muenster in Westphalia.

At the beginning of 1837 a Cabinet Order was issued suspending all previous sentences against Old Lutherans. Krause now was apparently free to leave Erfurt. He received a letter from Scheibel encouraging him to do so. After some indecision, he did leave in May to return to Silesia. There he became an underground circuit rider again, ministering to Old Lutherans in a fairly large area. He is also known to have visited Scheibel.

At first church leaders in Breslau were happy to have Krause serve a considerable number of their people. They always were short of pastors because of numerous arrests and imprisonments. Their joy over the return of Krause faded, however, when they learned that he was promoting emigration among the Old Lutherans wherever he went in Silesia. They strongly urged him to keep in close contact with and consult the other Old Lutheran pastors about the matter. No doubt it was hoped that the others would get him to change his mind. That did not happen.

As he traveled about Krause found a considerable number of lay members who either were considering or had already decided to emigrate. This could only confirm him in his intention to emigrate and in his continuing to encourage others to go with him. Officials heard in June 1838 that Krause told his congregation he would live where the greater number of his members lived. Prof. George Huschke of Breslau heard in September of that year that Krause was actively preparing to emigrate. Huschke expressed the wish that he would leave soon. He had given up trying to persuade him to stay.

Some time in the fall of 1838 an emigration company was organized. Krause and two laymen were elected to serve as advance men and agents to determine the best way to travel to America. On November 2 Krause and one of the laymen left Hamburg for New York. Their assignment was to seek out the best transportation agencies and possible places for settlement.

Krause quickly demonstrated that he was a poor choice for the rather heavy responsibility given him. Even the ship they took to New York turned out to be a poor choice. Krause was miserable the whole time of the crossing. The ship was sloppily run, the food was poor, and the passengers did not meet his standards of cleanliness and conduct.

When Krause and his companion arrived in New York, no one was there to meet and welcome them—much to Krause's disillusionment. His first requests for assistance and financial support were rebuffed, and Krause fell into a siege of homesickness, self-pity and general depression. He sent off a letter from America which roundly criticized all Americans as rude, unfriendly and greedy for money. He advised his people back in Silesia to stay at home.

It soon became apparent, however, that things were not as bad as Krause had pictured them. Within a few days he had received aid or offers of aid from several sources. A group of recent immigrants in Buffalo was looking for a Lutheran pastor. They invited him to come and serve them. Apparently forgetting about the assignments given him back in Breslau, he settled down in Buffalo for almost a year serving this little group as their pastor. Finally, just before the emigrants he had done so much to recruit in Silesia reached Buffalo, he returned to Germany. Neither von Rohr nor Grabau, whose paths he crossed on the way from Buffalo to New York, were able to persuade him to stay with his emigration party in America.

He insisted that he had to go back to Germany to restore his health, to save later emigrants from unscrupulous shipping agents, and to get married. He may also have had misgivings about the adequacy of his ministry in Buffalo.

Krause reached Hamburg on November 21, 1839, and apparently continued on at once to Breslau. This was a questionable move, since he was not in good standing with the Prussian government. When he had left the year before, he lacked the proper documents and authorization. In Breslau he at once went to the home of the Pastor Berger under whom he had served in Hermannsdorf in 1833 and 1834. It was his daughter that he expected, or at least hoped, to marry. Pastor Bergen however, refused to give his approval to the marriage, and

his daughter was not willing to emigrate to America. However firm or tentative Krause's plans may have been, they quickly came to naught.

Krause took up residence with his sister who lived in Breslau. In this center of the Old Lutheran movement he received a visit from one Old Lutheran official. Otherwise he was largely ignored by all the Old Lutherans. He felt himself very much neglected. As had happened in New York, he again was beset by depression and self-pity. Constantly on the lookout for police, he complained of the uncertainty in which he lived and felt he could not stand it much longer.

Regardless of how neglected, unappreciated and depressed Krause may have felt, it is difficult to understand or explain the actions that followed. He turned himself in to the police, who promptly put him in prison under strict security. This led to even greater depression. Feeling completely forsaken and ignored by all the Old Lutherans, he turned against them and offered to aid the police in eliminating all the Old Lutheran "trouble makers" from the scene. News of his offer was transmitted at once to *Kultus-Minister* Altenstein and even the king in Berlin. Krause was released from prison and an interview was arranged with Altenstein. In this interview he gave much information about the Old Lutherans, their church organization, their circuit riding pastors, and their plans and objectives. He did not stick entirely to the facts, but gave answers he thought the questioners were looking for. He made false statements about the Old Lutheran leaders to put them in a bad light. In other words, he acted the part of a traitor and an out-and-out scoundrel.

Then on May 5, 1840, another drastic shift occurred. He asked the Old Lutheran pastor in Berlin to visit him and confessed all he had done and asked for forgiveness. He wrote a letter to the leaders in Breslau confessing all he had done against the Old Lutherans in betraying them to the government. He attributed his actions to anger and resentment at being ignored and neglected. He called his conduct godless. He recanted all he had done and again applied for a position as a pastor in the Old Lutheran church. The Old Lutheran leaders forgave him his treasonous conduct but rejected his application for a position as pastor.

Soon after, he moved to Hamburg where he again spoke out strongly against the Old Lutherans because they opposed emigration. In May of 1841 he set sail once again for America, taking 60 emigrants with him. Not long after his arrival in America, he married a widow in his emigration company. In the fall of 1841 Pastor Grabau assigned him as pastor to the Freistadt-Milwaukee congregation, which had been without the services of a pastor since the fall of 1839. One wonders how much, if anything, Grabau knew of Krause's unpredictable and reprehensible conduct in Germany. Krause served the Freistadt-Milwaukee parish for seven years. Details of his difficulties there will be discussed in connection with the examination of the founding of the Buffalo Synod.

A call from the congregation in Martinsville, New York, in 1848 brought him close to Grabau, who had defended him in his difficulties in Wisconsin. Again controversy arose. The congregation, which had just finished building a church, refused to build a parsonage as Krause wanted. He excommunicated the whole congregation. The congregation responded by bringing charges against Krause before the Buffalo Synod, accusing him of 26 different sins. He was excommunicated in January 1851.

Later that year Krause applied for membership in the Missouri Synod. After returning to Freistadt and Milwaukee and successfully seeking forgiveness for offenses committed while he was pastor there, he was accepted into the Missouri Synod and assigned to a congregation at Macomb, Michigan, which had just withdrawn from the Buffalo Synod. His ministry in Macomb and the Missouri Synod lasted three years. Although exact information is not available, he spent several years in Germany again.

By 1856 Krause was back in America, again in the role of the penitent seeking pardon and readmission to the Buffalo Synod. Although he was granted forgiveness, not surprisingly, no position was found for him in the Buffalo Synod. He turned westward then and became pastor of a congregation in Winona, Minnesota. The year 1865 found him on the move once again as he accepted a position at Ellenville, New York, in the Ohio Synod. Apparently having exhausted the possibilities in America, he accepted a call to a congregation in Lobethal in South Australia in 1871. When his connection with that congregation was terminated in 1876, he organized a congregation of his own. That congregation disbanded in 1879, but he found another congregation nearby that was willing to call him. Here he remained until his death in 1885.

Krause apparently had a talent for promoting and recruiting for the Old Lutheran emigration in Germany. But he lacked the capabilities necessary to organize and lead the emigrants he had recruited. He also lacked the abilities needed to serve the emigrants as their pastor once they had reached the New World. The 1839 emigration company badly needed clergymen to serve as leaders for the trip, and they needed clergymen to serve the congregations organized in America. Krause did not help to fill these needs. Rather, by his inappropriate conduct he made matters worse. Credit is due him for his underground ministry and for his willingness to endure imprisonment for the sake of confessional Lutheranism. After that, unfortunately, he became a detriment to the Old Lutheran cause.

Wilhelm Iwan in his exhaustive two-volume study of the Old Lutheran emigration from Prussia, *Die Altlutherische Auswanderung um die Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts*,⁵ calls Krause unstable, undependable and weak. Those adjectives fit Krause well. Not only did he cause disruptions and division in several of the congregations of Prussian immigrants which he served, his conduct brought disrepute on the whole emigration movement in Germany and on the Buffalo Synod among emigrants in the New World. The adjectives unstable, undependable and weak certainly do not fit Johann Grabau, however, the man on whom we focus our attention next. He was of an entirely different mold.

Johann Andreas August Grabau became the leader of the 1839 emigration and the church body which grew out of it in America. His story is also a tragic one in a way. He was born in the village of Olvenstadt near Magdeburg in the Prussian province of Saxony in 1804. His parents, farmers by occupation, were truly pious people. Reading of the Bible and prayer were daily exercises in their lives. Johann began his schooling in the village school at the age of five. He later recalled that the rationalistic and Reformed influences were quite noticeable in his confirmation instructions. Zwingli was praised and Luther belittled. The Reformed doctrine of the Lord's Supper was presented and emphasized as the correct one.

In the fall of 1818 Grabau was enrolled at the Cathedral Gymnasium (high school) in Magdeburg, where he proved to be an excellent student. When his father died in 1822, his mother feared her son would not be able to complete his education at the gymnasium. Johann, however, was determined to go on with his studies. He lived at home and walked daily to Magdeburg to cut expenses. Soon he also succeeded in obtaining a stipend that permitted him to room in Magdeburg and pay other expenses. His reports at the gymnasium and also later at the university called attention to his exceptional diligence in his studies and his praiseworthy conduct.

The fall of 1825 found Grabau matriculating at the University of Halle. Here he regularly gained the approval of faculty members for the excellence of his work. He graduated in 1829. On his first examination for the ministry, also taken that year, he was given a *cum laude* and commended for his knowledge of the Scriptures, his aptitude in developing and setting forth his thoughts and for the power of his speech. After a brief period of serving as a private tutor, he taught for a year at a girls' academy at Magdeburg and then for two years as rector of a school in Sachsa. Then, in the spring of 1834, having passed the second examination for the ministry successfully, he was ordained and installed as pastor of St. Andrew's Church in Erfurt.

In the process of taking and passing his theological examinations and being ordained, Grabau accepted and committed himself to the Union. At first he received favorable comments from church officials for his "purity in spirit." In 1835 his bishop again made favorable comments, but added that his preaching was "too Lutheran."

By early 1836, Grabau was in correspondence with Scheibel. Apparently, some of his members informed him about events in Silesia, including the case of Hoenigern, and provided him with literature opposing the Union. Krause and another Old Lutheran pastor were transferred to Erfurt from Breslau on probation. They no doubt informed Grabau further about the Old Lutheran opposition to the Union and its theological basis. By August of 1836, Grabau refused to take part in the ordination of a candidate, declaring that he no longer was in agreement with the Prussian ordination formula, which committed the ordinand only to faithfulness to the "Evangelical Symbols." After his sermon on September 11, 1836, he announced to his congregation that he no

⁵ Iwan, Wilhelm, *Die Altlutherische Auswanderung um die Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Herausgegeben vom Johann Huss-Institut, Breslau. 2 vols. Ludwigsburg: Eichhornverlag Luther Kallenberg, 1943.

longer could use the new Union agenda, even though he had accepted it at his examination, because he now was convinced that it did not express the old Lutheran faith purely and faithfully.

Grabau then asked the members of the congregation to decide whether they wanted to keep him as their pastor. On September 20 he was suspended by the consistory. In early October there was a two-day meeting with Bishop Draeseke, who tried to convince Grabau that he and the Old Lutherans were mistaken in their views on the Union. But Draeseke had no success. In December, Grabau announced his withdrawal from the Union Church. By then he was holding services with those members of his congregation who wanted to keep him as their pastor. The mayor of Erfurt informed higher officials that most of the people who supported Grabau were uneducated weavers and factory workers. Grabau began traveling about the area, serving and strengthening his supporters. On March 1, 1837, he was suddenly arrested and carried off to the prison at Heiligenstadt without even an opportunity to go to his house to pack needed clothes and other things. The warden, however, sympathized with Grabau and provided special treatment for him. He could write letters and receive visitors. Heinrich von Rohr was among those who visited him.

Grabau appealed his arrest and imprisonment. The *Oberlandesgericht*, the supreme court of the land, ruled that he had been arrested and imprisoned only because of his withdrawal from the United Evangelical Church and the holding of private meetings. He was not charged with a criminal misdemeanor. There was no law which authorized such an imprisonment. The police had infringed on his personal liberty. The court then ordered Grabau released. The government officials in Erfurt replied that they had acted in accordance with the directives of a higher church ministerium. Grabau was being detained for reasons of state.

When Grabau learned that he had been ordered freed by the courts but detained only on the order of a higher official, he began to think of escaping. Von Rohr, who learned of this, soon developed a plan to free Grabau. One day he came to the prison with a horse and a closed wagon. A companion went into the prison and informed Grabau that von Rohr was there with horse and wagon. When Grabau went for his daily walk with a prison guard, he was able to jump into von Rohr's wagon, and the two drove quickly away. By the time the prison guards sent out searchers on horseback, Grabau, von Rohr and the horse and wagon had disappeared. Von Rohr took Grabau to Pommerania, where he lived undercover with some Old Lutherans for some months. Finally, in the late summer of 1838, he returned to Erfurt. But already on September 21 he was recognized, reported and arrested. He was taken back to the Heiligenstadt prison under heavy guard. This time he was given no preferential treatment. He was kept under close watch constantly. The prison warden, who was sympathetic toward the Old Lutherans, did not dare now to give Grabau favorable treatment. Grabau, who became quite ill, became an advocate of emigration. He applied for release from prison and authorization to emigrate.

Finally, on March 12, 1839, he was released from prison in order that his wife could care for him. He was not to engage in any ministerial acts or leave the city of Erfurt until he emigrated. He was kept under constant police watch. On April 26 he was informed that his emigration permit had been granted. A considerable number of his members in Erfurt and Magdeburg also were ready to emigrate with him since they had been informed that it was the king himself who had again declared that a separate Lutheran church outside the Union would not be permitted. In view of the fact that Grabau had been imprisoned for quite a while, it was fortunate that von Rohr and several other laymen had taken on the responsibility of making arrangements for the congregations for the trip. The company left Hamburg on June 27 and 28 in six ships. Grabau reached New York on September 18. By October 5 the company reached Buffalo, and the first church service could be held by Grabau there. We will take up Grabau's career again after considering the earlier life of his co-leader, von Rohr.

Although he was not a clergyman, at the time, *Karl Georg Heinrich von Rohr* deserves special attention as one of the main leaders of the first Prussian emigration. He was born in 1797 in Billerbeck, Pommerania. Members of the von Rohr family, which hailed from the Mark Brandenburg and could trace its ancestors back to the twelfth century, had provided numerous army officers and government officials through the centuries. The father of Heinrich served as a privy councilor. His work carried him to various parts of the kingdom. The father determined that Heinrich should become an army officer. At the age of eight he was sent to a school for cadets at Stolp in Pommerania. At the age of eleven he was appointed a page at the court of Frederick William

III. He thus became familiar with the family of Prince Wilhelm, who displayed their liking for him by gifts and court favors. He was commissioned a second lieutenant at eighteen and assigned to the "Kaiser Alexander" regiment of the grenadier guards. Von Rohr was stationed for a time in Paris and could associate with the many officers and diplomats of various nations who were there to settle affairs after the Napoleonic wars. Like other young officers, his chief interests in his twenties were dancing, hunting, gambling and the theater.

A rather radical change took place at his wedding. It is reported that both he and his bride, Emilie Willmann from Berlin, were deeply affected by the wedding sermon. Von Rohr determined to serve the Lord more fully, to search his Word and seek his guidance.

The Lord used a series of severe trials to draw this man closer to himself and direct him on unexpected paths. He began to seek spiritual enlightenment by hearing the sermons of theological greats such as Schleiermacher and Hengstenberg. He read frequently in the Scriptures and took instructions from his pastor. He sought the companionship of other earnest Christians. This spiritual growth was intensified when he lost his wife after the birth of their first child. In 1834 he was promoted to the rank of captain and sent to Magdeburg. His son developed cancer of the mouth. Several operations were performed in which the child displayed a moving faith and courage. Von Rohr then married again, this time Julie Mangold, the daughter of a pious Berlin surgeon.

A brief visit early in 1836 by an old acquaintance would prove to be of far-reaching influence in his life. August Kavel, who earlier had served as a private tutor in the home of von Rohr's parents, stopped in for a visit on his way to London to make arrangements for the emigration of his followers to Australia. From Kavel, von Rohr learned for the first time in detail of the battle against the Union being waged especially in Silesia. This visit led von Rohr to begin reading the Lutheran Confessions and the writings of Scheibel. At the end of 1836 he informed his chaplain that he was withdrawing from the Union church. Again, as with Grabau, Bishop Draeseke was called on to attempt to get von Rohr to change his mind, again without success. Apparently because of his close ties to the court, von Rohr had difficulty in finding an Old Lutheran pastor to baptize his child, which was born in October 1836. A certain Pastor Kaul finally agreed to baptize the child in a special service held at night. Not long after he did so, officials began questioning all those who participated in Old Lutheran services in the von Rohr home in an attempt to learn the identity of the man who had performed the baptism.

Von Rohr was dismissed from the Prussian army in February 1837. This left him without an income or a job. A month later his infant son died. Then later in the year his oldest son, Max, died of cholera, and his wife followed four days later. Von Rohr was left with a two-and-one-half-year-old daughter, Julie, whom he had to care and provide for. For some months he struggled under his great losses. Friends came to his support with generous gifts. To solve his need for an occupation and income he opened a used theological book store. The works of the old orthodox Lutheran theologians, which had been selling for a dollar a hundred pounds as a source of wrapping paper, were being rediscovered by the Old Lutherans. Von Rohr began traveling about the country to buy these books wherever he could find them. In selling them, he visited the centers of confessional Lutheranism in various parts of Germany. He became acquainted with and visited Scheibel in Glauchau, Loehe in Neuendettelsau, and Grabau in his prison cell in Heiligenstadt. No doubt these men contributed to his theological development. He began to study the biblical languages.

On November 8, 1837, he committed himself to the Old Lutheran cause at a more serious level by helping Grabau escape from prison. As a result, he was arrested and imprisoned for a month and a half in Magdeburg in January. In the months after his imprisonment, he became involved in planning and organizing the emigration of the Old Lutherans. Already from prison he wrote to Kavel in London requesting advice for travel plans. In a letter to Scheibel he wrote that the prospective emigrants were praying for God's help and guidance in obeying the Lord's will and denying their own will. He promised that they would consider Scheibel's reasons (for not emigrating) and were awaiting the opinions of other brethren in Breslau before making a final decision. The advice of Grabau, who by this time favored emigration, carried the day with von Rohr. He committed himself to the emigration. He began visiting those who were considering joining the emigration company. The principles which were to guide the emigration company were drawn up.

It was stated at the outset that the emigration company did not intend to establish an independent civil community. It was also stated that the company was not, to be a communal society. To demand common ownership of property was called sinful. Members were not to be required to contribute all of their share of the costs, or a specific part of their possessions. The common treasury was to be funded by voluntary contributions, given out of love. The responsibility of the company was to transport participants from Hamburg to New York. Congregations were asked to raise the funds to pay the costs for travel to Hamburg. Once the company arrived in New York, the individual members were left to their own resources. Three families stayed in New York, two in Albany, and the majority settled in Buffalo. Those with the most ample means traveled on to Wisconsin.

Basically, only members of the Old Lutheran congregations who were verified to be members in good standing were eligible to join the emigration. Exceptions were made for family members of Old Lutherans, so that the emigration did not needlessly divide families. On the whole, the guidelines drawn up were sound and fiscally responsible. There was none of the loose handling of funds for the benefit of the leader as was the case with the Stephan emigration.

Thanks to an offer made by two merchants who visited von Rohr unexpectedly in prison, the company sailed from Hamburg to Hull, then took canal boats from Hull to Liverpool, and then sailed from Liverpool to New York. This saved one fourth of the lowest price available for sailing directly from Hamburg to New York. With a view to preserving the health of little children, a cow or goats were to be taken along on the ships. The men were to get a daily ration of brandy.

The participants as they were finally assembled in Hamburg came from the area around Stettin in Pommerania, Erfurt and Magdeburg in the Province of Saxony, Berlin and its environs in Brandenburg, and, as a late development, Breslau in Silesia. The Silesians constituted the party that Krause was supposed to have led to America. When Krause stayed in America for a whole year, these people joined Grabau's party.

Unfortunately, disagreements developed between Grabau and these Silesian emigrants. Krause and the other Silesian agents had negotiated with a representative of George Fife Angas over the possibility of their group's emigrating to Australia. When Grabau arrived on the scene, he thought the Silesians should either sail to Australia, or make a cash settlement or at least apologize to Angas. The Silesians in the emigration party adamantly refused to do any of these. They felt they owed Angas and his company nothing. They had not authorized Krause to negotiate a trip to Australia. When they failed to follow Grabau's thinking in the matter, Grabau, who had taken over the spiritual care of these people since they came to Hamburg, refused to commune them. The upshot was that a part of the Silesian company sailed in a separate ship across the Atlantic and was not inclined to accept Grabau's leadership and ministrations when they reached Buffalo.

