# Dr. C. F. W. Walther.

## Life Portrait,

designed

by

Martin Günther.

**With 11 pictures.**

"A disciple of Luther, and, as I hope to God, a faithful disciple of his, I have stammered out everything I have spoken and written publicly up to now only after this prophet of the last world.

**St. Louis, Mo.**

Lutheran Concordia Publishing House.

1890.

# Foreword.

The life portrait of Blessed Dr. Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther presented to the reader in this booklet is the "honorary memorial" which the undersigned set up for the Blessed in the "Lutheraner" (Volumes 44 and 45). Not because he thought himself particularly suitable for it, but, moved by the urging of many brothers, he had taken it upon himself to draw up this life portrait; for this purpose, material had been offered to him from many sides, as stated in the "Lutheraner".

He makes no claim to have drawn a complete life picture; but despite the imperfections, many have been pleased with the work and have expressed the wish that the "Memorial of Honor" appear in book form.

Some things have now been added in several places; the supplements bring some more letters and

also some poems by Walther, of which he himself set four (the fourth, however, only half) to music. The songs composed on the ocean are taken with the relevant notes from the diary, which he kept during the journey and which is in the possession of his eldest daughter, the wife of Pastor S. Keyl. — The enclosed pictures will not be unpopular with the readers, especially those made especially for the biography.

May this booklet also serve to preserve the memory of the Blessed One for a long, long time among us and our children for the blessing of many.

St. Louis, Mo, Concordia Seminary,

the 15th of October 1890.

M. Günther.

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# Life portrait.

I.

## Birth — childhood — high school — decision to study theology.

Walther comes from an old preacher family. He himself has distinguished the following about it: "My great-grandfather was Moritz Heinrich Walther of Gladau in Magdeburg, since 1719 pastor in Oberlungwitz between Hohenstein and Chemnitz in the Grasschast Schönburg-Glauchau, died March 2, 1752. Was unfortunately! a chiliast, as can be seen from the 'Innocent News', year 1728, p. 565 ff. His wife was a née Neißing from Hohenstein. His son, my grandfather, was Adolph Heinrich Walther, born at Oberlungwitz on July 2, 1728; attended the school at Annaberg and the university at Leipzig, became pastor in 1752 in Gazen near Pegau in Saxony, in the Stistsephorie Zeiz, since 1763 pastor in Langenchursdorf near Waldenburg in the Fürstlich Schönburgischen, Kingdom of Saxony. His first wife was Maria Elisabeth, née Wagner from Burgstädt, the second was Auguste Concordia, née Bonitz from Lichtenstein. My father was Gottlob Heinrich Wilhelm Walther, former pastor of the Lutheran congregation at Langenchursdorf near Waldenburg in the Principality of Schönburg-Waldenburg in the Kingdom of Saxony, born here on November 15, 1770 and died here in 1841, January 13. My mother was Mrs. Johanna Wilhelmina Walther, née Zschenderlein from Zwickau in the Kingdom of Saxony, died in 1851 in Kleinhartmannsdorf near Frauenstein in Saxony with my sister, the married Pastor Julie Wilhelmi."

Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther was born in the above-mentioned Langenchursdorf on October 25, 1811. Walther was the eighth of twelve children, the fourth of sons.*) One of the younger sisters, Amalie Ernestine, married



**Walther s father.**

1836 with Pastor E. G. W. Keyl, then pastor in Niederfrohna. Walther's father was a strict educator. Nothing was more annoying to him

*) The firstborn son died in the first, the second son in the sixth year of life; the third was Otto Hermann, born September 23, 1809, 1834 to 1839 parish substitute in Langenchursdorf, died as the first faithful pastor of the local parish on January 21, 1841.

more squeamish than when a young man was squeamish. "A young man must suffer much before he becomes a *dominus* (master)," he often said. The children had great respect for their father.



**Walther's mother.**

hardly dared to look at him. Ferdinand was once punished for sitting on the sofa. But his father was otherwise an affable old gentleman, and he also took great pains to have his children well educated. When Ferdinand had completed his third year, and at Christmas, as is the custom in Saxony and other countries

as is the custom in some parts of Germany, the *Pelznickel* (Santa Claus?) [*Weihnachtsmann*]) had also come to Walther's house and had asked the children to recite a saying, little Walther prayed the verse:

> Christ's blood and righteousness,
> This is my ornament and dress of honor,
> I want to stand before God with this,
> When I will go to heaven.

The father was so pleased about this that he gave his little son a threesome. This made a deep impression on Ferdinand. He thought it must be a very nice saying that his father had given him a threesome because of this. This saying accompanied him throughout his later life; it was also in his mind during his high school years, where a rationalistic environment had also exerted its influence on him.

After Walther had received his first lessons in elementary subjects from his father and in the local school, he attended the city school in Hohenstein near Chemnitz in 1819 and then, in July 1821, the grammar school in Schneeberg in the Saxon Erzgebirge, where his brother-in-law, the husband of his eldest sister, the learned H. F. W. Schubert, was principal. Here he remained until September 23, 1829. His leaving certificate from Schneeberg was an extremely honorable one, both regarding his knowledge and his conduct. It testified that he was "especially worthy" (*inprimis dignus*) to be admitted to academic studies and had never incurred even a slight censure. The Pastor *primarius* and Superintendent of Waldenburg, in a letter dated November 21, 1829, recommended "the hopeful youth, Carl Ferdinand Walther, to the favorable consideration of his venerable academic teachers, as well as other high patrons and promoters of the sciences, as being equally worthy and in need, as duly as reverently."

What was the state of Walther's soul at the time when he was studying at the Gymnasium? All the teachers at the Gymnasium, with the exception of one, were decided rationalists and, as mentioned above, he was not free from their influence; however, he retained the faith in the Holy Scriptures as God's Word that he had received at home, even though, as he says himself, he had not yet had any experience of a faith that overcame the flesh, the world and Satan.

In the introduction to a lecture he gave in 1878, in which he spoke about the historical belief that the Bible is God's Word, he said, among other things: "By the fact that a man believes the Holy Scriptures to be God's clear Word, because he has been so instructed by his parents, that is, by mere human faith in them, no man, of course, becomes righteous and saved before God; but nevertheless even such a merely human faith is an inexpressibly great treasure, indeed, a deliciously precious gift of God's antecedent grace. — I can introduce myself to you as an example in this respect. My dear, God-fearing father also taught me from childhood that the Bible was God's Word. But very soon I left my father's house — already in the eighth year — and that into unbelieving circles. I did not lose the historical faith. It accompanied me like an angel of God through my life. But I spent my more than eight years of grammar school unconverted." "I was," he once related, "18 years old when I left the grammar school, and I had never heard a sentence taken from God's Word from a believing mouth. I had never had a Bible, nor a catechism, but a miserable guidebook, in which pagan morals were contained. "*)

*) Synod Report 1872, p. 69.

Walther did not intend to study theology, but rather music*). In 1829, on February 8, he wrote in his diary: "I feel born for nothing but music. When he once told his father of his desire to devote himself to music, he said to him: "If you want to become a musician, see how you get by; but if you want to study theology, I will give you a thaler a week.

However, God did not want him to become a musician, but He wanted to make him a chosen tool in the service of His church and worked in him the decision to choose theology as his study. This happened through reading the description of the life and blessed work of the preacher J. Fr. Oberlin, written by G. H. Schubert, which his brother Hermann, who had already been studying in Leipzig for two years, had brought home along with other Christian tracts. He wrote about it in his diary: “I live quite happily and philosophize with my brother about the most interesting subjects from both our lives and read with true greed the life of Pastor Oberlin, portrayed by Schubert; this has filled my whole being and shown me that the prospects that a theologian can have are the most beautiful, in that he can, if he only wants to, acquire a sphere of activity as no one who has chosen another profession has to hope for. The anxious doubt: 'Will you also get an adequate provision one day?' is now completely overcome; for an unshakable trust in God and a firm faith in His providence and influence on our destinies I have drawn from that invaluable booklet, after I saw it awakened by the conversations with my dear, good brother."

*) Not Medicine.

II.

## At the university — revival — salvation from temptation and fatal disease.

After a short vacation, he moved to the University of Leipzig in October 1829. There he had to get by quite miserably. His father gave him one Thaler a week, with which he had to get by. He received only one fathom of wood, which was given from an endowment to a number of students who had a good high school diploma. At that time he did not even own a Bible. He would have liked to buy one, but he lacked money. One day he had only a few pennies left. If he spent them on a Bible, he did not know how he would live for the next few days. Finally he said to himself: I am spending the money on God's Word; He will help me and will not leave me in my misery. The Bible was bought. The next day a farmer from Langenchursdorf came to the student Walther and told him that he had inquired in the parish before his departure to Leipzig whether his father might have something to order for his son; at first the father said that he knew nothing, but then he changed his mind and gave him a letter which he wanted to hand over herewith. The farmer left. Walther opened the letter and found a thaler inside. — On December 9, he wrote in his diary: "Today I read the Bible, namely the Acts of the Apostles, firstly to orient myself in it, since I still know very little about the apostles and can hardly recite their twelve names; secondly, to edify myself by the examples of effects and expressions of an unshakable faith.

At the Leipzig University at that time, rationalism (faith in reason) was in full bloom, whereas the Christian faith

was only weakly represented by the professors Aug. Hahn and F. W. Lindner *sen.* By God's grace, however, shortly before Walther's entry into the student body in Leipzig, as a result of the testimony of some believing laymen and an old believing candidate by the name of Kühn, a group of students who had awakened to a living faith had come together, to which his older brother, Otto Hermann, the same Pastor J. F. Bünger, the same Pastor Brohm and the still living Pastor Ottomar Fürbringer also belonged. Walther was introduced to this circle of students, and not in vain. In his heart, too, the Word of God, prayerfully contemplated together, proved to be a force for a new life. Walther wrote about this circle of students in the biography of the late Pastor J. F. Bünger, which he wrote: “This group of awakened students gathered on certain days of each week for common prayer, for common reading of the Holy Scriptures for the purpose of edification and for mutual exchange about the one thing that is necessary. For a while, Professor Lindner also held a so-called *collegium philobiblicum* for them privately (in imitation of August Hermann Francke), in which he gave edifying interpretations of the Scriptures and instructions on how to preach practical sermon topics from the biblical texts. Of course, the students, who had become believers and had completely withdrawn from the world, had to endure much ridicule and scorn. Mystics, as the believers in Saxony used to be called at that time, pietists, bigots, obscurants, darklings and the like were not yet the worst titles they were given. Partly hated as contemptible hypocrites, partly pitied as unhappy seduced religious enthusiasts, they were outcasts from the unbelieving world, partly even from their own closest blood relatives. Yet they were sincerely joyful in their God and Savior, and all who remained faithful among them,

have subsequently thought back to this time of their first love as the most blessed time of their entire lives. — Initially, there was no talk in this circle about the differences in the doctrine of the various churches, although the faith that had been kindled in these young men by the dear Bible book alone was, of course, no other than the Lutheran faith. However, it did not remain that way. With the growth in knowledge, after some time, the question arose, partly by itself, partly through the above-mentioned old candidate Kühn, who was well-grounded in doctrine: What faith are you? Are you Lutheran? or Reformed? or United? The consequence of this was a sifting; only the vast majority soon recognized that it was none other than the Lutheran faith, which God the Holy Spirit had long since sealed in them as the true one, standing alone in adversity and challenge, even before they knew which church faith it was. Only a few were therefore those who now left. On the other hand, the impression made on the young believers was deeper when Candidate Kühn, who himself had come to the certainty of the forgiveness of his sins and his state of grace only after long, difficult anxieties and struggles under the most terrible terrors of the law, now sought to lead the awakened group just as God had led him. He tried to convince us that our entire Christianity would not rest on solid ground until we, like him, had experienced a high degree of repentance and the true terror of hell in hot battles of penance. The consequence of this was a rather general change from an evangelical-cheerful to a legal-dark Christianity." (p. 11 f.)

The edification writings most used by these students were those of Joh. Arndt, Aug. Hermann Francke, C. H. von Bogatzky, Spener, Werner, J. C. Schade, Joh. Jac. Rambach, Steinmetz, J. Ph. Fresenius, and the like. "The less," writes

Walther l. c. The more lawful a book was that it came from contrition of the heart and from the preceding complete destruction of the old man, the better it was considered to be. Even such writings we usually read only as far as they described the pains and exercises of repentance; if the description of faith and the consolation for the repentant came after that, then we usually closed the book, because, we thought, that is still nothing for us". (p.17 f.) *)

Walther suffered severe mental distress and struggles. "The only family," he writes, "which understood us in Leipzig, which was always open to us and in which we always found refreshment for body and soul, was the family of the blessed tax auditor Barthel and his godly wife, who had many experiences in the ways of the Lord. (p. 19.) When the latter passed away blessedly there in 1881, he held a speech at her coffin and also commemorated in it the benefits formerly enjoyed in her house. "It is now," he said, "just fifty years since I had the great good fortune to be introduced into the family of the deceased by a godly friend. A youth without God behind me and having only recently come to the knowledge of Jesus Christ, a new, undreamed-of world opened up to me. I saw a truly Christian family; a family in which Jesus was the all in all, in which the Word of God was the daily food and drink of the souls and led the scepter in everything, in which the Lord was served without ceasing, in which therefore Jesus' heavenly peace was poured out over all members of the family. So I found my spiritual parents here, a

*Whoever is led to Christ without any detours and without first being driven into his own work, usually has no idea of the great grace God is showing him.

Father in Christ and a mother in Christ, who now take care of me spiritually and bodily as one son.

"I myself, however, was at that time in severe spiritual trials, was pining away in body and soul, and wrestled with despair, uncertain of my blessedness. No praying, no sighing, no crying, no fasting, no struggling helped: God's peace had departed from my soul. Frightened by the law, that verse resounded in my heart day and night:

Only this, this is what concerns me,
That I can not know,
Whether I am a true Christian
And you are my JEsus.

"It was then especially the dear deceased who carried me on her motherly heart. Not only did her mouth overflow with evangelical words of comfort for me as often as I crossed her threshold, but she also wrestled with God day and night in hot intercession for me, the strange youth. And behold! God heard her plea: I finally came to peace in Christ, and now a bond of blessed fellowship with Christ entwined us, which nothing was able to break until her death.

"O how happy I am to be able to testify to this publicly here! But even more I look forward to thanking her with a perfect heart one day before the throne of the Lamb and in the presence of all the angels and chosen ones for what she once did to me, the poorest.

A letter from the then pastor M. Stephan in Dresden, Saxony, the later leader of the Saxon emigration, freed him from his temptations. "When Walther knew no one to advise him, when, on the contrary, even the faithful pastors, who had a reputation for great Christian experience and to whom he turned for help, all directed him to Stephan, only then did he turn to the pastor in Dresden.

He also wrote to Stephen, asking him for advice from God's Word. — When he received the answer, he did not open the letter until he had fervently called upon God to preserve him, so that he would not accept false consolation, if such should be contained in the received answer. But when he read it, he felt as if he had suddenly been transported from hell to heaven. The tears of anguish and distress that had been meant for so long now turned into tears of truly heavenly joy." (Bünger's *curriculum vitae*, p. 29.)

In addition to his spiritual needs, he also had to struggle with what appeared to be a fatal chest disease during his studies. This illness also forced him to interrupt his studies during the winter semester of 1831-1832 (half a year) to seek recovery under medical treatment in his parents' home. During this time, Luther's works, which were in his father's library, fell into his hands, in which he, otherwise occupied with nothing, now immersed himself deeply. It was then that that living conviction of the sole Scriptural conformity of the doctrine of our Lutheran church and of the necessity of decisiveness in confession was generated in him, which never left him again from that time on. After obtaining physical healing through a simple household remedy, he returned to Leipzig around Easter 1832 to complete his theological studies. On Easter-Saint's Eve 1832, Candidate Brohm wrote to Candidate O. Fürbringer: “About eight days ago he (Walther) wrote to me, from which it can be seen that his soul is suffering very much, but is recovering, physically it is apparently also better, so that he wants to continue his studies after Easter, but, he writes, 'without hope' of ever becoming physically fit for a preaching ministry.”

God helped that he could complete his theological studies. In 1833, around Easter, he left the university.

Still a lovely event from his student days should be remembered here: In December 1830 he had to teach two boys from the S___. family. One day he found the following remark in the papers of Eduard S.: "I quickly got away from Mr. K. and came to Mr. Walther, to whom I owe all my blessedness. Before I came to him, I knew neither that I was a sinner, nor anything about Christ and His grace, nor anything about the Bible. To my present teacher I owe all this; I, as a weak sinful man, cannot repay him, God will reward him for having brought him a soul to heaven." — Walther wrote about this in his diary: "God, great, kind, merciful God, thanks be to you that you have not spurned to let your Spirit be effective also in this child; to you be praise, thanks, glory and honor for all eternity. O Lord Jesus, complete the work that you have so wonderfully begun here; do not let anything snatch him out of your hands. Help him one day to your heavenly kingdom. Amen."

### III.

## Exam — Home Teacher.

In the parental home he now prepared for the first exam (*pro licentia concionandi*), which he passed in September in Leipzig. Here we share a letter in which he informs his brother about the upcoming exam and, strangely enough, already expresses reservations about entering the service of the Saxon state church. He writes:

"Chursdorf, August 1833.

"Beloved brother!

"As little time as I have, I must tell you some things in writing, since Wilhelm is returning.

"The most important thing for me is that I received the citation for the exam last Thursday, namely for September 13 and 14, where I am to pass the written exam; September 19 is to be the oral exam. It is now up to you whether you want to be present (on the 19th), which I would certainly like very much; however, you will take your circumstances into consideration: I do not demand any sacrifice. By the way, I also received the text for the sermon and catechization at the same time as the citation, which I should submit next Thursday. The text for the sermon is Act. 26, 24-29. I am still wavering between the two themes: I. The preaching of the divine Word to those who are not obedient to its effects.... II. The effects of the testimony of Jesus in those who do not want to be obedient to the power of the divine word. — The text for catechization is 2 Thess. 3, 10. 11. with the prescribed theme: Faith in the divine preservation of human life does not release us from the duty to care for our preservation ourselves. — Now good advice is expensive: it does not want to work out at all: support me with your prayers! I rely on it!

"You would also like to have the recipe*) for lung patients; it is as follows: Take fresh unsalted goat butter, six spoonfuls; melt it and then mix it well with three spoonfuls of honey and stir both together until the butter has coagulated; take a tablespoonful of it daily early in the morning and in the evening shortly before going to bed, endure a few months, avoid the sour, ask God for its prosperity and in a short time you will be cured of consumption.

"Did you then also read in the state gazettes the motion of the

*) It is probably the home remedy that God had blessed for his recovery.

Minister Dr. Müller for the establishment of an ecclesiastical college, which is to draft the dogma of the future Saxon church, with the regulation and the good advice to put it in such a way 'as it should find the most acceptance among the educated of the people'? God seems to want to impose great judgments on the Saxon church; in this way we would probably never, at least in Saxony (incl. Schönburg), be able to enter the spiritual state. Who can be committed to such symbols without putting his salvation in the redoubt? In Keyl's case, the suppression of orthodox doctrine seems to be the first step; he has already received a letter from the High Consistory forbidding him to continue teaching the doctrine of man's natural perdition, accusing him of Manichaean, Schwenkfeldian and Donatist errors. He is said to have confused two people by his crass teachings about the proximity of infernal punishments; therefore, he has been tried; he is to pay more than 80 Thaler in costs. He still has no answer to his appeal to the highest secular court of appeal with reference to the oath he swore on the symbolic books at the same place where they wanted to force him to recant.

“God be with you, as he was with me yesterday when I preached in Chursdorf and Langenberg. Let us praise Him, fear Him and call upon Him for new grace.

"You are greeted on all sides.

"Farewell and answer soon your

brother in distress

F. W."

The following year, 1834, he wrote from Langenchursdorf to Candidate Brohm on January 15, among other things: "My external situation is

not enviable. I therefore pray to God that he may soon assign me another place, but I must expect that I will have the same enemies everywhere, both internally and externally. Soon after that, he received an application to take over a position as a tutor with Mr. Friedemann Löber in Cahla in Altenburg. He wrote about it to a friend (probably Cand. Brohm):

"Dearest friend and brother!

"A few hours ago I received your dear letter of the 10th. It has put me in no small embarrassment. The first thing I have done is that after a few sighs I have gone to God in Frohna to ask Pastor Keyl for his advice in this matter. I hasten to answer you as follows: For some time now, the desire to leave my father's house has become more and more intense, as my relationship with my father has become more and more difficult; the latter also wants me to leave. This external circumstance therefore makes my deliberate request very acceptable. However, if I look at my fitness for such an office, I would rather flee it. However, I would have to consider and recognize it as God's will if no other suitable subject should be found for it; therefore, I believe I can also assure myself of God's mighty help.

"From this you see what guides me and how you are to regard it, if I agree to accept the proposal in God's name under the condition mentioned. — -

"I have not been able to tell my father anything before hand; I am sure of his approval, but I could not give him your letter to read. If it were God's gracious will that I go to Cahla, would you perhaps be so good as to send me a letter?

and make me the application of this place in such a way in it, so that I could show it to my father without hesitation?

"Night is falling; I must hurry to get home, since my father does not know of my being here. — - -

"God be with you.

Your

Niederfrohna Walther ."

the 15th of March, in the evening 6 o'clock 1834.

He accepted this position as a home teacher in Cahla around Easter 1834 and held it until the end of November 1836. The councilor Löber was the oldest brother of the same pastor G. H. Löber in Altenburg, Perry Co, Mo. Walther also taught the children of the younger brother, August Löber, at the same time. Among them was also Richard Löber, now court preacher in Dresden. The same pastor G. H. Löber was pastor in Eichenberg at that time. Walther therefore had much contact with him and the intimate relationship, in which both always stood to each other, already stems from that time.

"When I was still a tutor in C. in 1834," Walther himself reports, "I sometimes argued with my principal about whether everything in the Bible was reliable, divine truth. My principal was not at all hostile to Christianity, but in his youth he had absorbed many rationalistic ideas that he had still not completely overcome. Thus, for example, he thought that what the Bible said about the starry sky was probably only Mose's opinions, which the Holy Spirit had not revealed and inspired him with. He therefore believed that the stars were not mere lights, but inhabited by similar creatures as our earth. I tried to talk him out of this as best I could at that time, but without success. Thus he came then once with joy-beaming face on my room, a newspaper sheet in his

hands, and said: 'My dear Mr. Candidate, you are beaten! I have just read in this newspaper that the great astronomer Herschel the Younger, who traveled to Africa at the beginning of this year (1834), has discovered creatures like men on the moon by means of his new enormous telescope. Just read!' I did so. And indeed, the newspaper really said what my principal had just reported to me. But I now spoke: "My dear principal, I beg you, you will not believe that? — Yes, I tell you: and if I myself looked into the telescope and saw through it a kind of man, as we are, running around on the moon, then I would not believe that the moon is the dwelling place of a kind of man, but think that the alleged men must be in the telescope'; whereupon my principal replied: 'I see well, there is nothing to be done with you', and angrily left my room. But what happened? After about half a year, a retraction of that news appeared in the newspapers with the following clarification. A penniless but clever Frenchman had intended to move to America, and in order to procure travel money, he had quickly written a pamphlet in which he had communicated a fictitious letter of Herschel with this astonishing news. He had also not miscalculated. His pamphlet was immediately sold in countless copies and really earned him more than the necessary travel money. When he arrived happily in America, however, he reported from there that his little book had only been a joke. — Of course, I did not gleefully hold this outcome against my dear Principal. However, as it seemed, since that time all astronomical assertions arguing with the Bible were no longer as firm for him as before."*)

*) "Lutheran," Vol. 42, p. 46.

## IV.

## Call to Bräunsdorf — ordination — inaugural sermon — state of the congregation.

But now the time was approaching when he was to serve God in the holy ministry. In the same year (1836), after passing the second examination (*pro candidatura*) in Dresden, he was called by the sincerely believing Minister of State Count von Einsiedel to the pastorate in Bräunsdorf near Penig in Saxony, a position of his patronage. On the third Sunday of Advent he preached a guest sermon and on the second Sunday after Epiphany in 1837 he was ordained. How he moved in, how he was ordained and held his inaugural sermon, how he found his congregation and how he intended to work in it, we let him tell us himself. He wrote to his patron as follows. *)

"Highborn Count,

Highly territorial Cabinet Minister, Gracious Sir!

"Your Eminence has always shown such sympathetic attention to everything that concerns the Church and the Kingdom of God, both on a small and a large scale, and especially when it concerns the individual parishes, which may honor their church patron in Your Eminence. I am therefore certainly not mistaken if I consider myself assured in advance of Your Eminence's gracious approval to inform Him about the experiences I have made in the previous administration of the ecclesiastical office, which was transferred to me by Your Eminence's grace.

*) After a design by Walther's hand.

"On the 15th of this month I finally moved in. With some reluctance, however, at the request of several local parishioners who, moreover, could not have been present, I had to agree to hold the procession already on the 10th of the same month. On the latter day, more than a hundred people gathered in Chursdorf, where I was staying, in order to lead me into their midst. An even larger number, among them the local school youth with their teacher, awaited me at the border of the Bräunsdorf area. Arriving in front of the parsonage, the schoolmaster greeted me in the name of the parish in a well-meant salutation, which I returned with assurances of thanks and with my ... wishes and requests. It was not without some apprehension that I now awaited the day in Bräunsdorf itself on which I was to be most solemnly ordained to the office that preaches reconciliation, with prayer and the laying on of hands. I feared that I would have to see changes made on the part of Ephorus Hiebei, which might perhaps deprive me of the comfort that comes from the certainty of not only being legally called, but also ordained and sent out. But God — I praise Him for this — has heard my prayer for the heart to be turned against his adversaries in a way that I had hardly dared to hope for. To my great joy, the Superintendent had just chosen Pastor P. to be my confessor for the aforementioned day, so that I could now immediately enjoy the comfort of absolution through the ministry unabridged at the beginning of this day, which was above all important and holy for me. Equally joyful and grateful, however, I also took it as if from God's hands that the superintendent not only gave me Holy Communion unadulterated, but also the act of ordination, accompanied indeed with an unchristian speech, but nevertheless so

*) January 15, the day of ordination.

I was given the power and authority to preach the gospel, to administer the office of the keys and to administer the holy sacraments according to the institution of Jesus Christ in the name of the triune God. This moment must have been doubly touching for me, since in addition to the pastor from Kaufungen and another nearby clergyman who was a friend of mine, my old father, my older brother and my brother-in-law, the pastor Keyl, spoke the words of consecration over me from the bottom of their hearts, laying on their hands.

"All this was preceded by the reading of the vocation handed out by Ew. Exc., a description of my life and the censure granted to me by the High Consistory in Dresden, along with the investiture of the attitude of the sermon. Richly strengthened by the preceding, I now preached on Jer. 1, 6-8: "But I said, O Lord, Lord, I etc. — saith the LORD.' After I had shown in the introduction how the consideration of the importance and the gravity of the office and the greatness of the former account to be taken over by me with the same, and the feeling of my powerlessness and incompetence, which is very much alive in me, want to depress me very much today: so I treated, in order to let my future congregation on this day immediately take a look into my heart, after the remaining text the topic: What makes a Christian preacher confident and joyful at the beginning of his office. I said that this is threefold: 1) that he does not come according to his own choice, but according to God's calling; for with this God also comforts Jeremiah when he says to him: "You shall go where I send you"; 2.) that he does not come with his own wisdom, but with God's word; for with this also he comforts

God the prophet, when he calls to him: Finally, 3.) that he does not come in his own strength, but under God's support; for nothing else is it, with which the Lord still finally raises up his prophet among many peoples, when he promises him: Do not be afraid, for I am with you. Then I concluded with a prayer, in which I asked God in particular to be the retributor of the attention that Your Excellency, as the High Instrument of His grace, has bestowed on me, an unworthy one, by His bodily and spiritual blessing.

"The following day was of almost equal importance to me; on this day I was confirmed at the superintendency in Penig and committed to the confessional writings of our church with an oath. God be praised for all eternity that through His great grace and mercy I do not need to regard this oath as a fetter on my conscience, but that through it the feeling, which strengthens me so much, has come alive that I now have freedom to teach, namely the freedom to teach the pure Word of God, to which my poor heart clings as the firm anchor of my hope for the present and future world.

"Yes, I may well consider such a repeated communication about this from time to time to be a duty.

"There are three main things about which I believe I must inform Your Excellency: first, the condition in which I found the congregation and its school; second, what I have already undertaken to do; and third, what success I have been able to achieve in my service to the Word.

"As far as the condition of the local congregation is concerned, I soon came to the conclusion that there was no real spiritual life in any of its members. How could it have been awakened, since here for almost forty years

for a long time, perhaps even longer, the living Word of God has not been preached! It seems that only very few are infected by naturalistic unbelief here; among these few is apparently the local paper miller K. An outward respect for God's Word and the preacher is predominant, but of course only insofar as it is compatible with a complete carnal security. The sins of fornication, desecration of the Sabbath, gluttony, impudence and crudeness prevail, the ignorance in the Word of God is boundless; at the same time the congregation is on a very low level of worldly knowledge; only very few of the adults are able to write their names correctly. — As far as the local school is concerned, it undoubtedly stands out from many others; there is order, diligence and obedience; even among the young people of the congregation one can easily find those who have enjoyed N.'s instruction; they are usually partly more instructed, partly less crude than the others. The religious instruction is moralizing, a strange mixture of truth and lies.

"My main endeavor has been to present the basic teachings of the divine Word as clearly, as simply, as thoroughly and as urgently as was only possible through God's grace, and in this way to bring my listeners to a living knowledge of their blindness, powerlessness and depravity and at the same time of the infinite riches of grace in Jesus Christ and to a right insight into the true essence of the saving faith and a truly Christian life. In doing so, I have always aimed to awaken in them a love and desire for their own research in the Word of God, and to remove as far as possible the many prejudices they have against the Holy Scriptures and pure doctrine, and especially against serious godliness. It seemed to me especially necessary to pay attention to the following

The seldom trust in respectability before the world and a pharisaic righteousness and in the merely external use of the Holy Sacraments. In addition to the sermons, of which I preach two on each communion and feast day, I mainly benefit from the introduction of the fortnightly church examinations on the catechism with individual people; here I can talk about many things that either cannot be said at all in sermons, or cannot be said in a way that corresponds to the insight of the congregation and is so fruitful. One of the main parts of the pastoral care is the visiting of the sick.

**V.**

## Hostility because of his resolute appearance — oppression of conscience — sad state of the Saxon regional church.

Walther thus found himself in an exceedingly difficult situation. He was under a godless rationalistic superintendent, who did him all the heartache and united against him with his unbelieving and hostile village schoolmaster, as his spy. Because of his firm stand on the Word of God, the confession to which he was still committed, and the old ecclesiastical orders, and because of his protest against rationalistic innovations in church and school, Walther was repeatedly put on trial, overwhelmed with official reprimands, and involved in costly lawsuits. The rationalistic agendas he was to use, and the rationalistic hymnal and textbooks he was to condone, lay heavily on his conscience. In a letter to Candidate Brohm of August 17, he pours out his heart about it. He writes:

"Bräunsdorf, Aug. 17, '37. "Beloved Brohm!

"First of all, I would like to thank you most sincerely for the Christian brotherly service you have rendered me by your last answer to my questions. Be convinced that I am well aware that you are sacrificing a great deal to me when you give me some of your time, which is certainly precious to you. Again I come with the same request. (Here follows a question concerning a person in the congregation of his brother-in-law, who during the time of his absence directed his people to him). — Would you be so kind as to communicate the above to the pastor and then send me his answer?

"As for the questions that concern me directly, I will have to save them until my imminent arrival in Dresden, since I need a lot of advice. There is only one thing I cannot well wait for, since it has already caused me much anxiety and doubt. The bitterness against me is rising here very much, and especially one complains that I only punish in every sermon. I am therefore often challenged by the thought that my sharpness in preaching is not in the right order, and yet I always see clearly again that sharpness is needed in the congregation here; for people sin here without shyness and put up with the preaching of the divine word indifferently as long as it is not sharpened for their particular sins. My question concerning this matter is this: What are the characteristics of an unseemly zeal, which, even in otherwise not malicious minds, must only arouse bitterness? And what are the characteristics of that right punishment of which the apostle speaks when he says: 'Preach the Word, instant, whether in season or out of season; punish, threaten, exhort with all patience and teaching'? [2 Tim 4:2]

"But before I close, I must ask one more thing. The local school board members and the schoolmaster have learned that the superintendent wants Hempel*) to be introduced. They therefore do not dare to vote against him; I am therefore all alone. However, if I wanted to take it upon myself, I would dare to bring Eckhart*) into the school without the Superintendent's prior knowledge. Am I now obligated to report it to the superintendent first? And if I have to, what should I do if the superintendent nevertheless insists on Hempel? Should I explain to him that I could not approve the introduction for the sake of God's Word, even if it were enforced by force? — The day before yesterday, the church patron Gr. v. Einsiedel was here and, as honorary head of the school board, he declared that he would only vote for Eckhart and, in the event of his introduction, would donate a batch of copies to the school. According to § 48 of the School Law Ordinance, the introduction of such a textbook seems to be at the sole discretion of the pastor and the district school inspector only has to decide something in the case that the pastor cannot come to an agreement with the school board and the schoolmaster. (Here follows the wording of the order.)

"I am very sorry to have to bother the pastor again with this miserable matter; but it is something terrible to me to be uncertain in what I am doing whether it is right. The fear of man does not guide me in the least, but only the fear of unwise and illegal steps. If God's honor demands it, I am gladly prepared to set the superintendent, district directorate, consistory and ministry on my neck.. If it were God's will, I would only be happy if the burden of my office were lifted from me, for it is very, very heavy;

*) A textbook.

but I am also willing to bear them as long as I can in God's name and with the knowledge that He is with me.

"Dear Brohm, do not become unwilling that I ask for your services again and for the soonest possible fulfillment of my wish. If only I could soon repay like with like.

"Yesterday my brother-in-law arrived here richly burdened and well. You will recommend me most obediently to the pastor. I sincerely greet everyone, especially the dear Wetzel, Klügel, M. Wege, Fürbringer (whom I expect soon), Dr. Vehse and Zöge.

Your

Walther."

Walther's father was not satisfied with the firm position of his sons Hermann and Ferdinand, as well as his son-in-law Pastor Keyl. When they had once talked to each other about it, the sons said to him: "On the last day it will be revealed", namely that the pure Lutheran doctrine is the right one. Their position towards their dear father was therefore certainly a rather difficult one. Already when Ferdinand was preparing for his exams, his father urged him not to appear so openly against the rational teachings of the professors, otherwise he would certainly get the repulse.

What kind of man the above-mentioned superintendent was, we can see from what W. communicates about him in Bünger's biography. Walther had testified in a so-called circular sermon held before him that death had only come into the world through the fall of our first parents. His reverend condemned this as a long outdated idea; and when Walther then reminded the superintendent that the same had himself condemned him a year ago at the same place where he was now before him

stood, sworn to the symbolic books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, in which this doctrine was contained, the superintendent replied, "You have not been sworn to the letter, but only to the spirit of the symbols." Walther replied: In the formula of obligation there had been no mention of this; besides, it was clearly written in the Holy Scriptures, "Which day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." The superintendent replied: "Oh no! There the spiritual death is meant." Walther replied: "Doesn't God say to Adam immediately after the fall: 'You are earth and shall become earth'? Is spiritual death also meant?" The superintendent then narrowed his eyes, fell silent and dismissed Walther. (p. 32 f.)

The pressure of faith under which true Lutherans in Saxony lay was quite appalling. Walther describes the terrible condition of the Saxon state church in Bünger's biography. We like this description all the more, since Walther also gives examples from his own experience. "Just as at that time the unconditional oath to the Book of Concord was nothing but an empty comedy, so at the same time the most important regional church institutions were just as many factual, obvious denials of the sworn ecclesiastical confession, which clearly proved that one could only claim on the basis of Jesuit moral principles that the Saxon regional church was still a Lutheran, i.e. a true-believing church, because in it the confession still rightly existed. First of all, since 1812 a church book or a so-called agendum had been introduced, which a Lutheran preacher could only use with an evil conscience, since it contained forms that obviously denied the divine truth, and at the same time miserably watered down the Christian doctrine. To this was added this: while no one asked whether the rationalistic

While the unbelieving preachers followed the Agenda, for whom it still sounded too Christian, a believing Lutheran preacher, on the other hand, could not dare to deviate from it in any way. If he did so and came before his superiors, he was called to account in the most serious manner. When, among others, the writer of this (Walther) had used the old formula of absolution, which the agendas did not contain, and his unbelieving school teacher sued him for it with his superintendent, the latter immediately reported the matter to the state consistory, which then strictly forbade him the use of the old absolution formula, obliged him anew to only proclaim the forgiveness of sins in all cases where absolution was granted, and sentenced him to pay the costs incurred by the written negotiations. Incidentally, a believing preacher was in almost greater distress of conscience when he had to read out and recite to God in his pulpit the wretched prayers prepared by the Consistory for special occasions and sent to him. — Also the schoolbooks in use were almost all completely leavened by the leaven of rationalism, so that a believing preacher, as a so-called spiritual local inspector, was in severe trouble of conscience. Wherever reasonably pure textbooks had survived, the rationalist superintendents worked diligently to have them abolished and replaced by rationalist ones. When the writer of this (Walther) tried to work towards the introduction of a school reading book written in a Christian spirit, his godless schoolmaster immediately sued him with his superintendent, who then joined forces with the ignorant local school board and wanted to force the immediate introduction of a so-called 'school friend' that was just as miserable as it was un-Christian. It

However, by God's gracious providence, this did not succeed, because the writer of these (Walther) turned to his pious church patron, the Minister of State Count Detlev von Einsiedel, who not only, in order to win over the congregation, gave them a large number of copies of a good school reading book as a gift, but also pleaded the case with the district directorate, which had to decide on this in the highest instance. The writer of this (Walther) had to bear the not insignificant costs of the lawsuit (which he of course did with pleasure), but on the very day before his emigration, his community reimbursed him without being asked, with the explanation that the lawsuit had only been conducted for the sake of the well-being of their children. — For Lutheran pastors of the Saxon regional church, it was a great burden of conscience that they were forced, against God's clear word, by virtue of their regional church office, not only to ecclesiastical, sacramental and brotherly fellowship with false teachers, yes, with the most obvious heretics, They even had to accept them as their chief shepherds, to be examined and ordained by them, to be sworn in on the confessions and to be initiated into the office, and they even had to allow them to blaspheme the divine truth in front of their congregations, which belonged to the preachers, and to spout their doctrine of the devil in front of them. When this writer (Walther) held his trial sermon and was soon thereafter ordained before his congregation, the officiating superintendent blasphemed Elijah and David as common murderers in his addresses to him, warning him against a Christianity that despised the joys of this life and blasphemously challenging him to preach such a cheerful Christianity as Christ had indeed preached at the wedding in Cana! Of course, this also caused a Lutheran believer no small pain in his life.

The Lutheran church was in such distress of conscience that it was forbidden to practice confession, to suspend even the most unrepentant people from Holy Communion, and in general to practice church discipline. — Even at that time in Saxony, the Lutheran lay faithful were in no small trouble of conscience. They were supposed to recognize obviously false prophets as their shepherds and pastors, to have their children baptized and confirmed by them, to be absolved by them in confession and to receive Holy Communion. They should leave their children to unbelieving schoolmasters for religious instruction and Christian education, and for this purpose buy godless schoolbooks and give them into their own hands. As often as a child was born to believing parents, there was great need. Among the five baptismal forms contained in the agendas, there was only one that was tolerable to a certain extent. The father had to hurry to his unbelieving pastor and humbly ask him for the use of this one form; and even this request was rarely granted, so that he usually carried his child, baptized by an enemy of Christ in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, but with the addition of rationalistic rhetoric, home again from church with a deeply wounded conscience.*) — As hard as it became for many poor Lutheran laymen to have to walk many hours if they wanted to hear a Christian sermon, this was the least they had to bear. Many, after having worked hard in the sweat of their brow during the whole week, from morning until late evening, in order to be able to give their own.

*) Walther remarks: "At that time, by the way, there were also such preachers in Saxony who did not even baptize in the Trinity according to the wording. However, we know of no case in which they dared to do so with the children of such parents, of whom they knew that they were believers.

To acquire the meager daily bread, they regularly set out at the dawn of Sunday soon after midnight to refresh their weary hearts in a distant church with the sermon of the pure saving Word of God. Once this had been done, they happily set out on their way back on Sunday evening and, strengthened in their souls, began their weekly work again on Monday, which was so meagerly nourishing for them and their families. How gladly the Lutheran preachers and laymen would have done their utmost at that time to obtain permission to join together in a Lutheran Free Church separated from the deeply corrupt apostate national church! But their release for such a purpose was absolutely out of the question at that time. Therefore, they saw emigration to a country where religious freedom prevailed as the only way out of the increasingly unbearable oppression of conscience, which threatened to suffocate all religious life in them. (p. 33 ff.)

**VI.**

## Emigration — Arrived in St. Louis, Mo. — Pastor in Perry County, Mo. — Founded teaching schools in Perry. County — Challenges.

Therefore, when already in the next year of his administration the above-mentioned pastor in Dresden called on all Lutherans, especially in Saxony, preachers and laymen, who were under pressure of faith, to emigrate with him to America in order to seek and enjoy the ecclesiastical freedom that was denied them in their home country, Walther and his brother Otto Hermann, who was his father's vicar, joined the quickly forming emigration society.

On the 16th Sunday after Trinity in 1838, he resigned from his office, although with a bleeding heart and after severe internal and external struggles. His congregation, among whom he had not worked without blessing, listened to his farewell sermon with loud sobs. Some of his families also emigrated with him. He was supposed to sail on the ship "Amalia"; but — O wonderful providence of God! — when he arrives in Bremen, he is not admitted. On the ship "Johann Georg", on which he then goes, there is also no room left; then a young man offers to make room for him, and goes on another ship, while Walther remains under his name*). The ship "Amalia" and its passengers were never heard of again; therefore, it undoubtedly perished.

The ship on which Walther was on sailed from Bremerhafen on November 3, 1838, and after a stormy voyage arrived in New Orleans on January 5, 1839. After a happy trip on the Mississippi, Walther arrived in St. Louis in February.

Of the emigrant congregation of about 800 souls, a small part remained in St. Louis, the first destination of the same, which appointed the same year the same pastor Otto Hermann Walther, Walther's older brother, as preacher. The others settled in Perry County, Mo., and there divided into several small congregations, which appointed the remaining emigrant pastors. Walther, who had come to Perry County in the month of May, took over Dresden and then Johannisberg. Although there was bitter poverty in the settlement, the candidates Ottomar Fürbringer

*) Not under the name: "Rector Gönner". Gönner became Rector only in 1843.

Theodor J. Brohm and Joh. Friedrich Bünger (who had arrived soon after Pentecost 1839 with the New York congregation, the so-called Berliners) to found an institute for the education of preachers and teachers. Pastors Walther, G. H. Löber and Keyl gladly accepted the candidates' plan and promised their active assistance. With Wal-



**Perry County Institution 1839.**

ther they bought six acres of land in the settlement of Dresden and also took care of the erection of a log cabin, doing the main work, since the settlers themselves have to struggle with great poverty.

In the summer (1839) the following advertisement appeared in the local "Anzeiger des Westens":

**"Teaching and educational institution.**

"We, the undersigned, intend to establish an educational institution which will differ from ordinary elementary schools in that it will include, in addition to the general elementary knowledge, all the grammar school sciences necessary for a truly Christian and scientific education, such as: Religion, Latin, Greek and Hebrew, German, French and English, History, Geography, Mathematics, Physics, Natural History, Philosophy, Music, Drawing. In the disciplines mentioned above, the pupils of our institution are to be promoted to such an extent that, after completing a complete course of instruction, they will be capable of university studies. The honorable parents, who want to hand over their children to our institution, are requested to obtain more detailed information about the plan and establishment of the same from Pastor O. H. Walther in St. Louis, Poplar Street No. 14, between 1st and 2nd Streets. — The classes are to begin, dear God, on October 1 of this year.

"At the settlement place of the German Lutherans in Perry County, not far from the Obrazo, on August 13, 1839.

C. Ferd. W. Walther,
Ottomar Fürbringer,
Th. Jul. Brohm,
Joh. Fr. Bünger."

According to "Lutheraner", vol. 4, 47, the lessons, in which Walther also initially participated, seem to have begun only in December.

The first students were: Hermann Bünger (who soon moved away), Theod. Schubert, Walther's nephew (who soon died), Fr. J. Biltz, J. A. F. W. Müller, Ch. H. Löber.

However, it had become obvious to the exile society that they could no longer follow their former leader Stephan. There Walther also got into a new great distress of soul. Although the society, with the exception of very few members, held firmly together in spite of all the deceptions they had experienced and, as noted above, founded a number of congregations under unspeakable hardships, the experiences that the emigrants had made had the effect that everything they had previously held fast that had moved them to emigrate now became unstable for them, with the exception of the one thing, God's Word and the confession of our church, which preachers and listeners now embraced all the more tightly as the only unbreakable anchor they had left.

In addition to the physical hardships, there were also great spiritual hardships. In the confusion of conscience, emigration itself was declared a sin and no distinction was made between emigration itself and the offenses that occurred in the process, e.g., the breaking of family ties. People doubted whether there was still a Christian community; they were suspicious of all pastors; they doubted the validity of their official acts. The pastors were burdened by the fact that they had left their congregations in Germany, that they were partly to blame for the sins that had occurred during the emigration, and so on.

A description of the sad situation can be found in a letter Walther wrote to his brother from “Dresdenau” on May 4. In it he writes, among other things: "The main questions now among us are: Are our congregations Christian Lutheran congregations? or are they fanatical [*Rotten*]? Do they have the power to call and to ban? Are we pastors or not? Are our calls valid? Do we still belong to Germany? Especially Pastor Löber, who has not even received an official dismissal from his office? *Can* we be divinely called here,

since we have left our German divine calling and run away according to our false conscience? Shouldn't the congregations dismiss us now, since they only now realize with us what great trouble we have caused? Wouldn't it be better if the congregations at least dismissed us, tried to maintain themselves for a time merely by exercising the spiritual priesthood, and then elected either the old or the new pastors? It is impossible for me to write you all the different answers to all these questions. Mr. Marbach doubts most strongly that our congregations are Christian Lutheran congregations — that they can validly call and ban and that we are pastors; Mr. Sp. [Sproede] denies it most definitely. Both, however, advise an interim dissolution of all church congregations, therefore no longer attend the public service and limit themselves to the home service; in the main, the former candidate Klügel and partly tax auditor Barthel think alike to them. Brohm has similar scruples, but more in the innermost part of his soul; he attends the public service and does not separate himself at all. All candidates precede us in recognizing the afflictions. In the unclear general condition, they could not decide to continue the service at the landing site: they could not come to terms about their calling; neither whether the present congregation was doing the right thing by asking them to preach in such an interim capacity, nor whether they could consider themselves our vicars, since all the members of the congregation have chosen one of us pastors as their confessor. They canceled their further preaching in writing about four weeks ago; this resignation has caused great movements in the minds and made the question of the call a rather general one."

In this letter he also writes: "Since I will perhaps move into the new settlement site of the Berlin congregation in Johannisberg this week, and since it is quite distant from the Dresden congregation and also separated from it by Apple Creek, which is very often impassable, I have asked the Dresden congregation whether they themselves should not consider it appropriate and beneficial to dismiss me and either choose a pastor for themselves or to join the Altenburg parish. They have already come to the conclusion that it is probably not feasible to keep me as the daughter preacher of Dresdenau. In the next few weeks, therefore, I intend to preach my farewell sermon here. Who will take my place here is still uncertain. There is a desire to have a candidate ordained; however, they will hardly be able to decide to accept a calling now, since they are in doubt as to whether it is God's will that such congregations remain here, since they obviously did not initially constitute themselves according to God's will. Here I come across points where I differ a little from the candidates or am unclear; more of this verbally. This much I see clearly: those who have emigrated against God and still have duties to fulfill in Germany must, where it is possible for them, go back or be legally released from their duties before they can remain here under God's blessing and pleasure; but this can obviously only be said of the smallest number. — With the others I am quite in agreement with the pastors, except that they do not speak so definitely about our emigration relations to their parishioners, so that among many of them there is still great dangerous ambiguity and many a one still thanks God in delusion for having made emigration possible, who actually cannot weep enough for it with tears. A retraction of our counter-declaration against

Vehse's writing will be drafted in the next few days and then immediately sent to St. Louis. Poor congregation that has such tainted shepherds! Ah, dear brother, what is not Christ, let us fear and flee all that would soothe us and assuage our guilt, eagerly, eagerly digging for that which shows us its greatness and heaviness. Oh, let us be careful that the truth is not always recognized and held out to us only by those who leave us, but rather that it is born in us, in our midst, by God's grace, and becomes a gift of our fraternal community. Read all this to the above-mentioned*) and ask them in my name to lend a hand and help; if the laity do not also do this, then we are truly lost; I truly consider us pastors to be the most miserable; if we should now perhaps remain in office for the sake of our higher literal knowledge, then everything, everything must rise up to help us and assist us, so that we once again have the seal of truth among us and God's wrath turns away from us completely ... He (Marbach) finds in our previous sermons, the present ones he no longer hears, more and more infirmities and clumsy division and mutilation of the law and gospel; I must now agree with him in many things. [However, I cannot admit to having really preached false doctrine, not even a false Christ, as Sp. [Sproede] wants to accuse me. How many false applications and evaluations have occurred, God will judge.**)] A similar complaint has already been voiced by my warmly beloved H. H., whom I love very much. Well, either we should be deposed, for I am convinced that we cannot go ourselves, or we should be patient with us and try to help us. — I am now with your wife for a short time.

*) Große, Roschke et al.
**) Marginal note.

Mother-in-law*) has been retired by the parish, since we have now had to vacate Mr. Sp.'s farm and the parish apartment in Johannisberg is not yet quite ready; the college is my residence. But, beloved brother, I must now close. May the Lord grant you wisdom from above in all things and prepare your heart for a deep valley of humility, into which it may flow down abundantly. He will not let you sleep in the camps of your soul's enemies, but will stir you up daily, but will open to you the bosom of His mercy, where you will find rest. He also make thee sure of thy profession in the service of the Lord, purify thy lips by the burning coal of his word, and if He delight in thee, make thee a blessed instrument of His grace to many thousands of souls, purge also from thee all former unfaithfulness, and for the sake of the blood of Christ, let that voice once be heard by thee: "O thou devout and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord". Amen. Amen.

Your co-sinner and co-savior

C. F. W. W."

*) Widowed Mrs. Pastor Bünger, mother of the blessed Pastor Bünger, later also Walther's mother-in-law.

## VII.

## Difficult battles — Deliverance — Walther the most distinguished work — disputation in Altenburg in 1841 — high Meaning of the same.

Shortly before, on April 14, 1840, he had written to Cand. O. Fürbringer:

"My dear and beloved friend!

"Mr. Sp. has not refrained from raising ever new scruples against the legitimacy of my remaining in office in several members of the local congregation and making it their conscience to remove me, because of the terrible stains of shame,*) which are, however, attached to me. I can find no peace. My heart is in great distress. According to what you told me, in such cases the community has the right to relieve its pastor, who was elected illegally and without proper knowledge of his person. Shouldn't it therefore be best in the end, under the present turmoil of consciences, either to get the congregation to exonerate me or to suspend me until complete light has been shed on the whole matter? Or should I not perhaps ask for my own dismissal or suspend myself until further notice? You can also imagine the sorrow under which I am now studying the many sermons that lie before me, and how they

*) As the reader can easily see from the context, what Walther calls here in his great conscientiousness and anguish of soul "terrible stains of shame" were not works of secret disgrace or other abominations also shameful before the world (from which God's hand of grace saved him), but the sins stated in this letter and also otherwise by W. himself: Human bondage, infidelity, etc., into which he and other emigrants had fallen in their proceedings during and after emigration in ecclesiastical matters and which now caused them such great distress of conscience.

will certainly also bear the imprint of my heart, which is burdened with doubt, shame, restlessness, powerlessness, and uncertainty. — Oh, how bitter are the fruits of sin, bondage, unfaithfulness and apostasy from God's Word!

"If it is possible for you, come to me yourself, a poor, contractual person, even if it is only for an hour; if you cannot do this, write to me and send me what Spener writes about remotion after that suggestion.)

Your

God's deserved wrath bearing

Walther."

Johnson's Farm, April 14, 1840.

NB. At the same time, I send you my excerpts from Francke, which have also prevented me from taking a decisive step so far.

The temptations must have continued for some time, for in November 1840 he received the following splendid letter of consolation from his dear brother in St. Louis: **)

"St. Louis, Nov. 9, 1840.

"My dear brother!

"As sad as the content of your letter was, it gave me great joy as your first sign of life after so long a fatal defeat. You are still very weak, but spiritually you are not only weak, but completely miserable without true comfort, peace and joy. Oh, my dear brother, you do not get out of the path you have taken, but you 'fall deeper and deeper and must sink to hell'. Why do you torment yourself over and over with your sins, why do you complain about your iniquities?

*) In the margin: Also that may make many great uneasiness that Mr. Sp. said that he had heard from someone that I had recently declared that I myself had not been converted.

**) The last one from his brother's hand.

Why do you let yourself be pressed to the ground by the memory of the given but unspeakable anger, why do you let yourself be intimidated by the ... and take the last bit of courage? — Because you do not go to Christ, do not dare to rely on Him alone, throw everything away and give yourself up completely, accept Him alone as your **wisdom**, righteousness, sanctification and salvation. One thing is necessary! This is also true for you. You only lack this One, in whom everything is given. Your excerpts about the call do not help you if you do not first assure yourself of your call in Him to His eternal kingdom of grace. In Him then everything is right and suddenly everything crooked is straight. -

"I am not afraid of Rhein's letters and treatises. If they ask more than I am able to answer now, I say: I don't know that now! But I know one thing, that Christ listens to me and I to Him. If Diehl is your wisdom, then Christ is mine. The few words that Pastor Löber writes to me, that they call their spiritual father Diehl*) their Moses, some witnesses in the present midnight, deprives me of all confidence... My wife spoke yesterday about writing to you herself and getting you to come up. Even if you get well again, you must not officiate this winter. -

"God bless this medicine for your strengthening. This and all kinds of spiritual blessings, light, life, strength, courage and victory pray to you from our compassionate High Priest.

Your brother who loves you tenderly in him and carries you in his heart

Hermann Walther."

*) Leader of a cluster of "revivalists" on the Rhine who wrote to those who had emigrated to Perry County, chastising and exhorting them to repentance, and urging them to unite with them.

As bitter and difficult as these trials were, they were salutary; for through them he was not only prepared for his later blessed activity, but also even then for the salutary liberation of poor confused consciences.

He stayed with his brother-in-law, the same Pastor Keyl in Frohna, and here he immersed himself, as far as his weakness allowed, in Luther's and other fathers' writings, consulted them in the questions that moved the minds at that time, and through God's grace reached certainty. He had collected a rich stock of theological testimonies. He was therefore well prepared when in April of the following year 1841 a disputation was scheduled in Altenburg, in which it was a matter of whether or not a Christian congegation and church still existed here. The advocate A. Marbach was the main spokesman for the opponents. The theses that Walther successfully defended were as follows:

1.

The true church in the most actual and perfect sense is the entirety of all true believers, who from the beginning of the world to the end are called and sanctified by the Holy Spirit through the Word from all peoples and languages. And because these true believers only know God (2 Tim. 2:19.), it is also called the invisible church. No one belongs to this true church who is not spiritually united with Christ, for it is the spiritual body of Christ.

2.

The name of the true church also belongs to all visible groups of people, where God's word is taught purely and the holy sacraments are administered according to Christ's institution. In this church there are also godless, hypocrites and heretics, but they are not true members of it and do not constitute the church.

3.

The name of the church, and in a certain sense also the name of the true church, is also due to such visible groups of people who have united under the confession of a falsified faith and are therefore guilty of a partial apostasy from the truth; if they have only so much of God's word and the holy sacraments pure, that thereby children of God can be born. If such groups are called true churches, this does not mean that they are true believers, but only that they are real churches, in contrast to all worldly communities.

4.

The name "church" is not applied to unbelieving groups in an abusive way, but according to the Word of God itself. Nor is it indifferent that such communities are granted this high name; for it follows,

1. that members of even such a multitude may be saved; for apart from the church there is no salvation.

5.

2. The outward separation of an irreligious group from a orthodox church is not a necessary separation from the general Christian church, not an apostasy to paganism, and does not yet take away the name of the church from that group.