For a time it also appeared that another large group would be combining with the Prussian emigrants. In November 1838 von Rohr, learning of the Saxon emigration, held a meeting with Stephan and the other Saxon pastors. There apparently was interest in combining the emigration efforts on both sides. But when Stephan demanded that the Prussian pastors be re-ordained by him before they could cooperate, von Rohr broke off the negotiations.

With all contracts, negotiations and other business complete, von Rohr left Hamburg for England on June 2, 1839. He traveled to England, since the four representatives had resolved to make necessary arrangements there for the travel of the company. He then took a ship to Baltimore rather than New York and traveled overland by way of Philadelphia to New York. In Philadelphia he met with some of the leading pastors of the Philadelphia Ministerium. He sensed in these men a "Union spirit." He became convinced that the Prussians could not work together with the men and churches in the East.

As was mentioned earlier, by September 18 all the emigrants arrived in New York. Von Rohr, who had reached New York earlier and had investigated the possibilities for the party, offered three possible options for the new arrivals to take. They could stay in New York, where they could find work at once in the water works that the city was installing. They also could go to Pennsylvania and find work with the railroads. Or they could travel by way of the Hudson River and the Erie Canal to Buffalo, where those whose funds were exhausted at that point could find employment working on the west end of the Erie Canal. Those whose resources made that possible could continue on at once to Wisconsin.

Already on September 25, before Grabau arrived in Buffalo, a congregational meeting was held in which it was resolved to hold new elections of elders. Meetings of the elders were to be held once a week, and schools were to be established at once. Assignment of the three teachers in the emigration company was to be made by Pastor Grabau and the congregations in Buffalo and Portage. One of the two pastors (Grabau or Krause) was to stay in Buffalo, the other to go on to Milwaukee. The organ brought along by the people from Magdeburg was to be repaired, the expenses being shared by all. If the organ brought by the Silesians stayed in Buffalo, the Magdeburg organ was to be taken to Milwaukee; if the Silesian organ did not remain in Buffalo, the Magdeburg organ should. It certainly speaks loudly of these people's strong concern for the preaching of the gospel and education that while most of them were still lodged in warehouses with not even a beginning of the building of permanent homes, they made matters of church and school their main concern—and that with no pastor present.

Some time between the congregational meeting and Grabau's arrival in Buffalo, von Rohr set out for Wisconsin with forty families, most of them Pommeranians. Apparently no records exist concerning the trip to Milwaukee, but it is assumed the company traveled by ship. Once they had arrived in Milwaukee, von Rohr, A. Radue and M. Schoessow were chosen to find a suitable area for the settlement of the immigrants. With the help of a saw mill operator named Tuerk, they traversed the area north of Milwaukee, finally deciding on land in Township IX in Washington County. The land was purchased from the government for \$1.25 an acre. The land was then assigned by lot to the members of the immigrant party. Forty acres were set aside for the church, school and residences of pastor and teacher. On November 5 the first immigrant land purchases were recorded in the government land office in Milwaukee. By November 14, von Rohr is reported to have completed a log cabin to shelter his family on the land he had chosen. During the first winter his skills as a hunter provided game for his and his neighbors' tables when food was in short supply.

In the fall of 1840, after a year of clearing land and raising a first crop, von Rohr was prompted by repeated requests from Grabau to move back to Buffalo and prepare himself for the ministry. For four years he taught school at Grabau's Trinity congregation during the day time, studied theology under Grabau from about four to six in the afternoon and studied for his next day's teaching and seminary classes in the evening. Upon his ordination in 1844, von Rohr was assigned to a congregation at Humberstone, some twenty-five miles west of Buffalo in Canada. In 1846 he accepted a call to Holy Ghost Church in New Bergholz. Here he served as a faithful and effective pastor until his death in 1874. Von Rohr no doubt was a very capable army officer. He gave up what surely must have appeared to be a promising career to follow the dictates of his conscience in withdrawing from the state church. Although he had to undergo some very difficult times because of the loss of his commission and personal family losses, he became a pillar of strength among those who emigrated from Prussia in 1839. His leadership talents and skills honed during his twenty-year army career were of great benefit to the emigration company as he effectively organized and prepared the way for the trip to America. Grabau must have much appreciated the strength and stability of this man as he dealt with Krause and Ehrenstroem. His congregation at New Bergholz and his brothers in the Buffalo Synod, too, benefited greatly from his gifts and his steady work.

Ehrenstroem, Kindermann and the 1843 emigration

It has been demonstrated earlier that Frederick William III and his persistent furthering of the Union of the Reformed and Lutheran Churches and his adamant refusal to permit the existence of a Lutheran church outside the Union were the cause for the "underground" Lutheran church in Prussia and the emigration of a portion of that church in 1839. His son, Frederick William IV, as Crown Prince had been embarrassed by and opposed to the severe restrictions and punishments imposed on the Old Lutherans. In August 1840 he ordered all the imprisoned pastors released. But he had no intention of doing away with the Union. He saw a united Protestant church in Prussia as a stronger counterweight to the Catholic Church, which was strong in portions of Silesia and the Rhine province. In 1841 the Old Lutherans were permitted to exist as a separate Lutheran church society. But they still were not allowed to have churches, bells and steeples of their own. Their members still

had to pay the taxes which provided the funds to pay State Church pastors and maintain and build their churches. Old Lutheran children still had to have a diploma from a State Church school to go on to a higher education or get many jobs. Old Lutheran schools still either were not allowed at all or were not recognized for some time. With the death of Frederick William III some thought the Old Lutherans no longer should have reason to protest or emigrate. But that did not prove to be true. In fact, it was in 1843 that the emigration reached its peak. We will begin our study of the 1843 emigration by again giving special attention to the pastors who led it.

Karl Wilhelm Ehrenstroem was born in Stendal, Brandenburg, in 1803, the son of a tailor. He studied philosophy and theology at the University of Halle. In 1826 he passed his first theological examination, which gave him the license to teach the next year. His second theological examination was not taken until 1835, and this was in the Old Lutheran Church. In connection with the first examination he declared himself ready to join the Union. Most of his grades were "good." On his examination sermon he was given an "outstandingly good." He is described as having a large, imposing figure, being slightly cross-eyed but highly gifted, and with a persuasive eloquence which could have a strong influence on his hearers.

As a student he was said to have lived a rather worldly life and enjoyed his schnapps. But that seems to have changed after he left the university. In 1826 he was appointed rector of a school at a town named Meseritz in Posen. Here he was also obliged to preach occasionally. During his tenure at Meseritz he began holding prayer meetings in his residence and elsewhere. In spite of repeated warnings he continued the practice. The result was that he was finally dismissed.

Meanwhile, Ehrenstroem had developed a friendly relationship with two Old Lutheran pastors, Lasius and Wermelkirch, who lived nearby. Through these contacts he was persuaded to withdraw from the State Church in 1833. Soon after, he was called by the small Old Lutheran congregation in Meseritz. He was also asked to serve others in Brandenburg and Posen. His life now became one of constant travel in disguise and being on the watch for the police. The government seems to have pursued him with special determination because of a fear of his persuasive powers with people.

Ehrenstroem's first arrest came in September 1836. In his hearings after the arrest he already spoke of the possibility of emigrating. He was arrested a second time and imprisoned in 1837. He was released not long after, however, because the prison was full. In an appeal for release he had promised to abstain from ministerial work. Given the choice of going elsewhere in Germany or emigrating, he said he would emigrate. Upon his release he told officials he was heading for Hamburg. Actually, he went only as far as Berlin, where he went into hiding.

Old Lutheran officials persuaded Ehrenstroem to give up emigration ideas entirely. He began to minister to the Old Lutherans in Berlin. The work was cut short when a disgruntled former member betrayed him to the police. He told the police he had changed his mind and decided not to emigrate. He spoke of his strong dislike for the Union and his intent to obstruct it in any way possible.

After four months of imprisonment in Berlin he was transferred to Danzig. Officials again tried to persuade him to give up ministering to Old Lutherans. He agreed to talk to a church official who thought he could persuade him. But Ehrenstroem used the arrangement as an opportunity to escape. He managed to elude the police from September 1839 to some time in 1840. When arrested this time, he was kept under close watch with a change of guard every four hours.

Meanwhile, Frederick William IV ascended to the Prussian throne. As was mentioned earlier, he was opposed to imprisoning the Old Lutheran pastors and in the summer of 1840 ordered their release. Ehrenstroem, however, no doubt because of his deception of officials, was not released until November 1840, and then only upon promising to report any change of address and to desist from seeking to gain adherents for the Old Lutheran cause or spreading the movement in any way. This, by the way, is clear evidence that Prussian officials, if not Frederick William IV, were not minded to grant the Old Lutherans the status of a recognized church at this time. It took strong urging from several members of the Danzig Old Lutheran congregation to persuade Ehrenstroem to agree to this promise. He was released and placed under surveillance.

Soon, however, he was again permitting himself strong outbursts against the Union and the Prussian government. He was warned about his conduct by government officials. In mid-1841 he left Danzig and moved to the province of Uckermark. The Old Lutherans then officially assigned him to Uckermark as his field of labor. He also was to assist Pastor Gustav Kindermann in Pommerania. During the next two years he continued to be a most hostile foe of the State Church.

But he also became increasingly critical of the Old Lutheran officials in Breslau. He criticized them for their opposition to emigration. He criticized them, too, for allowing Bible classes and devotional hours to be led by people who were untrained theologically. He was critical of some of the people who were being accepted as members into the Old Lutheran Church. Everyone who had a bone to pick with the Union State Church, he claimed, was accepted, whether he was Lutheran, Calvinistic, Schwenkfeldian, millennialistic, anabaptistic or pietistic in his beliefs. Finally, Ehrenstroem was suspended by the Breslau officials. Because of the great shortage of Old Lutheran pastors, he could not be replaced and continued serving the people that had been assigned to him in Uckermark and Pommerania.

In a late 1842 letter to the Breslau officials Ehrenstroem reported that he and his congregations did not accept the resolutions of the 1841 Breslau convention because they made too many concessions to unionism and indifferentism. He and his congregations no longer felt themselves one with the synod. Hence they had decided to emigrate.

Meanwhile, he continued to attack the State Church and the government in most hostile terms in his sermons. In one instance he is reported to have preached at the top of his voice in a room with all the windows open. Soon a considerable crowd gathered outside to find out what all the shouting was about. This earned him a jail sentence of two months, after which higher government officials ordered him released. But his conduct continued unchanged.

Finally, an investigation was instituted on orders from Potsdam. The investigation reported numerous instances in which Ehrenstroem spoke of State Church clergy as toadying to the rich and mighty, as being self-serving. It was reported that he warned his listeners all would regret not having listened to the prophet. Correspondence was found which made clear that Ehrenstroem was involved in promoting and organizing an emigration in the territories he served. It could not, however, be proved that he had actually induced any specific individual to emigrate. So it was decided to charge him with insulting the royal government and the United Church. He was arrested on April 28, 1843, in the midst of preparations to emigrate. His people then left without him, naming Kindermann as their pastor instead. Ehrenstroem was found guilty on October 23 and sentenced to one year in prison. He was released May 28, 1844, and finally emigrated.

Ehrenstroem took up the work in the congregations at New-Bergholz, New-Wallmow and Martinsville, New York, in the fall of 1844. With the Prussian government and the Union Church left far behind one would expect that he could turn to a more normal ministry. But being critical and negative appear to have become a permanent mind-set for him. He had hardly taken up the work in his New York congregations when he began to admonish and criticize his members for not having a living faith. Numerous prayer meetings and prayer exercises were held to awaken them spiritually. He charged Luther with having falsified the Bible in some passages of his translation. He tried to teach his members Greek and Hebrew so he could prove it to them. Then he burned a Book of Concord and a Bible because he claimed people were making idols of them. When his wife died, he attempted to resurrect her. He also attempted to restore the sight of a blind person, explaining that the time of miracles foretold in Mark 16:17f had come. He took to wearing high boots and a flowing robe with a rope for a belt wherever he went.

By now most of his members had left him, although a handful still followed and imitated him. The Buffalo churches excommunicated him. With a faithful few he moved to Wisconsin. When they came to a river, he stepped into the water calling out, "Waters, part!" His true believers walked into the water believing they would indeed part. Some almost drowned. After this the last of his followers left him and returned to New York. Ehrenstroem, too, is reported to have returned to New York for a time. The gold rush of 1848 drew him to California, where he lived out his last days in miserable poverty. He died in 1852.

One can be grateful that Ehrenstroem's spiritual and mental aberrations became apparent to all in the end. The congregations he served briefly in New York suffered no more than temporary confusion and division. Not surprisingly, those aberrations were used by opponents of the emigration to discredit the movement. But there still were real grounds for confessional Lutherans to emigrate in 1843. To agree with Ehrenstroem on that point did not necessarily make one a party to his aberrations.

Gustav Adolf Kindermann was the son of a Lutheran pastor. He was born in Ziegenhagen, Pommerania, in 1805. It is reported of him that he was declared unfit for military duty for the unusual reason that his right shoulder was "too high." That deformity did not prevent him from studying theology at the universities of Halle and Berlin. He apparently was not a particularly gifted student. At his first examination he was given a grade of "fair," although he had a "fairly good" in New Testament and Moral Theology and a "good" in Practical Theology. At his second examination a dispute developed with Bishop Ritschl as Kindermann presented and defended the orthodox Lutheran position. As a result, he did not pass the examination. In 1837 he joined the Old Lutheran Church. Some months later he was called to be the pastor of the Old Lutheran congregation in and around Kammin in Pommerania. An examination by a board of the Old Lutherans attested that his theological attainments were weak, but he was nevertheless admitted to the ministerium and in due time ordained.

Although his call was to the congregation in Kammin, he was given responsibility for the spiritual care of Old Lutherans in a large area reaching from Pommerania west into Uckermark and south into Posen and Silesia. The police soon were on the lookout for him. It was reported that he was traveling about dressed as a farmhand. When he managed to evade the police for some months, a reward of ten *Thaler* was offered for information leading to his arrest. In September 1839 he married in spite of his constant moving about and in spite of the opposition of Old Lutheran officials in Breslau. Within a month his bride was questioned extensively by the police as they sought to determine his whereabouts. Repeatedly his bride changed her place of residence, attempting to escape the surveillance of the police. Amazingly, the police did not catch Kindermann until March 1841. Then he was released again after two days. The police no longer could hold the Old Lutheran pastors in prison. But they would arrest them from time to time as a reminder that what they were doing was contrary to the law.

In the course of 1839 and 1840 Kindermann's relations with the Breslau church officials deteriorated. He criticized other pastors in Pommerania for being too tolerant of conventicles. Officials received complaints from several sources that he spoke as if it was not possible to be saved outside the Old Lutheran Church. In view of his scarcely adequate examination record, Kindermann took a surprisingly superior tone in writing to Huschke in Breslau. Also contributing to the tension between Kindermann and the officials was the fact that he began to encourage emigration among his members.

Kindermann attended the meeting of the Breslau Synod in 1841 but spoke very critically of it afterwards. He apparently was being influenced by some laymen in his congregations. Twice in 1842 special commissions were appointed to investigate the situation in Kindermann's congregation and the nature of his work. As a result, Kindermann was suspended for his contemptuous attitude and speech toward the church officials. Kindermann thereupon announced his withdrawal from the fellowship of the Old Lutheran Church but continued to serve his congregations as before.

In 1839 Kindermann had spoken out in opposition to the Grabau and von Rohr emigration. But in November 1842 he declared that he had given up all hope that the Prussian government would ever grant freedom of conscience. He also made known his disillusionment with the pussyfooting of the officials in Breslau toward the Prussian government and announced his intention of emigrating. Before deciding definitely to emigrate, Kindermann and his associate, Ehrenstroem, had requested full religious liberty and the right for the Old Lutheran congregations to call their own pastors and have them recognized by the government. That request was refused.

Preparations for emigration then began in earnest. A major obstacle to be overcome was acquiring the necessary papers and permits. Information of various kinds had to be provided, and several officials had to give their approval before the application could be sent off. In the process, government officials constantly sought to delay and discourage the would-be emigrants and persuade them that they did not have reason to leave.

Officials insisted that religious freedom was offered. They warned of the dangers and hardships that awaited emigrants in America. They pointed to actual disappointments and difficulties that emigrants had written home about. But the emigration preparations went on, and new applications for emigration permits continued to be submitted.

Eventually, a total of over 1600 people emigrated in 1843, primarily from Pommerania and the northwestern part of Brandenburg, called Uckermark. Some traveled from the Oder port of Swinemuende, all the way by sea. Others traveled by horse and wagon to Hamburg and boarded ship there. A majority traveled by canal barge from the Oder to the Elbe and then to Hamburg and by ship on to New York. It is not known exactly how many ships transported them to New York.

The first contingent left in early June and the last by the end of July. In one instance 150 would-be emigrants on a canal barge were checked for emigration permits at the Prussian border. Over 40 were found not to have the necessary papers and were transported back to their home towns. Church records indicate that later all of these managed nevertheless to slip past government officials and emigrate. Pastor Kindermann acted as the leader for the whole emigration, since Pastor Ehrenstroem was arrested for his sharp criticisms of the government and the church and was imprisoned in Berlin.

The first of these emigrants reached Buffalo on August 4, and the others followed in due time, all ships reaching America safely. A letter sent home by one of the emigrants reveals that some of them were already arguing about Grabau's doctrine of church and ministry on board ship, some calling it more Catholic than Lutheran.

Once all of the company reached Buffalo, Grabau and Kindermann held meetings with the congregation. It was decided that Kindermann should go on to Wisconsin with his Pommeranians while Grabau temporarily served Ehrenstroem's people, who would settle around Buffalo.

Von Rohr proved to be very helpful to the new arrivals. He was familiar with the Buffalo area and had also spent a year in Wisconsin. He could therefore give a comparison of the two regions. Von Rohr now acted as leader of the Buffalo settlers. With a committee he went around and looked over six different possible sites. Information thus gained was then presented to all those who planned to settle around Buffalo. They chose a site in Wheatfield County, northeast of Buffalo between Lockport, Tonawonda and Niagara. About 2,000 acres were purchased for \$9.00 per acre from Governor Washington Hunt, with whom von Rohr had developed a friendship.

Governor Hunt had the area surveyed. The land was laid out in 100-acre farms. In the center a village was laid out with one-acre lots. In addition, another 600 acres were purchased a bit later and put aside as a reserve so that some of the poorer settlers might purchase land later at a still reasonable price. Governor Hunt donated 4 acres in the middle of the settlement, which was named New-Bergholz, for a church, school, parsonage and market place. He also donated a pair of oxen for clearing the land and hauling logs for building log cabins. The governor also lent money at low rates to small farmers to assist them in buying land and tools. Another smaller settlement was established two miles north of New-Bergholz, which was named New-Wallmow. A third, which was given the name Martinsville, was located four miles east of Tonawonda on the Erie Canal. Most of the settlers here were fishermen who came from a town on the Oder River called Nipperwiese.

Grabau began holding services in these new settlements on an alternating basis. In his absence, elders would read sermons from some orthodox sermon book. The church at New-Bergholz was named Holy Ghost Lutheran Church, that at New-Wallmow, St. Peter's and that at Martinsville, St. Martin's. After the years of irregular "underground" services and the constant apprehension about arrest, fines and imprisonments, the people were indeed grateful for the freedom of religion and regular church life they now could enjoy in their new home.

In the spring of 1844 the three young congregations sent a letter to the Prussian government appealing for the release of Pastor Ehrenstroem. He was released later in the year and reached Buffalo in the fall of 1844. The people's joy at finally having a pastor of their own was soon turned to distress as it became evident that

Ehrenstroem had become a fanatic pietist and worse. Ehrenstroem was excommunicated by his congregations. They then called as their pastor Heinrich von Rohr, who had been serving at Humberstone, Ontario.

Von Rohr remained at New-Bergholz for the remainder of his life. Under his capable leadership churches were built at all three of the congregations at New-Bergholz, New-Wallmow and Martinsville. In 1853 daughter congregations were organized at Johannesburg and Wolcottville. Johannesburg was organized by 74 families from New-Bergholz halfway between New-Bergholz and Martinsville. Members of the mother congregation helped with the building of the church and school.

At Wolcottville, 12 miles beyond Martinsville and Lockport, 70 families bought 1600 acres of land with the help of the older churches from a man by the name of Wolcott, who donated 100 acres for the use of the church and 50 for the school. Thus within ten years the settlement at Buffalo had grown to a cluster of six flourishing congregations.