6.

3. Even unbelieving groups have church authority; even among them the goods of the church can be validly administered, the ministry of preaching can be established, the sacraments can be validly administered and the keys of the kingdom of heaven can be handled.

7.

4. Even irreligious clusters are not to be dissolved, but only to be reformed.

8.

The orthodox church is to be judged mainly according to the common orthodox public confession, to which the members of the same recognize and confess themselves bound.*)

When 25 years later, in 1856, the Western District of our Synod held its second meeting in Perry County, the then President of the District, Rev. Schieferdecker, also came to speak of the Disputation and said there, among other things: "What else did the prince of hell have in mind at that time than to destroy our poor band, to dissolve all bonds of faith and peace, to scatter the sheep, to nip the work of God in the first bud, and to extinguish the lampstand of the Word among us altogether. But the merciful Lord and Savior Jesus Christ did not let this happen; He rose up and provided help so that we could teach with confidence. Here in our town, where almost all the pastors who had emigrated with our congregations were still together, a public disputation took place. — With convincing clarity it was explained that in spite of all aberrations we still had the Lord Christ, His Word, His true Sacrament, the office of the keys among us, that the Lord still had His people, His church here. That was all it took to free our consciences from severe distress, to restore the faith in many hearts, which had almost sunk, and to bring them back to life as if from death. It was the Easter Day of our hard-trodden congregations, where they, like the disciples of old, saw the Lord again, whom they had believed to be dead, and were filled with joy and hope in the light of His grace and in the power of His resurrection. There are still many present here who will certainly remember this day with thanksgiving.

*) See about further "Emigration of the Saxon Lutherans — by F. Köstering", p. 42 ff.

We are reminded of the tears we shed against the merciful God. There are still quite a few of the faithful fighters present here, who at that time stood up for the cause of Christ and his poor torn host, also the dear brother himself" (Walther), "whom God needed as the most distinguished instrument in this cause of his. As important and significant as the Leipzig Disputation of 1519 became for the Reformation, as important — I dare to say it confidently — has this disputation held here at that time become for the entire subsequent formation and shaping of our Lutheran Church here in the West. What was then won and contended for as the jewel of truth has stood the test of time in all the subsequent battles that our synod has waged. It has saved us, on the one hand, from the arrogance of confining the Church of Jesus Christ within the boundaries of a particular church, no matter how indisputable its orthodoxy, and, on the other hand, from the injustice of denying the existence of the Church of Christ, where we see deficiencies and errors in doctrine, but where the Word of God and the holy sacraments are not denied and annihilated. It is precisely in this conception of the church, in accordance with the word of God, as an invisible church, built in the spirit, whose members are bound together by nothing other than the One Faith, the One Baptism, the unanimous confession of the truth, and the bond of peace and love forged by the Holy Spirit in the one Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, that the conditions for a joyful blossoming of our church community were given. And what an exuberant blessing God has laid upon it is before our astonished eyes today." (Proceedings of the Second Sessions of the Western District, 1856. Page 7.)

VIII.

## Profession to the congregation in St. Louis — acceptance of the profession — fight with separatists — consolation — victory.

When Walther took part in this disputation, he had a vocation of the congregation in St. Louis in his hands. On January 21, 1841, his dear brother, pastor of the congregation in St. Louis, had fallen asleep in Christ.*) On February 8, the congregation elected our Walther as his successor. Soon after receiving the vocation, he sent the following letter of response**) to the congregation:

"Esteemed gentlemen!
"Beloved friends and brothers in Christ!

"Grace, mercy, peace from God, etc. Amen.

"The document signed by you in the name of the Lutheran congregation in St. Louis and issued to me I received on the 10th of this month and read with deep emotion of my heart. In it, you declare to me the will of the aforementioned honored congregation to appoint me as their teacher and pastor. At the same time, you have indicated to me verbally through Mr. Quast that you wish me, under the present circumstances, to make a decision as soon as possible and, if it is possible, to enter the office entrusted to me immediately.

"Hereupon I humbly request you to tell the dear congregation in St. Louis that I greet them with the most sincere reverence; and to express to them my most humble thanks for the undeserved confidence in me which they have shown by the appointment sent, and for the extraordinary honor.

*) It did not go down with the "Amalie", as was stated in the "Pilgrim from Saxony" in 1877.

**) After a design by W.'s hand.

of which she has hereby dignified me, the unworthy. Do you want to tell her at the same time, as much as I would like to comply with her wish, to decide immediately whether I can accept the received call or not, it is nevertheless impossible for me for the moment. I am prevented from making an immediate decision not only by the misgivings of my conscience, the reason for which lies partly in me and partly outside me, but also by my physical condition. Although I am, as it seems, on the way to recovery, still recurring small attacks of cold fever show me that I must not promise to immediately submit to the administration of such a busy office. Such a willingness could easily put the dear congregation into even greater embarrassment. I have the firm trust in my dear God that He will not leave me in restlessness and uncertainty for long. Perhaps it will please His infinite grace and mercy to clearly reveal His holy will in the important matter in question, either by strengthening me soon or by depriving me of my health several times. Since an early reoccupation of the vacated position appears to be urgently necessary, the congregation can, as I believe, take it for an unmistakable sign from God that He does not desire me if either my complete recovery should be delayed or if I should not soon be able to come to a certainty of the divine will that soothes my conscience. In this case, the congregation could proceed to a new election in God's name.

"For my part, I will not fail to come to a clear understanding of God's will as soon as possible and then obediently inform you of the decision I have made with Jesus.

Finally, I humbly and faithfully call upon the highly praised Triune God to direct everything in such a way that even in the present matter

His holy will be recognized by us and done by us for the glory of His great name and the salvation of us all; and in committing you to his grace and protection, I remain with due respect and affectionate love.

Dero most obedient servant

C. F. W. W."

The congregation decided to wait some more time for Walther's answer. In the meantime, Walther had reached certainty and the aforementioned disputation had been held. He traveled to St. Louis to talk about the call with the congregation. On April 26 (1841) he appeared in the congregational meeting and explained that everything that had kept him from accepting the call was now out of the way: 1. he had recovered; 2. through diligent research in the old church scholars he had come to the conclusion that, if everything on the part of the caller was done according to divine order, the caller should by no means refuse to accept the call; 3. he had not been able to accept the call. 3. that the sins he commits when emigrating are not those that make him unworthy of the office (1 Tim. 3:7. Tit. 1:7.); 4. that he is now completely certain that the church cannot be deprived of the glory of a Christian church and therefore cannot be denied the rights of such a church.

The following Sunday, Jubilate, he preached his inaugural sermon. Since he was still physically weak, the congregation decided that he should preach only once on Sundays for some time. So now, firmly in the faith that he was divinely called, firmly founded by the temptations in the doctrine of the church, of the ministry, of the spiritual priesthood, etc., so important for the leadership of the congregation, he began his beneficial work in St. Louis, beneficial not only for the local congregation, but soon also for others, for the widest circles.

But Walther was not yet to rest in peace. Restless spirits, separatists, made life difficult for him and worried the community. Their leader was Sp. [Sproede], who had already caused Walther much heartache in Perry County and who seems to have become more and more insolent due to Walther's humble remarks. They tirelessly agitated against Walther, accused him of priestly rule, tried to persuade the congregation to remove him, disputed the legitimacy of the congregation and demanded that the congregation disband. Many a meeting of the congregation had to be held because of this, and many a negotiation had to be held with these people. Such a meeting was also scheduled for May 12 (1841). On the morning of this day, Walther received from his friend Cand. Gönner, who at that time was active in a secular profession and, according to the decision of the congregation, was to take part in the negotiations, the following letter of comfort:

"Wednesday morning, May 12, 1841.

"My dear friend and brother in our Lord Jesus Christo!

"Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

"That now not an hour passes in which I do not think of you, of your cross and tribulation and of the certainly gracious visitations of God, I certainly do not need to assure you with many words. It moves me when I go to bed, and it moves me when I get up. I include you and the congregation in my morning prayer and in my evening prayer. Since I have been chosen by the congregation to be one of the witnesses at the hearings that will take place today, I was especially moved this morning and felt particularly urged to prayerfully present these matters to our gracious God and Father.

and to call upon Him for His grace and mercy. I and my wife now need for our devotions the Morning and Evening Blessings by Schmolke and Bogatzky's Schatzkästlein. When I took these books in my hands this morning, I sighed to God and prayed every single word of the morning blessing with special reference and application to our present need and concern; and behold! every single word was made especially for this purpose and was very special and exceptionally appropriate. But now I came to a passage where it became instantly clear and bright and certain in my heart: It belongs to your poor friend and brother Walther; he shall have it, he must have it, and it is good for me that he receives comfort from my hand, from my mouth and heart. It was exceedingly important and gratifying to me that this morning's blessing on Wednesday, almost from word to word, was so exquisitely appropriate and fitting for the need and concern of today, and I thanked God for it. After completing the morning blessing, I took my treasure box to read the sayings for yesterday and today, May 11 and 12. As I looked at them, I was amazed and also dismayed, namely with joy. Now hear me, dear brother Walther, I beg and admonish you in the name of our gracious and merciful and faithful Lord Jesus Christ: read these sayings and take them for yourself without restriction and believe that your Lord Jesus Christ sends them to you through me, your poor miserable friend and brother, who, though in great weakness and misery of his own, nevertheless in full power and authority, authority, right and duty of his spiritual priesthood, appropriates and commands them to you. For the rest, command the Lord your ways and hope in him, he will do it well. Right must remain right, and all pious hearts will fall to him; and know: All affliction, when it is there, does not seem to be joy, but

sadness, but afterward it will give a peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are tried by temptation. Be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Be at ease and of good cheer in your Lord Christ; in him you have peace, in the world fear. His peace, grace and strength wishes you abundantly

"Your loving friend and brother

Gönner.

"In case you do not have these books at hand,

I'll send both of them with you."

Those spirits did not succeed in disrupting the congregation. Through the testimonies of the Word of God and the confessional Christians, as well as Luther and other faithful fathers, the congregation was strengthened more and more. And when Sp. publicly attacked the congregation in a political newspaper,*) Walther was commissioned by the congregation to publish a reply to his diatribe in the same newspaper. In this reply it was to be stated (1) that errors had occurred in the emigration, (2) that everyone should be asked to convince themselves "whether we are Lutherans," (3) that the congregation had elected Pastor Walther voluntarily, and (4) that a statement of Sp.'s errors was to be made. We take from the reply the following words: "Whether we now really strive, as we confess, to meet the high goal that the Lutheran Church has set for us, with sincerity in doctrine and life, we are not entitled to testify about that ourselves. Whoever wants to convince himself, let him come and see and hear; our church, our school, our congregational meetings and our houses are open to everyone. We do not creep around in corners, but act openly before all the world. Whoever wants to convince himself whether

*) December 1842.

if anyone believes that priestly rule still exists in our congregation, he should observe the administration of our congregational affairs and read the statutes of our congregational order, it will be easy for him to recognize whether we stand as a free, independent Christian congregation or not. — Finally, we also note that our former preacher, who was formally dismissed from his office in Germany by his spiritual authority upon his request, did not impose himself on us at all, but without any application from his side for our pastorate, was first excluded by the entire congregation from the list of candidates and then elected from among them by majority vote." A later essay by Sp. was not considered. Likewise, a letter addressed by him in November 1843 "to the congregation of Pastor Walther" was not accepted.*)

**IX.**

## Blessed office effectiveness — congregational ordinance — Trinity Church — conference at Walther's in matters of the Perry County teaching institution and the Grabau "pastoral letter" — Bünger Walther's faithful assistant.

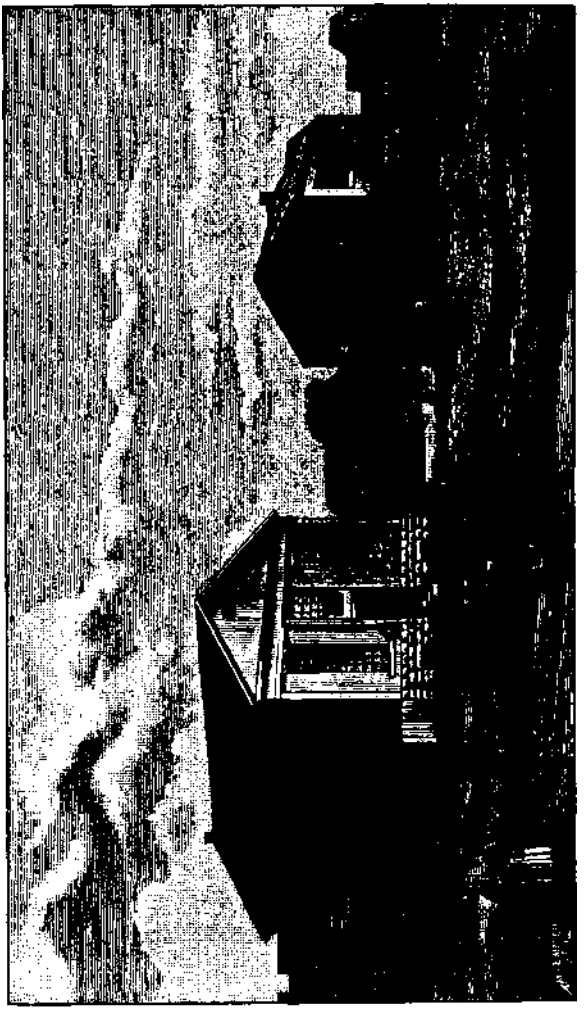
However, under Walther's blessed ministry, the congregation had also grown outwardly, but it grew even stronger inwardly. In the congregational meetings, teaching was diligently pursued. In the beginning, especially those doctrines were discussed that related to the present dispute, later also others. A congregational order and an order of the rulers were drafted, and for various paragraphs of the former and for the

*) The same died soon after of a sudden death.

ecclesiastical order of lay elders in some meetings testimonies of our teachers von Walther presented and discussed. The name "Kirchenrath" (church council), which was common in this country, was rejected. Although the congregation was still in poor circumstances, it took care of the poor in its midst at an early stage and drafted a poor relief fund, supported the institution in Perry County, and did not forget the poor from outside and, for example, in the summer of 1842, raised a collection for the victims of the accident in Hamburg.

The services were held until late autumn 1842 — with some interruptions*) — in the lower room of the Episcopal Church (*Christ Church*). However, since the board of directors of this church made more and more difficulties and no other local could be obtained, the congregation soon had to think about building its own place of worship. In January 1842, discussions began about building a church and purchasing a building site. A site on Lombard Street between 3rd and 4th Streets was purchased and the building was assigned. During the negotiations about the construction, Walther expressed the wish: 1. that the name of the church not be that of a man, 2. that it contain a confession, and 3. that it not immediately arouse the ridicule of the world. The church then received the name "Trinity Church". With reference to this name, the document written by Walther and laid down in the foundation stone, in which information about the origin, the fate and the inner and outer condition of the congregation was also given, says: "Know it, O reader, whoever you may be, that is why we have given our church the high and holy name 'Trinity Church', because we recognize no other God as the true one than the Triune, God the Father,

*) Several times in a Protestant church and also in the (rented) schoolroom.



**Old Trinity Church 1842.**

God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, as He has revealed Himself to us in His Word. Know it, O reader, only for this purpose have we laid the foundation of our church, that therein the pure Word of God, according to the interpretation of the apostolic church, and according to it of the Evangelical Lutheran church, is proclaimed to us and our descendants, and that the holy sacraments, Holy Baptism and Holy Communion, according to the institution of Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, are administered by appointed ministers of the church." A found note from Walther reads, "On June 22, 1842, the news was put in writing in the foundation of our Trinity Church that at that time the congregation consisted of 325 souls according to the number of souls, 131 individual persons according to the independence, 112 members according to the voting capacity." On the 2nd Sunday of Advent, December 4, 1842, the church was consecrated.

In the spring of 1843, the congregational order was signed after it had been thoroughly discussed in many congregational meetings, based on the testimonies of our Lutheran confessions and Lutheran church teachers. In his request for the signature, Walther emphasized the following four points: 1. that it is God's will that every congregation have its own order, 2. that God has given his children freedom to arrange everything according to their needs, 3. that we always have the church as a predecessor in this, and 4. that an order is especially necessary here in this country, where the authorities do not take care of the church.

In the summer of 1843, Walther and his congregation seriously considered promoting the institution in Perry County. Pastors Löber, Gruber, Fürbringer, and Schieferdecker, who were present in St. Louis at the time, invited the congregation to appear at their meeting on June 22 to present their views regarding the institution. They clearly recognized the necessity of a

such an institution. It was considered desirable that the institution be moved to St. Louis, but it was seen that the plan was not feasible at this time. It was also requested that the institution become an institute of the Lutheran congregations in St. Louis and Perry.




**Walther im Jahr 1843.**
Nach einer Zeichnung von Pfau.

**Walther in 1843.**

**After a drawing by Pfau.**

County, so that it would gain more strength. In later meetings, the deliberation continued. Candidate Goenner was proposed as a candidate for the college teaching position. A "Society for the College" was formed which took the cause of the institution in hand. Candidate J. J. Goenner was

appointed as Rector for the institution. Perry County joined in the appointment. On March 18, 1844, the community decided to consider the college matter as a community matter and to support the institution, even if only by voluntary contributions. And the support granted was indeed abundant for the circumstances of the time.

The aforementioned meeting of the pastors had another purpose. It was a joint response to the so-called "pastoral letter" of Pastor J. A. A. Grabau in Buffalo, New York. This Pastor Grabau was the leader of some Lutheran congregations who had immigrated from Prussia and settled in and around Buffalo, New York, and in Wisconsin. To these congregations he addressed a "pastoral letter" on December 1, 1840, to instruct and admonish them concerning their calling to the preaching ministry, church ordinances, etc. In this letter, however, he spoke quite dangerously. In this letter, however, he expressed quite dangerous principles concerning the mutual relationship between preachers and congregations, ordination, church ordinances, etc. The "Hirtenbrief" was also a letter to the congregations. The "pastoral letter" was also sent to the Saxon pastors for review. Not long after their arrival in America, they had been in contact by letter with Pastor Grabau in Buffalo and Pastor Krause in Wisconsin, and they had not been a little pleased with the hope that they would be able to stand with these fellow believers in an ecclesiastically decided as well as fraternally familiar fellowship of faith and confession.) So far they had expressed their concerns about this "merely in brief hints". However, a more detailed evaluation of the "pastoral letter" had to be written and sent to Pastor Grabau.

*) "Lutheran," Vol. 3, p. 30.

About this double purpose of the mentioned meeting of the Saxon pastors in St. Louis, the same Rev. Gotthold Heinrich Löber in the aforementioned "Beurtheilung" of the pastoral letter, dated St. Louis, July 3, 1843, among other things: "How much there would be to discuss and consult together, which will hardly ever be replaced by written exchange! How important would be only the one object of a jointly to be established teaching and educational institution for future teachers of our communities! It is precisely this matter, which is so important for all of us, that, after the departure of our friend Brohm*), prompted me and my brother Gruber to make a trip here to St. Louis and to discuss it here, where I am writing this letter, with our dear brother Walther and his congregation. Among the repeated consultations we have had with Pastor Walther and his congregation, mention was of course also made of the wish expressed in your last letter that such an institution should soon come about in mutual connection between your and our congregations. I do not need to assure you how much comfort and joy such a union would bring to us and our congregations, for which God in His grace would bestow His blessing. Certainly, however, such a union for such a purpose will only be truly blessed if we have agreed in more detail than has been the case up to now on this and that point of our faith and confession, on which we then want to build with one another in unity of spirit. In particular, we have not yet been able to provide you with a deeper insight into the content of your pastoral letter of December 1, 1840, which you graciously communicated to us.

*) Cand. Brohm had accepted a call to a church in New York.

We have not only been reminded of this very emphatically by Pastor Krause half a year ago and now again a few weeks ago, but have also been asked by the local congregation these days to come to an understanding with you on some points of that pastoral letter, the closer discussion of which had still remained backward in our letters exchanged with you since then on so many other initially available matters. Therefore, during our present meeting, we have seriously set about going through your pastoral letter again as precisely as you yourself have requested, and we ask you not only to receive from us in brotherly love what we have recognized about it in the present letter together with our dear colleague Walther according to God's Word and Luther's teachings, and to present it to you for further examination, but also to communicate it most graciously to Pastor Krause as soon as possible with a friendly greeting from us. Should we first give a summary judgment on the contents of the pastoral letter, it seems to us that, on the one hand, with regard to the so much emphasized old church orders, essential and non-essential, divine and human are confused and thus Christian freedom is restricted, and on the other hand, more is attributed to the office of preaching than is due to it and thus the spiritual priesthood of the congregations is put in the background "*).

Who does not see here the glorious fruit of the temptations and struggles that Walther and his co-workers had to endure? The

*See: "The pastoral letter of Pastor Grabau of Buffalo, 1840, together with the writings exchanged between him and several Lutheran pastors of Missouri. Delivered to the public as a protest against assertion of hierarchical principles within the Lutheran Church." P. 21 f.

The merciful God had led them out of dangerous, Romanizing teachings and had made them recognize the glory of the biblical Lutheran doctrine of church, preaching ministry, Christian freedom, etc., and thus prepared them to be instruments who should courageously oppose these aberrations appearing elsewhere and bravely defend the biblical Lutheran doctrine. Walther later wrote: "There is no doubt in our minds that if God, according to his unfathomable mercy, had not taken care of us and had not forcibly opened our eyes to our Romanizing doctrine and practice, we would not only have worked here alone to destroy Christianity, but would also finally have been lost forever. — But, O faithful God! What Satan intended to make evil, God intended to make good. Here we first had to be led by our errors to the abyss of temporal and eternal ruin, and then, saved from it by God's intervention without our doing anything, that is to say, as burned children, to bear witness all the more immovably against the same errors appearing elsewhere.)

In the spring of 1844, the congregation decided to provide Walther with relief in the district administration and to appoint an assistant. The choice fell on the candidate J. F. Bünger, who had taken over the congregational school since the summer of 1840. The acceptance of the call on Bünger's part was delayed because he had been appointed by a rural congregation in St. Louis County. He then accepted the calling as "second pastor" after all, since he had been permitted to serve the country parish as a filial every fourteen days. Walther had in him an extremely faithful assistant.

*) „Lutheraner", vol. 14, p. 2. note. — Grabau was able to bring his Romanizing principles to bear only in a relatively small part of the Lutheran Church.

X.

## "Der Lutheraner," edited by Walther, brings like-minded people together-steps toward the formation of an orthodox synodical association.

But now the time came when Walther's effectiveness was to extend into the widest circles. God inspired in him the idea of publishing a church magazine. He himself wrote about the genesis of the paper: "For a number of years we sought to establish ourselves more and more deeply in silence in the truth we had recognized. The treasure we had found and our church, in which we had found this treasure and of which we saw that it alone had it, therefore became more and more precious to us. With deep sadness we saw from the few local papers that we read at that time, partly how wrongly the doctrine of our church was presented by its enemies and how insolently it was attacked and blasphemed, partly how almost no one punished these lying distortions and repulsed these shameless attacks, partly how wrong even the ideas of many friends of the Lutheran church were about its actual doctrine, partly how we Saxons were still regarded as a Romanizing sect leading a special doctrine. This, together with several other Lutheran preachers who had emigrated with us, finally brought to maturity the decision in us to publish a leaflet that would serve our dear church under the openly honest name 'Der Lutheraner' according to the needs here, as much as God would give grace to it. The prospects for the existence of such a paper were very, very dim. Our immigrant congregations were still very poor and had to make hardly affordable sacrifices to be able to enjoy the benefits of well-ordered and well-supplied Evangelical Lutheran congregations. It was hardly possible for them to

Otherwise we would have almost no acquaintance and connection with preachers and congregations. We only dared to send the paper to two of them, W. and S., who are currently at the head of the so-called Saxon congregations as synodal officials. Our expectations, or at least our claims, did not go further than to bring as many sheets into wider circles as were necessary to give an unmistakable public testimony of what is actually Lutheran church and what is actually its doctrine."*)

At a community meeting on June 3, 1844, he presented his plan to the community and asked them to support him in bringing it out. The congregation unanimously pledged its support to him. In a later meeting — on August 12 — not only did many members of the congregation declare that they wanted to take two copies, but it was also decided by the congregation, since $4.68 was still to be covered for the publication of the first number, to take this sum from the surplus of the communal treasury if it could not be raised by a voluntary collection, and this should also be done for the publication of the following numbers. Thus, the first number was issued at the beginning of September (1844). In it, the trombone makes a clear sound. The motto at the top is: “Gottes Wort und Luther's Lehr vergehet nun und nimmermehr.” The content of this first number was: “Preliminary remarks on the cause, purpose and content of the sheet.” “Luther's Testimonies: Which is the Main Article of Christian Doctrine.” “Of the name ‘Lutheraner’. Is it not wrong to call oneself so?” — “A proof from the history of the church assembly at Nicaea, how our faith does not consist in human

*) “Lutheraner”, vol. 14, p. 2

*) "Lutheran," Vol. 14, p. 2.

wisdom, but in God's power." "Luther's own judgment on his sharp writing."

By God's grace, this journal became the instrument for the few who in America were still determined to remain with the faith of Luther and the Confession of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, as recorded in the Concordia Book of 1850, to get to know each other and to come together. "It was a great joy to me in 1844," writes Dr. Sihler in his self-biography, "when the first number of the 'Lutheraner' appeared in St. Louis. ... It filled me with great joy when I received the first number of the 'Lutheraner', and after I had received the following numbers, I did not fail to recommend the paper to my congregations and to spread it in them; for such a paper was necessary to the Lutherans of this country, who for the most part did not know what Lutheran was and why they called themselves Lutheran Christians. Of course, I first came into close contact by letter with the esteemed editor. (Lebenslauf II, 39 f.) Of Pastor Friedrich Wyneken, Dir. Lindemann: "Just at that time, when Wyneken had to defend Luther's teaching against his own Synod (Synod of the West), he received the first number of the 'Lutheraner', which was published since September 1, 1844 in St. Louis by Pastor C. F. W. Walther. He had convinced himself that he had nothing to hope for from his synod; therefore that paper was an angel of comfort to him. As soon as he had glanced through it, he exclaimed with great joy: 'Thank God, there are more Lutherans in America!' New hope animated him for the church of this land; he saw day after dark night." (Memorial of Faithful Witnesses of Christ, IV, p. 294.)

A first, a main fruit of the "Lutheraner" was the formation of the German Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, &c. St., a body whose aim from the beginning was doctrinal purity and teaching unity,

to whom, according to God's wonderful counsel, the doctrine of the divine Word was given in the purity of the apostolic and Reformation ages. The pastors, who got to know each other through the "Lutheraner" as those who were determined to remain with the confession of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession, first entered into correspondence; but soon felt the need to become personally acquainted with each other and, where possible, to join together in a special church body. Thus, in the spring of 1846, Pastors Sihler, Ernst, and Lochner set out for St. Louis, where, after an appointment had been made, Walther had also invited Pastors Löber, Keyl, and Gruber from Perry County, Mo. and Fürbringer and Schieferdecker from Illinois to a conference. Also at a congregational meeting (on May 11), Walther presented the plan to the congregation, showing how necessary and salutary it would be if a synodal union of orthodox preachers and congregations in the United States were to come about, without diminution of congregational rights. After hearing the reasons for this, the congregation decided to enter into such a synodical union if the constitution of the same was not contrary to God's word and not detrimental to the congregational rights.

Dr. Sihler writes about this conference in his self-biography: “Pastor Walther received us very kindly in his house and his precious wife, a née Bünger, ... entertained us in the best way. The most significant impression on us was undeniably made by Pastor Walther, who was not yet thirty-five years old at the time, but whose facial features were strangely aged, probably due to the many and difficult struggles he had to go through. His thoughts and words, however, were full of spirit and life. In our conferences, too, he was primarily the animating and formative principle in the drafting of the basic principles for a lawful and just society.

Lutheran congregation or synod. In this, he first revealed his significant organizational talent, of which I possessed very little, and above all, it became very impressive to me how in this draft, every single point was based on the pure Lutheran scriptural doctrine of the nature of the church, of the public ecclesiastical teaching office, of the church regiment and of ecclesiastical orders, and from this, the clear design of all the individual members of the draft took place". (Curriculum Vitae II, p. 52 f.)

XI.

## Draft synodical constitution — presented to congregation — Walther's trip to Fort Wayne — meeting with Crämer — Conference in Fort Wayne. — Publication of a hymnal.