Meanwhile, the larger portion of the 1843 emigration company moved on, as had been determined, to Wisconsin. Pastor Kindermann remained in Milwaukee for half a year. While there, he served the Old Lutherans who were under Pastor Krause's care. Meanwhile, he asked Pastor Krause to look after the spiritual needs of the members of his congregation who settled in and beyond Freistadt.

In contrast to von Rohr, neither Kindermann nor Krause apparently played any part in the selection of new settlement sites. One wonders whether von Rohr would have convinced the Lebanon people to settle in a place closer and more accessible for the Kirchhayn pastor. Some of the new arrivals bought unclaimed land in the Freistadt settlement.

The largest group selected the site six miles northwest of Freistadt which was given the name Kirchhayn ("church woods"). Eighty acres were set aside at the outset for a church, school and homes for the pastor and teacher. The women and children stayed with relatives and friends at Freistadt while the men felled trees, erected log cabins and cleared the first land.

At Easter in 1844 Pastor Kindermann moved into a two-story log cabin which had been built by Ferdinand Bublitz. The upper story was used for church services on Sunday and as a school room during the week. A separate school with an attached teacherage and a separate parsonage were built in the summer of 1844. In 1856 the present stone church was built. Neither the death of Pastor Kindermann the day before Easter nor a lightning bolt which struck and damaged the unfinished church deterred the congregation, which chose the name David's Star, from completing this new house of God.

Meanwhile, another smaller portion of the 1843 emigrants settled in Cedarburg and established Trinity Lutheran Church there, which was also served by Kindermann.

Iwan in his history, *Die Altlutherische Auswanderung um die Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts*, gives Kindermann rather poor marks for the work he did in Germany. He implies that Kindermann was involved in active recruiting for the emigration and considers his reasons for breaking with Breslau unjustified. He finds his manner of addressing the officials in his correspondence rather arrogant, considering his record in his examination for the ministry. But once Kindermann moved into the parsonage at Kirchhayn, he settled down to solid, commendable work.

When controversy broke out between Krause and the Freistadt congregation, it spread also into Kindermann's congregation. Kindermann tried to keep peace as much as possible. At first he defended Krause, but eventually he told those who had complaints to take them to Grabau, the synod president. Although Kindermann was by no means brilliant, the Buffalo Synod could have used more of his kind of steady ministry.

The fourth part of the people that came to Wisconsin in 1843, after searching for suitable land to the west and north of Watertown, settled in Lebanon Township in Dodge County and in Ixonia Township in Jefferson County, five miles east of Watertown. About 75 families came to the area. They felled the trees, built log cabin homes and cleared some land. Some even planted some winter wheat that first fall of 1843. In winter they called Pastor Kindermann to serve them as their pastor, but he had already accepted a call to serve David's Star congregation at Kirchhayn. For some months he attempted to serve Lebanon occasionally from Kirchhayn, but the distance of over 25 miles, the lack of direct roads and the difficult terrain finally led him to advise the Lebanon people to try to call a pastor from the Saxons in Missouri. Pastor Carl L. Geyer, a cousin of C. F. W.

Walther, accepted their call, arriving in Lebanon in late November of 1844. Thus Immanuel of Lebanon became a member, not of the Buffalo Synod, but of the Missouri Synod. Other losses for the Buffalo Synod would follow.

Grabau, the Buffalo Synod and their crippling controversies

The emigrations of 1839 and 1843 which we have examined in detail brought over 2,600 people to the United States. A fairly large number of others came individually or in groups in the following years and strengthened the settlements and congregations we have described. When the "Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church Emigrated from Prussia" was organized in 1845 at Freistadt and Milwaukee, it gave promise of experiencing considerable further growth and enjoying a flourishing future. That was not to be.

The first controversy developed before the 1839 group left Germany. When the emigration party from Silesia was left without a clergy leader because Krause had stayed on in America, they decided to join Grabau's party. When Grabau learned that Krause and one layman had negotiated with a representative of George Angas about the possibility of emigrating to Australia, he insisted that the Silesians should go to Australia or at least make a settlement with Angas's representative or apologize, if no settlement was needed. The Silesians, who had authorized Krause and their other representatives only to negotiate for a trip to America, refused to do as Grabau demanded. Grabau in turn barred them from the Lord's Supper.

A part of the Silesian group then went to America by themselves. When they arrived in Buffalo, the controversy continued. Grabau excommunicated them and considered them a *Rotte*, a rabble or mob, not part of the church. In 1841 when Ernst Moritz Buerger, one of the Saxon pastors, decided to return to Germany, he came through Buffalo. The excommunicated Silesians called him as their pastor, and he accepted. Grabau now considered Buerger a *Rottierer*, a rabble preacher.

The kind of thinking that lay behind Grabau's treatment of the Silesians both in Germany and in Buffalo was put into words in December 1840 when he issued his *Hirtenbrief*, or Pastoral Letter. In it he stated that members of a Christian congregation owe obedience to their pastor in everything not forbidden by the Word of God.

The *Hirtenbrief* was occasioned by events in the congregation in Freistadt because, in the absence of a pastor, two laymen had administered the Lord's Supper. Grabau claimed that only a properly ordained Lutheran pastor could administer a valid sacrament. He also made the procedures for ordination set down in the Saxon, Wittenberg and Pommeranian Church Orders absolute requirements for being ordained. He held that only ordained pastors were to perform marriages and baptisms, although exceptions were allowed for baptisms.

Grabau had had to deal with conventicles in Germany. Their members were people who claimed that ministers were not necessary, that any Christian could conduct a worship service, preach or administer the sacrament. Grabau had good reason to oppose those people and defend and support the public ministry. But he clearly went beyond Scripture in attributing to a pastor the authority which he did.

When Pastor L. F. E. Krause arrived at Freistadt in September 1841 to serve as the congregation's first pastor, he demanded that they sign a document which stated that they accepted 1) the Symbolical Books of the Lutheran Church, 2) the old Church Orders of Saxony, Wittenberg and Pommerania, 3) the Dresden Catechism, and 4) Grabau's *Hirtenbrief* as correct doctrinal statements and that they accepted Grabau as an orthodox Lutheran pastor and his congregation as an orthodox Lutheran congregation. Furthermore, they had to confess that they had sinned against proper church order in having a layman distribute the Sacrament of the Altar during their vacancy and that all that did not agree with all the above were separatists, heretics and enemies of the Lutheran Church. A considerable number of Freistadt people refused to sign Krause's document and were put out of the congregation. Several more families left the church as the result of arguments with Krause after word reached Freistadt of Ehrenstroem's doctrinal aberrations.

Another controversy arose in 1845 in Milwaukee. Krause had been renting a horse and buggy to drive into Milwaukee to serve the members there. At a rather poorly attended congregational meeting he asked that the congregation buy him a horse and buggy. He pointed out that this would be cheaper in the long run, and

that, in fact, if they would pay three cents a week for twenty weeks the horse and buggy would be paid for. The assembly voted to raise the money for the horse and buggy. But at the next congregational meeting the motion was rescinded, and the congregation went on record as refusing to raise the money.

Krause then excommunicated those who were opposed to buying him the horse and buggy. The matter was appealed to President Grabau, who sided with Krause.

The congregation in Milwaukee was about evenly divided on the matter. The Krause opponents appealed to and eventually joined the Missouri Synod. They became Trinity congregation, now in Milwaukee on 9th Street and Highland Avenue. The Krause supporters constituted St. Paul's congregation, today located at 28th and Wisconsin in Milwaukee. There was also a division among the members at Freistadt. Two congregations existed there until 1868, when a reconciliation and merger brought all of Trinity-Freistadt into the Missouri Synod. Krause left in 1848, taking controversy with him to New York, as we heard previously.

When Grabau wrote his *Hirtenbrief* in 1840, he sent a copy to the Saxons in Missouri. They did not reply at once. They were struggling to come to terms with the revelation of Stephan's abuses of his position. Not until the organization of the Missouri Synod did they in the course of that first convention reply publicly. But after that the pages of *Der Lutheraner* and later *Lehre and Wehre* carried repeated criticisms of the exaggerated claims of Grabau and the Buffalo Synod for the authority of the pastoral ministry. The dispute came to a head in 1866 when Grabau was charged with heresy by two of his own men, von Rohr being one of them. This led to a split in the Buffalo Synod. A colloquy was held with representatives of the Missouri Synod. As a result, a considerable portion of the Buffalo Synod pastors and congregations joined the Missouri Synod. Another group, including von Rohr and his son Philip, remained independent for some years, but after the elder von Rohr's death in 1874, Philip joined the Wisconsin Synod. Grabau was left with a much reduced Buffalo Synod.

It must have been a shattering blow for Grabau when several of his Buffalo brothers accused him of false doctrine and numerous pastors and congregations joined the Missouri Synod. But he kept on. He still was the pastor of the large Trinity congregation in Buffalo. He kept on teaching at Martin Luther College and Seminary. He kept on writing for the Buffalo church paper, which now was called *Wachende Kirche*. But the Buffalo Synod had ceased to be the significant force for confessional Lutheranism it had started out to be.

There are several characteristics of Grabau that deserve favorable recognition, namely, his life-long diligence and industry. Not many could bear the work load he did as pastor, professor, editor and church leader. His selfless devotion to the work of the ministry is also noteworthy. For example, he never asked nor received any remuneration for his 39 years of teaching. Above all, however, he deserves to be remembered for his strong commitment to the Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Confessions. For them he gave up a flourishing ministry in the State Church. He endured the hardships of the underground ministry and imprisonment, and he led the emigration.

But an attempt at an assessment of Grabau also has to acknowledge his failings. Iwan calls him a man with "*Ecken und Kanten*," corners and edges. He was not the easiest man to get along with, being uncompromising and unwilling to yield, once he had taken a position. For Grabau personally the Prussian emigrations in the end held more tragedy than triumph. He could not or would not recognize that trying to buttress the authority of the ministry beyond scriptural warrant could only discredit his ministry and weaken the Old Lutheran movement.

But we should also look at the Old Lutheran emigration apart from Grabau. What value or significance was there in the long run to this phenomenon of these three to seven or more thousand people (the estimates of their actual numbers vary quite widely) who left Prussia in the 1830s and 40s, protesting that they were no longer allowed to practice their Lutheran faith as Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions required? The government and the establishment press pictured them as poor, uneducated souls, who were being duped by a few fanatics. At the very least, those who came proved to be good citizens of our country. They were law-abiding, industrious, peaceable and thrifty. For being supposedly uneducated and, by implication, not very intelligent, they showed a surprisingly great appreciation for education. On the whole, these were solid Christians. They brought with them their Bibles, prayer books and hymn books and used them. For most of them regular church attendance was taken for granted as a vital part of life. In their letters back to Germany they gave

clear and strong evidence of their faith. Is there any reason to assume that they did not do the same in their conversations and conduct among family, neighbors and friends?

They established and handed down to the succeeding generations over two dozen strong Lutheran congregations. Although the Wisconsin Synod doesn't trace its origins back to the Old Lutheran emigrations, we today are blessed by the fellowship of these Old Lutheran congregations: David's Star at Kirchhayn; St. Paul's in Ixonia; St. John's of Maribel; St. John and St. James in part at Reedsville; Trinity in Neenah; St. Mark's, Sugar Island (Lebanon), all of these being in Wisconsin; and St. Paul's, Norfolk, Nebraska; there may also be others.

There was among the Old Lutheran emigrants a strong appreciation for Lutheran parochial schools. The 1843 people especially came to a considerable extent because they did not want their children educated in Union schools, but in their own truly Lutheran schools. The Prussian government, however, refused to recognize their Lutheran schools and required that they keep on supporting the Union schools. Starting their own Lutheran schools was one of the first things they did here. Many still have them.

Another benefit which the Old Lutherans brought with them rather unconsciously was a love of and appreciation for the German Lutheran hymnody and liturgy. In making the language transition, Eastern Lutherans had to a great extent lost their appreciation for and familiarity with these aspects of Lutheran tradition. They had turned to English and American hymns and had dropped the traditional Lutheran liturgy. The Old Lutherans kept them and shared them also when they made the language transition. We indeed still have numerous reasons to appreciate and be thankful for the Old Lutheran emigrations and what they brought to this land. We are the richer spiritually for their doing so. Most important, their insistence on confessional loyalty and clarity were of help to the Wisconsin Synod in its earliest years. Their criticism that the Wisconsin Synod was *dick uniert* stung. Wisconsin protested. But by 1867 the Union was rejected in principle and in practice, and Wisconsin was ready to move in new directions and in new company with the Old Lutherans of the Missouri Synod.

Part II

THE SAXON EMIGRATION

Having examined the causes, preparations, travel and settlements of the Prussian Old Lutheran emigrations, we turn now to the confessional Lutheran emigration from Saxony of 1838-1839. In contrast to the Prussian emigrations, for which there is a scarcity of good documentation available in America, the Saxon emigration has abundant documentation, much of it readily accessible in the United States. The participants in the Saxon saga recorded more of their experiences and preserved most of what they wrote. Concordia Historical Institute in St. Louis, Missouri, is the principal repository for the primary documents recording the Saxons' travels and travails, and a number of popular studies of the Saxon emigration have been published by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod at the various anniversaries of the original event and of the founding of the Missouri Synod. Finally, a very detailed and scholarly study of this emigration, written in English and offering abundant documentation, has been provided by Walter O. Forster under the title, *Zion on the Mississippi* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, c. 1953). The following study is to a large extent based on Forster's thorough work.

Political and religious conditions in early 19th century Saxony

The emigration of parties of confessional Lutherans from Prussia beginning in 1838 were, as has been noted, a direct result of the Prussian Union. Saxony also had a king who had a different faith from that of his subjects. Ever since 1697 the rulers of Saxony, the heartland of the Reformation, had been Catholic. In that year Elector Frederick Augustus I had turned Catholic in order to be eligible to be elected King of Poland. The ruler of Saxony in the early 1800s was Elector Frederick Augustus III, who took the title Frederick Augustus I when

he was crowned king by Napoleon in 1806. But Frederick Augustus was not directly responsible for the Saxon emigration, although he did play a small part.

In 1806 Napoleon dealt the combined armies of Prussia and Saxony a smashing and demoralizing defeat at Jena and Auerstadt. As a result, Prussia undertook a thoroughgoing reorganization of not only its army, but also its whole government, including its educational system and the administration of its churches. That reorganization was remarkably effective. The Prussian army played a major role in the defeat of Napoleon in 1813 and again in 1815. Prussia gained back all the territories lost in the Napoleonic wars and more. The successful *Befreiungskrieg* or War of Liberation, as the Prussians called the last part of the Napoleonic Wars, gave the Prussian people a strong emotional boost. Prussia was again one of the major powers of Europe. It was on the path that under Bismarck in the 1860s and 70s saw Prussia lead in the unification of Germany and made Germany a world power rivaling Great Britain.

Saxon forces also were a part of the army crushed at Jena in 1806. But Saxony underwent no reorganization. Under cautious and slow moving Frederick Augustus, it became a part of Napoleon's Confederation of the Rhine and regularly supplied 20,000 troops for Napoleon's armies, as it was required to do. Saxony lost 14,000 out of 20,000 men in the disastrous invasion of Russia in 1812, and it had 20,000 men on the losing side in the Battle of Leipzig. As a consequence, when the Congress of Vienna redrew the map of Europe in 1815, Saxony lost almost half of its territory and over forty percent of its population to Prussia. It is said that Frederick Augustus responded to this disaster for his realm by attempting to carry on as though nothing had changed. Any suggestions that Saxony also inaugurate some sort of reorganization of its government, that it institute at least some liberalization in response to growing dissatisfaction, were repulsed.

Frederick Augustus died in 1827. His brother Anton succeeded to the throne and continued the old policy of unchanging conservatism. This was an advantage for conservative Christians and strictly confessional Lutherans like Martin Stephan and his followers. A leading figure in the cabinet of both Frederick Augustus and Anton until 1830 was Count Detlev von Einsiedel. He himself was a member of the *Erweckungsbewegung*, the spiritual renewal that moved through the church in the early 1800s. He also was sympathetic to the Stephan party. But when riots broke out in Saxony in 1832, more liberal men were brought in, and von Einsiedel was dismissed.

Saxony found itself no longer the political and economic power it once had been. It was in no way a match for a revitalized and rapidly developing Prussia.

In the spiritual-religious realm, prospects were also discouraging. The 18th century had brought the *Aufklärung* to Germany, the land of Luther. In the realm of science the many new scientific discoveries had demonstrated that science, the disciplined application of human reason, could achieve amazing results and solve a host of human problems. Many concluded that ultimately all human problems could be solved by applying human reason to them consistently and persistently. And so also in the field of religion and Christian theology men began to apply the principle that human reason is *the* ultimate source of truth. The conclusions of human reason were thought at first to supplement and in time to supplant the truths of Holy Scripture. The so-called supernaturalists still allowed for a revelation given through the Scriptures, but held that the truths taught by Scripture must agree with reason. They emphasized the wisdom and goodness of God and deemphasized such doctrines as original sin and Christ's atoning death. Full-blown rationalists dismissed Scripture and revelation altogether. In the Age of Rationalism men proclaimed from supposedly Christian pulpits that "so-called revealed religion is a lie."

The supernaturalists and rationalists first gained significant entry into the church and its work when they were appointed to chairs of theology at the universities. University students, impressed by the "reasonableness" of the new theology, flocked to the lectures of the rationalists, adopted their views and carried them out to the pulpits and classrooms of parish after parish. While there surely were faithful professors and pastors who continued to preach and teach the One Thing Needful, the passing of time continued to thin their ranks, and within a generation or two they had become a minority in the churches also in Saxony.

The effects on the people in the pews varied, depending on the effectiveness of the preacher, the length of his tenure and the background of the people in the congregation. On the whole, the educated portion of society, the

professional people and their families and the merchant class, in other words, the middle class, was quite strongly permeated by Rationalism. Among the lower classes, the peasants and laborers, its influence was quite a bit less. Also among the nobility it attained less of a hold. As was mentioned earlier, there still were areas such as Breslau and Silesia where orthodoxy held on into the 19th century.

In an earlier period Pietism had not gained a hold in Saxony either as quickly or as strongly as it had in Prussia, where Halle had been a most effective center. In Saxony the supernaturalists rather than out-and-out rationalists had become most widespread. In the 19th century the supernaturalist form of homage to human reason held on longer in Saxony than in other German lands. A significant number of representatives of extreme Rationalism still could be found in Saxony well into the 19th century. One opponent of Stephan, Ludwig Fischer, conceded that the evangelical church in Saxony was a refuge of free thinkers. Franz Delitzsch stated in 1842 that the bulk of rationalistic publications in Germany was being published in Saxony. Most of the higher church officials in the 1820s and 1830s were supernaturalists or rationalists. After 1817 and the proclamation of the Union in Prussia, there also was a small but growing number who advocated that Saxony likewise approve a merger of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches and adopt a confessional statement that reflected that position.

Meanwhile, it should be emphasized, the State Church of Saxony officially still declared itself to be an Evangelical Lutheran Church. The creeds and confessions contained in the Book of Concord were the official doctrinal position of the church according to which all preaching and teaching was to be done and all doctrine was to be judged. Although the rationalists did not accept much of what is taught in the Lutheran Confessions, they never sought to have them altered or repealed. The Confessions were a tradition, an empty form. The church had become pluralistic. And the very men who were charged with keeping watch over the doctrine of the church, with defending its creeds, condoned and even encouraged departures from them.

The rationalists did effect several changes to reflect their theological views. In 1812 a new *Kirchenbuch*, or Agenda, was published. The formulas for the various services and rites were changed in a way that either changed the doctrine involved or made for empty and meaningless phrases. To avoid controversy, however, in most instances several alternatives were offered, at least one of which would offer intact the traditional orthodox Lutheran form. It is also reported that liberal church officials permitted extreme rationalists to change these forms to suit themselves. Hymnbooks, catechisms and other religious books used in schools were changed to eliminate those Lutheran doctrines which the rationalists no longer accepted. By the end of the 18th century it seemed that Rationalism would soon eradicate every trace of traditional orthodox Christianity.

But then, unexpectedly, things began to change. Voices began to be heard expressing dissatisfaction with Rationalism. Objections came from the ranks of the highly educated and from the uneducated. It became obvious that man is not solely, not strictly, a rational creature. A steady diet of sermons on the improvement of living conditions and better morals did not satisfy people. It became evident that there were many, especially among the common people, who had never accepted the claims of Rationalism. They sometimes were referred to as *die Stillen im Lande*, a portion of the population that had been silent because they did not feel capable of debating with the philosophers, but also did not agree with them. Among these people a desire for more satisfying fare began to express itself. They found others of a like mind. They did what the pietists once had done: small groups met to read the Bible together, to discuss its teachings, to pray, to sing the old traditional Christian hymns.

Thus the *Erweckungsbewegung* came into existence, spread and flourished. The individual little groups of Christians gathered around the Word, established ties with each other by mail, encouraged each other and shared what they gained from their study of the Word. They looked for and found here and there those few preachers who still preached the gospel, and they traveled many miles to hear them. They also informed other groups of like-minded believers about these preachers. It was largely from cells of these earnest, active Christians that the followers of Martin Stephan and the Saxon emigration came.

Martin Stephan: The early years

Any study of the confessional Lutheran emigration from Saxony in 1838-39 must, of course, concern itself with Martin Stephan. It was around him that the emigrants gathered. It was his decision that set the emigration into motion. He was the leader of the actual emigration company; and before the company had reached its goal, he had been elected their bishop and been given their declaration of complete submission to his authority.

Martin Stephan was born on August 13, 1777, in a village named Stramberg in Moravia. His father was a linen weaver by trade, and Martin was trained for the same occupation. The parents, originally Roman Catholics, had been converted to the Lutheran faith before Martin was born. Martin's father was very much concerned about his son's spiritual training. As a result, Martin became familiar with the Bible at an early age. His mother also took an active part in his spiritual development, encouraging him from earliest childhood to be faithful in prayer and God-fearing in his daily life. Stephan always spoke of his mother with deep respect. Sad to say, both parents were taken from him through death at an early age.

Having become an orphan so early in life, Stephan had to overcome a number of serious difficulties. His education was cut short. Because he was a Lutheran convert in a predominantly Catholic country, he endured persecution in his homeland. That experience may have prompted him to move to Breslau at the age of twenty, when he had attained the status of a journeyman weaver and hence was free to travel.

In Breslau he came into contact with members of its *Erweckungsbewegung*. Stephan became a member of this group. He soon demonstrated a real zeal to proclaim the gospel to others. As a result, members of the group were moved to provide the financial means for him to resume his education. Johann Ephraim Scheibel, whose son, Johann Gottfried Scheibel, was the early leader of opposition to the Prussian Union, befriended Stephan and gained for him permission to use the library of St. Elizabeth Church in Breslau. An interesting matter for conjecture is the extent to which the Scheibels, father and son, influenced Stephan or contributed to his strong commitment to the Lutheran Confessions.

Stephan spent two years at St. Elizabeth's gymnasium (high school-college). He is reported to have read avidly, especially church history. He did not master Latin or Greek, however, and so could not pass the final examination, the *Abitur*, which normally was a prerequisite for entry into a German university. Nevertheless, he somehow managed to obtain entrance to the university at Halle. A Count von Hohenthal provided needed financial support.

After two years at Halle, Stephan also spent three years at the University of Leipzig. He attended only a few lectures in philosophy or theology. He spoke disparagingly of the "fleshly disciplines." He tended to consider anything which did not come from olden times as unbelief and false doctrine. Again at Leipzig he devoted most of his time to reading in church history, and especially ascetic writings from the age of Pietism. In this rather narrow field he gained a rather impressive mastery. Later he used the materials he had gained to advantage in sermons, classes and conversations.

This intensive concentration on one narrow segment of just one discipline left Stephan unprepared to take either the examination necessary to qualify for a license to preach or the second examination, the successful completion of which was normally necessary to obtain a pastorate in any of the churches of Germany. Nevertheless, upon termination of his university studies in 1809, Stephan received a call to a congregation in Haber, Bohemia. Just a year later he received and accepted a call to serve the congregation of Bohemian exiles in Dresden and also to preach in German at St. John's Church, where the Bohemians worshiped.

Stephan appeared to have considerable talent at getting around what would be insurmountable obstacles to others, to shrug off or bypass regulations that usually applied to everyone. At 25, he had been admitted into the gymnasium. There he had applied himself only to those subjects that interested him. Without passing the final examination at the gymnasium he gained admission to two universities, where he again ignored the usual procedures and curricular requirements. Upon termination of his university studies, without passing either of the two examinations necessary to qualify for the ministry, he received two calls within little more than a year, when other men who had passed their examinations waited as much as ten years for their first call. The second call brought him to the capital city of Saxony, Dresden. Very likely Stephan had highly placed spokesmen or

advocates who played key roles in his gaining admission to institutions and positions for which by normal standards he was ineligible. But Stephan would again demonstrate a penchant for considering himself outside or above regulations, customs and laws later in his life.

St. John's of Dresden was a congregation ideally suited for cultivating such an attitude. In 1650, a considerable number of Lutherans who had fled Bohemia during the Thirty Years War were permitted by the Saxon government to organize the congregation in Dresden. They were provided with St. John's church as a site in which to worship and carry on their congregational meetings and other activities. Because they were Bohemians, who had had somewhat different church customs in their old home, and because their work was carried on in the Bohemian language, they were not incorporated into the organizational structure of the Saxon church. Rather, they were permitted to carry on their affairs with very little supervision or regulation by officials of the State Church. They were allowed to call their own pastors, elect their own church officers and carry on discipline within the congregation as they saw fit. They were permitted to continue the smaller group meetings, which we would probably call Bible classes, such as had been advocated and initiated by Spener and other pietists in the 17th century. These were called conventicles in the 18th and 19th centuries and were restricted in all congregations of the State Church of Saxony. The Bohemian congregation also had brought along a fund of 12,000 gulden that had grown to 50,000 thaler by Stephan's day, which the congregation administered by itself.

By the time Stephan assumed the pastorate of the Bohemian refugee congregation, 160 years had passed since its organization. Only a small minority still actually spoke Bohemian. Almost all had been born in Saxony and spoke German. Hence, the stipulation in Stephan's call that he also conduct German services. It was out of Stephan's ministry at St. John's that the Saxon emigration developed.

The congregation had exercised its freedom in calling Stephan, a man not qualified by State Church standards. From the beginning Stephan exercised the congregation's freedom by conducting several meetings each week which were not worship services. In these meetings sermons might be read or discussed, and there were prayers. One type of these meetings Stephan referred to as *Sprechstunden*, apparently open counseling meetings. Some people in Dresden questioned the permissibility of what Stephan was doing, but for some years no action was taken.

At St. John's, Stephan developed a rather popular ministry. In some ways that was surprising. The inadequacies of his education showed themselves in not infrequent grammatical errors. He spoke with a Bohemian accent. His voice was described as not particularly pleasing. He spoke in a monotone, displaying neither any fire or special fluency. His sermons displayed no efforts or ability at rhetorical artistry.

But it is reported that a strictly Lutheran and biblical spirit prevailed in his preaching in that rationalistic age. His sermons, classes and individual counseling evidenced good judgment, pastoral wisdom and an understanding of human nature. He did have a sound and deep understanding of the gospel and justification and was able to proclaim the gospel to the comfort of numerous souls in his congregation and could apply the comfort of the gospel in counseling individuals.

Popular opinion was divided about him. The majority, who had been influenced by Rationalism, rejected and condemned him as a fanatic, an errorist, a starter of sects. But there still was a considerable number of true and sincere Lutheran Christians in Saxony. Among these he found an increasing following. The unadorned preaching of the gospel, of sin and grace, of repentance and faith, was rare in the land. Word spread quickly far and wide that this could be heard in Stephan's sermons.

In the earlier years of his ministry in Dresden, from 1810 to about 1823, Stephan was noted as being ultraconservative, and there was a considerable amount of positive reaction to him in the community. He was much involved in the organization of the Saxon Bible Society in 1814 and served on its board of directors for a considerable number of years and preached for anniversary services from time to time. He also played an active and leading role in the Dresden Mission Society. In both organizations basic documents called for faithfulness to the Lutheran Confessions, in spite of the fact that there were pietists and even rationalists in the membership. Thus Stephan had considerable contact with the nondenominational or unionistic pietist movement in Dresden. Increasingly, he drew people away from this pietistic group and gained them as his own followers. His sermons,

classes and counseling spoke effectively to Christian hearts and consciences. Attendance at St. John's Church increased noticeably. It is estimated that as many as a thousand people attended services and other meetings at St. John's more or less regularly without becoming official members of the congregation. The old Bohemian core counted only about 30 families.

Stephan's growing popularity did not come without negative responses, however. In time the Bohemian core of the congregation began to complain that Stephan was neglecting them and devoting all his time to the German-speaking people who were coming from other congregations. There also was unhappiness that so many newcomers or outsiders were coming to St. John's and "taking over" the congregation. Other pastors in Dresden and its environs also began to complain and express their discontent that their members were absenting themselves from their services and going to hear Stephan. By 1820 they began to enter complaints with Saxon church officials charging Stephan with interfering in their parishes and ministries. Nevertheless, Stephan continued with his ministry as he had before.

Candidate Kuehn and his Leipzig conventicle

In the 1820s Stephan's ministry continued to grow, spreading beyond Dresden to a considerable portion of the Kingdom of Saxony and even beyond. We will touch on this somewhat later. Meanwhile, a development in Leipzig deserves our attention.

About 1820 a conservative theology professor at the University of Leipzig began holding meetings with students which he called *Collegia Philobiblica*, in imitation of similarly named meetings which A. H. Francke had held in Leipzig with students in the late 1600s. In these meetings the professor sought to lead the students in the study of God's Word, in prayer and in discussion of current religious questions. He also sought to assist in development of their sermon preparation skills. The small group that met several times a week consisted of men who rejected Rationalism and accepted the truths of the Bible in a living faith. In time, leadership of this group was taken over by a man referred to as "Candidate Kuehn." Almost nothing is known about his personal life, not even his first name. He was in the not unusual situation of having completed his studies in theology at the university several years earlier, but not yet having received a call to a congregation. He apparently was doing some kind of teaching in Leipzig to support himself.

Precisely when or why Kuehn assumed the leadership of the student group is not known. But it is clear that he changed the nature of the group and the purpose of its meetings. Rather than stressing practical theological studies, he shifted the emphasis almost exclusively to devotional reading. Kuehn had come, as Walther himself explains, to certainty regarding the forgiveness of his sins and his possession of God's grace only after long and difficult struggles and the most frightful terrors of conscience evoked by the law. He then was convinced and sought to convince the young students in his group that Christianity and their salvation would not have a sure foundation until they too had experienced a high degree of remorse and had felt the terrors of hell in vehement struggles for repentance. They read the devotional writings of Arndt, Spener, Francke, Rambach and other pietists. The more strongly and more legalistically one of these books insisted on a crushing of the heart and on a total mortification of the Old Man, the better they thought the book to be. And even those writings they read only as far as they described the exercises and pains of repentance. If there followed a description of faith and its comfort for the penitent, they closed the book, thinking that that was not yet for them. One of the students, E. M. Buerger, later commented that they had made a savior of repentance, fear and alarm. Two of the students, C. F. W. Walther and J. F. Buenger, actually damaged their physical health and suffered physical breakdowns through excessive fasting and other forms of self-denial, so that both had to drop out of the university for a semester to recuperate.

Walther, suffering from severe spiritual trials and unsure of his salvation, slipped into serious depression and wrestled with despair. There are certain parallels between the young disciples of Candidate Kuehn and a young Luther also struggling in vain to attain the assurance of salvation and God's grace. Luther attempted to do so through the methods prescribed in monastic life: fasting, prayer, self-denial, even self-flagellation. The young Kuehn disciples followed somewhat similar methods as laid out in the ascetic directives offered by the

pietiats. Both came increasingly to the conviction that their efforts were in vain, their goal impossible of achievement. Both arrived at a state of exhaustion, frustration and depression near despair.

Walther found several sources of comforting advice in his desperate situation. Surprisingly, the first came not from his pastor father, who, one would expect, should have been able to comfort him with the gospel. Rather, it was a lay couple, Mr. and Mrs. F. W. Barthel, and especially Mrs. Barthel, who were able to offer Walther words of counsel which spoke with biblical assurance to his despairing situation. Many years later at the funeral of Mrs. Barthel in St. Louis, Walther described how he had been attracted to this family by the warm and living faith he experienced there: "The Word of God was the daily food and drink of the souls and wielded its scepter. The Lord was served unceasingly, and...the heavenly peace of Jesus was poured out on all members of the family. Here I found my spiritual parents, a father in Christ and a mother in Christ, who now, spiritually and bodily, cared for me as for a son."

About the same time, help came from another source. In his spiritual struggles Walther had found that various pastors in and around Leipzig were unable to offer him real comfort. Then someone directed him to Martin Stephan in Dresden, who had a reputation of being a Lutheran of the old school and an excellent pastor and counselor. Walther described his spiritual state and his vain struggles for comfort in a letter to Stephan.

When Stephan's reply arrived, Walther at first was afraid to open it, lest it contain more false comfort. Before he opened the letter, he prayed that the Lord would not permit him to be misled by false comfort, should this letter contain such. But when he read the letter, it seemed to him that he had suddenly been transplanted from hell to heaven. The tears of fear and suffering, he would say later, which he had shed so long were suddenly transformed into tears of heavenly joy. Stephan offered him counsel and comfort from the Word of God which put aside all his useless struggling to become repentant enough to merit grace and directed him to accept forgiveness and salvation as a complete gift of God.

One after the other the members of Candidate Kuehn's group came into contact with Stephan and became adherents and followers of Stephan. Since they played key roles in the Saxon emigration and later in the organization and growth of the Missouri Synod, it is appropriate that they be introduced individually here.

Ernst Gerhard Keyl (1804-1872) was the son of a Leipzig tax official. He lost his mother at the age of four, his father at 16. Nevertheless, Keyl received a good general education and training in the fine arts so that he became an accomplished musician. Taught in his early years by private tutors, he was sent to the university in Leipzig and studied for the ministry. Here he came under the influence of Kuehn. As a result, Keyl had his conscience aroused, and he entered a state of spiritual uncertainty. He found peace and assurance and forgiveness through the help of a simple Leipzig cobbler named Goetsching. Upon completing his university studies in 1827, Keyl spent two years as a private tutor. In 1829 he was appointed pastor at Nieder-Frohna and Mittel-Frohna in the Mulde valley by Count Detlev von Einsiedel.

Keyl met Stephan in 1828 and formed a high opinion of the Dresden pastor. He began to turn to him often for advice and confided in him regarding problems in his ministry. The close relationship between the two came to an abrupt end in 1831, however, when a strong disagreement developed regarding the question of what degree of obedience is due the government by a Christian. The disagreement drew in other members of the Kuehn group, and it became apparent that Stephan would not tolerate a difference of opinion among his followers and supporters. Since Kuehn was among those who agreed with Keyl, such agreement and closeness as had developed between the Kuehn group and Stephan up to this point was snuffed out. About this time Kuehn finally received a call to a village named Lunzenau, also in the Mulde valley. His ministry there proved to be very short. He died in August 1832.

With Kuehn removed first from Leipzig and then altogether, his influence declined and that of Stephan grew. Although the point of the original disagreement was never settled, relations between Keyl and Stephan resumed when Keyl apologized to Stephan in 1834. Keyl again looked more and more to Stephan for advice and guidance. That Keyl was neither particularly indecisive nor submissive by nature suggests that Stephan was demonstrating the force of his personality and willingness to use it.

Ernst Moritz Buerger (1806-1890) is the second student in the Leipzig group. Next to Keyl in seniority, he, like several other members of the group, was a descendant of a line of Lutheran pastors. His father was

serving at Arnsfeld, Saxony, when Ernst was born, but moved to Seelitz when Ernst was two. He entered Holy Cross gymnasium in Dresden at 13 and in 1825 enrolled in the university at Leipzig, three years after Keyl. There he was exposed both to Rationalism, toward which his father inclined, and to believing, awakened Christianity. Among those who influenced him were Candidate Kuehn, Keyl, cobbler Goetsching and Pastor Wolf, a conservative who served at St. Peter's church in Leipzig. Buerger experienced a spiritual "awakening" and became a member of Kuehn's group. Upon completion of his studies he became his father's assistant at Seelitz. It was after he returned to Seelitz that he met Stephan and was freed from the stress on adequate repentance that characterized Kuehn's group. Like Keyl, he also became a close and loyal follower and supporter of Stephan. The proximity of Seelitz to Mittel-Frohna facilitated a growing closeness to Keyl. Disagreements with his father grew increasingly vehement. After a time the son no longer would take communion from his father. Thus when he was offered the pastorate at Lunzenau made vacant by the death of Kuehn, he gladly accepted. Eventually he married Kuehn's former fiancée.

Theodore Julius Brohm (1808-1881) was a native of Oberwinkel, Saxony. He attended the gymnasium at Altenburg from 1821 to 1827. Having decided to study theology, he enrolled in the university at Leipzig at Easter, 1827, just at the time Keyl left. Brohm became acquainted with Candidate Kuehn and his group and like the others experienced the rigors of the prescribed spiritual exercises. He met Stephan sometime before he left the university in 1832, and, although he passed the examination necessary to become a candidate for the ministry, on Stephan's advice he refused to accept a position in a parish in the Saxon State Church. He spent two more years in Leipzig studying and then moved to Dresden, where he assisted a Candidate Welzel in teaching in a private school. His relations to Stephan grew closer as he first preached for him occasionally and eventually became Stephan's secretary.

Ottomar Fuerbringer (1810-1892) although a native of Gera, Thuringia, attended the university at Leipzig from 1828 to 1831. He too became a member of Kuehn's group of students, was highly thought of by Kuehn and became a close friend of Brohm, Buerger and the two Walthers. After leaving the university in 1831, he taught at an institute for boys in Eichenberg which was maintained by Pastor G. H. Loeber. Fuerbringer learned to know Welzel, Stephan's secretary, and through him, Stephan. He first met Stephan in person in 1832. In 1836, when Fuerbringer was offered the position of director of the Dresden Mission Society, he sought Stephan's advice. This resulted in Fuerbringer's remaining at Eichenberg until the emigration in 1838. Fuerbringer, perhaps even more than the other Kuehn men, displayed a strong zeal for proselytizing for Stephan and gaining new supporters for him.

Johann Friedrich Buenger (1810-1882) was a descendant of families on both his father's and mother's side which could boast of a number of prominent clergymen. Buenger showed no particular promise in his early schooling and so was accepted conditionally into the ducal academy in Meissen. After six years he matriculated in the school of theology of the university at Leipzig. It was a year later when he became acquainted with Candidate Kuehn and his circle of students. Buenger accepted Kuehn's pietistic views and followed the rigorous practices he advised most zealously. He became a close friend of C. F. W. Walther. The two encouraged each other in goading their consciences to produce greater awareness of and remorse for sins. Both contributed to each other's despondency. Ultimately, both had to leave the university for a semester because of deteriorating health. Buenger appeared to be suffering from an incurable lung ailment. He entered a health resort near Dresden at Easter, 1833. Surprisingly, he recuperated so quickly and completely that in the fall of 1833 he went to Dresden to be with his friend Brohm to prepare for his first examination. This he passed in early 1834. In 1837, although he was eligible to take his second examination, he decided not to do so, both because of concern for his health and because of scruples engendered by Stephan about entering the ministry of the Saxon State Church. Instead, he returned to his home and tutored his younger brothers and sisters. After the death of his father, he took a teaching position at Dresden. He became closely associated with Stephan and considered him the sole pillar of Lutheranism in Saxony.

Otto Hermann Walther (1809-1841) with his more famous younger brother, Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm, was the son of Gottlob Heinrich Walther, who throughout his ministry was the pastor at Langenchursdorf, Saxony. The grandfather, Adolf Heinrich, had served there before him. His great-grandfather, Moritz Heinrich,

had served as pastor at Glatau. Otto Hermann grew up in a home in which strict discipline and the importance of a good education were stressed. The later prominence and fame of his brother left Otto Hermann, who died quite early, in the shadows, as far as historical research is concerned. It is known that the older brother matriculated in the university at Leipzig in 1827 and was drawn into the group of students around Candidate Kuehn early in his university career. He served as his father's assistant from 1834 until the emigration in late 1838. Just when he came to know Stephan is not recorded, but he became perhaps the most devoted and submissive of Stephan's adherents when he did. He was highly thought of by others who knew him. He was considered one of the most gifted of the pastors in Stephan's company.

Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther (1811-1887) also was born in the parsonage at Langenchursdorf, Saxony. His earliest education was imparted by his father. He attended an elementary school at Hohenstein for two years and then the *gymnasium* at Schneeberg from 1821 to 1829. Just before entering the University of Leipzig, he read a biography of the Alsatian pastor Oberlin, written by his brother-in-law, G. H. Schubert. Up until this time, Ferdinand, who was very talented musically, had intended to devote his life to music. Now suddenly he decided to become a pastor and so enrolled in the school of theology at Leipzig. His father and mother had emphasized that the Bible is the Word of God.