We now let another person involved, Pastor Fr. Lochner, tell us about the course of events. He writes: "In order to establish a church connection with the Saxon Lutherans, the three of us: Blessed Dr. Sihler, Pastor A. Ernst, then pastor in Neu-Dettelsau near Marysville, Ohio, and I, then pastor in Toledo, Ohio, set out for St. Louis at the beginning of May 1846. Sihler and Ernst had already resigned from the Ohio Synod; but I, with the blessed Pastor Hattstädt, Pastor (now Professor) Crämer, and Pastor Trautmann, belonged to the Michigan Synod, but was determined with those to resign if at its first meeting, which was to be held in June, it would not abandon its Unionist stand taken *in praxi*, for which there was little hope.

"On the way, we met the pastors Löber, Keyl and Grüber on May 12, who boarded the train at *Wittenberg Landing in the* evening, and the next day we arrived with them at Walther's house. What a completely different personality appeared to us there, since we had imagined him to be a spiritual, but more sedate-looking man! And with what love, with what joy and kindness he received us strangers and how considerately he treated us in the following days! Soon he had won all our trust, all our love. Especially we two, Ernst and I, breathed a sigh of relief, who had become a little tight around the heart and had lost our courage a little, since during the journey the blessed Keyl had examined us sharply whether we were preaching correctly according to Luther, and whether we did not know how to give enough information!

"With Pastor Fürbringer, the three of us were Walther's guests. But how modest, not to say poor, were the external conditions of our dear host at that time! Opposite the old Trinity Church, where the Saxon Mill now stands, there was a two-story brick house.) The upper part to the front was occupied by the shoemaker Neumüller, a brother-in-law of Walther, the rear part by the blessed pastor Bünger, Walther's and soon after also my mother-in-law, who owned the house. Walther lived in the lower part for rent. This lower part consisted of a living room, which was at the same time a bedroom for him, his wife and two children, an adjoining small summer kitchen and his study. The latter, however, had to serve as a guest room at the same time. When it was time to go to bed, the lounge was folded down to serve as a double bed for Dr. Sihler and Pastor Fürbringer, and a low frame was made under it.

*) See Image, p. 56.

which served as a storage place for Pastor Ernst and me. During breakfast in the morning, the transformation of the improvised bedroom into a study room took place each time.

"After our instruction received from Pastor Löhe had been gone through and after we had given a satisfactory answer on some points of it, we went to work — to the common draft of a synodal constitution. The elaboration of this draft took about a week. What wonderful, and especially for the three of us so instructive, so blessed days they were! How much light was shed on church and ministry, especially by Walther! But also how we felt towards Walther and his fellow ministers our then still so great lack in every respect!

"When we had come to terms with this bill, we decided to immediately make copies of it, send them to like-minded people, and invite them to a conference in Fort Wayne for July.

"At the same time, at Walther's invitation, we attended an extra congregational meeting in which he submitted the bill to the congregation for discussion. But, but, what opposition did it meet with, what objections were raised against it, how did one see in a synodical association, even though it was supposed to have only a consultative power, again and again the popanza of a German consistory! And Walther? While at that time, still a very young newcomer, my mind often wanted to stand still because of such opposition on the part of a congregation, yes, such a discerning congregation, since I had thought that the congregation would immediately say yes and amen to a Walther and to the one sitting next to me, who had been a member of the congregation for years.

Although Dr. Sihler's facial expressions and gestures sometimes indicated that he, too, might have jumped out of his skin, Walther could not be put off his guard. With admirable patience, he responded to every objection and tried to resolve every concern. And even if he sometimes had to reply something seriously to one or the other, this was done with avoidance of all carnal eagerness, everything was done with moderation and dignity. In all his speeches, however, he endeavored to show the congregation that a synodical constitution of this kind, far from diminishing the congregation's rights, sought rather to preserve them. Even if not with all, at the end of this meeting, which lasted until late at night, all doubts had fallen with most. We guests, however, had learned a lot for the leadership of a congregation meeting at that time."

In eight further congregational meetings the draft of the synodical constitution was discussed and in the last one — on June 18 — it was decided that Pastor Walther would attend the conference in Fort Wayne, where the draft was to be gone through again and to which Dr. Sihler also wanted to invite other like-minded people who had not been able to come to St. Louis. Sixteen pastors showed up in Fort Wayne. Six pastors who could not be present had assured the conference of their hearty approval of the plan. The draft was adopted with few changes and the decision was made to meet in Chicago in April 1847 for a synod based on it.

According to Director H. Löber, Pastor Fr. Lochner reports about Walther's trip to this conference as an eye and ear witness: "When Walther traveled with Pastor G. H. Löber and his son, who was still a student at that time, to that conference in Fort Wayne in July 1846, they talked a lot about

of the synod that was now to be formed on the basis of the documents. Walther could not hide his concern as to how the work would turn out, since of all those invited there was not yet sufficient guarantee as to how they stood in the doctrine, as to which spiritual child each of them was (I add: we three, who had been together with the Saxon brothers in St. Louis in May and were recognized by them purely in the doctrine, still had many frailties that could not escape them). Arriving at the *junction* from Cincinnati early in the day, the travelers had to wait a large part of the day for the canal boat coming from Toledo. They therefore used the beautiful morning for a walk in the woods and talked again of the things that filled their hearts and made them anxious. Then, in the solitude of the forest, they sang the morning hymn recited by the blessed Löber: "Thanks be to God in the highest", and when it was finished, Walther and his companions fell down and poured out a moving prayer for the church and for the establishment of a true synod in this land of freedom of conscience. After they had stayed in the forest for some time, they went to the landing place, since the Toledo canal boat had to arrive soon. It was not long in coming. As it approached, Walther drew the attention of his companions to the black-clad men standing on the deck with their long pipes. It was Crämer, the Indian missionary and pastor of Frankenmuth, and some of his companions from the Franks. Soon Walther and Löber were in agreement with Crämer on all points.

Prof. Crämer describes his first meeting with Walther as follows: “Since I was already prevented by fever from attending the preliminary conference in Cleveland organized by the same Dr. Sihler and others, I hurried all the more to get there.

I was more interested in attending the conference invited to Fort Wayne, Ind. in the following year, 1846, at which we pastors from Michigan, Ohio and Indiana met with the Saxon brethren from Missouri to discuss the constitution of the synod which came into being in Chicago in 1847. The route to Fort Wayne for us northerners at that time was from Toledo on the Wabash Canal, which divides 70 miles from Fort Wayne at the so-called *Junction* into two arms, one of which runs west past Fort Wayne through Indiana, the other from Cincinnati to the *Junction.* On the latter the Saxon brothers came, since they, shunning the arduous and boring way on land, preferred to travel down the Mississippi to the mouth of the Ohio, up this to Cincinnati and from there on the canal to Fort Wayne. The boat that brought them to the *Junction* had already arrived, and was only waiting for ours to carry on its passengers traveling west. It was not long before a lanky man with a prominent nose and fiery eyes stepped out of the door of the small inn, followed by a serious but mild-eyed slender man and a young student, who immediately boarded our boat. The former was, of course, Walther, the other the venerable Pastor Löber, and his son. The joy of the happy meeting was great on both sides, and soon, while we were cruising along the canal smoothly and undisturbed, everyone was engaged in the most eager conversation with each other. So I was with Walther. I was very interested in getting to know the man personally, whom I had already recognized from his "Lutheraner" as a pillar of genuine biblical Lutheran truth. Walther, on the other hand, also wanted to know what kind of man Löhe had sent over to lead the colonization and missionary work and to be a leader of his disciples. Soon we were there-

We had a serious conversation about the doctrine in all points, which lasted the whole long journey. Of course, the doctrine of the Election of Grace was also discussed, and I thank God that I have the opportunity to testify here that the good man of God already at that time firmly declared the biblical Lutheran doctrine of the Election of Grace as the conviction of his faith, as he so victoriously defended it in the recently erupted controversy about it.

Dr. Sihler writes about the conference itself: "The main purpose of this meeting was, in the presence and with the help of the Eastern brethren, to go through anew and bring to a conclusion the outlines of the draft of an orthodox Lutheran synodical constitution drawn up by Pastor Walther in St. Louis, which was done to general satisfaction after about a week. Of course, here too, as in St. Louis, the Saxon brethren, or Walther, had to do the work; for we Easterners were pretty much newcomers to this delicate and difficult work. But we all had fresh courage and good confidence, and in the end decided to meet with deputies of the Chicago congregations in the spring of 1847 for the formation of an orthodox synod." (*Curriculum Vitae* II, p. 72.)

At the congregational meeting on February 1, Pastor Walther put the following questions to the congregation: 1. whether there was anyone in the congregation who had no objection to a synod, but might not agree with the present constitution; 2. whether there was anyone in the congregation who believed that a synod was not necessary or not beneficial. At the meeting on February 22, the congregation declared that the synod was necessary and beneficial, and decided to join it if a paragraph was added to the constitution stating that the synod was only a deliberative body and that it was not necessary to have a synod.

that therefore no decision of the same has binding force for a congregation, if the same imposes something on the congregation.*)

Until the summer of 1847, old hymnals from the previous century, the Dresdener, Chemnitzer, Zwickauer, and others, had been used in the congregation; but since the use of different hymnals was inconvenient and the existing number was no longer sufficient, Walther was intent on publishing a new Lutheran hymnal. Already in a congregational meeting on November 10, 1845, he had brought up the issue of publishing one. Since the congregation decided to take over the publishing, Walther and some fellow ministers in Missouri set about collecting the hymns. By what principles he and his associates were guided in the process, he himself thus states: “As far as the songs included are concerned, the main consideration in selecting them was that they be pure in doctrine, that they have already found as general a reception as possible in the orthodox German Lutheran Church and have thus received as unanimous a testimony as possible from the same that they have flowed from the right spirit; that, since the book is intended first of all for public worship, they do not express the particular changing conditions of individual persons, but rather contain the language of the entire church, and that, finally, although they bear the stamp of Christian simplicity, they are not rhymed prose, but products of true Christian poetry. The editors were vividly aware of the great task they had to solve; in doing so, they completely despaired of their own wisdom and earnestly prayed to God for his Holy Spirit's enlightenment and government, and especially for the gift of the Holy Spirit,

*) The paragraph was excluded. See Constitution Cap. IV, A. § 9. First Synodal Report, p. 6.

They can assure that they have done so with fear and trembling and have selected only those songs from the immense treasure that the Christian Church possesses of German hymns, of which they recognized, according to the grace that God gave them, that they were worthy above all others to be inherited from children to children's children and to be preserved as an inventory, as an inalienable property of the Church of the German tongue". *)

XII.

## First synodal assembly — Walther elected President — great fire in St. Louis — fire sermon — trip to the third synodal assembly — cholera in St. Louis — Walther appointed Professor elected — College moved to St. Louis — Cornerstone laid.

When on April 26, 1847, the German Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, etc. organized itself, it was quite natural that the man who had contributed so much to its founding, Pastor Walther, was elected president. As this first meeting was also a synodal body to be issued, Walther offered his "Lutheran" to the synod. The synod accepted the offer with thanks and decided that the previous editor would continue to be the editor of this newspaper, that the complete ownership of it would be transferred to the synod at the beginning of the fourth year.

*) "Lutheraner", vol. 3, p. 84. -- Later, in 1862, the congregation, with commendable altruism, gave up its ownership of the hymnal it had published to the synod for good, thus providing it with a rich source of income for the maintenance of the Concordia Seminary and College. ("Synodal Handbook," p. 79.)

The title of the book is to be changed to the Synod and the following addition is to be made to the title: "Published by the German Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and elsewhere, edited by C. F. W. Walther."

"Concerning the establishment, maintenance and supervision of institutions for the training of future preachers and school teachers for the service of the church ... the Synod deemed it highly desirable that the private institutions of this kind, hitherto connected with it only by some of its members, should be placed under the direct supervision of the Synod." The congregation at St. Louis, as well as those at Altenburg, Perry Co., Mo. under whose care the institution at Altenburg had been primarily, agreed to turn it over to the Synod. But while the one at Altenburg wished the institution to remain in their midst, the one at St. Louis wished it to be transferred here. At the next synod meeting in St. Louis in 1848, after considering the reasons of both congregations, St. Louis was declared to be the proper place. In a congregational meeting held while the synod was in session, the congregation promised to allow the surplus from the God's Acre [cemetary] and Hymnal funds to flow into the college funds. At the third synodal meeting in Fort Wayne in 1849, it was decided to move the institution to St. Louis as soon as possible and to elect another professor of theology to replace Pastor Loeber, who, feeling the decline of his physical strength, wished to be relieved of the heavy work at the institution.

Pastor Walther had started his journey to the synod with a heavy heart this time. Cholera was approaching and on Ascension Day evening a great fire had reduced 640 houses and 27 steamships to ashes in a few hours. Members of the congregation were also hard hit by the disaster. In the fire sermon held on Sunday Exaudi, Walther said in the introduction: "Indignation of entire peoples against their governments, bloody, whole parts of the earth devastated by

wars on land and sea and a pestilential plague sweeping through the whole world, these are the terrible preachers to whom God has now given the command: Go into all the world and preach repentance to all creatures! In our city, too, the voice of these three preachers sent by God has been resounding for years. But what has happened? Has Saint Louis, like once Nineveh, repented of God's terrible sermon of repentance? Certainly, there are still some souls in this city who, as Ezekiel writes in the 9th chapter, "sigh and lament over all the abominations that are done in it. But the great majority of the inhabitants here have only made a mockery of God's punishments and judgments, and in unprecedented wickedness those who want to be the leaders of the people, the writers of our daily papers, to the annoyance of young and old, have mocked with impunity that there are still people in our city who believe in a God and therefore want to humble themselves under his mighty hand and implore his mercy together and penitently. But behold, what God's Word calls out to us has now come true: Do not be deceived; God is not mocked.

"A great and terrible misfortune struck our city on the very day when God's Word was publicly mocked. No sooner had the church bells and the Christian prayers for mercy died away on the last Ascension Day than the sound of fire bells rang out through all the streets and alleys of our city. Night suddenly became day. It was the work of a few hours that raging flames had reduced to ashes most of the ships of our harbor and several of the busiest and richest streets of our city. Thousands were not only robbed of their roof and all their earthly possessions in a few hours, but also many people perished in the floods and in the flames.

The power of the devastating element mocked all human power that attempted to dampen it and every human precaution that was taken. The power of the devastating element mocked all human power that attempted to dampen it, and every human precaution that was taken to put a stop to the spread of the fiery blaze that was reddening the sky. When the night of terror was over and the sun of the new day again illuminated our unhappy city, goods worth millions had become food for the ravenous flame; and who can count the tears and sighs that this misfortune has squeezed out and will still squeeze out! — Oh, also several dear members of our community belong to the hard hit, who look with tears at the heaps of rubble, into which their homes and all their possessions have been turned."*)

Pastor Fr. Lochner reports about the trip to the synod: "In the summer of 1849 I traveled with Pastor Walther, Pastor Fick and Treasurer Barthel to the synod in Fort Wayne. The departure was not without concern, for the first cases of cholera had just appeared in St. Louis, and the journey there and back took two weeks at that time, as well as the stay in Fort Wayne. How sometimes Walther sang Luther's mighty song with us when we sat together in the evenings on the canopy during the Mississippi and Ohio voyages: "Mitten wir im Leben sind," etc.

"On this trip, Walther read with us the Grabau pastoral letter and the correspondence of the Saxon pastors with Grabau that was linked to it. At that time, the doctrine of church and ministry was not yet quite clear and Löhe's aphorisms had made me somewhat apprehensive, and it was only through Walther that I came to clarity and firmness. How good that was, since I was called to Milwaukee the next year and now worked as a so-called 'Rottenpriester' in

*) "Lutheran" 28, p. 17.

the then quite fiery battle with the Buffalo Synod had to enter! How often afterwards I blessed Walther in my heart for leading me to clarity and certainty on this journey, how often I thanked God for the blessings I received on this journey!

"From Cincinnati we had to sail the Miami Canal. On the canal boat there were also a number of German passengers, among them an unbelieving Jew who tried to entertain the company with his jokes and mockeries about priests and the Bible, becoming more and more impudent the more we pastors kept quiet and he succeeded in arousing some laughter. I once asked Walther if it was not time to shut him up, but he shook his head, noticeable only to me. Finally, the man had used up his powder supply, and now Walther caught him, so that the mocker lost his hearing and sight and got into such a state of confusion that he finally no longer knew what he was saying and then fell silent. Although he now became the object of laughter above all others, the entire treatment that Walther meted out to him was not of the kind that would have embittered him. On the contrary, when soon after the boat stopped at Dayton and the Jew had to get off, he took Walther's hand beforehand, asked him to forgive him for being so insolent, and assured him of his high esteem. (In the following year I was again witness to a similar scene in Milwaukee, where I, as pastor there, visited a sick man, to whom Walther accompanied me at his request at the time of the synod held there for the first time, and at whose bedside we had a collision with a German doctor).

"Soon after our arrival in Fort Wayne came one Job's mail after another about the spread of cholera in St. Louis. When we returned home it was already raging terribly. It came on so

There were not enough wagons left to carry the corpses away. Day and night the two pastors Walther and Bünger were with the sick and dying, but they were allowed to make many a blessed experience of believing Christians overcoming death and repentant conversion of the lost. During this time Walther held prayer meetings on Wednesday afternoons. I once attended one of these. It was precious."

When the electoral college had published its announcement concerning the election of a theological professor in the "Lutheraner", it was brought up for discussion in the congregational meeting on August 6, since Pastor Walther was named in it as a candidate, and in one of the next meetings, on August 20, it was decided by majority vote that one wanted to protest against the nomination of Pastor Walther as a candidate. Pastor Bünger, on the other hand, pointed out how important it was that the excellent gifts of Pastor Walther, which the Lord had bestowed upon him, be used at the college, and pointed out that he could perhaps be retained as pastor if a vicar were added to him. Another suggestion was that Pastor Walther be given only the directorship of the institution. In the meeting on the following day, a document was presented in which the reasons were given why the congregation had to protest against the election of Pastor Walther, and in which it was stated that only the directorship should be transferred to him. In a meeting held soon after, on August 23, it was decided that if Pastor Walther were elected professor, he could only be let go in peace if he could still remain pastor.

Walther was elected theological professor. On October 8 he reported this to the congregation, and on October 10 he declared that he recognized the profession as a divine one and that he was now going to

wanted to know which functions he still had to take over as pastor. It was agreed that as pastor he would preach 13 times a year, attend the congregational meetings and the board meetings, and be in charge of the supervision of the congregation.

The construction of the institution building was started in the fall on the land donated by the congregation, which at that time was still outside the city limits (2 acres of Gottesackerland). When the foundation stone was laid on November 8, Pastor Walther gave the speech and showed how the church had always proven itself to be a faithful, sincere friend and nurturer of art and science and must always prove itself according to its nature and purpose.

XIII.

## Walther's blessed effectiveness — Beginning of teaching at the institution — Synodal speech in 1850 — Fight against Romanizing Lutherans.

When Walther resigned from the pastorate of the congregation and took over the theological professorship at the institution, the congregation numbered 944 souls, 245 voters, 424 children in 4 schools, had 2 churches and 1 graveyard. Under his leadership, the congregation had grown considerably externally, but mainly internally, as a result of his thorough sermons, which most of our readers know, and as a result of his conscientious pastoral care and his excellent leadership of the congregational meetings. Of the doctrinal subjects presented and discussed in the congregational meetings, we mention, in addition to those already mentioned, the following: the

Emergency baptism by laymen, rights of the congregation, preaching ministry, binding nature of church ordinances, catechism examinations, the doctrine of Sunday, election of preachers, necessity of attending congregational meetings, fraternal punishment, care of the sick, attendance of Sunday schools by false believers, etc.

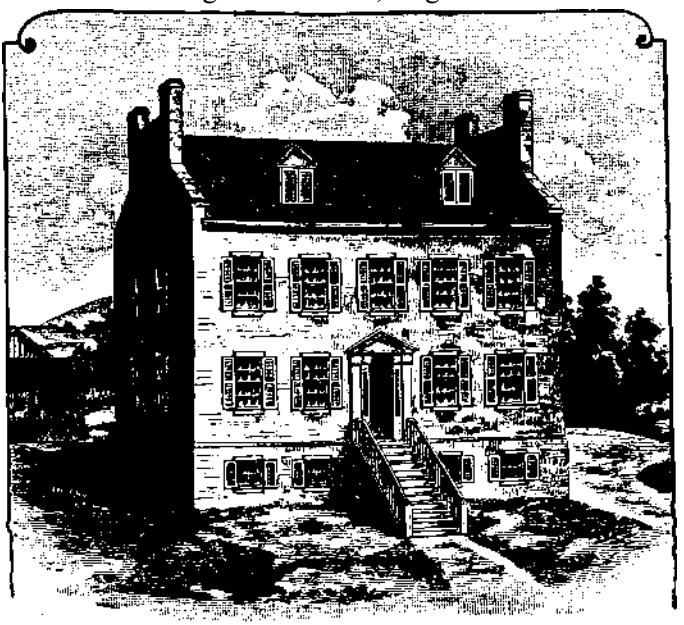
As a testimony to Walther's blessed effectiveness as pastor, let us follow the description of the congregation given here by Dr. Sihler, who soon after became vicar here, in his self-biography: "It was a difficult, but at the same time beautiful and lovely time, which I remember with heartfelt thanks to the Lord. In the congregation, of course, there was no lack of various ailments and cases of church discipline, but on the whole, the condition was very pleasant, and even in these latter cases, when the guilty and unrepentant one was finally called before the congregational assembly, it was really the case that he was 'punished by many', as the apostle also demands.... ‘Many' brought what each one had or received at his request, be it punishment, warning, threat, plea, enticement, tears, abundant intercession, in short, whatever could be expected to make a salutary impression on the conscience and heart of the guilty and lead him to repentance. A great holy earnestness then went through the congregation. The Christian teachings in the afternoons were also very well attended; and in the old tribe of the congregation there were not a few discerning members of deep spiritual experience and righteous godliness, truly anointed Christians, also well educated and proven in several Cross schools, from whom I had more to learn than they had to teach. — The congregational meetings were almost always very diligently attended, despite the great remoteness from the homes of some of their members and despite occasional inclement weather. The meetings were always held in a very orderly manner. The assembled

Members were as reverent toward me as Christ's servants as they were frank in their speech. It seldom happened that they spoke apart from the matter at hand; for there were not quite a few in the congregation who knew how to speak to the matter at hand out of thorough knowledge and experience. . . His (Walther's) faithful and wise 'work in the Lord' on these former church children of his could be seen clearly enough in this piece. In this, too, I sometimes had more to learn than to teach. In their sociable behavior, the brothers with whom I came into closer contact made the most pleasant impression on me, for they were as respectful as they were cordial and confidential toward me. On festive occasions at home, such as weddings, things were also very sweet and pleasant. There was nothing to be seen or heard of insipid merriment or mere carnal gaiety; there was a pleasantly pleasant cheerfulness that pervaded the assembled guests as a prevailing mood — a cheerfulness that did not miss the background of seriousness even in occasional jokes; for the fear of God and the reverent awe of His word kept convivial intercourse and conversation in wholesome bounds; 'let your speech always be sweet and seasoned with salt,' this admonition of the apostle was followed here also." (*Curriculum Vitae* II, p. 140 ff.)

In January 1850, Professor Walther began teaching at the Institute,*) initially in his apartment on Lombard Street, between 3rd and 4th Streets, since the Institute building was not yet completed. On June 4, he moved into it. He had to make do with little space, because apart from himself and his family, the building (the south wing, 42 feet long and 36 feet wide, which, apart from the first floor, at that time had only 2 floors) was to be used for the treatment of children.

*) It had been moved here from Altenburg the previous December.

In the building of the "Concordia College" (which had its own workshops), a teacher, the caretaker with his family, 6 students and 10 high school students were accommodated. At the inauguration of the "Concordia College" on June 11, he gave a Latin address.



**South wing of Concordia College in 1850.**

Since the office of visitator was connected with the presidency at that time, he could no longer continue the same as a professor. In his place, the synod elected Pastor Fr. Wyneken as president in the fall (1850). The synodal address that Walther gave at this synod as the present president was extremely serious. He said, "We begin our synodal proceedings this time, as before

never before. The history of our synodical congregation has apparently entered a new stage at present. God, according to His great mercy, had spared us with severe visitations until the time of our last year's meeting and had given us the grace that we could build ourselves undisturbed. ... We begin our present sessions not only with the sensation of hard blows from the divine hand which we have had to experience since we were last together, but also with the prospect of severe trials and decisive struggles into which that same hand has led us." After he had hereupon commemorated the deaths of excellent members of the Synod: Löber, Wolter, Buttermann, and Flessa, and referred to other sad phenomena in congregations, he continued, "Important and sensitive as, however . . . these experiences have been and still are important to us, I cannot but express to you the conviction that our Synod is facing an even more important and decisive test in a completely different respect, the most difficult test that the church can ever experience, a test against which the test of bloody persecutions can only be marginally beaten, in short, it is this — the temptation to false doctrine." In the following, he showed how the Lutheran church had been reawakened for about three decades, but how many had not faithfully dealt with the knowledge given by God, but had allowed themselves to be led along false paths. Among these he also counted those who again bring things into the church from which Luther had purified it with great effort and hard struggle, who describe the church of Jesus Christ as a visible, well-organized external institution, who again bind the consciences to some human statutes and ecclesiastical orders, who fight the rights of the spiritual priesthood of all Christians as chimeras of spiritually proud zealots and who denounce the

who deny the so-called laity even the right to elect their preachers and the right to vote in the synods and in the church courts, who derive the office of preaching from the power of ordination by preachers, which they declare to be a divine order, who make the office of preachers a special estate privileged over the lay priesthood, who ascribe to preachers a power and dominion *jure divino* (by divine right) even in those things which are neither commanded nor forbidden in God's Word, and who make the power of the Word and the sacraments dependent on the office of him who administers these means of grace. "Although," Walther then continues, "this latter direction has been clearly evident for some time, both in the Lutheran Church of Germany and in America, it has remained without influence on our Synod until recently. In recent times, however, as you know, we have finally come into serious conflict with it from two sides. The time when the members of the Synod could be silent spectators of the struggle that this direction has provoked is therefore over. The call to fight for or against has also gone out to us."

The Romanizing Lutherans of America, to whom Walther referred here, were the already mentioned Pastor Grabau and like-minded people. We reported above that the Saxon pastors in Missouri had sent Grabau an evaluation of his pastoral letter. Grabau countered this criticism with an anti-criticism. The Saxon pastors again sent Grabau a reply, to which the synod formed by Grabau in 1846 (the "Buffalo Synod"), which called itself "the Lutheran synod of the church emigrated from Prussia" (!!), sent a letter of reply to the Saxon pastors. They did not owe the answer. However, Grabau's synod in its issued "Synodal Letter" had asked the Saxonian

Pastors publicly attacked. After further attempts on the part of the Saxon pastors to reach a mutual understanding proved to be in vain, they handed over Grabau's pastoral letter together with the writings exchanged between them and him to the public as a protest against the assertion of hierarchical principles within the Lutheran church.*)

At its first meeting in 1847, to which, as to the above-mentioned preliminary conference in Fort Wayne (1846), Pastor Grabau had been invited — but in vain — our synod was induced to consult the consciences of some members of two congregations belonging to Grabau's synod, who were troubled because of the false teaching, etc., carried on in the congregations. At the third synodal meeting (1849), a report was given by a committee on the above-mentioned writing: "The pastoral letter of Pastor Grabau," etc. Grabau's fight was now also directed against the synod, since it had taken on such people who, for reasons of conscience, believed they had to leave the Grabau connection or had been unlawfully banned. Thus, at its fourth meeting (1850), the synod considered, as far as time permitted, the doctrine of the ministry and justified its behavior against those who had left the Grabau connection, and also decided to publish a paper in which, in the face of a second Grabau synod letter, the procedure taken was to be justified and the Grabau false doctrines etc. were to be refuted. Both happened first in the "Lutheraner", the former in a supplement ("Beiwagen"),**) the latter in the "Ausführlichen tabellarische Uebersicht einiger offenbarer Irrthümer Grabau's, mit den eigenen Worten desselben vorgelegt und mit der

*) See the above-mentioned writing: "The Pastoral Letter", etc.

**) See "Lutheran," Vol. 9, p. 63.

The latter is then compared in a special paper by Professor Walther: "**Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt.** A collection of testimonies on this question from the confessional writings of the Lutheran Church and from the private writings of orthodox teachers of the same. By the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, etc., as a testimony to their faith in defense against the attacks of Pastor Grabau in Buffalo, N. Y., presented by C. F. W. Walther." etc. This writing could justly be called a testimony of the faith of our Synod, for Walther had presented the draft of this writing to the Synod for its consideration at the Synodical Assembly in the following year (1851). "The lecture itself," says the synodical report in question, "and the discussions (Erörterungen) about church doctrine and practice which followed it, took eight sessions with few interruptions. This was undoubtedly the part of the proceedings that proved most fruitful, filling the hearts of all with great joy over the scripturality, clarity and sweetness of our doctrine, and making them feel how the peace of the Spirit of God is the sweet, tasty fruit of right unity and certainty of faith." (p. 10 f.)

*) See "Lutheraner," Vol. 9, p. 69.

XIV.

## Prof. Walther and Pastor Wyneken elected by the Synod as delegates to Germany — negotiation with Rev. Löhe.

The synodal assembly of 1850 had also decided to ask Pastor W. Löhe in Bavaria to attend the next year's assembly. For Löhe and his friends also belonged to the Lutherans to whom Walther referred in the aforementioned serious synod speech, who took a wrong, Romanizing direction. Löhe had been the Synod's most loyal friend and promoter, a large part of the pastors had been trained by Löhe and sent over by him, he had handed over the practical seminary for preachers founded by him to our Synod. Now, however, it became more and more apparent that there was a doctrinal difference between Pastor Löhe and our synod, which threatened to disturb the unity that had existed until then, and finally to completely dissolve it. The synod could not be indifferent to this. An extraordinary conference of the St. Louis District held on May 14 and 15 therefore proposed to send two brothers of our synodal association to Germany in order to bring about a longed-for agreement with the Lutherans there, with whom we had hitherto been in closer contact, regarding the pending doctrinal differences, with God's blessing. In a congregational meeting held on May 19, Prof. Walther communicated this plan to the St. Louis congregation. He said that much had already been negotiated with Löhe in writing, but nothing had been accomplished; it would certainly be a happy success if some delegates from the local Lutheran church were sent to Germany; it was our sacred duty to avert everything so that no separation would arise. At the same time, he asked the members of the congregation to express their opinion as to whether a delegation was necessary and which persons should be sent.

the coongregationmcongmunity considers appropriate. In the next congregational meeting, the congregation declared that they recognized the necessity of a delegation. In the meeting on May 29, Prof. Biewend appeared and showed what gifts the delegates must have and that he found these gifts especially in Walther and Wyneken, and therefore urged the congregation to give both gentlemen, even if at great sacrifice. In two subsequent congregational meetings, Prof. Walther declared that he had no pleasure in traveling to Germany as a delegate of the Synod.

When the synod met in Milwaukee in June 1851, the delegation to Germany was the first subject of discussion. In a special letter, President Wyneken urged this matter upon the Synod, pointing out that we were bound above all by the commandment: “Be diligent to keep unity in the Spirit through the bond of peace.”

At the same time a letter was submitted, signed by Dr. Sihler and other brothers, recommending the same subject. In this letter Professor Walther and Pastor Wyneken were proposed as delegates. The necessity of a delegation was recognized by all the synod members and Walther and Wyneken were unanimously elected as delegates. The congregation in St. Louis, which served Pastor Wyneken, gave their consent to let their pastor make the trip if Dr. Sihler would take over the service of the congregation, as had been indicated at the synod.

The departure*) was delayed by Walther's illness, which lasted several weeks. He was able to leave on the evening of August 15. After five days he arrived in New York. The sea voyage was

*A detailed travel report from the pen of Professor Walther can be found in "Lutheraner", Year 8, No. 13-21.

a happy one. Once in Germany, they, Walther and Wyneken, in accordance with the wishes of the synod, also visited other vocal leaders of the Lutheran church and some conferences. They visited Dr. Guericke in Halle twice. He faithfully and warmly exhorted them to hold fast to the recognized truth. In Leipzig, Walther met Dr. Marbach, who had once emigrated with the Saxons to Missouri, but, dissatisfied with the then developing conditions here, had returned to Germany. At the mission house Walther had an interview with Dr. Kahnis. In Waldenburg, arrangements were made by Pastor Pasig to hold conferences on two days.*) During the time of their stay in Dresden, Dr. Harleß devoted so many hours to them daily that they were not only able to present a lively picture of our local conditions to him, but also to discuss with him in more detail what was moving our synod at that time. With the greatest interest he heard

*) “Since I was now," writes Walther, "in the immediate vicinity of my dear birthplace, Langenchursdorf, where one of my sisters currently lives, I could not avoid visiting here for a few hours. As great as my joy was to see the lovely valley again with its old, well-known huts and fields and gardens and streams and paths, the few relatives I had left and so many dear old friends from my youth, the joy almost completely turned into melancholy, because both parents had gone home in the meantime (probably after shedding many a tear over the children who had gone far across the sea) and therefore nothing was left for me on my return home but to visit their burial mounds. From here I also made a short visit to the little village of Bräunsdorf, where I took up the pastoral office fifteen years ago, but which I resigned after having administered it for only two years, out of an errant conscience. Although I was greeted here again by everyone I met with the warmest joy, sometimes with tears, the fact that here, too, pain outweighed the joy of seeing each other again needs no mention." "Lutheraner," Vol. 8, p. 107.

their report, expressed the most joyful hopes of our American Lutheran Church for the Church in general, assured them of his concurrence in the doctrine we hold and hold fast, especially on the points now in question and in dispute, and expressed the wish that henceforth a more lively intercourse between the Church on this side and on the other side of the ocean might be established and maintained.

But their actual destination was Neuendettelsau. They were warmly received by Löhe. It did not take long before they found themselves in a lively and friendly conversation about the points of doctrine on which a difference had come to light. Already during this first conversation, which continued until the night of the following day, an understanding was reached. Löhe dedicated an entire number of his journal "Kirchliche Mittheilungen aus und über Nordamerica" to the memory of the visit of our delegates. The especially beautifully decorated number bore the title: "In memory of the presence of the venerable brothers Walther and Wyneken in Germany." It is beautiful what Löhe says in this number about the event of the delegation on the part of our Synod. After expressing that he had not been able to accept the invitation of our Synod, he continues: "In response to our statement, which unfortunately had to be rejected, the Synod of Missouri, Ohio, etc. decided, with a love that was shameful for us, to send two messengers of peace across the sea, who should present their convictions of the holy office in the various Lutheran churches and also grant us the benefit of personal negotiation. Indeed, a holy and noble sense, worthy of the Lutheran Church, a proof that the right God is in Zion. Where, in case of differences, one does not flee from one another, but rushes to one another, opposing the Satan who kindles dissension and wants to turn the kindled one into a mighty burning fire,

by clasping brotherly hands more firmly one to the other, — where one does not let rivers, forests and prairies, not the ocean hinder one in such doing; then Jesus speaks blessing and peace, He establishes peace in the heart before understanding and knowledge have become one, — and herewith the best has almost already been done.

In Erlangen, Walther met his childhood friend Dr. Delitzsch, and was introduced by him to his colleagues, Professors Hofmann, Thomasius, Höfling and Schmid. Few days passed without Walther and Wyneken eating at the tables of one or the other of the aforementioned professors, according to the invitation they had received, and taking part in their conferences. That there was no lack of disputations can be imagined. Since Walther had not been able to complete the paper "Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt" (The Voice of Our Church in the Question of Church and Ministry) before his departure due to illness, he used his stay in Erlangen to do so.

Twice the delegates met Pastor Löhe in Nuremberg and twice more they visited him in Neuendettelsau. After they had made a few more visits to northern Germany, they set out on their return journey. On February 2, 1852, they arrived happily in St. Louis.

The delegation has undoubtedly been of great blessing. The latest day will make that clear. Many misgivings on both sides fell away, the friendly relationship grew closer with every conversation, but a complete agreement on all disputed points was not reached. And unfortunately, the restoration of a friendly relationship was only temporary. We believe that Dr. Sihler is right when he writes in his self-biography: "Unfortunately, they had not achieved the main purpose of their journey. Pastor Löhe was admittedly able to

in the end, he was unable to counter Professor Walther's compelling reasons for proof; however, he stuck to his vague assertions that the confessional writings of our church did not have such a unifying power as we thought they did. (*Curriculum Vitae* II, p. 146.)

XV.

## Bible Society — a new theological monthly "Lehre und Wehre" — struggle with the Buffalo Synod — Walther in Pastor Grabau's church in Buffalo.

In a congregational meeting held in April 1853, Prof. Walther advised the congregation to make sure that one could always get cheap and good Bibles that contained the correct Luther text, and suggested the idea of a Bible Society to be founded. The Bible Society, already founded on April 24, first imported good Bibles from Germany and later had two editions produced itself, after it had previously published the well-known Altenburger Bibelwerk*). Walther, its founder, remained its president until his death.**)

In 1853, the synod decided to publish a monthly journal for preachers and those of the people who are capable of understanding more academically written treatises, in addition to the "Lutheraner", which would still appear every two weeks, but whose style of writing would henceforth be adapted to the capacity of the people even more than it had been before. However, the decision was not carried out. Prof. Walther brought up the publication of such a monthly journal at the next

*) A Bible with prefaces and summaries to each chapter.

**) In the Synodal Assembly of 1887, the Bible Society transferred its property worth $17,407 to the Synod.

Synodal Assembly and showed the urgent need for it. The publication was decided anew and Prof. Walther was entrusted with the editing of it. He writes about it in a prospectus published in the "Lutheraner", in which he announces the publication of the same in January 1855: "Our synod has left it up to the present editor of the 'Lutheraner' to wait with the publication of the theological periodical until the Gymnasium director to be elected takes office; however, three reasons have determined us, after consultation with our Reverend President and several other brothers in office, to begin with the publication of the designated monthly journal already this month in God's name. First of all, several of our colleagues have already sent us so many valuable submissions that the first two issues are already almost completely filled, among which especially one essay deals with a now "burning question", the publication of which is actually about time; it is a review of Wucherer's writing on the sacred office of preaching.*) Secondly, it seems as if the filling of the vacant director's office here could be postponed for quite a long time, while among us the need for a journal becomes more and more palpable, which can also take up what the 'Lutheraner', intended more for a general readership, must either reject or can only take up with impairment of the rights of a large part of its readers. Finally, the beginning of a year seems to us to be a particularly suitable time for the start of a new journal, which we would not like to miss."

About the task and aim of the paper it is said: "The paper should not be a church friend, but a church servant, not above or beside, but in and under the church.

*) By P. O. Fuerbringer.

It will not give itself up as a playground even for those who set out to attack the doctrine of the orthodox church and its sanctified institutions and, if not to overthrow them — for even the gates of hell are not able to do that, let alone the babblings of men of wisdom — yet to try and shake them," etc.

The struggle with the Buffalo Synod lasted until 1857. In synodical meetings and in the "Lutheraner", testimony had to be given against their Romanizing principles. The fight against our synod was led by the Buffalo Synod, respectively by Pastor Grabau, in the most passionate and hateful way. Those pastors who served congregations in which people were found who had conscientiously renounced the Grabau connection or were unjustly banned were called "Fanatic [*Rotten*] preachers", Walther and Löber and others were called " Fanatic protectors", "heretics", our Synod "Ahab Synod", "Abominable Synod", "Babel Temple". All requests by the Missouri Synod for meetings to discuss doctrinal differences were turned down by the Buffalo Synod. However, in order to give the appearance of seeking peace, it proposed to establish a general court of arbitration, by whose decision and judgment the dispute would be settled. Thus our Synod made the final declaration that, "since our dispute with the Synod of Buffalo has its ground in nothing but the false doctrine of the same," ... "we remain unchanged in the proposal we made from the beginning and later repeatedly to the Synod of Buffalo, that for the settlement of the dispute pending between us and the said Synod, first of all a colloquium be held on the doctrinal differences that are taking place", and that we "reject any further peace proposal on the part of the Synod of Buffalo, which does not bring about a peace on

based on doctrinal agreement, as a proposal for a false peace that is displeasing to God". The Synod also declared that "Prof. Walther, as editor of the 'Lutheran,' had not represented private views in the dispute with the Synod of Buffalo, but had proceeded entirely in their interests." From then on, Walther only rarely mentioned Grabau and his comrades in the "Lutheraner".

Walther once had the opportunity to hear Pastor Grabau preach and to be absolved by him. He used to tell this more often. Pastor Hochstetter writes: He (Walther) told me the following at the first meeting in the fall of 1866: When he, accompanied by student Hugo Hanser, traveled to Rainham, Ontario, in order to win the pastor there for a job (in the winter of 1855 to 1856), he stayed in Buffalo for the Sunday and had a friendly parishioner, Peter Schulz, lead him to Pastor Grabau's church in the morning. No sooner had the two of them taken their seats in the gallery of the church than a Grabau churchwarden was seen going to Pastor Grabau in the sacristy; whereupon Pastor Schulz said to Prof. Walther: 'You are already registered with Pastor Grabau.' Pastor Grabau preached on John 8:46-59. 'I was surprised,' said Walther, 'how slowly and languidly Pastor Grabau began to preach, as if he were too weak to finish the sermon. But all at once he cried out: "Are they already dead, those who lift up stones against the Buffalo Synod? They are not far from here, the arch-enemies and the protectors of the fanatics [*Rotten*]! — After the conclusion of this sermon," Walther continued, "public confession and absolution followed. There I knelt down with the other listeners and thought, while Grabau said the absolution: 'Now look, my old Grabau, now you have to absolve me of my sins, if you think I'm the protector of the mob!

## XVI

### Struggle with Iowa Synod — Walther's call for free Lutheran conferences — four free conferences are held.

However, a new battle had broken out, which was also about the preservation of important, sacred truths and in which Walther also fought in the front line. Pastor Löhe, of whom we have reported above, had basically kept his church-governmental ideas. Displeasure filled him, since he saw that he could not realize these his favorite ideas among the Missourians, that his offer that the Missourian congregations in Michigan, which had immigrated from Franconia, should enter into "ecclesiastical" fellowship with him, met with no response. He was therefore again and more and more alienated from our synod. The friendly relationship restored by the delegation was short-lived. His distrust of Missouri also spread to the men he had now sent out. He had promised the delegates the establishment of a school teachers' seminary, but the teacher Großmann, who was then chosen for it, already received the instruction to join the Missouri Synod only "as intimately as possible". The seminary was established in 1852 at Saginaw City, Mich. in the midst of the congregation there belonging to our synod. But Grossmann, who held Löhe's views, did not feel at ease among the Missourians. He tried in vain to teach the congregation, of which he was a member, his Löhean views. So in 1853 he moved with his seminary to Iowa, where another of Löhe's disciples, Pastor Deindörfer in Michigan, who had left our synod, had gone before. Thus, in 1854 — as an opposition synod — the Iowa Synod came into being, to which Löhe wanted to assign his disciples from then on and which was the

Löhe's principles and favorite ideas should be brought to bear here in America.

The new synod thus agreed completely with Löhe, especially in his un-Lutheran teachings on church and ministry, which were related to those of the Buffalo Synod; hence the Iowa and Buffalo Synods were once close to each other. But since these views of the Iowa Synod did not agree with the teachings of our confessions, she and Löhe took a freer position on the confessions, not only in this respect, but in general, and did not want to consider herself bound by the entire doctrinal content of the confessions, but only to accept as conscience-binding what was said in the same confessions. Together with Löhe, they wanted to strive for further development of the doctrine and declared important doctrines, e.g. that of church and ministry, to be "open questions", regarding which different opinions could and should be tolerated until the church had decided. The members of the synod partly paid homage to chiliasm (the delusion of a millennial kingdom of Christ still to come before the last day), and partly, if they did not accept it for themselves, they were obliged to tolerate it. As a result of these chiliastic views, they denied — against the confessional writings — that the pope was the Antichrist.

Our synod had to bear witness against this un-Lutheran direction, but also — and especially Walther — had to endure much vituperation.

What this fight against Löhe and his friends was about, Walther showed in a note to an article sent in for the "Lutheraner" "about the position of the Iowa Synod on the symbolic books of the Lutheran Church". He writes: "A time has evidently come in which within our church all the more dangerous opponents of our ecclesiastical confessions have risen up, the greater merits they have otherwise rendered to our church

have acquired. Here, it is necessary to refrain from people and speak to his father and mother: I do not know them; and to his son: I know not. Woe to our synod and all its members if they are not faithful now, since the apple of our church's eye is being attacked loudly and ever more loudly by those who led many of us to it in the first place and who now, having gained prestige in the church through their former faithfulness, want to use this prestige to lead us away from it again. **Here we mean men like Löhe**. To be pliable here is a more heinous sin than the most miserable union. ... If we allow a departure from any point of the confession in the midst of the Lutheran Church, we tear down the Lutheran Church itself and prove ourselves to be the traitors who have taken a seat within its walls in order to grind down its fortifications under the appearance of mending them and to open wide the entrance to the enemies on its ruins." ("Lutheraner," Vol. 11. p. 203.)*)

*) What it means to declare articles of faith to be "open questions" is shown by the following sentences taken from an article by Prof. R. Lange, which Walther heartily approved: "It is an insult to the Christian Church to say that she has not known until this hour what she is; and an insult to the whole series of orthodox shepherds and teachers whom the Lord has given to the Church from the beginning, to say that they, without exception, have not known what their office consists in. It is an insult to the Holy Spirit to say that no enlightened Christian can understand His words in the Holy Scriptures without the decision of the Church. To turn articles of faith into open questions is to turn revealed doctrines into problems of reason and the Christian faith into pagan searching for truth. Hence the folly of placing doubt and uncertainty in articles of Christian doctrine higher than simple faith and firm adherence to the revealed teachings. It is a grave error of Lutheran theologians to assume the "sole authority" (prestige) "of the self-interpreting Holy Scriptures in matters of faith.

That Walther was not concerned only with arguing, as his enemies always claimed, that he was a true theologian of peace despite all his zeal against false doctrine and for pure doctrine, that he was very interested in rallying quite a few around the faithful confession of our church, is shown by his public question at the end of the Foreword to the second volume of "Lehre und Wehre" 1856. He says there: "So we hereby dare to make the public inquiry: Should not, for the purpose of striving for the final presentation of a unified Evangelical Lutheran Church of North America, the respective meeting of such members of the various synods calling themselves Lutheran, which have adopted the unchanged Augsburg Confession, be held?

and to put those of the church in their place. It is a faith-destroying delusion to make the certainty of faith and the knowledge of truth dependent on the future decision of the church instead of basing it on the pronouncement of God. It is folly to deny the decision of Scripture when the decision of the church has not yet been made. The demand which the defenders of the open questions make on Christianity is ungodly; for it demands in fact for the contradiction against the heavenly doctrine of truth equal rights in the church with the latter. Of contradictorily opposed teachings, only one can be the right one, the other must be false teaching, lie and error. It is a temptation of Satan when those who have correctly recognized the truth from God's Word are challenged to cast doubt on this truth. It is a grave sin and great delusion to despise the light long since given by God to the Church in the expectation of receiving better light from the confused theology of the nineteenth century, which is itself 'impoverished of common sense'. Scripture calls men of broken senses who are always learning and never come to the knowledge of the truth — and therefore wait for the decision of the church. To turn articles of faith into open questions is pagan, papist and unionist at the same time. For in this way revealed truths are turned into problems, the Church is substituted for Scripture, and the distinction between truth and error in parts of the Christian faith is abolished." (Lehre und Wehre VI, 261 f.)

How would it be beneficial and conducive for the Lutherans to recognize and confess without reservation the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures and their own faith in the pure and faithful expression of the Confession of 1530? For our part, we would be heartily willing to participate in such a conference of orthodox Lutherans, if and where it should take place according to the wishes of the majority of the participants, and we can assure in advance the same willingness to do so on the part of several theologians and laymen here, to whom the prosperity of our dear Evangelical Lutheran Church in this new home of ours is no less the deepest longing of their hearts, and to whom we have already communicated the thought expressed here. Since it is a fact that even among those local Lutherans who wholeheartedly adhere to the basic confession of our church, there are still many differences of opinion, the discussion of which in our journals can easily contribute more to delaying than to promoting the unification of our church that is longed for by all, so a personal verbal intercourse and exchange can undoubtedly be nothing but beneficial and would certainly bring above all the incomparable blessing that the struggle, which is admittedly still necessary within our church, would acquire and retain the character of a mutual competition of brethren for the faithful preservation of the precious jewel of doctrinal purity and unity." (Lehre und Wehre II, p. 4 f.) Finally, he remarks "that the meetings and consultations, with all publicity, should of course only be of a private character and all those present, without intending a representation of their respective synods, should participate only for their person".

The proposal met with approval. Soon names were published in "Lehre und Wehre" and other church papers agreeing that Columbus, Ohio, was the most suitable place for the meeting.

In the same year, the first free Evangelical Lutheran Conference took place in Columbus from October 1 to 7, 1856, with 54 preachers and 19 laymen from four different synods: Missouri, New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Of the proposals made concerning the subject to be discussed, the one made by Walther, no doubt, to discuss the Augsburg Confession article by article, was accepted. It was argued that the disgraceful attack on the Augsburg Confession*) made the year before within the so-called Lutheran General Synod and the resulting fight for this good confession had brought about this meeting. At this first conference, the first seven articles were discussed. We add here immediately that three more such free conferences were held in the following years, namely in Pittsburg from October 29 to November 4, 1857, in Cleveland from August 5 to 11, 1858, and in Fort Wayne from July 14 to 20, 1859,**) and that Articles 7 to 14 and 28 of the Augsburg Confession were discussed at the same. Walther was able to attend the first three conferences. He took the liveliest part in the negotiations. He could not be present at the fourth because of a throat ailment. The congregation expressed its heartfelt sadness that "Prof. Walther, who had given the first impulse for these free conferences and through whom God had bestowed so many blessings on them, had been prevented from taking part in the negotiations this time; at the same time with the wish that it may please God to restore this noble instrument soon and to preserve it for his church for a long time to come.

*) The Augsburg Confession had been mutilated by striking out several doctrines offensive to many General Synodists. — "*Definite Platform,*" etc. See "Lehre und Wehre" I, 336.

**) S. "Lutheraner" 13, 33. 14, 81. 15, 19. 16, 10.

**XVII.**

## Walther falls ill — is forced to go on a health trip to Germany — returns strengthened and invigorated.

Walther's throat condition worsened, and his state of health became increasingly worrisome. In January 1860, President Wyneken, who had taken up residence in Fort Wayne at the end of 1858, came to St. Louis with Prof. Crämer to ask him to make a trip to Germany to regain his health. At the congregational meeting the proposal met with lively applause. The teachers at the institution were asked to communicate with the board of the congregation of Walther the sentiments of the community and to urge him to make the trip. The congregation undertook to provide all travel expenses. There were also promises of contributions from other sides.

Walther was finally moved. In the "Lutheraner" *) he spoke about it thus: "To the members of our synod and readers of the 'Lutheraner' I, the undersigned, hereby report the following: After our Reverend General President, Pastor Wyneken, had received the news that my health was declining from month to month and that I was hardly able to do even the most necessary work of my profession, he, after consultation with the dear brethren in Fort Wayne, found himself moved to send me home in the company of Prof. Crämer's company and, after obtaining medical advice from the latter, he persuaded me first to abandon all further official activities, to embark on a journey to Germany and there, among other things, to use a mineral bath for a while. At the same time, I was urged by the local congregation and its pastors not only to follow the instruction I had received, but also to

*) Volume 16, p. 102.

I have also been promised by the former, as well as by many other dear brothers, the procurement of the means of travel in the most loving and touching way. Now no one can see more vividly than I myself how utterly unworthy I am of all, let alone such extraordinary love; how my poor life and my miserable service to our church stand in no relation to the great sacrifices which my brothers want to make for it; and how what they want to give me would be incomparably better used for any other pious purpose — only the request made to me not to reject the loving care of my brothers for my recovery was so urgent, so urgent to the conscience, that I finally, in deep bowing of my soul and shame before God and man, let myself overcome to give up all my grave misgivings and to submit to the will of my superiors and brothers in Jesus' name. When this sheet comes into the hands of the readers, I will therefore probably already be on the journey to the old home (via New Orleans and Havre). — May now the benevolent God prevent that by this my final consent to the wish of my brothers, to let them make such great sacrifices for my futile life, no one will be annoyed; may He further give according to His mercy that the immense amount of love given to me poor worm is not completely wasted; And may He finally be a rich retributor to my benefactors in time and eternity and strengthen me in such a way that I can still show my gratitude here or tell there as one of the least among His own what His own have done to me. . . . Finally, I humbly and urgently commend myself to the intercession of all my American brethren and friends, and hereby bid them all a sincere and heartfelt farewell in Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen. C. F. W. Walther, Editor."

On February 6, 1860, he left, accompanied by his son Constantin and his nephew, S. Keyl. On the Mississippi steamer he wrote for the "Lutheraner" an evaluation and recommendation of Röbbelen's writing: "Das zwanzigste Kapitel der Offenbarung St. Johannis", in which Luther's interpretation: "Die tausend Jahre müssen anfahen, da dies Buch (die Offenbarung St. Johannis) ist gemacht", is justified.

He arrived in New Orleans on February 12 and stayed here until March 10. On that day, he departed on the "Oder" for Hamburg. On the sea, he wrote a few songs, which we include in the appendix.

We add here immediately some thoughts recorded in the diary, which show what at that time, as so often, his mind was occupied with:

"An exhortation to our Synod to preserve the unity in which it stands.

"It is something unprecedented in our days, a miracle of God.

"It is a return of the days of our fathers and of Acts. 2.

"It is a visitation of grace and a gift of grace from God.

"Let us calmly watch how people everywhere want to progress and invent new things, to correct the orthodox church, to lead the fathers to school; no matter how much the new wisdom may spread, the wind of time will blow it away like chaff and the old truth will shine like the old sun.

"This unity makes us strong despite our weakness.

"Let us bear the ignominy with joy that we only repristinate, not reproduce, the theology of the sixteenth century; let us look to those who seek the glory, the pure Lutheran

The author is convinced that he did not receive the teachings of the Christian Church as a pupil, but rather reproduced them independently.

"Not a unity of stagnation, but a unity in living movement.

"Unity not only among ourselves, but also with the orthodox Church of all ages." *)

He arrived happily in Hamburg on May 4. In Leipzig, which he visited several times, he met, sometimes repeatedly, with Dr. Marbach, Graul and Hardeland, Pastor Ahlfeldt and the Leipzig professors, among others. In Leipzig, he consulted two physicians who advised him not to take the bath and to travel to Switzerland. In Saxony he visited his relatives. In Halle, he was kindly treated by Dr. Guericke. In Zeiz, he visited Ströbel, who was known for his contributions to Guericke's journal. When he arrived back in Leipzig on June 7, he learned that Dr. Marbach (who had emigrated with the Saxons but returned, "whose heart, however, remained with the church in America and in whom our synod, with which he was in complete agreement in spirit and faith, had the most intimate friend and advocate") had died blessedly the day before. On the 9th he attended the funeral of the same. He reported the eulogy held by Pastor Fr. Ahlfeldt in the "Lutheraner" **).

On June 12, he began his journey to Switzerland. On the return trip he visited Pastor Hornung in Strasbourg, where he met Pastor Magnus, in Durlach Pastor Eichhorn, in Ispringen Pastor Frommel, in Steeden Pastor Brunn, in Hermannsburg Pastor Harms, etc. On August 4 he started his return trip to

*) Compare the editorial correspondence in "Lehre und Wehre" VI, p. 193, in which he expresses these and similar thoughts.

**) Volume 17, No. 2.

America. On August 20, he landed in New York and arrived in St. Louis on August 28, as the "Lutheraner"*) reported, "not only happy, but also recovered from his physical ailment".

At the general synodal meeting held in St. Louis in October, President Wyneken was able to announce in his report: "Our dear and dear teacher, Professor Walther, has returned from his journey to Germany strengthened and invigorated, thank God. May the Lord keep him a blessing for us for a long time to come."

XVIII.