In the schools which he had attended since he was eight Rationalism had prevailed. Now at Leipzig his brother introduced him to Candidate Kuehn and his circle of spiritually awakened students. Walther himself later said that his faith up until this time had been "a historic Christian faith." He and his friend Buenger devoted themselves to a truly Christian life. Like Buenger, he tortured himself day and night in an effort to reach the highest possible degree of penitence and contrition, without being able to reach the goal. As with Buenger, this resulted in great distress of conscience. So severe were his spiritual struggles that his physical health was impaired. A friend described his appearance in these words: "He was wasted like a skeleton, coughed blood, suffered from insomnia, and experienced the terrors of hell."

As already mentioned, Walther, although he had already learned the answers to his spiritual problems from Frau Barthel and Stephan, nevertheless was in such a run-down physical condition that he had to drop out of the university for the winter 1831-1832 semester. He spent that time at his parental home. In his father's library there was a set of Luther's works. Walther spent much of his time that winter studying Luther. This research would bear rich fruit later on. He became strongly convinced that Luther's doctrine and that of the Lutheran Confessions were fully scriptural.

Although he was still weak in the spring of 1832 and was convinced that he would never again have enough health and strength to serve as a parish pastor, Walther returned to the university at Leipzig and completed his studies in a year. He then again spent a half year at home preparing for his first examination, which he passed in the fall of that year. After another half year at home, he accepted a position as a private tutor in the town of Kahla, where he instructed the children of two brothers, Friedemann and August Loeber, whose brother, Pastor G. H. Loeber, was a member of the Stephan following. Walther remained in this position until November 1836, when he received a call to the village of Braeunsdorf, not far from his birthplace, Langenchursdorf. Before accepting the call to Braeunsdorf, Walther consulted with Stephan and was advised to accept. He served there until he left on the emigration.

It will be noticed that five of the above men, Brohm, Fuerbringer, Buenger and the two Walthers, were within three years of each other in age and enrolled at the university in Leipzig between 1827 and 1829. They became close friends while at the university. Their experience of the extreme Pietism of Kuehn and his group very likely made them more receptive to and appreciative of the emphasis of Stephan on the objective gift of free grace that is ours through faith because of the justification based on Christ's atonement. Their membership in the Kuehn conventicle also brought them closer to each other as they read and discussed and prayed together and as they faced and bore the taunts of the majority of university students, who ridiculed this little group and called them such names as "the holy club," mystics, fanatics, obscurantists, bigots and other derisive epithets.

These men formed a circle of the closest associates around Stephan. They all strongly admired him and sought and followed his advice. They spoke of him to others and gained additional adherents for him. When the number of those adherents grew, it was through them that Stephan communicated with the people. When the

plans for the emigration were laid and carried out, they along with a small handful of laymen served as his lieutenants. They carried out the plans and desires of Stephan. By 1838, six of Stephan's inner circle were serving congregations. They were able to bring members of their congregations into contact with Stephan. When preparations for the emigration were being laid in 1838, they used their positions and influence to gain recruits for the emigration in their congregations.

Two additional older pastors should be mentioned, who, while never being members of the Kuehn group, were influenced by it and eventually joined the Saxon emigration. The first was Theodore Carl Gruber. He was a friend of Keyl since their student days and most likely learned about Stephan from Keyl. He served as a pastor at a village by the name of Reust from 1825 until he led a party of Stephan adherents in a later emigration in 1839. The other was Gotthold Heinrich Loeber. He graduated from the University of Jena in 1819, served as a tutor until 1824, and then was called as pastor to Eichenberg near his home town of Kahla in Saxe-Altenburg. Ottomar Fuerbringer, who taught at a boys' school in Eichenberg, very likely played a role in introducing Loeber to Stephan. Also, C. F. W. Walther served as a tutor for Loeber's brothers' children at Kahla for two years. Gruber and Loeber became close friends. Both had had pietistic leanings already in student days. Both came to know Stephan about 1834 and were attracted by his strict Lutheran doctrine. Both became adherents of Stephan. Both had the experience that they for a time had doubts about some positions of Stephan and found themselves ostracized by the whole company of Stephan's inner circle, whom they by that time considered some of their best friends. Both gave in to the pressure, apologized for the doubts they had expressed and were received back into the Stephan following.

Several other names merit mention here. Carl Ludwig Geyer was a cousin of Walther. He succeeded him as tutor at Kahla. Later he was called by the Prussian congregation at Lebanon, Wisconsin, to be their pastor when Kindermann could not adequately serve them. George Schieferdecker later became prominent in the Missouri Synod. A number of men who entered the Kuehn group also left again after a time. Franz Delitzsch was a close friend of a number of the leaders of the Saxon emigration and an admirer of Stephan. He did not, of course, join the emigration. In all, six pastors, ten candidates of theology and four students of theology joined the Saxon emigration. These men would prove an invaluable resource in the New World, as they had in Saxony. Candidate Kuehn's student group played a major role in the emigration indeed.

STEPHAN AND HIS FOLLOWERS: DIFFICULTIES AND DISTURBING DEVELOPMENTS

It is generally agreed that the early years of Stephan's ministry in Dresden were years of evident blessings. His presentations were considered interesting. He had an ability to win hearts and to cast a powerful spell over his listeners. He was noted far and wide for his unyielding faithfulness to the Lutheran Confessions, to old Lutheran doctrine and practice. In 1823 he published two of his sermons along with a "Heartfelt Appeal" to the citizens of Dresden with a preface on fanaticism and the nature of sects. In them he defended himself against the accusations of his opponents. Two years later a full year's course of his sermons on the Gospels bearing the title, "The Christian Faith in Sermons," was published in Dresden. He enjoyed the undivided respect and love of over 1000 people. Among these were a number of families of high rank. The people to whom he ministered gave evidence of an active Christianity. He could also point to a number of years of fruitful activity and a leadership role in the Saxon Bible Society and the Dresden Mission Society.

But there was also significant criticism. Early on there were complaints from area pastors accusing Stephan of interfering in their ministries and serving their members. Eventually he was given a severe rebuke regarding this matter by the Supreme Saxon Consistory.

Not surprisingly, there were varying degrees of enthusiasm for and loyalty to Stephan among his followers. Some came regularly to hear his sermons. Others also attended his meetings, discussions and counseling sessions. To some, his book of sermons became like another symbolical book. In religious controversies and in questions concerning which there was uncertainty, his book of sermons came to be used to decide matters, and unquestioning submission to Stephan's teachings and personal views spread among his supporters.

As the 1830s advanced, difficulties developed on another front. As Stephan's loyal followers from among the Kuehn group assumed pastorates in various congregations, they sought to introduce a truly conservative and confessional Lutheran practice in their congregations. They introduced evening meetings such as Stephan held. Their congregations, however, unlike Stephan's, came under all the rules and regulations of the Saxon State Church. There were objections from members who didn't approve and from church officials. Stephan's disciples sought to reintroduce private confession. That met with objections from many of their members. The pastors found no support on the part of their superiors. They sought to remove textbooks from the school which they found objectionable and to introduce other old tried and true Lutheran books, only to meet with strong opposition from some of the teachers.

C. F. W. Walther and E. G. W. Keyl especially came into running conflict with a rationalistic superintendent named F. O. Siebenhaar. Whenever possible, this man let his opposition to Walther and Keyl be felt and placed obstacles in their way. Increasingly, Stephan's young followers felt themselves to be opposed, if not actually persecuted. They saw themselves as surrounded and hopelessly outnumbered by the more liberal and non-confessional pastors and people. Already at the university, Kuehn's young student group considered itself to be a faithful few, a persecuted little handful of true believers in the midst of an unfaithful and unbelieving world. These feelings grew stronger after they entered the ministry. A not surprising result was that there was a growing emphasis on separation. Stephan and his young pastor associates withdrew from the Bible and Mission Societies to which they had belonged. Keyl and C.F.W. Walther had joined the Muldenthal Pastoral Conference, an association of confessional Lutherans led by A.G. Rudelbach, which was organized in 1831. But dissatisfied that it did not follow Stephan closely enough, they withdrew, as they explained, "for reasons of conscience."

In the later 1830s respect and admiration for Stephan grew into adulation. Stephan followers made extreme statements, claiming, for example, that Stephan and his followers were the true church, that in Stephan the chief means of grace were present, that everything depended on coming to Stephan. If you did not seek him out, the light of grace would be withheld from you. Apparently, neither Stephan nor any of the other pastors or lay people objected to such well-nigh idolatrous statements.

Since Stephan was held in such extremely high esteem, it is not surprising that his opinions and his judgment were sought not only in spiritual affairs but in all manner of problems and decisions in everyday life. His opinions and decisions were accepted without question by many. Unfortunately, Stephan accepted his followers' opinion of his authority and came to expect it. Anyone who questioned or disagreed with him soon felt his displeasure and was ostracized by his followers. Stephan demonstrated considerable skill in manipulating the circle of his intimate associates to put pressure on anyone who displayed an inclination to independence of mind. It is not surprising that Scheibel charged Stephan with "papacy."

Another problem which developed and which proved instrumental in setting the emigration in motion in 1838 grew out of a physical problem which Stephan said bothered him for many years. He had difficulty falling asleep, at least at an hour when most people do. His method of dealing with the problem was to take walks late in the evening. No problems there. But in time he developed the added custom of taking one or more members of his inner circle of friends with him on these walks.

From the beginning of his ministry in Dresden, Stephan had made full use of the privilege granted the Bohemian congregation in Dresden of holding evening meetings in their church. Stephan developed meetings of varying forms. Some dealt with the Bible, some reviewed the sermon, some dealt with members' questions, in some Stephan gave counsel and advice, and some studied the Lutheran Confessions. Some met in the church, others in the homes of members. The citizens of Dresden came to look on these meetings with disfavor, considering them really to be conventicles, which were forbidden. Although there were investigations, Stephan was never found guilty of illegal conduct by the Ministry of Worship. The evening walks apparently took place after these meetings.

Some time during the 1820s the practice was initiated of renting a meeting place where Stephan and his inner circle of friends would gather for entertainment and recreation late in the evening. It is known that this meeting place was not intended for all members of the congregation. Rather, it was run as a private club. Only a

select group of Stephan's associates were welcome. There was a specific membership. A requisite of membership was the acceptance of a set of rules drawn up by Stephan. Admission of new members occurred only upon the vote of approval by persons already members. As could be expected, the existence of this exclusive club of Stephan supporters did not go unnoticed in St. John's congregation or in the larger community. The reaction was quite generally negative. But that did not move Stephan to alter his practices or call a halt to the activities and existence of the social group.

Rather, matters grew worse. Stephan's followers rented a lodge located in a vineyard a short distance outside the city. After meetings in the evening Stephan would take his late evening strolls out to and around the lodge. He often arrived quite late. As was already mentioned, he would take companions with him on his strolls. There might be a single person, or several. His companion might be male, female, or of mixed company. Sometimes the strollers would stop along the way and build a campfire, even though that was expressly forbidden by government forestry regulations. Activities at the lodge involving mixed company were reported to last until 2:00 a.m. at times. Sometimes Stephan and others did not return from the lodge until morning.

Even if one assumes that all the activities in and relating to the lodge were innocent recreation, as Stephan's supporters insisted, activities so late at night were sure to arouse suspicions and stimulate gossip. Stephan's opponents accused him and his associates of gross misconduct and moral lapses. Even a confessional Lutheran like Wilhelm Sihler, who later became one of the leaders of the Missouri Synod, found Stephan's conduct so questionable that he would have no dealings with him. Stephan's loyal supporters, however, dismissed all suspicions, condemnations and slander as groundless persecution. Stephan himself gave the impression of being either unaware of the reactions and opinions of the community, or of being totally unconcerned as to what the community thought of his and his supporters' conduct. He acted as though he were accountable to no one.

THE EMIGRATION: DECISION AND EARLY PLANS

Faithful, confessional Lutherans, whether Stephan and his supporters or others, constituted a minority of the population of Saxony in the early 19th century. They lived in a country in which the government controlled all church matters. Even though the church of Saxony officially was a Lutheran church in which the Lutheran Confessions supposedly decided all matters of doctrine and practice, in fact the Confessions were only an empty tradition. Stephan and the people around him began to consider the possibility of emigrating to a land that would provide religious liberty. According to C.E. Vehse, one of the lay leaders of the group, Stephan once stated that he first thought of leaving Germany only a year after he came to Dresden. Whether that remark was serious or accurate is impossible to determine. Stephan did, however, definitely speak of emigration in 1825, stating in a sermon included in the book he published that year that if a government sought to deprive Christians of their faith and appeals and protests went unheeded, they should leave that land.

Two years later a leading American Lutheran, Pastor Benjamin Kurtz of Hagerstown, Maryland, visited Stephan. He later reported that the Dresden preacher spoke of the restrictions, the opposition and persecution an orthodox Lutheran pastor had to endure if he sought to adhere faithfully to orthodox Lutheran doctrine. It was reported that Stephan expressed the wish to Kurtz that he and his congregation might live in a land of complete religious freedom. Stephan stated further that at times he thought seriously of emigrating to the United States.

As was mentioned earlier, the year 1830 brought political riots and the end of the old conservative government and the resignation of Count von Einsiedel, the friend and defender of the religious conservatives. In 1831 a new constitution was adopted which provided for a representative *Landtag*, or assembly, in which liberals had a far greater voice than they had enjoyed before. Prince Frederick Augustus II became co-regent that year and king in 1836. Stephan recognized that each of these developments brought more liberal influences and forces into power and meant a less sympathetic environment for him and his followers.

It was in 1830 that Stephan first spoke of a plan of emigration to Keyl and several others around him. In a letter written to Kurtz in 1833, Stephan complained about the irreligious jurists and blaspheming clergy on the staff of the Ministry of Worship. He expressed the fear that Saxony, too, might soon make its State Church a

Union church. He wondered whether he and his followers might not soon have to leave Germany. He asked for advice as to a suitable state in America in which to settle. Because Kurtz was ill, his uncle, J. D. Kurtz, answered for him. He recommended settling somewhere along the Missouri River. He also advised traveling by ship to New Orleans and river steamer to St. Louis, advice Stephan later followed.

Also in 1833 several of the close friends of Stephan published a "Confession of St. John's Congregation." There had been an increasing number of attacks and criticisms of Stephan and his followers that year. Stephan refused to defend himself or his theological position. His explanation for this posture was that the criticisms and attacks against him were merely repetitions of old attacks and really persecution. His supporters apparently did not feel comfortable with that approach. In the "Confession" they defended the Stephan party with reference to Scripture and the Confessions and insisted that their teachings were indeed orthodox when judged by these historic standards.

Overt opposition took a more aggressive turn when, on the evening of February 1, 1836, police raided the home of Mr. J. O. Nitschke, a prosperous Dresden business man and a loyal supporter of Stephan. The police broke up a religious meeting they found being held there on the grounds that it was disturbing the peace. They also arrested Stephan. A number of people present were interrogated extensively. On March 17, 1836, an injunction was issued by the government prohibiting the preacher of the Bohemian congregation, Martin Stephan, from further conducting any such nocturnal meetings either in or outside the city. It was stated that such meetings gave offense because of the "unseemly time" they were held. The police were directed to see to it that the injunction was observed.

F. A. Marbach, a leading lay member of the Stephan group, and an attorney, submitted an appeal on behalf of Stephan. It was asserted that the arrest and injunction both were illegal, depriving Stephan of his civil rights, since he had not been given a hearing or notified of the charges against him. Now Stephan offered an explanation of his style of life and work. He asserted that such meetings as he had been conducting when he was arrested had been carried on with government permission at St. John's for almost 200 years. He defended his right to accept invitations to purely social functions extended to him by members or friends. In these claims he would appear to have been justified. But it is difficult to find any justification for his claim that he had never arranged any nocturnal meetings, nor taken part in any nocturnal gatherings. The appeal did not produce any positive results. Meanwhile, the news that the police had "raided" one of Pastor Stephan's meetings and that he henceforth was under police surveillance was prime material for Dresden's gossipmongers. The basic facts of the incident quickly became embellished, and Stephan became the target of cynical humorists' barbs.

It should be noted that no misdemeanor charge was brought against Stephan. If Stephan's followers and the Saxons later spoke of harassment and persecution, this incident and another in 1838 which we will be describing shortly are acts to which they could point. What the Saxon confessional Lutherans experienced certainly was mild compared with what the Old Lutherans endured in Prussia. Stephan once referred to a "stealthy persecution by powerful enemies." There had been people strongly opposed to Stephan and his supporters and what they stood for all along in Dresden and in the Saxon government. The police action of February 1, 1836, gave public expression to that opposition and put the authority of the national government behind it.

On the other, hand, it must be said that Stephan was exploiting, was stretching to the fullest, the special privileges St. John's Congregation had enjoyed for so long. One might have expected that if he wished to maintain and protect the unique privileges that were his at St. John's, he would, in his social life at least, have maintained a low profile and avoided conduct that would arouse the enemies he claimed to see all around. But he made no attempt to avoid the late hours that were considered inappropriate for proper social activities. The Apostle Paul's policy of "putting no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited" would have commended itself to Stephan's situation. But he showed no such concern or restraint.

Sometime between February 1 and March 17, 1836, Stephan called a meeting of a number of his followers-pastors, candidates and teachers. He spoke at some length, stressing that the times were difficult and that the Lutheran church would scarcely survive in Europe without a miracle. Emigration was presented as the

ultimate solution. In a letter to Pastor Loeber written about the same time he made these comments in a similar vein:

Our times are becoming constantly graver and more decisive; in the long run things cannot remain as they are now. God will bring a decision in His Church, whether it is to continue to exist in Europe or to emigrate to North America.⁶

Another meeting was held on May 3, 1836, at lawyer Marbach's home. Present were five prominent laymen: Marbach, Vehse, Jaeckel, Nitschke and Schwabe, as well as six of Stephan's close associates: Keyl, Buerger, Loeber, Fuerbringer, Brohm and Buenger, two teachers and several other candidates. His comments were similar to those quoted above, emphasizing that the times were evil and the church's very existence was threatened. He urged all those present to pray to God to lead his people out of Sodom, to take his church to another land where it would be allowed to serve him undisturbed. The number who could definitely be counted on to join an emigration was discussed with inconclusive results. Other practical aspects of an emigration were discussed. Stephan apparently had already drawn up a constitution for an emigrant party's use in the New World. It provided for a hierarchical church structure, and an episcopal administration was casually taken for granted. Organization of the whole party was laid out. Stephan concluded by indicating that concrete preparations should not begin until a sign from God had been received that indicated the time for departure.

In the months that followed nothing more apparently was said about emigration. Meanwhile, the police carried on their surveillance for several months but discovered nothing that conflicted with the injunction. For over a year and a half there were no more instances of police intervention. Whether the police relaxed their watch or Stephen thought they had relaxed is not known, but on the night of November 8, 1837, there was a gathering of a small number of Stephen people at the lodge in the vineyard that had been rented earlier for the use of Stephen and his friends. Three men, including one teacher and two laymen, together with a young single woman, came by carriage early in the evening. They still were there at midnight when there was a raid by the police. The police found nothing illegal or objectionable going on. Nor did lengthy questioning uncover anything that would be a cause for arrest.

About five a.m. Stephen himself arrived at the lodge together with another single young woman. Although she was questioned extensively, nothing illegal or immoral was discovered. Stephen was, however, ordered to appear in court the next day. The one charge brought against him was that he had ignored the injunction of March 1836 against holding nocturnal meetings in or outside the city. Stephen was charged with conducting conventicles and with immoral conduct. He was suspended from the further exercise of his office as pastor of St. John's Congregation by the Saxon Ministry of Worship. A preacher theologically more to the liking of Ministry officials was appointed in his place. The order was worded as a temporary suspension, but the Ministry of Worship never took further action either to prove Stephen's unfitness for office or to lift his suspension. In fact, Stephen's ministry at St. John's and in Germany was ended.

Not long after this, serious planning and preparation for emigration to America began. Given the intensely loyal relation of many of Stephen's followers to their leader, it is not surprising that most of them saw his suspension as the "last straw" of intolerable government and public opposition and wholeheartedly agreed with Stephen's decision to emigrate.

On December 6, 1837, Stephen convened a meeting of his closest and most loyal lay followers. Present were: Lawyer F. A. Marbach, H. F. Fischer, a merchant, and G. Jaeckel, a bank cashier. The last named served as secretary for this and all later meetings of what might be called the directors of what its members referred to as the emigration society. Even though the society actually did not yet exist, several very important decisions were made at this meeting. The travel route would be by riverboat from Dresden to Hamburg, then overland to Bremen. From Bremen they would sail to New Orleans. From New Orleans a steamboat would take them to St. Louis.

⁶ Stephen letter to Gotthold Heinrich Loeber, February 20, 1836, manuscript at Concordia Historical Institute. Quoted in translation in Walter O Forster, *Zion on the Mississippi* (St Louis Concordia, c. 1953), p 96.