**The Practical Seminary in St. Louis — twenty-fifth anniversary in office — "The Proper Form of a Local Lutheran Congregation independent of the state" — Walther again General President — Colloquium with the Buffalo and Iowa Synods — "The Evangelical Lutheran Church the True Visible Church of God on earth."**

In this synod meeting (1860) it was also decided that the two seminaries, the theoretical and practical (the latter at that time in Fort Wayne, Ind.), should be united locally, that therefore the practical seminary should be transferred from Fort Wayne to St. Louis, while the high school, which was connected with the theoretical seminary here, should be transferred from here to Fort Wayne. As a result of the outbreak of the Civil War, the local institution had to be closed as early as May 1861, and so the decision of the Synod came at the beginning of the new school year (in September)

*) Volume 17, p. 16.

to the execution. Thus, Prof. Walther continued to teach at this institution in the following years until 1875, when the institute was moved to Springfield, Ill.

When the Civil War, which also brought Prof. Walther much pain and heartache, broke out, it was decided in the congregational meeting of February 4, 1861, to include a special request concerning the general distress of the country in the church prayer and to kneel and present the distress of the country to God after the sermon in the Passion Week services.

On the second Sunday after Epiphany in 1862, Prof. Walther celebrated his twenty-fifth anniversary in office. A number of his local friends had a beautiful lithograph produced. In the marginal decorations of the same, which surround the dedication*) and a poem, reference is made to four of the most important publications, to the "Lutheraner" and to "Lehre und Wehre", to the "Kirchengesangbuch" and the writing: "Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt." Furthermore, in addition to Wittenberg and the Wartburg, it depicts pictorially: Bräunsdorf, the first site of his effectiveness in Germany, the (old) Dreieinigkeitskirche (Trinity Church) there on Lombard Street, and the (old) institution building. A friend published a poem: "Festive and joyful greeting to Sr. Hochehrwürden the Herr Professor and Pastor Carl Ferd. Wilh. Walther on his twenty-fifth anniversary in office on the second Sunday after Epiphany 1862

*) To the venerable pastor and professor Mr.
Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther
on the occasion of his twenty-fifth anniversary in office
the second Sunday after Epiphany, 1862.

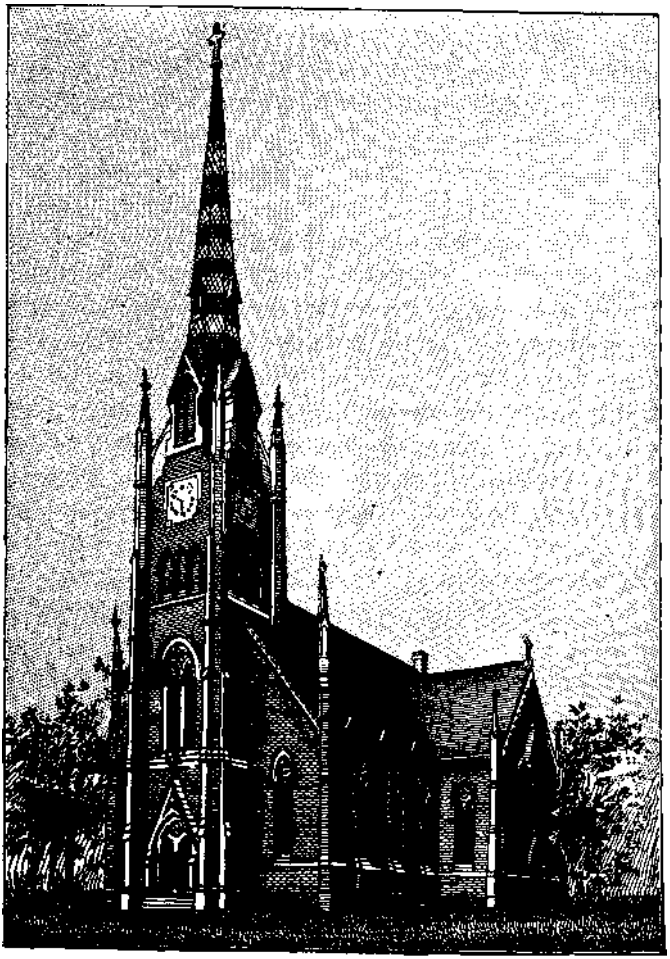
offered by the Evang. luth. Zion America's." The last verse of this reads:

"God let his place clothe him
In fresh strength still long at his reward!
He will also help him to fight and graze victoriously,
That he as a fifty-year-old jubilant old man
With joy I see how Zion is being built,
On her head the truth star wreath,
And that he may one day see the Savior blessed,
And gloriously shine like the brightness of heaven."

In 1863, Walther published an extremely important paper, "The Proper Form of a Local Lutheran Church Independent of the State." This writing is a side piece to his earlier writing: "The Voice of our Church in the Question of Church and [Ministry] Office." It was the practical implementation of the doctrine of Church and Ministry and showed that the Lutheran doctrine of Church and Ministry "forms the firmest foundation on which a particular church in its proper form is built" and "that our old orthodox teachers, although living in a state church under a consistorial constitution, on the basis of their doctrine of church, office, church government, etc., did not conceive of the form of a local congregation independent of the state in any other way than the way it is presented here".

At the special meeting of the General Synod held in Fort Wayne in October 1864, Prof. Walther was re-elected General President, after the Synod had modified the powers of the office of General President and determined that he should no longer be obliged to visit the individual congregations, but should be inspector over the whole of the Synod, especially over the district presidents.

Walther was particularly pleased with the construction of the new, large and beautiful Trinity Church and the love and pleasure it gave him,



**Trinity Church 1865.**

with which the District proceeded. The dedication took place on December 3 and 4, 1865. Walther preached the first sermon on Ps. 87; his topic was: “The glorious miraculous building of God's Church on earth"; he showed "1. that it seems so weak and yet stands so unshakably firm, 2. that it seems so poor and yet possesses such immeasurable treasures, 3. that it seems so small and yet comprises such a large innumerable multitude”.

In November 1866 the colloquium with the Buffalo Synod took place in Buffalo, N. Y.. Pastor Grabau, who had refused and thwarted the religious discussions offered until then, had broken away from his synod because it no longer wanted to put up with his arbitrary rule. No sooner had Grabau left the Synod of Buffalo than the desire for peace, which he had hitherto held down, stirred in the members of it more strongly than ever. The willingness to hold a religious discussion with Missouri about doctrinal differences was indicated by the new senior, Fr. G. Maschhop, to Prof. Walther as General President on August 31. At Walther's request, a preparatory friendly private discussion had previously taken place in Fort Wayne on October 10, 11, and 12 between Walther and Dr. Sihler on the one hand and Pastors von Rohr and Hochstetter on the other. Walther was able to report to the synod meeting in St. Louis on October 31, "that the carrying out of the same by an official public colloquium, under God's gracious blessing, gives hope of the best success for the establishment of a true church peace". (Synod Report XIII, 25.) With joy the Synod heard this news and made the necessary arrangements for the colloquium to be held and elected the colloquists, among them Prof. Walther. The colloquium was held from November 20 to December 5. At the colloquium, one of the Buffalo colloquists adhered to certain Buffalo teachings to the end. The others

but declared at the end: "In view of the fact that they agree with the declarations of the Missouri Colloquents on record, and that these in turn have agreed with the declarations of the undersigned" (the Buffalo Colloquents) "-- the doctrinal unity between the Missouri Synod and ourselves is now fully established." The Missourian Colloquents then recorded the following: “The entire present representatives of the Missourian Synod meet the foregoing declaration with the declaration on their part that they too, with thanksgiving and praise to the Lord, recognize complete doctrinal unity with the aforementioned for the result of this Colloquium, and therefore hereby extend to them the hand of brotherhood in the face of the whole church.*)

In the following year, when the Northern District of our Synod was assembled in Adrian [Michign] in June, the Iowa Synod, meeting at the same time in Toledo, submitted a letter through a deputation consisting of Professor G. Fritschel and Pastor Klindworth, requesting a colloquium. The District gave its consent and asked the present General President, Prof. Walther, to obtain the consent of the other three Districts. The colloquium was held at Milwaukee, Wisc. from November 13 to 19 (1867). Prof. Walther was one of the colloquists representing our Synod. The main subjects on which were negotiated were: The position on the ecclesiastical confessions, the so-called open questions, the millennial kingdom, and the doctrine of the Antichrist. For lack of time, two other points of difference: the doctrines of the office of the keys and of ordination could not be discussed. The colloquium was inconclusive at this time. The last statement of the

*) See "The Buffalo Colloquium," p. 31 f.

Colloquents of the Iowa Synod concluded with the charge that the Missourians were committing "a grievous irresponsible sin of terrible consequence" in denying church fellowship to the Iowans for the sake of a difference in the doctrine of Antichrist. In response to this statement by the Iowa Colloquents, the Missouri Colloquents declared the following: "So long as the Iowa Synod does not firmly and roundly recant what it publicly and solemnly confessed in its report of 1858: 'that the papacy is antichristian, or that many popes may be called antichrists, in the very sense in which 1 John 2:18. speaks of many antichrists; but the man of sin mentioned in 2 Thess. 2. is a definite human personality, even so in the future. . . This apostasy in the antichrist must also be expected by us in the future, because we do not understand by the man of sin a papacy, but only a certain individual human personality' — as long as we cannot concede to it that it is confessionally faithful in this point. This alone, however, is by no means, as our opponents state after their final declaration, the reason why we cannot stand, confess, work and fight together with her ecclesiastically, but rather other differences named in our submissions, which in part have been balanced neither by a round recantation nor by a round confession, and in part have not yet been able to be discussed for lack of time. However, after the rapprochement that has already taken place, we do not at all give up the hope of a future, God grant it, ecclesiastical agreement soon."*).

So an agreement in the full truth had not been reached. And only such an agreement could be reached by our colloquers.

*) See "Oeffentliches Colloquium" etc., p. 31 f.

"We want to achieve complete unity," said Prof. Walther repeatedly, "we want to win it! What a joy it would be, what a blessing for the church, if we could reach out to each other and work with each other in complete unity of faith from then on!*)

In this year (1867) Walther published his writing: "The Evangelical Lutheran Church the True Visible Church of God on Earth", — which had been the basis for the doctrinal negotiations of the General Synod in 1866 and was later also the basis for district assemblies.

XIX.

## Agreements with other synods — illness — new home — Synodal Conference — Jubilee Synod — English Lutheran Conference.

In the same year, 1867 in November, Walther received a letter signed by the General Presiding Officer of the Ohio Synod, Prof. M. Loy, and the District Presidents of the same, in which they informed him that the Ohio Synod had appointed a committee to confer with the Missouri Synod and to take the necessary steps to initiate a friendly relationship, and requested him to communicate this wish to the Missouri Synod. After obtaining the consent of our district presidents, the desired meeting was held on March 4-6, 1868, at Columbus, Ohio. The intention of the conference was to establish a friendly relationship between the Synod and the Synod of Missouri. It had been the intention of the conferring parties,

*) Later, some pastors left the Iowa Synod and joined the Missouri Synod and the Wisconsin Synod.

not to publish the agreed points*) until they had been submitted to the two synods for negotiation and decision. But Walther, who had privately communicated the document to Pastor Brunn in Germany, who took such an intimate interest in all the experiences of the local Lutheran Church, had overlooked to note this explicitly. Thus it found its way from Brunn's monthly paper into the local papers before it was discussed by the synod. The final declaration of our Synod, in 1869, was: "The Synod of Missouri is ready to carry out its agreement with the Honorable Synod of Ohio, etc., in the manner specified in the nine points, as soon as the latter is ready to make the declaration that it also agrees with us on the points in which, according to its own declaration, it is not yet in harmony with us."**).

In June 1869 Walther was requested by the officials of the Illinois Synod to permit representatives of the Illinois Synod to have a friendly conference with representatives of our Synod for the purpose of mutual understanding and recognition. The meeting took place here in St. Louis on August 4 and 5, 1869, and our Synod, to which the agreed points were submitted, considered the continued holding of both free and official conferences by members of both Synods, as well as mutual attendance at Synodal meetings, to be the only proper way to establish a right relationship and full trust between both Synods.

On October 21 and 22, 1868, a meeting was held in Milwaukee, Wis. for the purpose of reaching an understanding between our Synod and that of Wisconsin. Among the representatives of our Synod was Prof. Walther. The agreement reached with the Wisconsin Synod was ratified by ours in 1869.

*) S. "Lutheraner" 24, p. 188.

**) S. Fourteenth Synod Report. p. 95.

In 1869, his sore throat returned. On March 18, he wrote to his nephew, Pastor J. G. Walther: "I, too, have been suffering from a sore throat for more than a month. Soon it is more violent, soon less so. I will probably not be completely freed from it." Previously he remarked: "Apart from my journey to the Alps, yours have done me the best service with salted fresh water, with which I gargled myself. If the inflammation in the throat was still so significant, it immediately disappeared quite a bit after gargling with well-salted water." The following year he suffered from rheumatism. On September 15, he wrote to a pastor, "I am just now beginning to recover from a rheumatic disease."

Until 1870, Walther occupied rooms in the old institution's building, at first, as we have seen, very modest, since it consisted initially only of the southern wing, later somewhat more, when the northern wing (1851) and the middle building (1857) were erected. In that year (1870) he was able to move into a house built for him on a lot adjacent to the college land. Friends had had it built and wanted to give it to him as a gift. But he did not accept the gift. In the "Lutheraner" he therefore made the following statement: "A number of my personal friends have, without my knowledge, begun the construction of a valuable house on a small lot belonging to me and bordering on the college land, with the friendly intention of making me a gift. After careful consideration before God, I see myself compelled, in hereby expressing my most sincere thanks to my dear friends for their undeserved kindness, to declare publicly at the same time that I cannot, nor will I accept the great gift under any condition. Since this matter is a matter of conscience to me, I ask the kind donors, if they will let me know of their

I do not consider your friendship completely unworthy of penetrating me any further. Not only would it not change my decision, but any attempted coercion would cause me all the deeper heartache. It is not my place to make suggestions about what should be done with the building that is nearing completion; however, I believe I may allow myself to remind you that my family is cordially prepared to cede the lot in question,*) so that the house erected on it can be sold and the donated funds returned to the charitable donors. C. F. W. Walther. "**)

In October 1870, Walther received a letter from a committee of the Ohio Synod, which informed him that it had been appointed for the purpose of conferring with similar committees of other synods about the feasibility of cooperation, and inquired of him whether our synod would be inclined to enter into a discussion with it and similar committees. The district presidents, to whom he submitted the matter, agreed to the proposals made, and so Walther arranged that, in addition to the representatives of the Norwegian Lutheran, Ohio and Wisconsin Synods who had been invited and had appeared, representatives of ours also took part in a convention to be held in Chicago on January 11-13, 1871, for the purpose indicated. The result of these consultations was the formation of the "Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference". At the same time it was decided to hold another preliminary meeting in November and to prepare everything necessary for the final meeting. This preliminary meeting was held in Fort Wayne under the chairmanship of Prof. Walther. In addition to the members of the above-mentioned synods, members of the Synod of Illinois

*) The building site was later purchased by the synod.

**) S. "Lutherans" 26, p. 110.

and that of Minnesota, who made the declaration that their synods had given their cordial consent to the plan of the synodal conference to be formed.

The General Synod convened here on April 26, 1872, was a jubilee synod. In the opening service, in which Pros. Walther preached the opening sermon on Ps. 119:43, the 25th anniversary of the Synod was celebrated. At the request of Prof. Walther, who feared that the opening sermon would exhaust him too much, Vice-President Brohm delivered the synodal address. However, Walther took a lively interest in the discussion of the theses presented by Pastor Brohm on the timely question: "What tasks do we have to solve, so that the blessings which God has showered upon us in the last twenty-five years will not be spilled by us, but bequeathed to our descendants?"

At the first meeting of the synodal conference held in July at Milwaukee, Wis. Walther preached the opening sermon on 1 Tim. 4:16 and was elected president.

In August 1872, Walther attended a free conference of English Lutherans of Missouri held in Gravelton, Mo. Sixteen theses *) presented by Walther

*) These are: 1. a. God's written Word is the only rule and guide of faith and life. b. God's written word is the only principle of Christian knowledge c. God's Word is always to be taken literally and not to be misunderstood without compelling reasons. d. God's Word is from itself, not from reason, tradition or new revelations. God's Word is to be interpreted from itself, not from reason, tradition or new revelations. 2. Man by nature has no free will in spiritual matters and therefore can contribute nothing to his conversion. 3. According to his human nature, divine attributes are *realistically* imparted to Christ through his personal union with the Godhead. 4. Christ has already completely reconciled the whole world to God. 5. a. Christ's merit and good deeds will be made known to mankind

on points in dispute here in America were discussed with supporting passages from our Confessions. This discussion took place for the purpose of first determining whether all members were in truth in the right

through the means of grace, Word and Sacraments, alone and truly. b. The gospel is not a mere proclamation, but at the same time an offering and sharing of the grace of Christ. c. Private absolution is the gospel addressed to individuals and the offering and bestowal of forgiveness of sins on the part of God. d. Absolution requires faith, and faith alone receives what it offers and gives; neither it nor any means of grace works *ex opere operato*. 6. a. Faith alone makes just and blessed, this is the main article of the whole Christian religion. b. If faith is of the right kind, man becomes a new man in heart, courage, mind, and all powers; he purifies the heart and is active through love and good works. (7) Good works are only those commanded by God, if they are done in faith. 8. a. Baptism works regeneration and gives eternal blessedness to those who receive it by faith. b. By sinning against conscience, the grace of baptism is lost. c. Baptism remains firm on God's part even if a person falls; therefore, through repentance he can and should return to it. 9. in the holy supper the true body and blood of Christ is truly present, is given under the bread and wine, and is partaken of by the worthy and unworthy with the mouth, by the former for the remission of sins, by the latter for judgment. 10. a. Christian freedom includes freedom from the Jewish ceremonial and police laws. b. Because of his Christian freedom, a believer in the New Testament is no longer bound to a Sabbath day. 11. a. The church in the proper sense is the invisible totality of all true believers in Christ. b. The characteristics of this church are pure doctrine and the rule of law. The marks of this church are pure doctrine and unadulterated sacrament. c. Ecclesiastical communion is to be maintained only with those who agree in all the articles of faith. 12. The church has the duty to administer church discipline and therefore to banish stiff-necked false spirits or sinners. b. The church must be a place of worship for all. Communion guests must first be interrogated. c. The ignorant are not to be admitted to Holy Communion. 13. The power of the keys is not a privilege of ordained preachers, but a power of the whole believing church, which has it originally and directly. 14. a. The preachers do not form a special holy order.

faith and whether, therefore, fraternal and ecclesial cooperation was possible. Each of those present expressed their agreement with each thesis and with the discussions that took place. Thus Walther laid the foundation for the "English Lutheran Conference of Missouri" which was then formed and whose welfare he was concerned about until the end.

XX.

## Illness — strange coincidence at the close of a synod meeting in Milwaukee — Walther is to remain President — anniversary of the 25th anniversary of the establishment in St. Louis — Walthers great joy over Pastor Schieferdecker's return to the synod.

About an illness that struck Walther at the beginning of 1873, he wrote to his daughter M. on March 19: "God has done great things for me again. It looked dangerous enough around me. I was prepared for the worst. But God only lifted His finger threateningly and smiled at me again after barely three weeks. I was worried that I would have to go through a rather painful and dangerous operation, but even that was overcome by the kindness of God.

b. The pastoral office is nothing but a divinely appointed office of service to the church, c. The calling of preachers is a right of the congregation which they are to serve, ordination only a confirmation of this calling and only an apostolic-ecclesiastical foundation. (15) The doctrine of an expected glorification of the church in a so-called millennial kingdom contradicts several articles of the Christian faith and is therefore to be rejected. The Roman pope is the Antichrist prophesied in Scripture. See "Lutherans" 28, p. 180 f.

I, a poor sinner, now feel like a weak child with whom his father is more tender than with strong ones. I also know that many dear souls have interceded with God on behalf of me, an unworthy person; so God soon allowed Himself to be interceded for. I therefore think, as it says in that morning song in the prayer treasure: "My God, now it is morning again": Oh God, on whose bread I feed, if only I were of some use to you!"

As a result of overexertion, Walther was prevented from attending the second meeting of the Synodal Conference in July 1873. At the close of the Northern District Synod held in Milwaukee in June, he had had a hazard of his own. Rev. Fr. Lochner, then pastor in Milwaukee, describes the same thus:

"It was in the year 1873, when a District Synod in Milwaukee, which had brought much work and excitement, especially for Prof. Walther, as General President at that time, had closed. Even after the end of the meeting, a Klügelianer sought him out, but in the end he attacked Walther with such shouting and treated him so indignantly that I finally had to intervene, indeed, since this did not help either, I had to use my house-father rights against the man quite seriously. When he had left the parsonage, I accompanied Walther to Doctor John, who had invited us to dinner.

"At 9 o'clock we set out again for home, as a thunderstorm was in the offing. Before we reached the parsonage, however, a downpour occurred that soaked us to the skin. When we arrived home, I escorted Walther to his bedchamber so that he could change his clothes. But when, after I had also changed my clothes, I looked around for him, I was startled when he looked at me in bewilderment as he entered and asked: ‘Where are we?’

And when I simply remarked, ‘We are in your previous bedroom, dear brother-in-law,' it continued: ‘In my bedroom? I haven't seen that yet!' — Certainly, dear Walther, you have been staying there for a week. — ‘Yes, where are we actually?’ — Well, in Milwaukee! — ‘In Milwaukee? Yes, how did I get to Milwaukee?’ — Don't you remember that you traveled from St. Louis to Milwaukee? Here's your duffel bag. — ‘Is this really my valise?’ — Of course! — ‘But why am I in Milwaukee all of a sudden?’ — We held a synod, and you attended it as General President and had a lot to talk about and a lot of trouble. — ‘Synod has been? I don't know anything about it?’ It went on like that for some time. My heart was trembling. I cried out to the Lord from the depths of my soul. Finally I managed to break off the conversation and to get Walther to undress and go to sleep. I lay down on a sofa that I had had placed in front of Walther's sleeping quarters in order to be at hand immediately. Praise God! When I rose after a while to check on Walther, I found him sleeping peacefully. The night also passed quietly, and when the dear man awoke from sleep, he still felt somewhat stunned, but nevertheless in full use of his powers of memory again. The doctor, who had been summoned in the morning, found him to be out of danger, but declared that if the case should recur as a result of excessive mental work and mental movement, then Walther would be done for. He insisted that Walther stop all work immediately after his return home and start a journey.

"Of course, I could not let him travel home alone. Since I had to do something in Addison on behalf of the Synod after its conclusion anyway, I accompanied Prof. Walther to-

first to Chicago, and since a brother official there had intended to travel to St. Louis in the next few days anyway, he immediately embarked on the journey at my request in order to be able to serve Prof. Walther as a companion."

Walther himself wrote about the coincidence to Pastor Sievers Sr. on July 24:

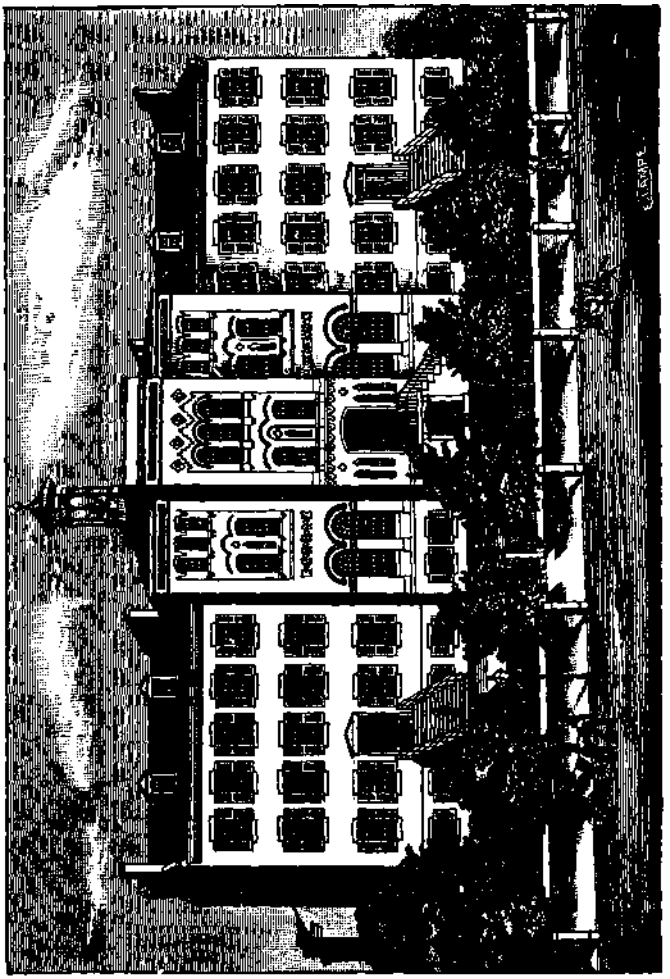
"Since I had a strange incident in the evening after the conclusion of the conference in Milwaukee, suddenly lost my memory for the last 20 years, so that I did not know where I was, and yet was otherwise completely aware of myself and sane, I followed the warning of several doctors and friends and decided not to attend the Synodical Conference and instead to make a trip for the purpose of relaxation after too much mental tension. After all, the doctors had given me the prognosis that if I did not moderate my mental activity, softening of the brain could occur. The trip has had a very good effect. I feel much fresher mentally. Praise and thanks be to God for that! Although I cannot accept your kind invitation now, changing my whole plan with regard to the use of the vacation, it has been dear and valuable to me, a sweet comfort in my cross. You will probably have experienced for yourself that when God's hand strikes us, it is especially good to experience the great love of one's children and faithful servants at such a time. Therefore, I thank you most sincerely for your loyal love, of which I feel so unworthy. I would undoubtedly have accepted your invitation if I had been able to attend the Synodical Conference, for I have long longed to visit the Franconian Colonies, a strong root of our Synod. Perhaps, if God should spare me my life for a few more years, I shall find another opportunity to do so."

However, he still attended the meetings of the Central District (August 13-19), during which he often lost his thoughts, and those of the Eastern District (August 27-September 2). He had delegated the opening sermons to others.

At the General Synod held in Fort Wayne in 1874 (the first delegate synod), Walther, since several synod members had announced that they intended to re-elect him as General President, asked the synod to dispense with him; already under the present circumstances, the seminary was suffering from the fact that he had to serve the synod in the presidential office; In the future, however, the disadvantage for the seminary would become even greater, since instead of the previous four, now six district synods would have to be attended by the General President; consequently, to the great detriment of the seminary, the last two months of the school year would often have to be interrupted; they wanted to take this into account and not deprive him of his main office. The synod, however, could not decide to dismiss him and therefore passed the following resolutions: "1. the General President shall not be required to preach at the opening of the district synods. 2. he shall not be induced to attend the pastoral conferences to be held at district synods. 3. it is the earnest will of the Synod that Prof. Walther teach only from November 1 to the end of April of each year at the Seminary in St. Louis, but use the remaining time to attend the District Synods and to hold the annual examination in St. Louis." Walther was unanimously re-elected as president. — At this meeting it was also decided to separate the practical seminary from the theoretical seminary and to move it to Springfield.

June 11, 1875, was a day of great joy for the local institution, and especially for Walther. It was

**The old seminar building.**



celebrated the 25th anniversary of Concordia College here in St. Louis.

Another great joy was given to him this year, when his old friend, Pastor Schieferdecker, returned to our synod.*) How great his joy was, we can see from a letter which he addressed to Pastor Schieferdecker on June 24, 1875. It reads:

"Your dear old friend!

Beloved brother in the Lord Jesus, given to me again by God!

"When I returned today from my trip to the Synod in Saginaw, Mich. I found, among many others, your letter of the 13th of this month. Unfortunately, I must answer almost all of them as soon as possible. Yours, however, should be one of the first among them; but, pressed by the time allotted to me, I must be as brief as possible, according to which you may not measure my love for you and my participation in your fate.

"First of all, I assure you of the deepest joy and the most sincere praise of the gracious God, to which your last two letters have moved me. I felt as if I had to say with Simeon: Lord, now let your servant go in peace! The greatest wound that has ever been inflicted on our synod now really wants to close. This has been done by the Lord and is a miracle before my eyes." — — (Here follows further on a statement — calling to a Missouri congregation, etc.) — "Please, greet the dear ones of yours and tell the same how much we look forward to seeing them with you soon as the old members in the kingdom and tribulation among us. God draw

*) See his explanation in "Lutheraner" 31, p. 113 f.

Fill you with great joy and rich consolation, and help you to conquer the strongholds of Satan, which he will oppose your return to your old spiritual home.

"In time and eternity in the Lord Jesus thee

C. F. W. W."

On June 30, he wrote to him, among other things:

"You would not believe the trembling joy with which our entire Synod is looking forward to a declaration from your side and with the same to your return. Everything is already rejoicing at the thought of soon being able to call you ours again." —

XXI.

## Walther, Doctor of Theology — Address at the presentation of the Diploma — Letter to the Chicago Conference.

Since 1878, Prof. Walther has held the title of Doctor of Theology. As early as 1855, he was offered the title of doctor by the theological faculty of the University of Göttingen. Dr. J. G. Reiche, Consistorial councilor and Professor of Theology at Göttingen, currently Dean of the Theological Faculty, addressed the following letter to him, dated Göttingen, June 5, 1855: "...Your successful efforts — — have also aroused lively interest among us, your colleagues in Göttingen, and have also found deserved recognition in other circles. In particular, your writing on Church and Ministry has aroused great interest by its open, clear, manly presentation of the subject, which is also being eagerly discussed in the Lutheran Church in Germany. It

would give me and, as I can assure you, all my colleagues a pleasant satisfaction to appoint Your Reverence as *Doctor theologiae honoris causa* on the occasion of the upcoming tercentenary celebration of the Augsburg Religious Peace on the part of our theological faculty in Göttingen. However, we would first like to receive an assurance from you yourself as to whether such a public recognition on the part of our Göttingen theological faculty would also be desirable to you in every respect, given your circumstances there, which are not completely known to us, and whether you have not perhaps already decided to accept the doctorate which another faculty has intended for you. Your Reverence would oblige me and my colleagues very much if you would honor me with a pleasing answer as soon as possible. With the most perfect respect I sign etc." Walther turned to the district presidents for advice. In a letter to Pastor Schieferdecker, then President of the Western District, dated July 21, we learn the following: "Two reasons speak strongly in my mind for rejection. First, that I would feel a crowned ass if I accepted the dignity." As a second reason he cites the doctrinal position of the Göttingen faculty. "Believe me, if you advise me against acceptance, that you are only taking a burden from me.… God guide you. I sincerely beg you to take the matter into serious consideration before God and write to me immediately. — Your miserable Walther." Walther refused the honorary title.

But when, at the request of the entire Ohio Synod, its faculty in Columbus sent Walther the doctoral diploma, he did not think he should refuse.

Namely, when the General Synod of Ohio held its sessions in Columbus, Ohio, in 1877, from October 23 to 25,

the following letter was submitted and unanimously approved by the Synod:

"Since God teaches us in His Word that the elders who preside well should be held in double honor, and since the example of our Fathers shows us how they honored such ministers of the Church as distinguished themselves above others in learning, faithfulness, and diligence in the work of the Lord, by giving them the title of '*Doctor Theologiae*,' the following proposal is hereby submitted to this venerable body for its decision:

"Resolved: In spite of the fact that here in the country and elsewhere by many faculties a wicked game is played with the title '*Doctor Theologiae*', in that the same is conferred on such persons, who instead of leading to the right doctrine of God, rather lead away from the same and into abominable errors, — the abuse of this title, however, does not cancel the right use of the same, — we as the General Lutheran Synod of Columbus, O., the General Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Ohio and others, request the Board of Directors of our educational institutions to confer the title of *Doctor Theologiae* on Professor C. F. W. Walther of St. Louis, Mo, for his many excellent services rendered to the Church of God, and that in this jubilee year of our Formula of Concord we consider it all the more fitting to adorn the person concerned with this title, because it was especially he who, under God's grace, not only brought the pure doctrine of the divine Word, which our precious Formula of Concord so exquisitely represents, to its rightful validity in this country, but also so valiantly and overwhelmingly defended it against all storms and distortions. May God preserve this faithful witness as a blessing to his church for a long time to come!

"Further resolved: That a Committee be appointed to present Prof. C. F. W. Walther with this title in due manner."

The Synod entrusted the Board of Directors with the appointment of the above-mentioned committees, and in a meeting of this body held soon after, Professors Lehmann and Loy were appointed as such.*)

Therefore, Walther's local friends organized a celebration on January 25, 1878, in the evening at 7 o'clock in the auditorium of the seminary. First the song "Lobe den HErren, den mächtigen König der Ehren" etc. was sung. After the presentation of the diploma by Pastor E. A. Brauer, to whom it had been sent by Columbus, Dr. Walther gave the following address:

"Your dear old friend!

"Beloved and honored brothers in the Lord! "My dear Concordians!

"You have put my self-knowledge to a severe test by setting up this solemnity.

If it should ever happen that I am to be clothed with the dignity of a Doctor of Sacred Scripture or of Theology, I confess that the most desirable thing for me would have been if the handing over of the diploma in question had taken place in a completely private circle, whereupon I could simply have quietly put the document *to rest* [*ad acta*].

"Believe me, my brethren, it is not that hypocritical modesty which seeks the praise and glory of humility when I confess that at this moment I am ashamed to stand before you. Rather, this confession comes from the deepest depths of my heart.

"First of all, when I consider that men such as Luther, Chemnitz, Gerhard, once bore the title of Doctor of Sacred Scripture or of Theology, I would like to

*) See Proceedings ... of the General Evang.-Luth. Synod of Ohio u. a. St. etc. of 1878, p. 20.

crawl into the earth. And if I now consider that even Luther, when he was offered the doctorate in 1512, refused most resolutely to accept it, and that he could only be forced to do so by Staupitz's reproaching him for the vow of obedience he had made to his superior, what am I to do, who am not worthy to give a Luther, a Chemnitz, a Gerhard, yes, what am I saying? — Who am not worthy to undo the straps of the shoes of the least doctor of theology of former better times, and who know no higher honor than to sit learning at the feet of these great teachers as their least disciple?

"When I further consider that the theological doctorate is the highest dignity which the Church confers upon a theologian, by which he is declared not only a pure teacher, but also competent and called to be a teacher of teachers, that is, to teach and equip those who shall one day become teachers in the Church, yea, to teach with his voice throughout all Christendom: what shall I do? I would like to cover my head in shame. For from the moment I bear the high title, I am not more pious, not more enlightened, not more learned, not more worthy, but I am and remain the poor old sinner and unlearned bungler that I have been up to now, who has not gone beyond the first letters of the divine words and will never become a real doctor, a master in Israel, even if ten doctor's hats were given to him.

"There are two things, however, which to a certain extent make me feel unworthy and ineffectual. First, that not only the doctrinal state, but an entire orthodox Evangelical Lutheran Synod has conferred this dignity upon me, that is, the representation of an entire church, a congregation of the saints or of the faithful children of God, which, as the holder and bearer of

the key of the Kingdom of Heaven, also has the power and authority to establish such orders in the church.

"Another reason is this, that the holy apostle expressly says, that when the church wishes to adorn herself, she puts the most honor on those members who seem to her to be the most dishonest (1 Cor. 12, 23.).

"Ah, may only God help that the dignity conferred upon me, a miserable human being, may be firstly for God's glory, secondly for the furtherance of His kingdom, and finally thirdly for my own salvation, and not for God's dishonor, for the church's hindrance, and for my own ruin! May my doctorate from now on become a guardian of my faithfulness, but also in times of challenge not accuse me to God, but, as Luther has so often mightily comforted, so also comfort me!

"But now I know that by my own reason and strength I can neither know nor do anything in spiritual matters. Without Him, the Lord Jesus, I can do nothing, nothing at all. So now I prostrate myself before him in spirit and beg Him to be my light and my strength. But I implore you, my dear brothers, who have taken on the responsibility of mediating my promotion: o, include me now and then in your faithful intercession and call upon God for this: First, that He may preserve me from error, unbelief, sin, pride and arrogance and keep me in His truth and grace; second, that He may make me capable of defending the truth even unto death and of waging the wars of the Lord bravely and victoriously against false doctrine, heresy, sectarianism and all ungodly beings that are dangerous to the soul; and that He may finally recognize me as His own on that great day of joy, terrible to the world, glorious to the children of God, and accept me with grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Dr. Walther then accepted the congratulations of the professors, the city ministry, the congregational representatives and the student body. Finally, "Let me be and remain yours" etc. was sung. Those present then lingered in the auditorium for music, singing and entertainment. The Chicago Conference had published "Jubelklänge zur Doctor-Promotion des Herrn Prof. C. F. W. Walther," in which the previous faithful work of the same is sung about. Congratulations arrived from all sides in the next few days. In the "Lutheraner" he therefore published the following "Acknowledgement": "The undersigned hereby expresses his most heartfelt and humble thanks to all the many dear brothers who during the last weeks have assured him of their so undeserved participation, partly by letter, partly by telegram, since it is hardly possible for him, as he would be obliged to do, to express his thanks in writing to each individual.

C. F. W. Walther."

To the Chicago Conference, he addressed the following response.

write:

St. Louis, Mo, March 9, 1878.

To the Venerable Pastoral Conference at Chicago, Mr. Pastor H. Wunder there to hand.

Revered and beloved brothers in the Lord!

On the occasion of my doctorate, through God's kindness, I have received congratulations from so many dear brothers that I am unable to respond to any of them in gratitude. However, they have bestowed upon me such an extraordinary honor that my heart and conscience urge me not to accept it in silence.

Nothing, as you will all have experienced with me innumerable times, works true humility than free grace, and that a

the deeper, the richer the latter is. So, for your consolation, while I express my heartfelt thanks for your completely undeserved love, I may at the same time report that God has kept me from misunderstanding your "jubilations" and attributing even the slightest of the good things celebrated in them to me, the most miserable of all sinners, but has rather thrown me into the dust, giving Him alone all honor with hot tears, in the liveliest feeling that nothing, nothing but shame and disgrace is due to me. I cannot and must not deny that the work and the struggle of our dear Synod, in which I have been honored to stand in the front ranks, has been abundantly blessed; but just as God has never let me forget that all blessings were free grace, so I have felt especially deeply when reading through your "Jubelklänge": "If anything good in life is mine, it is truly yours. It is not really through us that the Church has been blessed, least of all through me, but through the blessing we have become what we are, above all me. If God had placed any other believing Christians in the same circumstances in which God, out of incomprehensible mercy, had allowed me to be placed, they would have experienced the same blessing of their work and struggle if God had shown them the same grace. I was only God's larva. And oh! such a bad and ugly one! What was really my own was my sin, my foolishness, which has spoiled and hindered many things and would have spoiled and hindered everything, if God, who wanted to visit America in grace at that time, had not averted it by his wonderful government. When I was still a student, God powerfully brought me out of great blindness and great sinful corruption and planted faith in his word in my heart and worked on me daily in spite of all my unfaithfulness, so that the little light of my faith was not allowed to go out, and

could. Now God gave me the opportunity and in consequence of severe insanities he forced me to seek the truth or to perish temporally and eternally. However, I did not decide to do so, but God decided me to choose the former. I could not resist. When he called me into the work and into the fight against the contradiction that arose, I could not help it, I had to hold on to the truth and ward off the contradiction. I had wonderful experiences. In my loneliness, swaying back and forth in my heart, full of fear, anxiety, terror, feelings of sin, often almost seized by despair, so that my prayers at times became almost only a silent writhing in the dust before God, God gave me almost always, when I had to speak or write publicly, a confidence and a joyfulness, without which all my wanting and running would have been completely in vain. The circle in which I have lived so far consists in the fact that God has soon humbled me, soon lifted me up; so that I always knew, when a lifting up came, that a deep humiliation would quickly follow; but when the latter was present, always without my expecting (yes, as a rule, when I thought that now everything was over) soon, or even after a longer time of deep darkness and concealment of the divine face of grace, a lifting up or rather lifting up followed. The following has always been particularly strange to me. I have brought away very little, extremely incomplete knowledge from school and university and have only been able to supplement it according to the requirements of the respective circumstances, haphazardly; also the collection of my library was always a haphazard, occasional one. But finally I often had to see with astonishment that God placed me in such circumstances in which I could utilize all the little that I knew and had. O, a faithful God! In short: God has done great things for me, of which I will be glad,

even though I feel, vividly feel, that I am nothing in myself but a lump of darkness and sin.

Until now, God has kept my eyes open to see my misery clearly and therefore to remain untouched by the praise that my brothers give to the instrument, which belongs only to the one who uses it according to his unfathomable wisdom. But, dear brothers, you know from God's Word what corruption dwells in my flesh, and that therefore I can fall into the most horrible delusion, into arrogance, sin and shame at any moment when God withdraws his hand from me; oh, then add this to your proofs of love, that now and then you also remember me before the Lord in your Father-Our; and that in every petition, for I need them all, but also yes in the last one, for I feel: I have completed my course and long to leave this world full of nets and ropes.

Now once again my most humble thanks. God repay you for what you have done to me, the most dishonest member of our common body.

Your

C. F. W. Walther.

**XXII.**

## The synod takes the presidency from Walther at his urgent request — Jubilee celebration in 1880 — Dispute over the doctrine of election to grace.

At the General Synod (the second delegate synod) held in May 1878, Dr. Walther declared that he could no longer administer both synodical offices and that one would have to be taken from him. After a long discussion it was decided, "in view of

that Prof. Dr. Walther himself has made an urgent request to the Synod that he be relieved of one of his two difficult and responsible offices, and in view of the fact that the office of a professor at the theological seminary is by far the more important, it has been decided (albeit with a heavy heart) that Prof. Dr. Walther be completely relieved of the General Presidency, which he has untiringly administered for many years with such great fidelity and in such rich blessing, because only in this way can he be relieved of his almost overwhelming workload". The motion was now made that Dr. Walther should be obliged to attend every district synod at least once during the period of three years; however, this was not done when Walther firmly refused and gave reasons for his refusal; however, one could not refrain from at least expressing the wish and hope to see the dear man as often as possible at the district meetings and to enjoy his gifts.

The year 1880 brought a double jubilee: the tercentenary of our Book of Concord and the 350th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession, in the celebration of which he took a lively part. We now report here that Walther had the privilege of celebrating five other secular festivities and jubilees here in America in addition to the one mentioned, namely in 1846 the tricentennial of the death of Dr. Martin Luther, in 1855 the tricentennial of the Augsburg Religious Peace, in 1867 the fourth and a half centennial of the Reformation, and in 1877 the tricentennial of the Formula of Concord. He not only took part in these celebrations, but also knew how to encourage others to celebrate, gave excellent instructions on how to organize the celebrations, and showed the great importance of these festivals. For the last mentioned jubilee, that of the Formula of Concord, he published

the text of the Epitome of the same with explanatory notes and a valuable historical introduction.*)

But the Jubilee year was not a year of peace; for in that year a very serious dispute broke out in the Synodal Conference, of which our Synod is a part, a dispute about the doctrine of election by grace and conversion. At our Jubilee Synod (1872) it had been pronounced (no doubt by Prof. Walther): "In the Lutheran Church itself there will still have to be a severe struggle if the truth is to remain with us." — Without a doubt, Walthern and others were aware that there was still a struggle ahead to sweep out all and every synergism.

The year 1880 thus brought the sad doctrinal dispute about the election of grace. We call it sad because it caused many a separation and annoyance by those who brought about the dispute; but we can also call it salutary because in the course of it many souls were healed of the shameful false doctrine of synergism (according to which man can have a hand in his conversion) and led to give God all glory for the work of their salvation. We cannot describe here the whole course of the controversy; it is probably still in the memory of most readers, and they know that our dear Doctor Walther stood at the head of those who fought for the honor of the free grace of God, and how he bravely defended the truth in journals, in tracts, at synods, at conferences. Apart from his polemical essays and writings, two popular writings in particular have contributed much to the victory of the truth, his writing: “Der Gnadenwahls-

*) "The Formula of Concord, Core and Star. With a historical introduction and brief explanatory notes. Presented to the Lutheran Christian people on behalf of the esteemed Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America by C. F. W. Walther."

lehrstreit, that is, simple, proven advice for godly Christians who would like to know who teaches Lutheran and who teaches un-Lutheran in the present Election of Grace doctrinal controversy. 1881.“ — and: "Die Lehre von der Gnadenwahl in Frage und Antwort dargestellt aus dem eleften Artikel der Concordienformel der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche. Provided with a preface and epilogue. 1881."

In the first-mentioned writing, he advises godly Christians to hold fast to two sentences of our Formula of Concord in particular. He writes: "First of all, beloved reader, note only **two short sentences**, which the dear confession of our church has sent before the extensive discussion of the doctrine of the Election of Grace, and with which it has clearly and brightly indicated what a person must first and foremost hold on to, and from which he must not let himself be diverted by anything, if he does not want to fall into error in the doctrine of the election of grace, but wants to remain on the straight path of the holy scripture. The first of these sentences is as follows:

(I.) First of all, the difference between the eternal providence of God and the eternal election of his children to eternal blessedness is to be noted with care. For *praescientia vel praevisio*, that is, that God sees and knows all things beforehand, before they come to pass, which is called the providence of God, is over all creatures, good and bad, etc. **The eternal election of God, however, *vel praedestinatio,* that is, God's decree for salvation, does not apply to the pious and the wicked, but only to the children of God, who were chosen and ordained to eternal life before the foundation of the world was laid; as Paul says in Eph. 1:5: "He has chosen us in Christ Jesus and ordained us for adoption. "**(See Jubilee Edition of the Book of Concord, p. 478.)

"But mark, dear Lutheran Christian, also the second

This is the second main principle that our Lutheran confession also places at the head of its doctrine of the election of grace. This is because our confession also wants to make this second main principle a guiding star, as it were, for all Lutherans, which should and could protect them from all errors in regard to this doctrine, and which they must therefore also hold on to first and foremost. This second main principle in the doctrine of the election of grace is the following:

(II.) "The providence of God **(*praescientia*)** also sees and knows evil beforehand, but not in such a way that it would be God's gracious will that it should happen, etc." (I.). The beginning and cause of evil is not God's providence (for God neither creates nor works evil, nor helps nor promotes it), etc. **The eternal election of God, however, not only sees and knows beforehand the salvation of the elect, but is also, out of God's gracious will and good pleasure in Christ Jesus, a CAUSE, so that our blessedness and what belongs to it creates, works, helps and promotes; on which also our blessedness is thus founded, so that the gates of the heavens shall not be able to do anything against it; as it is written: "My sheep shall no man pluck out of my hand"; and again, "And as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed." (Matt. 16:18. John 10:28. Act. 13:48.)'** (See Jubilee Edition of the Concordia Book, page 478 f.)

"Our two main propositions from the Formula of Concord therefore stand, as it were, like two strict guards before the entrance of the doctrine of the election of grace and admit no one who wants to reinterpret this doctrine. If someone wants to claim that the election of grace, of which the Formula of Concord speaks, is an election of grace in a more valuable sense, the first main proposition immediately confronts him as the first guardian and says: The election of grace goes

not over all men, over good and evil, but only over God's chosen children. If someone else wants to claim that the election of grace, of which the Formula of Concord speaks, is not a cause of faith, then the second main theorem, in which election is called the cause of faith, immediately opposes him as the other guardian. Both guards also help each other. If an opponent says that the second principle teaches that the election of grace is a cause of faith, but that this is to be understood only as the election of grace in a broader sense, then the first principle, which teaches the election of the children of God alone, comes to the aid of the second as the first guardian. But if an opponent says that the first main clause does not speak of an election of grace in the broader but in the narrower sense, but that it does not say anything about faith flowing from this election of grace, then the second main clause comes to his aid and confesses this in clear words. In short, our opponents stand between the two main propositions of the Formula of Concord as between two fires: if they want to escape the first, they burn themselves on the second, and if they want to escape the second, they burn themselves on the first. There is no way out: either our opponents must recognize our doctrine as the Lutheran one, or they must reject the Formula of Concord as an erroneous, Calvinistic book.

"Praise be to God that He has provided us with such a glorious confession, which is like a monkey that is well fortified on all sides!

"O, dear faithful children of God within our dear Evangelical Lutheran Church! For the time being, hold steadfastly against all Calvinism that God wants to bring all men to faith, keep them in faith, and finally save them eternally, and that He offers all this through the Word to all seriously,

powerfully, and effectively, and that therefore it is not the election, but only men themselves, namely their stiff-necked resistance, who are to blame for the fact that so many either do not come to faith, or do not persevere in faith to the end, and therefore are eternally lost. But also hold on to this: That you have come to faith and persevere in it, you yourselves are not the cause of it; it is not because you were better than the others and because you would therefore have been more willing to decide for the way to salvation, thus also for faith itself; but the cause of it is, as the Formula of Concord page 483 writes, that God, 'before the foundation of the world was laid, held counsel over it, and decreed in his purpose how he would bring me' (thus also you) 'to it and keep me in it', and that he decreed your salvation ‘in his eternal purpose, which cannot fail or be overthrown, and has placed it in the almighty hand of our Savior Jesus Christ, from which no one can snatch us, to preserve it'. He who is lost is lost not because, as Calvin ungodly taught against the clear word of God, God has destined him to eternal damnation, for God wants to make all men blessed, but because of his own guilt; not because God excluded him, but because he excluded himself; not because God passed him by with his grace, but because he, man, passed by God's grace, which wanted to save him. But he who is saved has not himself to thank, but only the mercy of God in Christ; as God himself in the prophet Hosea sums up these two truths briefly in the words: 'Israel, you are bringing disaster upon yourself, for your salvation is with me alone.' (Hos. 13, 9.) Therefore, whoever wants to persuade you that we taught that gruesome Calvinistic

Predestination doctrine, who grossly transgresses the eighth commandment, who speaks false witness against his neighbor, who slander us; what God will judge one day; for we condemn Calvin's predestination with all our hearts, so help us God!"

From the second writing we quote the beautiful conclusion, in which he clearly explains the doctrine of the Election of Grace even to the most simple: "Do you, beloved reader, already stand in faith or not? — If you are not in faith, I must advise you not to concern yourself with the mysterious doctrine of the Election of Grace! In this faithless state of yours, you need to be taught the first letters of the divine words. The doctrine of repentance and conversion is what you need. But if you are already in living faith by God's grace, let me ask you further: Have you given your faith to yourself? — You will say, Oh no; I have not been able to do the least thing to obtain a living faith through the Word of the Gospel, and I have not come to the Word, but the Word has come to me. — Well! But do you think that you came to faith only by chance? — You will undoubtedly answer, "Oh no; if I meant that, I would have to be a pure pagan; nothing happens by chance. — Well then, let me ask you further: To whom then do you owe it that you have come to faith through the Word? — You say, "I owe this entirely to the mercy of God and the most holy merit of Jesus Christ. It was God who, like Lydia, opened my closed heart so that I paid attention to what I read and heard from God's Word. I truly did not deserve this with anything. For the sake of my many sins, I would rather have been worthy that God had neither called me nor brought me to faith, but rather that he had kept me in my sins.

would have let me die and perish. My conversion is a secret to me; only this much I know, that I have done nothing for it. — Do you think that God only thought of bringing you to faith at that time, when your eyes opened, when you recognized your misery and God's grace in Christ, came to faith and became a different person? — You will say: How could I mean that! For I know from God's word that God has not only foreknown all the good things he does in time, but has also foreknown them from eternity. — So now let me ask you only one thing: Do you also hope to be saved? — You will answer: Yes, I hope so. If I did not hope so, I would have to reject Luther's 'Christian Question Pieces'; then I would not even be able to recite with the whole holy Christian church the third article in firm faith, in which it says: "I believe . . . an eternal life' and not speak with our catechism: "I believe ... that God will give me, together with all believers in Christ, eternal life; this is certainly true". And my dear Lord Jesus Christ says: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."' (John 10:27, 28.) How, then, should I doubt my blessedness? — Rightly so, beloved reader! — Behold, then, in very brief words you have the whole doctrine of the election of grace as in a summa. For this and nothing else is what the Concordia formula teaches about the election of grace and what we teach with it, and only that which is not in accord with this simple doctrine rejects that our confession and we with it. Can you therefore get involved in the many disputations that are now taking place about the election of grace verbally and

If you do not find the doctrine in writing, then be confident! If you remain in this simple faith, you have the right doctrine of the election of grace, even if you have never heard of the word 'election of grace' in your life. In this faith, then, let nothing mislead you! . . . Just stick to that little saying in which God the Lord Himself says: "Israel, you are in trouble, for your salvation is with me alone. (Hos. 13:9.) From this golden saying turn not aside to the right hand, nor to the left: so walk thou in the right course, and the end of this thy way of faith shall be eternal blessedness." (p. 57 f.)

We cannot refrain from sharing a letter that Walther addressed to a member of one of our congregations, who admonished him to abandon the Calvinist doctrine that we had fallen into.*) The letter reads:

St. Louis, Mo, March 29, 1881.

My dear Mr. !

Yesterday I received your dear letter of the 26th of this month. I thank you for it from the bottom of my heart. I see from it that you are serious about your salvation and about the pure divine truth. May God keep you in this sense by His grace until the end. But I was especially pleased that you fulfilled my request to the readers and made a fervent intercession to God for me, a poor sinner. God reward you for this. As confidentially as you have written to me, I will now also answer you in confidence. Do not think that I am a mere head scholar. Already 50 years ago, by God's grace, I came through a long and heavy anguish of my heart to the realization of my sinful end and thereupon to the knowledge of the truth.

*The member had changed his mind before he received Dr. Walther's answer.

I have also come to a living knowledge of my Savior through God's Word and the Holy Spirit. And now, when the sad Election of Grace controversy has broken out, I cry and weep day and night on my knees to God that He will not let me fall into error, but will let me know the truth and keep me in it until my end, which is no longer far away, for I am already in my seventieth year. But God makes me ever more certain that the doctrine I profess is right. For it is in God's Word and in the faithful confession of our orthodox Lutheran Church. I am surprised that you as an experienced Christian, as I believe, do not also have this insight. My doctrine is that believers have to thank God's mercy and His eternal counsel in Christ alone that they have been torn out of the world and have come to faith; do you not also have to say this? Have you given yourself the true faith? Or did you become a believer only by chance? But if God has brought you to faith, must not God therefore have decided from eternity to bring you to faith? You will certainly say yes to this. Well, this and nothing else is the choice of grace.

Unfortunately, many godly Christians are now being misled by all kinds of sophistry. Do not let yourself be misled and speak with that song to the glory of God, to whom alone all glory is due:

> You have also chosen me in Christ from the depths of hell, so that I have never lacked any good;
>
> And that I may be your own, you have also chastised me with my father's rods out of great faithfulness.
>
> (See our hymnal No. 220, verse 5.)

I have written another little booklet; when it is printed, I will send it to you if you wish.

Greetings to you in the Lord Jesus

Your brother

C. F. W. Walther.

It hurt Dr. Walther very much that a student of his provoked the fight against the biblical Lutheran doctrine of the free grace of God in Christ Jesus and that students of his blew his trumpet. On January 25, 1880, he wrote to the pastor, now director Ch. Heinrich Löber in Milwaukee: "..... How deeply we are grieved here by ---'s appearance, can you can imagine. We pray to God day and night that He will take away the terrible trouble that has been given; but we are also confident, for we know that although we cannot preserve the church and its blessings, the Lord has promised to do so."

Under June 15, 1880, he wrote to his old friend P. Bürger Sr:

" I'm also glad you don't believe the rumor, I would have already given in on one point. As much as I would like to do so, if God's Word allowed it and peace could be bought with it; but up to now, nothing that has been brought forward against our teaching has been able to convince me of an error. My conscience is caught in God's Word; but to do anything against it is 'neither safe nor advisable,' as Luther said at Worms. — —

"Until death, which I long for very much,

yours

C. F. W. Walther."

On January 21, 1881, he wrote to the same regarding the doctrinal dispute:

"My dear old trusted friend and brother in the Lord!

"Thank you very much for your brotherly encouragement. Now, when one hears so many defeating things, such encouragement is of double value, it is a fresh drink in the sandy desert with sunburn. — — — — After finally in Milwaukee when it became obvious that the electoral dispute can only lead to victory through a decisive struggle on our part, an alp fell from our hearts. Until now, nothing was more embarrassing to us than not knowing how to act in order not to be partly responsible for a schism. This uncertainty is now gone, and that gives us courage. For God, whose cause is ours, cannot possibly leave us stuck. Only continue to ask and plead with us that God will not let his light go out for the sake of our ingratitude. W. "*)

The cry that Walther has only now brought up this doctrine is outrageous. Among many things that can be said against it, it should only be mentioned here that Walther and the other Saxon pastors, among others also the same pastor Löber,**) through the disputations with the candidate Kl. who misinterpreted Dr. Luther's writing against Erasmus: "That free will is nothing", already early, even before the

*) The reader will find two beautiful letters by Walther from this time in the appendix.