Since the emigrants were cutting their ties with the State Church, it was necessary to establish a form of church government for a free church in the New World. It was decided that there should be a bishop with nine deacons. When conducting liturgical services, the bishop should wear the episcopal vestments once used in the old Lutheran church. The vestments were to vary with the different seasons of the church year. The bishop's vestments should distinguish him from the deacons. Materials to sew the vestments and paraments to be used in the New World were to be taken along from Germany, as were communion vessels and other altar furnishings, together with communion wine and implements needed to prepare hosts for the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Basic financial arrangements were decided on. There was to be a common treasury from which all travel expenses were to be paid, land was to be purchased in America, and the emigrant group was to be supported until they could find work and earn their own incomes. Wealthy emigrants were to place into the fund moneys beyond their expenses from their financial resources. The poor and indigent were to be supported from this fund until they had an income. Interest and resale of land were visualized as sources of additional funds for the group. Debtors would not be obligated to pay interest until they had a source of income. Land and funds were to be set aside to provide for a church and school.

A week after this meeting a larger group, known as the Advisory Committee, was organized. Its members included the three laymen named above plus Candidates Brohm and Welzel, a Dr. Stuebel; and a farmer named Gube. Stephan apparently communicated his ideas and wishes to the smaller group and was able to depend on them to convince the larger group to make decisions in keeping with those wishes. Marbach was appointed director or manager of the whole emigration project. He drew up a set of guidelines for the Advisory Committee. Among them was this statement: "Business will be carried on in accord with the orders of the Herr Pastor under the directions of Lawyer Marbach." Noteworthy is the fact that at the first meeting of the Advisory Committee it was resolved "that there be a library, archives, and chronicles." It was hoped that Dr. Carl Vehse, an archivist with the Saxon government, might be persuaded to take on the responsibility for carrying out this resolution.

The Advisory Committee was divided into subcommittees and various tasks which were a part of preparing for the emigration were assigned to these eight (eventually ten) committees. One committee was responsible for providing for the Herr Pastor. It was stated that "every attention be devoted to caring for him who is the Most Reverend Archbishop of the Lutheran Church." Merchant Fischer was made responsible for all travel arrangements, such as boat and ship contracts, schedules, handling of baggage and meeting requirements for border crossings. Marbach was made responsible for the general fund or treasury, membership in the emigration society, and the drawing up of a "general emigration code." The organization was to be hierarchical with the Advisory Committee functioning under Stephen like a cabinet in a secular government. Each member of the Advisory Committee was responsible for duties in a given area, but responsible to Stephen. At a meeting in February 1838, it was decided to negotiate with government officials to obtain 1) authorization for Stephen to leave the country, 2) dismissal of all proceedings against Stephen and dropping of attendant court costs, 3) guarantee of security for Stephen on travel through the country, and 4) granting of a pension commensurate with Stephen's 28 years of service in the State Church and adequate to support him, his wife and eight children. (Stephen took only his oldest son, Martin, along on the emigration.) A discussion of finances brought the conclusion that 300 thaler per person for an estimated 100 emigrants meant a need of 30,000 thaler, plus an estimated 35,000 thaler to purchase an entire township. A survey of the resources available suggested that no more than 25,000 thaler could then be raised. A more thorough polling of the pastors in the movement, taken in April, indicated that there might be 300 in the emigration party. Minutes of the Advisory Committee for May reported that an Emigration Code was unanimously adopted as presented. (Only an outline of such a code can be found in the archival records of the society.) If completely realized, this code would have resulted in a semiautonomous theocratic community. Power was to be divided between the clergy and a wealthy class. Final authority would rest with the *erster Geistliche*, the first or senior clergyman. Excommunication of a member from the church would result in the loss of all political rights and banishment from the community. Censorship of the press would be very strict. On the other hand, this code called for some

very modern features. City planning would lead to a very attractive community. There would be an eight hour day. (It would be almost a century before any workers actually enjoyed such a work day.) And there would be municipally supported recreation centers for all citizens. It was quite an interesting combination of features that was specified for the community Stephen had dreamed up.

Preparations for departure

At a meeting of the Advisory Committee on May 18, 1838, Stephen, after lengthy comments on the sorry state of conditions in Germany, declared that no hope remained for maintaining the Lutheran Church in Germany. This statement was intended and was understood as a signal that the time now had come to begin actual preparations for the emigration of the Stephen people to America. The preparations began at once.

The process of determining who actually would participate in the journey started. This was to be the responsibility of the pastors of congregations together with Stephen and his closest assistants in Dresden. The pastors first determined who in the congregations was seriously interested. The names of these people along with descriptions of their backgrounds and financial resources were sent to Dresden. There Stephen and his advisors made the selection of the people they considered suitable for participation in the emigration. The laymen on the Advisory Committee urged that only people who could pay the 100 thalers estimated as the total cost of the trip be accepted. These men thought that a financially sound colonization project should be the objective.

The language of the Emigration Code was vague, stating only that there were financial and spiritual requirements for membership. With this as authorization, Stephan, who apparently made most of the final decisions on whom to accept, operated in a rather arbitrary manner. If he disapproved of a person, either lack of funds, or absence of the proper spiritual viewpoint might be given as the reason. If he chose to accept someone, he often did so even though the person had little or nothing to contribute toward the Credit Fund. In the end 42 percent of the Saxon emigrants contributed nothing to the Credit Fund. An estimated 33,500 thaler had to be advanced to pay these people's travel expenses. Less than half was ever paid back. As has been mentioned earlier, in contrast to the Prussians who undertook to bring everyone in the company only to the shores of the New World, it was Stephan's intent to deliver everyone to St. Louis, buy land adequate for the needs of all, and support all members until they could support themselves, a much more ambitious undertaking.

Who actually went along? The emigration company is properly referred to as Saxon. The participants came largely from the Kingdom of Saxony, the Duchies of Saxe-Altenburg and Saxe-Reuss, and the Prussian Province of Saxony. Not surprisingly, Dresden and the Mulde Valley, where Keyl, Buerger and the two Walthers had been serving as pastors or assistant pastors, produced the largest number of participants.

As could be expected, the occupational background of the emigrants varied considerably. Of the total of 916 persons who emigrated in 1838 or joined the company in 1839, the occupations of 355 were recorded. Surprisingly, only 48 were farmers or farm and garden workers. There were 217 craftsmen and tradesmen. A total of 39 were of the professional class, including eight pastors, 11 candidates of theology, two students of theology and five teachers. If the part of the company for which no occupation was given had similar proportions of the various occupations, Stephan's plan of setting all these people down on the frontier in Perry County to carve farms and towns out of primeval forest was not the most practical, to say the least. The proportionately large number of theologians would prove to be very important somewhat later, but not of the greatest value in clearing land, building shelter and trying to become self-sufficient in Perry County.

Another aspect of preparation for the emigration was the selection of travel routes. It will be recalled that the American, Benjamin Kurtz, had advised Stephan to settle in Missouri and to travel there by way of New Orleans and the Mississippi. That was in 1833. By 1838 Michigan had achieved statehood, and Wisconsin and Iowa were being opened to settlement as territories.

But Stephan had chosen Missouri as the state to settle earlier, and that was not reconsidered now. The Advisory Committee did spend much time during April 1838 discussing the best modes and routes of travel. Was

Hamburg or Bremen the preferable port of departure? Should the emigrant company sail to New Orleans and then take a river steamer to St. Louis, or sail to New York and travel overland to St. Louis? Itemized lists of advantages and disadvantages of each route were drawn up. Hamburg was directly accessible by river boats from Saxony via the Elbe and its tributaries, the Mulde and Saale. Departure from Bremen required an overland trip from Hamburg to Bremen. Hamburg was the larger and busier seaport, offering many more ships on which to sail. The trip to New York was a third shorter and cheaper.

At its April 28 meeting the Advisory Committee passed a resolution not to take the New Orleans route, only to have Stephen take the floor and present his view at length. The committee then reversed itself and decided to travel entirely by water via New Orleans and the Mississippi. Stephen's most emphatic point was that he did not want to travel a single mile on land with over 300 people because it would be too difficult to keep them together. Stephen also emphasized that safety and comfort were to be preferred above anything else, a revealing statement.

The committee had been advised more than once against chartering ships for the emigration company because of the considerably greater costs. Nevertheless, it was decided to charter, one and later, as the need became evident, four more ships were chartered. After carrying out preliminary negotiations by mail, Marbach and Fischer traveled to Bremen in July. On the 14th a new, in fact not yet completed ship, the *Olbers*, with a capacity of 200 passengers was chartered for the journey to New Orleans. Agreed upon fares were 40 thaler for steerage and 80 in cabins, meals included. After Marbach's and Fischer's return to Dresden, negotiations also were begun to provide the boats to transport the emigrants by river down the Elbe to Hamburg. Providing needed transportation thus seemed to be well in hand.

The names of definite participants in the emigration had been coming in to Dresden at a steady rate. Then in August there was a sudden increase in "joiners," a veritable flood of additional names of prospective emigrants, raising the total to over 700 by September 4. Marbach and Fischer dealt with the new needs adequately. Additional river boats were chartered, as were two more ocean ships, the *Johann Georg* and *Copernicus*, to provide facilities for 514 passengers. In early October two smaller ships, the *Republik* and the *Amalia*, were engaged, providing space for 180 more passengers. New applications were received and accepted into early November.

On July 2 the Advisory Committee sent out instructions to the pastors and candidates with teaching positions to seek release from their offices from their governments. All participants in the journey were told to obtain passports and any other needed documents. In the obtaining of the desired documents and releases harassment by government officials became apparent. Officials frequently hindered and delayed the issuance of the documents. Failure to have served the required military duty and service proved to be an obstacle for some. The persons who testified on behalf of Stephan in his court trial found that their passports were held up. Pastor Keyl was charged with holding conventicles. As a consequence, his application for release from his congregation was not acted upon for some time. The charges against him were dismissed only the day before he sailed for America. C. F. W. Walther was charged with breaking up families by persuading individual members to emigrate. His release, too, was granted only at the very last moment. Pastors Loeber and Gruber were refused both releases and passports for some months. To complicate Gruber's situation, his father refused to provide expected financial support. Hence Gruber was not among the 1838 emigrants. He did, however, find it possible to make the voyage to America in 1839, when he led an emigration party of 125 souls to Missouri.

A critical part of the preparation for the departure to America was, of course, the raising of the funds to pay for the ambitious goals of the emigration society. As has been mentioned, the lay leaders had considered it essential to charge each emigrant at least for the cost of transportation to St. Louis. Stephan, however, accepted many people who could pay little or nothing toward their part of the costs.

Again the pastors played a key role. They were charged with raising the needed funds. The emigrants who could were asked to pay their costs in full in advance. In addition, more prosperous members of the party were asked to loan or deposit additional moneys to the Credit Fund with the promise that these moneys would earn interest in the New World. Finally, emigrants and nonemigrants were urged to make outright gifts to the Credit Fund as their hearts moved them.

These efforts succeeded in raising over 117,000 thaler, almost \$81,000. This was a sizable fund with which to work. It must be reported, however, that fiscal control of the fund was very loose. It was not until February 1839 that the treasurer, F. W. Barthel, calculated exactly how much had come in. Control of the expenditures was informal, to say the least. The outline of the Emigration Code adopted in June 1838 provided that money deposited in the fund might be expended "at the order of Herr Pastor Martin Stephan." While the Saxons were still in Germany, several of the other leaders close to Stephan also were allowed to authorize withdrawals by their signature alone. Stephan himself was inclined to be generous in allowing expenses to be reimbursed from the Credit Fund. All of his legal expenses arising out of his arrest and his suspension in 1837 from the pastorate of St. John's in Dresden were paid out of this fund raised to meet expenses of the emigration. Not only Stephan but also his circle of advisors were generously provided for from the fund. Not until the Saxons had been in St. Louis for some weeks was any concern evidenced about the status of the fund and the rate of outlays for nonessential purposes. But in the busy days before the departure this apparently did not become a matter of concern for anyone.

Some comments are in place regarding the motivation of the emigrants. When the outline of the Emigration Code was being drawn up, Stephan emphasized that no one was to be solicited to join the emigration company. Only those who were deeply concerned about their own spiritual welfare and that of the true Lutheran church were to become members. As the time of departure neared, however, and news of the forthcoming emigration spread, a considerable number of applications were received also from people who wished to go along with the emigration but were motivated primarily by a desire for economic or social advantage in the New World or the desire to escape unpleasant or unhappy situations in Germany. How many of such applications, if any, were accepted is not documented. For some, fear became a motive to join the emigration.

The most dedicated of Stephan's followers were convinced that he was the last hope and representative of true Lutheranism in Germany and that with his departure the church would cease to exist in Germany. It was implied, if not stated outright, that to fail to join the emigration was to let salvation slip from one's grasp. This led some to encourage married persons to leave spouse and children behind to go with Stephan. Others helped minor children escape from their guardians to join the emigrants. Disguise and deceit were used to get these young people past border guards and customs officials without proper papers. Later, sober reflection led those involved in these activities to recognize that they had been improper.

The emigration of these Saxons for the avowed reason of religious harassment and persecution received much attention in the public press. Many curious onlookers watched as the first parties left Dresden. Also along the way others showed their curiosity about this unusual group of people leaving the fatherland for reasons of conscience and gathered at various points on their route of travel to watch them pass. Some exhibited a certain amount of sympathy, but by and large public opinion, like that of the press, disapproved of the emigration. The government was increasingly negative in its handling of Stephan's followers. Still another source of negative reaction to their emigration was the other conservative and confessional Lutherans in Saxony. A. G. Rudelbach, who had founded the confessionally oriented Mulde Valley Pastoral conference and had had contacts with Keyl and the Walthers for a time, strongly opposed emigration. So did J. G. Scheibel, the early leader in the battle for confessional Lutheranism in Prussia who had been promoting confessional Lutheranism in Saxony since his eviction from Prussia.

It is not surprising then, or entirely false, that the Saxon emigrants considered themselves to be a persecuted little flock, who were being driven out of their homeland into exile by the disfavor and harassment of the government and people. O.H. Walther put this view of their experience into poetic form. In the months before the departure from Germany, he composed four *Exulantenlieder*, "Songs of the Exiles," which in a quite sentimental manner described the sense of persecution which Stephan had fostered. Stephan had 1700 copies printed and distributed to the emigrants at the expense of the Credit Fund. Other writings from these months expressed in prose this same view that the group's emigration was compelled by faithfulness to their beliefs, but that they were setting out on the journey supported by a firm trust that Gad was watching over them and blessing them.

The journey from Saxony to St. Louis

The Saxon emigrants began leaving their homeland of Saxony during the last days of September 1838. Travel plans called for the participants to gather at Dresden and Halle and assemble into larger groups to embark on river boats for the trip to Hamburg. Each boatload was under the leadership of one of the pastors. Departures were spread over several weeks. The last of the Saxons reached Bremen on November 10.

All the participants were assigned to one of the five ocean ships which had been chartered by Marbach and Fischer. O. H. Walther was in charge of seeing to it that the various boatloads of emigrants boarded the proper ships. Again one of the pastors was to be in charge of the emigrants on each of the ships for the ocean journey. The *Copernicus* with 177 emigrants under the leadership of E. H. Buerger and the *Johann Georg* with 140 under E. G. Keyl left November 3. The *Republik* with 111 passengers under G. H. Loeber left November 12, and the *Olbers* with 181 passengers under O. H. Walther together with the *Amalia* with 56 emigrants under Candidate K. Welzel left on November 18.

The crossing to New Orleans took from 59 to 64 days. The *Copernicus* arrived on December 31 and the *Olbers* on January 20. Stephen, Marbach and the other lay leaders sailed on the *Olbers*. Tragically, the *Amalia* never arrived in New Orleans. Among the 56 emigrants who disappeared without a trace were Candidate Welzel and two students of theology. The ship also carried a lot of the other emigrants' baggage, an organ, over \$900 worth of orchestral instruments, a library and materials for clerical vestments. There were 665 emigrants who left Bremerhaven. In addition to those lost with the *Amalia*, ten died at sea on the other ships. Three children were born on the way. Arrivals in St. Louis numbered 602.

Although all the ships were to keep journals of their trip, this was actually done faithfully only on the *Olbers*. It encountered several severe storms already in the North Sea and the Bay of Biscayne. After warmer regions were reached, classes were conducted almost daily for the children on deck. Stephen did not take well to sea travel. Not only during the storms but for most of the journey he kept pretty much to his cabin. The man who had gathered his large and faithful following by his preaching and counseling now remained aloof from his people. O. H. Walther conducted most of the church services which were held on board. If Stephen wished to communicate with the whole company of emigrants, it was done through Walther. Stephen himself communicated only with his inner circle of advisors.

The most significant event of the trip occurred on January 14 when the emigrants on board the *Olbers* named Stephen their bishop and entrusted him with the authority and powers to carry out that office. Since this step had been discussed in the past, it caused no negative reactions. The next day a meeting of the Advisory Committee was called, as the minutes put it, "at the command of His Reverence, the Herr Bishop." Committees were appointed to take care of the necessary arrangements and purchases in New Orleans. Marbach was to pay the duties for the immigrants and their baggage. O. H. Walther and Nitschke were to charter a riverboat steamer for the trip to St. Louis. A third committee was to supervise the transfer of the baggage to the river steamer, a fourth to purchase necessary supplies. One woman was assigned to this committee with the specific duty of looking "especially after the needs of the Herr Bishop." Two laymen were assigned permanently to his personal service, and the theological candidates were to accompany him and provide him with companionship.

Although it had been agreed in Germany that the emigrants should keep their stay in New Orleans as short as possible to hold down costs, the passengers of the *Olbers* spent ten whole days in New Orleans. Although meals for cabin passengers were included in the fare on the steamboat *Selma* which took the Saxons to St. Louis, a considerable sum was spent for hams, coconuts, oranges and wine. And, although the cabins were furnished, a sofa was purchased especially for Stephan.

The *Selma* left New Orleans for St. Louis on January 31. Under the best conditions the 1250 mile trip upstream took eight days. But the *Selma* ran aground on sand bars several times because of low water. This caused serious delays. On February 16 the emigrants on the *Selma* were persuaded by O. H. Walther to sign a "Pledge of Subjection" to their bishop. An expense fund of 1500 thalers which had been set aside for Stephan's trip was now presented to him as an outright gift to do with as he pleased.

On February 19 the *Selma* finally reached St. Louis, and all of the Saxon immigrants except those lost with the *Amalia* were reunited. Stephan and his followers had reached the long dreamed of "land of the free." On the Sunday after the arrival of the *Selma* in St. Louis the pastors who had led the groups on the various ships and river steamers assembled their "congregations," officially announced Stephan's investiture as bishop on January 14 and persuaded their people to choose representatives who, together with the pastors, then signed a confirmation of Stephan's investiture. In it they promised to "comply with willing obedience with his episcopal ordinances." The pastors and people who had not been on the *Selma* to sign the Pledge of Subjection signed copies of that document too. Stephan obviously did not trust his followers' ability to handle the freedom America offered its citizens.

In view of the controversies which arose later with Grabau and the Buffalo Synod, it may be of interest to record the reasons given by the Saxon pastors for investing Stephan with the title and office of bishop:

...there were also five servants of God's Word, by whom you were loved and honored as spiritual father, and approached for counsel and judgment in all important matters which pertained to their own welfare or that of their congregations. Accordingly, you have already for a long time occupied the position of bishop and performed episcopal functions among us....You have been recognized by all individual congregations and congregation members as the father of all, as highest shepherd of souls, and as leader; without the name of a bishop you have exercised the office of bishop with paternal kindness, firmness, justice, care and wisdom....We have been instructed by you in many things, and from this instruction an abiding conviction has resulted in us that an episcopal form of polity, in accord with the Word of God, with the old Apostolic Church, and with our Symbolical Writings, is indispensable.⁷

No citations from either Scripture, Luther or the Confessions were offered to support the institution of the episcopal office. The only reason given is that they had learned from Stephan that it was "indispensable."

The first months in St. Louis

The Saxons undoubtedly had rather rosy expectations of what life would be like in the New World. The reality of life in St. Louis in 1839 for a new immigrant with limited means was very likely quite disillusioning. Compared with Dresden or Leipzig, St. Louis was a raw, unfinished town. Streets were unpaved, alternating between mud and dust. There was no water system, no sewers, no garbage collection. Garbage lay rotting where people had thrown it unless eaten by free-roaming pigs. Carcasses of horses, cows, pigs, dogs and cats lay about where they had dropped, spreading foul odors and disease. Epidemics of cholera, small pox and various fevers broke out repeatedly. It is estimated that 65 to 70 Saxons died in the first six months.

Prices were high in St. Louis. Available housing was expensive, even though of flimsy construction. Fuel was in short supply and expensive. Food and housing for the new immigrants were paid for from the Credit Fund. Records indicate \$1,500 was paid out in the first month. How 600 people could be housed and fed for that amount is unclear. To cut expenses whole houses were rented and families, couples and single persons were housed together as much as possible. C. F. W. Walther was housed with six other adults and a child. Stephan was provided with an ample apartment in the house of a St. Louis doctor.

The Saxons had not even become somewhat settled in temporary housing when they began to experience criticism and opposition from a source they very likely had not expected, the press. The press had been unfriendly in Germany, but matters were worse in St. Louis, at least as far as the German press was concerned. There was but one German newspaper in St. Louis in 1839, *Der Anzeiger des Westens*. But it represented the viewpoint of the first significant group of Germans who had arrived in St. Louis. They were the political liberals and religious freethinkers who had come to America after the political unrest in Germany in

⁷ Forster, Walter O., *Zion on the Mississippi* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1953), p. 288f.

1830. The arrival of the first shipload of Saxons had been announced with an article which charged that they were being misled by the parsons at their head. The article warned that a communal colonization project which placed complete control of spiritual and secular affairs in the hands of the clergy such as they had undertaken was dangerous. In Germany personal attacks on clergymen in the press were forbidden by law. In America, especially on the frontier, no holds were barred, and from the beginning the *Anzeiger* poured out a continual barrage of scorn and ridicule on the Saxons and their leaders. For the Saxons, the freedom of America which they had been looking forward to for months proved at once to have a dark side.

If their fellow Germans proved to be unexpectedly unfriendly, some of their new neighbors of English origin made up for it with unexpected helpfulness. The Episcopalians of St. Louis had just dedicated a new church and generously granted the Saxons permission to hold services there on Sunday afternoons. This kindness was extended for three and one half years until the Saxons were able to build their own church. The first service was held on March 3, and services continued regularly after that.

Also in March a school was established for the education of the Saxon children. A house was rented for \$12 a month. A teacher's salary of \$25 a month was approved, and \$40 was appropriated for acquiring tables and benches. In time, several school buildings were provided. There is no record of the purchase of any books, but perhaps these had been brought along from Germany. Education, Christian education, was a high priority for these people.

Having found a residence and shelter for themselves and their families the Saxons began to look for employment. The whole country was still suffering the consequences of the Panic of 1837. Jobs were scarce. Wages were low. Prices were high. Much of the currency issued by states was worth considerably less than its face value. The able bodied Saxons took whatever jobs they could get. Candidate of Theology Schieferdecker labored in a pickle factory. Candidate Goenner went to work as a barber. A distinct advantage for the new immigrants was the fact that a large proportion of them were trades- and craftsmen, and skilled workers were in relatively short supply in St. Louis. The trades- and craftsmen thus had rather good reason for hoping to obtain employment and earn more than the wage of common laborers.

Stephan did not help the task of finding good employment for the Saxons when he issued the order that, so as to be ready to move to their own land as soon as it was acquired, his followers should not accept employment which committed them to a job for any longer period of time. If followed, this order would have resulted in all of the Saxons working at the lowest wages. Whether this order was rescinded later or just ignored, it appears that a considerable number of the Saxons had good enough jobs by the time the move to Perry County was undertaken in April and May to make them decide to stay behind in St. Louis instead of taking part in building the dreamed of colony on the frontier.

Meanwhile, in these critical months after arrival in the New World while the company was struggling to support and establish itself, Stephen demonstrated that one of his highest priorities was the acquisition of vestments and other accouterments of the episcopal office as he conceived of them. Among the latter were a staff, a cap, a cross and chain. The cross and chain are known to have cost \$100. The staff is reported to have been intricately carved and plans called for it to be covered with gold. Gustav Pfau, an artist and a member of the Saxon immigrants, designed the vestments. A tailor by the name of Roschke with the help of several women sewed all the vestments not only for Stephen, but for all the pastors. To lessen the drain on the Credit Fund, the Saxons were asked to donate pieces of personal jewelry that could be sold and turned into cash. This appeal netted \$170. The *erster Geistlicher* also had plans drawn for the bishop's palace which was to be built once the Emigration Society had moved onto its own land. In the last months in Dresden he had ordered the purchase of a special coach to be used for his trip to Bremen. This was shipped along to St. Louis. Once in St. Louis, he discovered that the heavy coach was not suitable for traveling the dirt roads of a frontier town. It was sold at a loss of \$200.

The cost of all the episcopal equipment was born by the Credit Fund. As has been stated earlier, the Credit Fund was to pay for the transportation of the whole society to the New World, for the purchase of adequate land and for the support of the emigrants until they were self-supporting. Since everyone was depending on the Credit Fund to provide the basic necessities of life, it seems certain that all would watch the

withdrawals from the fund with more than casual interest. In Germany a number of pastors and laymen around Stephen had been empowered to authorize drafts on the fund. After their arrival in St. Louis the bishop alone decided upon and authorized all expenditures from the fund. Stephen alone now bore responsibility for the financial affairs of the society.

It should be mentioned that the Emigration Code, which had been drawn up before preparations for the emigration began, called for representatives of the whole membership of the society to take over the administration of the Credit Fund and the other secular affairs of the society in the New World. Stephen postponed the election of administrative representatives until the land had been bought and the people could assemble on their own property. For people struggling to put a roof over their heads and food on the table Stephan's expenditures for episcopal splendor would scarcely cause his people to respect him more highly or love him more dearly.

There was no real control over the expenditures. Personal whims and unrealistic ideas often prompted significant outlays. There was no budgeting of the limited remaining funds in the light of expected and necessary expenditures. There was no exact accounting of the actual expenditures and uses of the fund. For a time no one knew exactly how much had been spent or how much remained. Stephan's fiscal administration of his colony could only be characterized as selfish, careless and not in the best interests of his people.

As the weeks passed, two lay leaders of the society, Vehse and Jaeckel, became alarmed at what was going on. They computed the money remaining in the fund and then on March 24 confronted Stephan with the fact that, by their reckoning, only about \$18,600 remained. Expenditures for food and housing were running at a rate of \$1500 a month. The first tracts of land that had been investigated by members of the society for possible purchase had apparently been priced at \$30,000 and up. All that Stephan had to offer by way of remedy was the vague hope that perhaps some members of the society could and would contribute more to the general coffers. The treasurer, F. W. Barthel, now drew up a general inventory of the assets and debits in all the accounts of the society. It was clear to all, and apparently also now to Stephan, that the purchase of an appropriate tract of land for the society was the highest priority.

As part of their planning in the fall of 1838, Stephan and the Advisory Committee had set down in considerable detail what was desired in the land that would be purchased for the settlement of the society. There was to be an agreeable climate; the land should be located in a healthful area; it should be in close proximity to a stream and to a larger city; and the topography should be like the Grimm-Rochlitz area in Saxony. The intention in 1838 was to purchase an entire township (23,040 acres) so that there might be a measure of political autonomy for the Saxons.

A Mr. Kimm, a German-American businessman whom Stephan had learned to know in Dresden while Kimm was on a business trip, was contacted for advice regarding land purchase. He advised the purchase of land at some distance from St. Louis to avoid higher land prices around the city. He also advised that land be acquired on a navigable river, preferably the Missouri or Mississippi, in an area where land still sold for \$1.25 an acre. Kimm also urged strongly that the Saxons investigate in person any land they were considering for purchase before making a commitment.

A Dr. Gemp, a physician whom Vehse had recently learned to know, also was asked for advice. He soon recommended the purchase of a certain Gratiot estate. It was located on the Meramec River some 12 to 15 miles west of St. Louis. It consisted of 15,000 acres and was offered to the Saxons through Dr. Gemp at an attractive price and on very easy terms. The soil was good, the region healthful. Some of the land was heavily wooded, providing lumber both for construction of needed houses and barns and for sale to raise cash. A clear title was available. Although it could be purchased for under \$30,000 and seemed to meet the requirements which the Advisory Committee set down when it began searching for land, the Gratiot estate was not purchased. Vehse's comment, "Stephen's mind was fixed on the wilderness," suggests that it was too close to St. Louis to suit the bishop. Did he fear that his control over the colony would be threatened by the proximity to a growing city?

Instead, a combination of tracts totaling somewhat under 4,600 acres was purchased in Perry County some 90 miles south of St. Louis. The total cost was \$9,234, an average of \$2.06 per acre. The largest portion by far was government land purchased at \$1.25 an acre. Six acres for the landing place at the mouth of Brazeau

Creek cost \$6 an acre, and a whole section, 640 acres, around the landing cost \$5 an acre. The purchases were completed between April 12 and May 22. In view of the fact that, as Stephen himself had noted earlier, most real estate transactions at the time involved a one third cash down payment, one wonders why Stephen chose to pay the entire amount in cash, thus greatly depleting the cash resources still available to the Saxons.

The area where the Gratiot estate was located along the Meramec river grew rapidly in the years after 1839. Perry County experienced only a modest growth, remaining largely rural and agricultural today. The population of Perry County at the time was predominantly French Catholic with smaller numbers of English, Scottish and Irish, of whom the largest number were Baptists.

Stephen's deposition

The document by which the Saxons invested Martin Stephen with the office of bishop on January 14, 1839, said of him:

You have been recognized by all individual congregations and congregation members as the father of all, as highest shepherd of souls, as leader...

Your Reverence has...remained standing as the last, unshakable pillar of the ruins of the now devastated Lutheran Church in Germany.⁸

In the Pledge of Subjection to Stephan subscribed to by the Saxons on board the *Olbers* on February 16th they said:

We have complete and firm confidence in the wisdom, experience, faithfulness, and well-meaning fatherly love of our Very Reverend Bishop.⁹

Less than four months later, on May 31, 1839, the Very Reverend Bishop was removed from office, declared excommunicated, equipped with an ax, a spade and a few personal belongings, rowed across the Mississippi and set off near a rock formation still known as "The Devil's Bakeoven" on the Illinois shore.

Stephan had moved from St. Louis to Perry County on April 26 along with many of the farmers among the emigrants. Most of the other leaders remained in St. Louis. The party that went to Perry County intended to build shelters for themselves and the rest who would follow. One history reports that Stephan put the men to work building roads and bridges rather than houses. At any rate, his leadership was about to come to an end.

The rather dramatic end of Stephan's days as the head of the Saxon emigrants was precipitated on Sunday, May 5. On that day, apparently as a result of the sermon preached by G. H. Loeber that morning to the congregation in St. Louis, two women came to him individually later in the day and confessed to having had improper relations with Stephan. Other women made similar confessions later in the week. Loeber, who was shocked by the revelations, told C. F. W. Walther. The two then shared the contents of the confessions with E. G. Keyl and E. M. Buerger. Next the information was shared with Vehse and Jaeckel, two of the leading laymen. Soon all attempts at maintaining secrecy were dropped, and the information quickly became common knowledge throughout the Saxon community in St. Louis.

Stephan could not be confronted concerning the damaging statements made in the confessions since he was in Perry County. Nevertheless, the statements were accepted as the truth. The "unshakable pillar" was considered guilty as charged without a hearing or any opportunity to defend himself. But it will be recalled that Stephan had been suspended from his pastorate in Dresden because of his insistence on exercising his predilection for nighttime strolls, often in the company of individual women. At the time when applications for membership in the emigration company were being received, there had also been a woman who applied to Marbach to be accepted, but added that Stephan would not favor her acceptance since she had at one time

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*, p 294.

repulsed his improper advances. At the time none of the inner circle of Stephen's advisers granted any credibility to the charge or to other vaguer charges of improprieties against Stephen, even though other confessional Lutherans outside the Saxon party expressed strong misgivings about his conduct.

Stephen's wife came from a prominent Dresden family. Some described her as being more refined than he. The couple had at least eight children. It was generally known that the marriage was unhappy. Some described the wife as a shrew. It seems quite likely Stephen gave her quite a bit to be shrewish about. Stephen himself claimed that he was innocent as far as the marital discord was concerned. He was accustomed to speak of his marital difficulties as a cross he was called on to bear because of his testimony for Christ. When the Saxon emigrants set out for America, Stephen took only his oldest son, Martin Jr., along.

Stephen had not been in St. Louis long when he again took up the practices that had caused him his difficulties with the officials in Dresden. He apparently had a number of women who stayed at his residence. One of these was his housekeeper who lived there permanently. Five others were known to appear there frequently; others came less frequently. Stephen soon resumed his nighttime strolls apparently quite unconcerned that Americans tended to be more protective of their women and less tolerant regarding such conduct than the people of Dresden.

To return to the developments in St. Louis in May, 1839, the four pastors, Loeber, C. F. W. Walther, Keyl and Buerger, decided that Stephen had to be removed from office. A plan was worked out to bring this about without shattering the community. Since Stephen's influence and hold over the people was feared, it was decided to send one pastor to Perry County. Acting on behalf of all the pastors, he was to gain the confidence and support of all the people there, especially the trustees of the Emigration Society, Marbach and Gube, who were there with Stephen. Only then would Stephen be confronted.

Two major questions had to be decided in the present situation: Who should take over the leadership of the Saxons, and what should be done with Stephen? By making the decision to remove Stephen from leadership the pastors also determined who should take over the leadership of the Saxons. A joint leadership by a council of the pastors was put into effect. C. F. W. Walther was chosen to go to Perry County to inform the people of developments in St. Louis and enlist their support for the planned ouster of Stephen. Why Walther was chosen is not recorded. Perhaps it was because he had strongly favored decisive action against Stephen from the beginning and was less reluctant to go than the rest. Attempts by Vehse and Marbach to involve the lay leaders in the decision-making process of the leadership were successfully rebuffed by the pastors. They had the advantage of previous knowledge and hence time to arrive at an agreed-upon course of action.

Walther left for Perry County on May 15. Stephen had given orders that none of the Saxons in St. Louis were to come to Perry County without his express permission, and then only in small groups. Walther arrived unannounced and without permission. Stephen gave him a frosty reception, but could not, or at least did not, attempt to make him leave again. Walther, of course, did not tell Stephen of the purpose of his coming or confront him directly. He worked quietly and quickly to spread word to the key persons in Perry County of what had occurred in St. Louis. By disregarding express orders from Stephen he indicated without saying so that something had changed drastically with regard to Stephen's leadership position over the Saxons. Walther was aided in carrying out his purpose by the fact that shortly after he arrived in Perry County an additional company of 108 immigrants arrived. They had come by way of New York and included Walther's close friend during university days, J. F. Buenger. Walther, of course, informed Buenger of what had transpired in St. Louis, and Buenger agreed to cooperate in carrying out the actions planned against Stephan.

It was announced that on Pentecost Sunday, May 19, Stephen himself would conduct the services for the Saxons at the mouth of Brazeau Creek, at the landing that had been named Stephen's Landing and later would be called Wittenberg. Walther quietly let it be known that all the Saxons in Perry County should assemble at a settlement farther inland which became known as Altenburg and that he would preach. All but a handful of people assembled at Altenburg. After the Pentecost service had come to a close, Walther informed the people present of what had happened in St. Louis on May 5 and since. Apparently no one doubted or questioned Walther concerning the news he brought. He had achieved what he had set out to do. Several days later he returned to St. Louis.

There Vehse and several other laymen had begun a campaign to get the spiritual and secular leadership of the Saxons separated. The pastors at this time would not hear of such a move. Walther upon his return sharply criticized the lay leaders and their efforts to obtain a greater part in the administration of the secular affairs of the colony. But the attention of all now was focused on Perry County, and it was resolved that the immigrants travel in a body to be on hand when Stephen was deposed.

Two steamers were chartered to transport the Saxons down to Perry County and back. It is estimated some 400 Saxons made the trip to the mouth of the Brazeau on May 27. About 100 did not go along because of their jobs. Before leaving St. Louis, the pastors placed what they titled an "Explanation" to be printed in the June 1 issue of the *Anzeiger des Westens*, informing the German community of St. Louis that Stephen had been exposed as immoral, unfaithful and hypocritical and had been renounced and removed as leader by the Saxon immigrants. The names of the six Saxon pastors, Loeber, Keyl, Buerger, Oertel and the two Walthers appeared below the announcement. There followed a shorter statement of similar content over the names of what were referred to as the "provisional deputies," 23 in number. Just before leaving for St. Louis, the "provisional deputies" also handed a document to the pastors which stated their conviction that expulsion from the church was not the right of the clergy, but of the congregation. The question of the respective rights and authority of the clergy and laity was by no means settled.

By 5:00 p.m. on May 29 both steamboats had reached Stephen's Landing. A meeting of the pastors, to which Marbach was invited, was held to decide the proper method of procedure in dealing with Stephen. Marbach reported on opinions which he and Vehse had obtained from prominent St. Louis officials as to the most suitable way to deal with Stephen. No definite decision was reached. That evening Keyl and Loeber visited Stephen, informed him of the charges against him which grew out of the confessions made in St. Louis, and ordered him to appear the next morning before a meeting of the council assembled to hear his case. Stephen rejected the authority of this specially organized council to hear or decide charges against him. He appealed to the entire Emigration Society. After Keyl and Loeber left, a watch was placed around the house where Stephen was living to prevent his escape.

The next morning another meeting of the ad hoc council was held. Again a dispute arose between pastors and laymen regarding the respective roles and authority of each group. The dispute could not be settled, but a temporary compromise was worked out by which the clergy were to determine how to handle Stephen's case and the entire council, including laymen, would carry out the decision. Stephen refused to appear before the council, saying, "I know of no council." From a legal point of view Stephen would appear to have been in the right on this point. He also declared, "I am not conscious of having done anything wrong." The practical result of this response was that he was not given any kind of a hearing and had no chance to defend himself before any tribunal or assembly.

The ad hoc council voted to remove Stephan from the office of bishop and to excommunicate him. A document officially deposing him was drawn up. He was charged with fornication and adultery, repeated and prodigal maladministration of the property of the society and false doctrine. By not recognizing the legitimacy and authority of the council over him, it was declared, he forfeited his right of defense, rejected the Word of God, the church, the office of the ministry and all divine order. Hence he had forfeited his investiture as a bishop and the rights and privileges of a member of the Christian church.

The document was signed by the members of the council, read to the whole assembly and approved by them. The council then went to Stephan's house. The document was read to him by Henry Bimpage, a St. Louis real estate agent and newspaper publisher, who acted as agent and English recording secretary for the council in its dealings with Stephan. Stephan was ordered to leave the house in which he had been living and the colony. At first he refused. An angry crowd began milling around the house and trying to get inside. Stephen now became frightened of the crowd and yielded to the demands of the council. He requested that only a small delegation from the council deal with him. He was, in effect, a prisoner. He was taken from the house, which then was thoroughly searched.

Another document was drawn up and presented to the erstwhile bishop to sign. It stated that since he owed the congregation, i.e. the Saxons, more than he could ever repay, he ceded to them all his property of

every kind. He declared all connections with the congregation to be ended and declared the congregation and all its members released from any obligations to him. He gave up any and all claims or demands upon the congregation for all time and promised never to return to the territory of the Saxons or the state of Missouri.

To prevent Stephan from somehow making contact with any of the people and again gaining influence over them, it was decided to remove him from the area that same day. There were so many logs floating down the Mississippi that day, however, that no one was willing to venture across with a boat. Stephan was housed in a tent until the next day. On the morning of May 29, 1839, he was transported across the river. He was allowed to take his clothing, a cloak, linen, two beds, two chairs, one clock, one sofa cushion, books of meditations and 100 dollars. Agent Bimpage and a Teacher Mueller rowed him across to the Illinois shore. Apparently, arrangements had been made for him to take up quarters in some kind of house whether with someone living there or in a deserted cabin is not clear.

The promise not to return to the colony was not kept. Stephan did return several times in attempts to regain a following among the Saxons. He also wrote several letters. But all these efforts were rebuffed. Later that summer word reached the Saxons that Stephan was gravely ill. Pastor Loeber went to visit him expecting to minister to a dying man. But Stephan was not dying, and if Loeber hoped to hear some confession of guilt or admission of wrong-doing he was disappointed.

Stephan regained his health and not long after tried to bring suit against the Saxons in an attempt to regain what he still considered to be his personal property. Accounts differ on whether he succeeded in gaining compensation or not. In any case, Stephan did succeed in developing enough contacts in southwestern Illinois to permit him to begin holding church services in the courthouse in Kaskaskia. Eventually, he organized a congregation near Red Bud, Illinois, which he served until his death on February 22, 1846.

After the Saxons had deposed their bishop and disposed of him by means of a boat ride to Illinois, the ad hoc council, having failed to elicit any kind of confession or statement from the man they blamed for all their troubles, turned to his maid. They subjected her to two days of questioning. Lawyer Marbach conducted the inquiry. She was charged with several kinds of wrongdoing. She was accused of slandering members of the society by reporting to Stephan trespasses and transgressions observed in the community. This she admitted in part, saying Stephan had insisted she was in conscience bound to report any misdeeds she noticed to him. But she also insisted that she frequently defended individuals before Stephan.

Secondly, she was accused of seeking to recruit women of the society to join the small group that spent much time in Stephan's house. This the maid denied absolutely. A third charge leveled against her was that of adultery. To this she pleaded guilty, informing the questioners that she had sexual relations with Stephan over a period of seven or eight years. But she also stated that he had described it as her moral duty to satisfy his desires.

Only a few weeks after Stephan had been deposed, his maid slipped out of the colony and followed him to Illinois. She remained with him until his death. Then she returned to St. Louis, confessed her sins, sought forgiveness, and was received into Trinity Congregation.

Difficult beginnings in Perry County

The Saxons who moved from St. Louis to Perry County, like most pioneers, faced the difficult task of turning the wilderness into productive land and putting up the necessary houses and barns to enable them to support themselves and live at least a somewhat comfortable life. In spite of the shock, dismay and confusion of Stephan's exposure and expulsion, once that was behind them, they set resolutely to work at mastering the daunting tasks that faced them. They got at felling trees, putting up log cabins and clearing land for planting. This is heavy work under any circumstances. The fact that their Credit Fund was nearly depleted made it impossible for them to buy the horses or oxen which would have greatly eased and speeded the work. Now human muscle power had to do the job. Soon they began to experience the heat of a summer in southeastern Missouri something which they had never experienced in Germany.

Although a few buildings were already standing on the land purchased by the Emigration Society, these were allotted to the pastors and their families. The rest had only lean-tos, sheds or shelters of branches and leaves to provide protection from rain and storm. Quite a few slept in the open. Mosquitoes and numerous other insects added to their discomfort. Before long, disease broke out among them, especially where they settled in the damp creek and river bottom land. To provide medical care they had only a student of medicine, E. E. Buenger, and he was handicapped by a shortage of medical supplies and of funds to replenish those they did have. Nevertheless, they did not lose heart but kept at their work.

They also organized secular and spiritual communities or congregations. Five colonies or settlements were established on the lands the Saxons had purchased. These settlements lay in a roughly east-west line just south of Brazeau Creek. The westernmost was Niederfrohna, which included 360 acres. E. G. Keyl became the pastor here. He himself owned considerable land in this area. A mile and one half southeast was Altenburg. It comprised 1,559 acres and was the largest of the settlements. The land here was level, fairly high and well-drained. G. H. Loeber was the pastor here. Dresden was located adjacent to Altenburg on the east. It comprised 1158 acres and was second largest in area. Since the individual plots were large, the population was rather small. C. F. W. Walther served as first pastor from 1839 to 1841. It was in Dresden that the "Log Cabin College" was built and operated from 1839 until moved to Altenburg in 1840 and to St. Louis in 1849. The Dresden land, like that of Altenburg, was level, well-drained land.

About one and one-half miles to the northeast of Dresden lay Seelitz. It was mostly in the bottom land along Brazeau Creek. It comprised 758 acres. The soil was rich, but the greater dampness led to more disease. Most of the people who settled here had come with Pastor E. M. Buerger, and he served as their pastor. Another one and one half miles east from Seelitz, where Brazeau Creek empties into the Mississippi River, the colony of Wittenberg was established. Its area was 640 acres. It had been Stephen's plan—and remained the colonists' hope for some time—that Wittenberg with its riverboat landing would become a larger city, the "Metropolis of the Saxon colonies." A wharf was built and steamboats did stop here regularly. Wittenberg did become a rather lively river boat and farm trading community. In its most prosperous days it boasted a flour mill, a brewery, a furniture factory, a hotel, several warehouses, a stockyard and a number of general stores. But a major fire in 1907 and repeated floods crippled the town. Today the front steps of St. Paul's Lutheran Church and the smokestack of the brewery are about all that remain of Stephen's metropolis.

In 1840 additional immigrants arrived and established the community of Paitzdorf some eight miles west of Frohna. This is now known as Uniontown. Grace Lutheran Church still serves the descendants of the Paitzdorf settlers. Other added settlers arriving in 1840 moved south from Dresden and established Johannisberg.

Today there are flourishing congregations at Frohna (Concordia) and Altenburg (Trinity). Both operate thriving parish schools with modern buildings. Both congregations have demonstrated their sense of history by turning old school buildings into congregational museums. The "Log Cabin College" building was moved into Altenburg in 1912 and now stands just a short distance from Trinity Church. Of Dresden, Seelitz and Johannisberg little visible evidence remains. The congregations for a time were served from Altenburg and eventually merged with Altenburg. Near Frohna one of the original Saxon log cabins has been preserved and restored by the Concordia Historical Institute as a Lutheran Saxon Memorial.

Vehse's protests

Stephen had planned and had been in the process of establishing a theocratic, hierarchic little state on Saxon lands. He was in complete charge of all spiritual and secular affairs in the colony. He seemed to be intent on developing for himself the luxury he considered suitable for his office. His clergy followers and the prominent businessmen who had accompanied him were there to carry out his orders.

But now with Stephen gone, his so carefully planned community was subject to review and revision. One major change introduced without any significant debate was that the lands purchased by the Emigration Society as communal property were divided among the individual members. Since the Credit Fund was

exhausted, the Emigration Society was for practical purposes bankrupt. Dividing up the land was the only possible way to pay off the creditors of the fund, at least in part. This would permit the individual families to work their land, raise stock and harvest crops and reestablish themselves financially.

Another change that did occasion some debate was the change in government. When Stephen's adultery was exposed, the six pastors assumed authority to act for the whole colony in removing him from office. Without consulting anyone they established a council consisting of the six pastors plus five laymen whom they chose to act on behalf of the whole Emigration Society. Religious and theological matters, they decided, would be determined by the pastors alone, secular affairs, by the whole council. By choosing only five laymen the pastors assured for themselves that they would have a majority on the council.

The pastors decided that they alone should determine how Stephen was to be dealt with. They drew up a Deposition Document in which they declared that Stephen had forfeited not only his spiritual office, but also the right of membership in the Christian church. When Stephen had been dealt with and removed from the scene, the pastors continued to administer all of the Saxons' affairs.

C. E. Vehse was one of the laymen appointed to the council which deposed Stephen. He also was the first to protest the dominance of the clergy in running both the spiritual and secular affairs of the whole colony. Late in June he withdrew from the council. In early August he brought to Pastor Otto H. Walther, the pastor of the St. Louis congregation, six theses which provided a theological basis for his objections to the continuing domination of the affairs of the Emigration Society by the clergy. He based his whole argumentation on the doctrine of the universal priesthood of all believers. In the sixth thesis he stated that the office of the ministry is no more than a public service enjoined upon a person by a whole congregation. Pastor O. H. Walther expressed agreement with Vehse's document at the time.

On September 9 the four Perry County pastors, joined by a wavering O.H. Walther, issued a statement which did not name Vehse by name or meet any of his arguments, but warned against those who sow seeds of distrust and bring about dissension in the congregation.

On September 19 Vehse, joined by G. Jaeckel and H.F. Fischer, published a document entitled "Protestation." It again emphasized the priesthood of all believers and the rights of a congregation over against clergy and bishops. It declared Stephen's system of rule to be papistic and intolerable and renewed the assertion that the congregation possessed the right to establish the office of the ministry without ordination by any outside group or individual. Quotations from Luther and Spener supported the arguments presented. The functions of the ministry as conceived by the three laymen consisted of religious instruction, administration of the sacraments and the exercise of the Office of the Keys. It was also asserted that the conditions in Saxony had not made the emigration obligatory for a faithful Christian and concluded that the emigration was a mistake. A supplement issued on November 14 detailed what were considered wrongs perpetrated by the pastors in handling the removal of Stephan from office.

By October 29 O. H. Walther had again undergone a change of heart. Now he issued a statement in which he declared that he did not find the accusations in the September 9 letter to apply to the three lay protesters. He furthermore declared it his intention to use his influence to induce the Perry County clergymen to make a similar statement.

On November 20 the four pastors in Perry County responded to the charges of Vehse, Jaeckel and Fischer. They insisted that Stephan had misled them and confessed to being ashamed of the part they had played under Stephan. They claimed that they had repudiated every vestige of the Stephan hierarchy. Vehse and his fellow protesters were faulted for continuing to criticize the clergy. For the sake of peace the pastors offered to give up the episcopal form of church government. They did not speak to any of the abuses of authority of which the laymen had accused them, abuses which, according to the laymen, were continuing undiminished.

The lay people, both in St. Louis and in Perry County, learned of the contents of the protest documents quite soon after their transmission. One reaction was that the St. Louis congregation reproved Pastor O. H. Walther for "Stephanism," and directed him henceforth to adhere to the Bible and the Lutheran Confessions in shepherding his flock. But clear and outspoken support for Vehse and his two supporters remained notably absent. Not surprisingly, on December 16, 1839, Vehse left Missouri and returned to Germany. There he was

able to resume a professional career with the Saxon government. At the time of his departure from America available evidence suggested that his protests had been quite in vain.

Uncertainty and confusion

The Saxon pastors apparently assumed that when Stephan was removed from the scene, they could simply take over his leadership and carry on for the most part as Stephan had intended to, except without Stephan's corruption and incompetence. For a time they managed to maintain the leadership they had seized. At least the four Perry County pastors maintained a united front and resisted Vehse's calls for changes. We noted that O.H. Walther already was uncertain in his response to Vehse. As late as May 1840 there still was an attempt from Perry County to discredit Vehse and his protests.

But Stephan's system of running the colony could not simply be continued. There had to be discussion. Could or should the form of church government be the episcopacy? Should they continue to have a combination of church and state government, whether by bishop or council? And if Stephan was a hypocrite, a false leader, what were the implications for the pastors and lay people who had followed him? Were they still Lutheran—still Christians? Had there been justification for leaving Germany? Had the leave taking been proper? There were a lot of questions but no sure answers.

How much Vehse should be credited with stimulating the raising of these and similar questions cannot be determined with certainty. That there was substance to his protests was acknowledged publicly on June 29, 1840, when Loeber, Keyl and Buerger sent a letter to the congregation in St. Louis withdrawing their condemnation of Vehse's writings. They admitted that these condemnations were undeserved and that the pastors had earned the distrust of the people. They offered apologies to the congregation. The exact significance of the absence of Walther from this retraction is not clear, but the united front of the Perry County pastors had been broken. That there no longer was unanimity among the Saxon theologians was made more evident when the candidates of theology in Perry County announced that for the time being they would refrain from preaching. The congregational members had apparently begun to ask themselves and the clergy searching questions.

Stephan, with his autocratic manner of leadership and psychological pressuring of anyone who disagreed with him, had provided single and definite answers to questions. But as the weeks went by, the pastors too asked themselves more questions and no longer were agreed on the answers. There was no leader, no voice of assurance and certainty. Questioning, uncertainty and confusion grew. E. M. Buerger resigned two times from his congregation at Seelitz, but his resignations were not accepted. He informed them on a third occasion that he simply was unable to serve them any longer. A number of men issued confessions of their wrongdoings under Stephan. Others published theses setting forth their understanding of what was wrong and how it should be made right, but no agreement was found in the various writings. There was, however, a trend toward more guilt, more confessions. In September 1839, for example, Loeber had stated that the Saxon emigration had been right and justified. In April 1840 he was not sure. By December 1840 he published a document entitled: "Renunciation of Stephanism," in which he stated that he saw his guilt ever more clearly. Eventually, this document was signed by most of his members at Altenburg and by the other pastors.

In a May 1840 letter to his brother, C. F. W. Walther revealed something of what was going on in his conscience. He stated that leaving his congregation in Germany had been contrary to God's will and Word, a breaking of his ordination vow. He thought of the numerous families torn apart by the emigration and wrote:

My conscience blames me for all the broken marriages which occurred. It calls me a kidnapper, a robber of the wealthy among us, a murderer of those who lie buried in the sea and the many who were stricken down here, a member of a mob, a mercenary, an idolater, etc....¹⁰

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p 515.

It is hardly surprising that he offered his congregation his resignation, as did Loeber and Keyl. The congregations, however, refused to accept them.

By the spring of 1841 two of the candidates had left the colonies. There was growing agreement among a number of laymen around Marbach that in following Stephan the Saxons had broken their connection with the Christian church, that there was no church in their midst, that they must return to Germany to reestablish, a connection with the church. Marbach and those who agreed with him stopped worshiping with the others. The colony showed signs of disintegrating. It could not continue without leadership, without some resolution of the uncertainty and the numerous questions which were troubling everyone.

Surprisingly, some of the practical problems were resolved first. As noted earlier, communal ownership of land was abandoned as the property of the Saxons was parceled out to individuals. The Credit Fund could not be abolished at once because of the varying amounts owed to it and by it, but it no longer functioned as the communal treasury. Individuals were financially on their own from now on.

Gradually the individual accounts of the fund were settled as much as possible. There no longer was any communal labor for the colony at the direction of one leader.

But the spiritual problems remained. As long as they did, the future of the colony was very much in question. Confusion, guilt, discouragement and a growing depression gripped more and more of the people. Increasingly, people accepted Marbach's view that they were no longer a part of the church or Christians and that their pastors were impostors. Marbach's solution was for everyone to return to Germany. But for the great majority that was impossible They had no money to pay for a return trip.

The Altenburg Debates

How to find a way out of this impasse? In March 1841, a number of the pastors and candidates met with Marbach to try to find a solution. Marbach again thoroughly ventilated his pessimistic views and concluded by emphasizing there was no church among the Saxons. Pastors Loeber, Keyl and Gruber disagreed with him but were not able to defend their view effectively. Candidate Brohm rode the fence; Candidate Wege sided with Marbach. Pastor Buerger not only sided with Marbach but announced he would have nothing more to do with the church services or other church activities of the colony. The conference was a success only for Marbach and his views.

It was at this point that C. F. W. Walther came forward and offered effective arguments to refute Marbach's views about the status of the Saxon colony. He had been ill for some time. While convalescing, he lived with his sister and brother-in-law, Pastor and Mrs. E. G. Keyl. On leave of absence from pastoral duties at Dresden he had time to study and think. As in his university days, he again spent a lot of time studying Luther. He also apparently thought over Vehse's argumentation based on the fact that all the Saxons were Christians and so members of the church and the universal priesthood. A debate between Marbach and Walther was arranged. It was held on April 15 and 21, 1841, in the "Log Cabin College." Marbach, a veteran lawyer and a trained and experienced debater, had been sharpening his arguments in public for quite some time. He must have rated as the clear favorite beforehand. But Walther clearly was the victor in the Altenburg debate. He convinced the majority of the people that filled every available inch of space in the log cabin that Marbach was wrong.

Walther summarized his thoughts in eight theses, since then known as the Altenburg Theses. The first thesis stated that the true church is the totality of all believers and no one belongs to the true church who is not spiritually united with Christ. Walther was able to demonstrate that there still were many sincere believers in Christ among the Saxons; hence, they were members of the true church. In the second thesis he stated that the name of the true church belongs also to visible companies of men among whom God's Word is purely taught and the sacraments administered according to Christ's institution. There are godless men, hypocrites and heretics in this church, but they are not true members.

In his third thesis he argued that, in a certain sense, the name "true church" belongs to visible companies of men united under the confession of a falsified faith, provided they possess so much of God's Word and the holy Sacraments in purity that people may be brought to faith. Article four stated that the name church was not

improperly applied to heterodox companies, but that this could be done according to the manner of speech of the Word of God itself. Out of this it follows, Walther argued, that members of such a company also may be saved. In article six he stated that even heterodox companies have church powers among them, the ministry may be validly established, the sacraments validly administered and the keys of the kingdom of heaven validly exercised. It followed therefore that, even if the Saxon colony was a heterodox company through the misleading of Stephan, they still had the authority to carry on all the essential functions of the church. The ministry in their midst still was a valid Christian ministry.

Article seven stated that heterodox companies were not to be dissolved, but reformed. Hence, it followed that the proper procedure for the Saxons was not to get back to Germany somehow, but to reform whatever was false in their doctrine and practice according to Scripture and the Confessions.

Thus Walther convinced the Saxons that they still were believers, still were members of the Christian church, still were members of a Christian, even if heterodox, congregation, and they still had the right to issue a valid call to a pastor. The proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments in their midst then was a valid and effective administration of the means of grace.

The Altenburg Debates signified a new beginning for the Saxons. Peace and unity were restored in Perry County. Marbach returned to Germany. He and Walther parted as friends. Pastor Buerger started out to return to Germany, but during a stop in Buffalo, New York, he was persuaded to become the pastor of the group who had broken with Grabau. He and the congregation later joined the Missouri Synod. The other leaders in Perry County, Loeber, Gruber and Keyl, were convinced by Walther's arguments, as were their congregations. As late as August, Keyl still completed his "Confessions" and had them printed in Germany, but pastors and congregations were in agreement and moved forward with the work of building their congregations along with their homes and secular lives in America.

Walther, the Missouri Synod and American Lutheranism

Before the Altenburg Debates the Saxon colony had been an impoverished little group without a leader, without direction, without an identity, most likely without a future. Who would have predicted a glorious future, or any future at all for them? All that was about to change. The day after the second debate Walther took a steamboat to St. Louis. His brother had died in January. The St. Louis congregation then called Walther himself as successor. With the status and whole future of the Saxon colony unclear, he had not been able to decide whether he should accept the call or not. Now he accepted the call. He served Trinity of St. Louis until his death in 1887. With the possible exception of the May 1839 trip to Perry County to prepare the people there for Stephan's ouster, he had not demonstrated any exceptional abilities as a theologian or leader. In the debates he demonstrated both the ability to muster scriptural truths in a logical and penetrating manner and the ability to win his hearers in the give and take of a public debate. If the Saxons needed and wanted a leader, and they clearly needed one desperately, Walther could be their man. And what a leader he became! And what a theologian and teacher!

In 1844 he began publishing *Der Lutheraner*, thanks to the resources the St. Louis congregation provided to support the abilities he demonstrated. His eloquent defense of biblical theology and confessional Lutheranism soon gained him many readers. Among those who were deeply impressed with Walther's faithfulness to the Lutheran Confessions was Wilhelm Loehe in the far-off Bavarian village of Neuendettelsau. Loehe alerted missionaries whom he had sent out to Ohio, Michigan and Indiana in the U.S.A. That led to conferences between the Saxons and the Loehe men in 1846 and the organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and other States in 1847. Walther was elected president. The cohort of university-trained Saxon men plus Walther's abilities gave the Saxons a strong theological base. Charter congregations were located in New York, Indiana, Michigan and Illinois as well as Missouri and Ohio. Additional congregations in New York City and Baltimore soon joined to provide a presence on the east coast. There was a congregation in San Francisco by 1860. This would be a nationwide church body. Where most synods struggled to establish a theological seminary, Missouri enjoyed the advantage of having two, one in Fort

Wayne, a gift from Loehe, the other in St. Louis, the outgrowth of the "Log Cabin College." In 1855 Walther, who had become president of the St. Louis seminary and senior instructor in addition to his pastoral and administrative responsibilities, began publishing the theological journal *Lehre und Wehre*, to bring confessional Lutheran theological materials not only to Missouri pastors, but to a wide circle of other readers as well.

The Missouri Synod was well equipped, indeed, for sound growth from within and effective outreach as well. The Norwegian Synod established close ties with Missouri and sent its theological students to St. Louis from 1857 on. The later 1850s brought a series of free conferences as well. The late 1860s brought doctrinal fellowship with the Ohio and Wisconsin Synods. Fellowship with the Illinois and Minnesota Synods was established several years later. In 1872 the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America came into being, with Missouri as the largest member and leader. The Synodical Conference became the largest general Lutheran body in the country. What growth! What a change in significance! How different the scene in American Lutheranism, especially in the Midwest, would have been without the Saxons, Walther and the Missouri Synod.

The favoring hand of God must be recognized again and again in the Saxon Emigration and what grew out of it. One must speak in harsh terms of Stephen's growing corruption and the self-serving organization he dreamed up to satisfy desires of the flesh. Yet the Lord used all of this to bring the Saxons and Walther to America and to shape them and their theology. Readers of the *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* are reminded of the article "Anniversary Reflections" by Prof. August Pieper (Vol. 84, pp 12ff, 96ff, 186ff, and 270ff) and its perceptive and eloquent appreciation of the significance of Walther for the Missouri Synod, the Synodical Conference and all of American Lutheranism. Pieper at one point calls Walther the Atlas of his synod, so all-encompassing were his responsibilities, his efforts, his accomplishments, his influences. His influences and those of his synodical brethren surely left a large and lasting imprint on our Wisconsin Synod. The coming of this man and his fellow emigrants is indeed an event worthy of grateful remembrance and an occasion for praise to the Lord of the church, who through them brought great blessings also to our synod and the Lutheran church in this land.

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In addition a number of helpful articles on the Prussian Union, the emigration and its leaders may be found in the *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly*.