**) The writer of this already learned in 1845 from the same Pastor Löber in confirmation classes that it is not right to say: "I am chosen because I believe", but that one must say: "I believe because I am chosen". — There were no people among us at that time who interpreted this "in view of faith" synergistically.

Missouri Synod, were driven into the study of the doctrine of election by grace on the basis of Scripture and the Formula of Concord.

It gave Dr. Walther great joy*) that Satan did not succeed in destroying our Synod — as the opponents hoped — that the doctrine of free grace retained the victory. The synod could continue its work in blessing, it could build itself up in peace and in the fear of the Lord after the elimination of all synergistic elements; yes, God granted it to carry out a special great work, the construction of a new seminary building here.

XXIII.

## Seminar construction — death of his wife — family — joy of grandchildren.

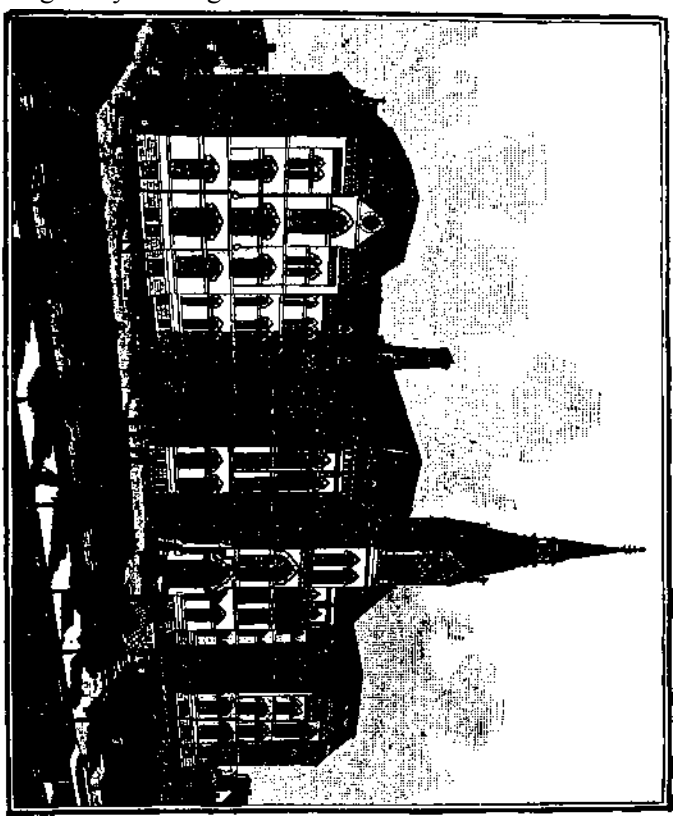
The Synod of Delegates meeting in Fort Wayne in May 1881 had decided to build a new large institution building on the same site as the old one, which was to be demolished. On behalf of the synod, Dr. Walther issued an appeal to the synod's congregations, in which he explained the reasons for the new building and called upon them to contribute abundantly in a truly evangelical manner.*)

The foundation stone was laid on October 1, 1882, and the inauguration ceremony took place on September 9 of the following year. On both occasions, Dr. Walther held the first ceremonial address. In the speech given at the inauguration, he showed "that

*) Dr. Walther was also very pleased with the many letters of congratulations he received on his seventieth birthday (1881).

**) Lutheraner, vol. 37, 89 f.

The real reason for the joy of the celebration is none other than threefold: the final purpose which this new building alone is to serve; the circumstances which alone have caused it and made it necessary, and the love which alone has established and adorned it". Both days were real days of joy for him, because the promotion of the institution was his thought day and night.



**The new seminary building in 1883.**

On August 23, 1885, our dear doctor suffered a heavy loss. On this day his dear companion, Mrs. Christiane Emilie, née Bünger, passed away at the age of 73. She was a faithful disciple of the Lord, who adorned her faith with a quiet, godly walk and who especially demonstrated it by
a quiet, godly walk and practiced it especially through her love of God's Word and works of love and mercy. She was a helpmate to her husband in deed and truth for 44 years.

From a letter Walther sent to his children in New York, in which he informs them of the death and burial of his wife, we learn the following.



**Dr. Walther's wife.**

"—Let not then this description of her last sufferings sink you into too great sadness; God has made her chosen in this furnace of misery like gold and silver. She fought like a heroine and — gloriously conquered. Her faith, her love, her patience have been found approved by God. Her suffering, great as it was, is not worth the glory she already enjoys beyond all doubt. Her mouth is now full of rejoicing and her tongue full of praise. We long for her, but she does not long for us. She is safe, we are still in danger. We still fight and run, she rests and triumphs. Her memory will be in blessing as long as there will be people who knew her. She did not have enemies. My tears have certainly flowed abundantly, for what I have lost with this faithful helpmate of mine cannot be said. But the more I think of the fact that she lived and worked day and night next to God only for me, the more I must grant her that she has come to rest and that her works follow her. Oh that I had only honored her more than I have done in the urge of my professional work! That humbles me very much; but her blissful looking up at me has been a comforting absolution for me. Oh how I look forward to seeing her again soon!

"Her tired body, as you know, we took to its bedchamber last Wednesday. Stöckhardt gave her a beautiful funeral sermon on Acts 16:13-15. and presented her as a faithful and godly Lydia. The congregation was a large one. The church could not hold the congregation. Probably more than 70 carriages and half carriages followed her coffin, which was covered with floral decorations and carried by the professors and pastors of the city.

"It is a great blessing for me that I have Katharina, who has already served us faithfully for 14 years and has taken over the running of the business.

I will be able to continue just as my blessed helpmate, given to me by God, has led me. . . .

"Your hard-beaten, but humbly submitting to God's providence.
C. F. W. W."

Since we have not yet reported anything about Dr. Walther's family circumstances, the following should be added here: Walther's wife comes, like himself, from an old family of preachers. Her father was Jakob Friedrich Bünger, pastor at Etzdorf near Roßwein in Saxony. The marriage took place in Dresden, Perry Co., Mo. on September 21, 1841 and was performed by Pastor Keyl.

The marriage produced 6 children: 1. Christiane Magdalene, born November 22, 1842, wife of Mr. P. S. Keyl in New York; 2. Hermann Christoph, born October 25, 1844, died July 24, 1848, of cerebral apoplexy as a result of an unfortunate fall into the cellar; 3. 4. The twins Constantin and Ferdinand Gerhard, born February 23, 1847, the latter a pastor at Brunswick, Mo.; 5. Emma Julie, born July 27, 1849, wife of P. J. H. Niemann at Cleveland, O.; 6. Christian Friedrich, born June 29, 1851, died of dysentery October 29, 1852.

The marriage was a happy one. The marriage cross was not missing, but God also gave a lot of joy. Walther especially enjoyed his grandchildren. From letters to his children we communicate the following:

"April 10, 1864.

"I cannot tell you what joy the news of the happy arrival of your healthy little daughter has given us. From this hour on, our thoughts are always with you and ours are always with you.

Conversations are always about you. We have hardly ever felt so painfully the great distance from you, dear ones, because the desire to be with you for at least a few hours and to embrace the dear, sweet child in our arms, to hug and kiss him, is only too great now. It is as if a child had been born to me even in my old days! I feel as if I had suddenly become a rich man from a poor man.

"August 4, 1866.

"... The little ... struts along all day long in the shade of the large house and its ornamental trees, except for the noon hour, when she prefers to sleep off her governmental worries on the carpet of the guest room, with a pillow under her head, always with an expression as if she were entrusted with the proper administration of the entire Concordia area. Her energy has already achieved a certain fame in the children's world of the whole area. However, with great kindness, she has quite a bit of strength of character, which one could also call self-will, without doing violence to the language. However, after her short stay in this area, she has already noticed that there are forces above her that can use the acacia trees with their beautiful branches for something other than shade. Up to now, it has only been necessary to show her one of these branches without any other use being made of it; but I have had to raise my bass voice several times out of the window of the study room when the little tomboy downstairs wanted to assert his own will as the highest law of the house. Nevertheless, she is more familiar with no one than with her grandfather, since he also grants her many innocent things that her mother would not be unwilling to deny her. I can only let her see me, and she will jump at me.

with a beaming face. Dear little T___chen is also everyone's favorite. He is such a sweet child that he cannot save himself from kisses. — There is never a lack of arms and hands to carry him. Everything wants to take the little sweet boy with pleasure. — What people can do to care for these little roses, that happens; much less will the heavenly gardener lack his care. God only give us always a fervent prayer for it."

"The 14th of December 1866.

"When you were gone, it was as if we had taken you to the graveyard; everything was so empty, as if dead! Our meals, which had been so cheerful for a whole quarter of a year, were now like meals of death. The spice was missing, which the dear sweet little ones added to every meal with their twittering larks. The various work one has with these little creatures is such a pleasant one that without them one is deprived of a high pleasure. The whole college seemed to us after your departure like a birdcage without a songbird. But I must not be ungrateful. After all, God has so directed circumstances that I have once again enjoyed real fatherly pleasures for longer than I could ever hope."

"April 18, 1867.

"You can't believe how happy we are every time you write us again that your little children are still alive and well. We love them as much as we love our lives. Would to God that we could divide ourselves in such a way that we could have them and you could keep them! But several can possess only Jesus and his goods completely; other goods do not have this perfection. Well then, let us divide ourselves in the Lord Jesus and his grace. I look at your dear little marriage plants for my children at the same time and rejoice in them, as a sweet gift for my withered age, by which it becomes green and blooming again.

"June 1, 1872.

"Although, as you can imagine, after E...chen's death no loud joy has come to us, we are nevertheless quite content in God. E. and C. give us much joy. They are the center around which everything in the house now revolves. C. in particular brings life into the family. She is with me all the time and nothing can move her to leave me alone. I can see from her how we should deal with God. She doesn't care if I tell her that I don't have time to get involved with her now; she never stops asking me, and I can't be angry with her, I have to laugh at her excessive confidence in my grandfather's love.

"February 5, 1876.

"What a joyful message your dear letter of yesterday brought us today! What a happy surprise! How rich and happy you will feel now! I can still remember the time when my first child was born. ... I felt as if I had won the great lottery. I would not have given away this treasure for anything in the world. When I went out, it was as if I had a magnet at home that pulled me home again and again. That's how it will be with you now, too. . . . Even if it had been a girl, I would have been royally pleased; but the fact that it is a boy increases my joy and certainly yours all the more. One wishes, after all, that one's own name should not die out; but it is the boys alone who perpetuate the father's name. Now we both have a little progenitor; what joy! O dear children, let us therefore also give thanks with all our hearts to the faithful God for having done so great things for us! We are all not worthy of such great kindness and goodness, but rather

we deserve vain punishment. Therefore, immediately make a covenant with God that you will consecrate your son, whom the Lord has given you, to the Lord and raise him for his glory, for the child's own happiness and for the world's benefit and good. Pledge this to your God! Such a vow is then a constant reminder when the flesh wants to become tired and lazy. A child consecrated to God is the greatest treasure that can be in a home. A child is worth more than the whole starry sky and the circle of the earth; for all this will one day pass away, but a child is born for eternity. Would to God that I could hurry to you now! How happy I would consider myself if I could take your little son in my arms, press him to my heart and kiss him! But unfortunately I must deny myself that. May God keep your sweet little boy healthy, so I hope, if I don't die myself first, to see him here with both of you on the occasion of this year's synod."

XXIV.

## Wonderful life — work-filled life.

Before we move on to the last days of the Blessed One's life, let us look back at his life and see the image of it. How God so wonderfully watched over the life of the man whom he wanted to use for such great things and preserved it so long! Weak from his youth, Walther repeatedly had to endure severe illnesses. Let us recall the serious illness at the time of his university studies, which forced him to go home in order to probably die; the serious illness that struck him during his stay in Germany; and the serious illness that overtook him while he was

in Perry County and debilitated him for a long time; to the serious illness that required him to make a recuperative trip to Germany in 1860. It is worth recalling the many efforts of the synod, of synod officials, of friends, to lighten his workload because of his weakness and to relieve him of some of the work. It is worth remembering the various efforts of the synod, the synodal officials, the friends, to make his work easier because of his weakness and to relieve him of this and that part of it, and yet the work was not less and the weak man was able to do the much work until the hour when God stretched him out. Divine Providence was visibly watching over Walther's life; that is why he was to find no place on the ship Amalia, on which he was to make the crossing and which sank; that is why he was saved twice from the danger of drowning, once in his boyhood, when he fell down a steep slope into deep water while playing, the other time in 1853, when he bathed in the Mississippi. The latter event is described by P. C. J. Otto Hanser as follows: "A hot August day in 1853 was nearing its end when Professors Walther and Biewend took their children on the usual walk to the river for a swim. The students H. and O. Hanser, and the students Keyl and Barthel were allowed to accompany them. Professor Walther had not felt like bathing, but had finally given in to the requests of his wife and Professor Biewend. Since he did not know how to swim, he only stayed in the low water near the shore, while we usually swam downstream and went back up the shore because of the strong current. Professor Biewend and I were just returning when we were suddenly startled by the children's shouting: Professor Walther is drowning. The current, which was still strong even on the bank, had led him unnoticed away from the children further downstream and into one of the depressions in which this river is so rich and which make bathing so dangerous for non-swimmers. Professor Walther told afterwards: when he suddenly-

When he sank for the first time, but came up again, he did not want to call for help, hoping to regain his footing. But when he sank for the second time and resurfaced, he could no longer call out. Professor Biewend's eldest son, Adolf, saw him sink and called out loudly, and the other children immediately joined in, while Professor Biewend and I were walking along the shore opposite, engrossed in a conversation. We saw him sinking and in a flash I was in the water and at the spot (it was only about 12 steps away from the bank) where the bald head of the sinking man was still shimmering through the water. A quick, happy grasp with the left hand under the right shoulder lifted him above the water. At the same moment, Professor Biewend was also on the spot and grabbed him under the left arm, whereupon we effortlessly brought him ashore. Strangely enough, Professor Walther had neither lost his senses nor swallowed much water, but had been unable to call for help. He said he had expected nothing but to drown now. Yes, Professor Walther, although so close to death, was less affected and dressed without effort, while Professor Biewend was deeply shaken and said to me on the way home: 'The shock has completely paralyzed me, I think I would have drowned with him. Even today I cannot forget the expression of horror on his face when we were happily on the shore. — When we parted at the seminar building, Professor Walther shook my hand and said: 'I thank you for giving me your hand.'"

Walther's life was one of hard work. He was a tireless, faithful and conscientious worker. In addition to his professorship, he also administered the office of pastor of the first four congregations of the city, preached, participated in the congregational meetings, led doctrinal discussions in the same, and held

Lectures on important issues.*) He participated in the meetings of the University Society, the Hospital and Orphanage Society, the Bible Society. For many years he was the synodal president and also led the doctrinal negotiations at the synods. A lot of time was taken up by the editing of his writings, the editing of the journals and the correspondence which almost overwhelmed him and which extended over all parts of the world. He spent much time on the preparation of his sermons, on the preparation for the lectures at the synods. He prepared himself for each of his theological lectures.

About his work he wrote under May 8, 1867 to his nephew, then pastor in Wyandotte, Mich.: "Already for a long time two dear briefs . . from you are in my hands and still I have answered you neither to the one, nor to the other! You will certainly be very angry with me for this. But, dearest J., have mercy on an uncle who holds a busy office, which has many branches, and in addition daily (with very few exceptions) not only one, but often a whole series of letters to the

*) Some such negotiations and lectures have been published, for example:

The Usury Question. Minutes of the proceedings of the German Lutheran congregation U. A. C. at St. Louis, Mo., on this question, together with some excerpts from the writings of theologians before and after the Reformation and other documents concerning it.

Communism and Socialism. Proceedings of the First German Lutheran Congregation U. A. C. at St. Louis, Mo.

On the duty of Christians to affiliate with a local orthodox congregation. Proceedings of the First German Lutheran Congregation U. A. C. at St. Louis, Mo.

Dance and theater attendance. Two free lectures each on this subject, held in four devotional hours organized for this purpose, and published by C. F. W. Walther on the basis of stenographic notes at the request of his congregation.

The first thing you have to do is to write letters, some of them important, which first require serious consideration. In such a situation, your uncle gets a conscience that knows almost nothing more than about official duties and official sins, and therefore does not stir when it concerns duties of kinship love and their violation. You can believe that. I write hundreds of letters, and my dear sisters are almost always forgotten, even though they accuse me of unbrotherliness. That's how it is with you, too, if you don't have a case of conscience to present to me. But since I expect to meet you in A. in a few days, it is only the fear of your angry face that compels me today, still on Memorial Day [?] before the feast, to at least write to you why I have not written. I thought of the statement by Goethe, which I liked very much as a paradox when I read it for the first time, without having followed it often: In some cases it is necessary and friendly to rather write nothing than not to write. That is the key of my letter."

Pastor E. A. Brauer, who was his colleague at the institution for a longer period of time, writes about the work that his sermons made him do or that he made for himself: "Not only did he, since he was a professor, almost without exception write down his sermons word for word and corrected them again and again, so that his manuscript was usually covered with additions and improvements in the margins and between the lines; but he also always memorized them word for word for several days with the most painstaking conscientiousness. On Sunday mornings he got up at about four o'clock and, refreshed by a good cup of coffee, which his careful housewife had already prepared for him before he got up, he then memorized most diligently until he went to church. Later he said that this painstakingly literal memorizing caused him great distress, and he wished that after a few years of exact memorizing of the sermon he could have

He was then no longer so tied to the concept, especially since he was a master of free speech, as he proved from the beginning, especially in the synod sessions. Although all his sermons proved his eminent talent, as well as his iron diligence and the most conscientious elaboration, he wrote me several years ago (November 27, 1881) just about his sermons in his well-known humility the following: '...That you consider the tone I struck in the Luther celebration sermon to be the right one, that has been very comforting to me to hear. For you have no idea how miserably I always have to beg every period out of the dear God, and how much noble time I then have to spend on memorizing like a schoolboy, I am ashamed to tell you; .... You approach preaching with joy, I mostly with mortal fear; believe me. ''If there is anything good in preaching that is mine, then it is truly yours,'' that is what I confess in the liveliest conviction.

He often spoke about his preaching difficulties in his letters. In a letter to Pastor Wyneken of December 21, 1871, he remarks: "I am, as always, in great distress, since I must preach again." Fourteen days before the four and a half hundredth anniversary of the Reformation on October 16, 1867, he wrote to his son-in-law, Pastor S. Keyl: "God grant me and you a joyful opening of the mouth on the upcoming feast. I am still in great sadness and distress of soul, so that I think of the Jubilee Day with horror. Include me in Your prayer. I am poorer than you might think. And again on October 26, 1867: "May God graciously help you to speak with burning lips of God's great deeds for his little Zion, so that the fire of first love may seize all the members of your dear congregation. I am quite finished with my sermon, but it displeases me so much that I

wished not to have to deliver them. In the sermons, too, one hears again and again: It is not up to someone's will or running, but up to God's mercy? Help me to call upon God to help me at least not to spoil the feast; I will not forget you either. To the same he wrote on August 15, 1868: "As far as preaching a sermon is concerned, I don't want to promise anything yet, but I certainly don't see how I could escape the suspicion of being a slacker if I were to be idle during the following Sunday. First of all, I feel sorry for the congregation if I preach a sermon to them that is stitched together on the journey; secondly, I am afraid that such a sermon on the journey would only disgrace our college, our presidium, our synod and our church in general, because you know what a poor extemporizer I am "*).

Pastor F. Lochner writes about his work at synods: "Since Dr. Walther was always my guest at the synod meetings held here frequently during my 26-year stay in Milwaukee, I could quite perceive how little rest he allowed himself before and after the meetings. Not only was he occupied before and after the afternoon sessions, partly by individuals seeking advice in difficult cases, partly by this and that committee, but he also did not allow himself any rest before the morning sessions. He usually sat in my study before breakfast and retired to it after breakfast until the beginning of the session in order to prepare himself for the lectures, whether he himself was the lecturer or assisted the lecturer with the abundant and excellent citations he had brought with him. One morning, when a number of fellow ministers were talking in my parlor, I asked him to take a little rest and come down to us,

*) See the letters of September 5, 1877 and October 12, 1878 in the appendix.

he replied, ‘I would like to spend some time with the brothers, but I can't. I have some preparations to make: Oh yes, I would like to spend some time among the dear brothers, but I cannot, I still have to prepare myself a little.’ ‘You prepare?’ I asked in amazement, 'if anyone comes to the Synod already prepared, it is you!' 'All the same,' he replied, 'but you see, not only pastors, professors and teachers come to the synod, but also the many delegates of the congregations. Some of these dear, good men have come a long way, have been sent as representatives of the congregations, and as such are to report to their congregations on our proceedings when they return home. We must take them into special consideration in our negotiations, and the importance of the matter and the necessity require that we make every effort to treat the subject matter at hand as comprehensibly and vividly as is possible. It would be exceedingly sad if the dear delegates had little profit from such negotiations!' No wonder that the lectures became so interesting and that wherever Walther intervened in the lectures, when he explained a lesson or read a quotation with his interspersed remarks, the delagates' eyes and ears were open and after the sessions the mouth of many a deputy was full of what was in his heart."

As a professor he was still happy to help in pastoral care, e.g. by visiting the sick. Pastor E. A. Brauer writes: "He proved his great faithfulness in visiting the sick especially in the case of the misfortune of young Johanna H., who was so terribly burned all over her body that she had to suffer severely for nine weeks before death relieved her from her bed of pain. She visited Professor Walther every day. At first, the thought of death, which Walther naturally touched upon in his conversations with her, still seemed terrible to her — she was a virgin of 18 years — she did not want to

die. Every time during this whole time Walther prepared himself for these visits in the most conscientious way — if I am not mistaken, even in writing; and he once told me that this was no small work for him. The result of these visits was that this poor virgin finally looked forward to her death with great joy and certainty of salvation, and died in this way."

There are probably few theologians who have worked as he did, who gave themselves so completely to work, who enjoyed working so much. "The synodical times," he once wrote to Pastor Sievers Sr. "in which I am allowed to be active, are the most refreshing and enjoyable of my life."

He allowed himself little rest. In earlier times, he conducted a choir that he himself had founded, and he was also an excellent musician. In earlier times, he would sit at the piano for a short time, but in later times he did so less and less often, and finally almost not at all. He could devote little time to his family; sometimes he spent Sunday evenings with his family. Sometimes a wedding celebration or the birthday party of a friend took him away from his work. In the past, he probably visited a good friend on Sundays, such as the blessed Rev. Fick, when the same was pastor in Collinsville. "He had his delight in a bird, which he always cared for himself and, when he traveled, recommended to his own in the most appropriate manner." (E. A. Br.) When he was urged by his wife, by the doctor, and by friends to take a walk in the evening, he sometimes did so and asked his colleagues to go along, but it was not long before the good intention was gone again.

So he worked undauntedly and tirelessly until his old age, not to gain honor and fame, but to promote God's glory, to spread God's kingdom, to win many for the pure teaching that gives all glory to God.

XXV.

## Walther a righteous Christian — prayerfulness — humility — conscientiousness — unselfishness and frugality -.

### Generosity — hospitality — faithful friend.

Walther was equipped by the Lord, not dead, but alive; he was a sincere, righteous Christian, that is, a man who recognized himself as a poor sinner, but who firmly held on to the Savior in faith. His faith was not a dead head faith, but a living heart faith, which had been purified and proven through heavy tribulations and temptations. His signatures in letters are well known: "Your least fellow in tribulation and in the kingdom" — "You who long for eternal life" — "Your intimately united brother in Him who loved Himself to death for us and now sits on the throne to pour out on us the gifts He has earned for us" -.

He was a man of prayer. He understood the asking, the seeking, the knocking to which the Lord exhorts us. Everyone who heard him pray must confess this. Also the prayers written by him*) — everyone can sense this — have been prayed through by him before.

One virtue by which his faith proved itself was his humility, humility before God, humility before men. We have already shared many expressions of his humility; we recall the farewell words he addressed to the congregation when he left for Germany in 1860, the expressions he made when he accepted the

*) Addresses and Prayers spoken in the meetings of the Lutheran congregation and its board of directors by Dr. C. F. W. Walther, pastor of the congregation in St. Louis, Mo. 1888.

Doctor title. Walther knew that God had chosen him as an instrument to build the Lutheran Zion here in America, along with other faithful workers, he knew that he had contributed much to the building of the Synod, but he did not want to know it, he did not claim any honor, but gave God the glory; and when people came into consideration, he did not say: I, but: the Synod. In an editorial correspondence in 1860, while traveling in Europe, he wrote: "O, how happy I am, therefore, that God has given me the high grace of being able to stand in the fellowship of our Synod! — May He ... help me that I may soon rejoin the circle of my brethren and continue to enjoy the blessings I have enjoyed in it until the day of my death. "*) He knew that he had prestige and influence in the Synod and also outside of it, but he did not abuse this prestige and influence in his own interest, he did not elevate himself above others.

They say he was domineering, did not put up with opposition. We answer: Walther was also a poor sinner and in this knowledge he lived and therefore he also complained about his old Adam, who was no better and more beautiful than that of other sinners. Even if his flesh tormented him at times, we know that he fought against it bravely; we know that he also humbly acknowledged it when he let himself be hurried; we know that he also endured opposition and submitted to the will of others.

A pastor writes to us: "When it happened to him once. When it once happened to him to treat others a little too harshly, he then made such a full, humble confession that I told him afterwards that he had confessed too much. He answered: God grant that it does not harm the offended. I will

*) Lehre und Wehre VI, p. 197.

but rather confess too much than too little, for my only desire is to be saved.

"When Walther was once an arbitrator between two parties, one of them, because he was dissatisfied with the verdict rendered, fell upon Walther with impetuous speeches. The latter acted as if he did not hear. When the unwilling man then gave in a little to the coaxing of others, Walther warmly shook his hand in farewell. When I later expressed my surprise at Walther's behavior, he replied: "What does a doctor do who has a terminally ill patient in front of him? Doesn't his heart rejoice when he feels even a few weak signs of incipient improvement? We should also be such physicians, carrying the weak and the terminally ill, not immediately demanding much new life, but rejoicing warmly when at least a small beginning is made.

Pastor Sieker writes in the notes to his "Gedächtnißpredigt auf den selig vollendeten Dr. C. F. W. Walther": " The writer of this can testify to that from ... experience, that he might be tempted to rejoice at having even personally injured Walther, because he afterwards experienced such a rare patience and kindness about it from him, which must make and leave an indelible salutary impression. While many a respected man in the church repels the lowly and those who deviate from him with mockery and harshness, Walther was always kindness and friendliness itself, even toward the lowest. — The sharpest, most shattering speech that this writer heard from the blessed man's lips was prompted on the occasion of a meeting of the Synodical Conference by the remark of another man, then gladly honored. The latter began his presentation with the words: 'When Professor Walther has spoken and judged in a matter, it is difficult to come out against it.' With immense

In a subdued voice, trembling in deep melancholy, which later, however, became shaky and sharp, Walther explained the following: He had and could calmly bear it from enemies of God's truth, if it was attributed to him that he therefore fights a view or measure because it is not pleasant to him, that he therefore supports a doctrine or a practice because he considers it to be right. Now, however, it was insinuated to him in the circle of his fellow believers that one finds it difficult to oppose a question that he considers to be right. There he was humiliated as never before. Where had he given cause to even think of him in this way? If this is the case, then he has not known his God until now, whom alone he is to follow and obey; he has not known himself in this way, since he has walked in the faith of seeking only alone God's honor. He was a man like the least of the assembly, and this least was so much higher than he, if he led God's Word against him, as God was higher than a man. Should the enemies of the truth celebrate the triumph, that the suspicion arises from the circle of his own brothers in faith, that one is not allowed to speak against him? But the devil be defied to prove to me that I have justly left the impression, even to a simple-minded layman, that one must not contradict me," and so on.

To his nephew J. W. he wrote in 1868: "-- But I am comforted by the fact that I am at least a monument of God's great mercy, which often chooses just such instruments on which free grace shines all the brighter for the sake of their unworthiness."

When we consider what authority Walther possessed, how his judgment was sought after in all things, how highly he was honored as a teacher, we must regard it as a miracle of the mighty grace of God.

praise that this man remained in humility, did not become arrogant and fell.

As Walther was conscientious in the arrangement of his various offices, so also in his entire conduct. He was immensely anxious to keep himself in all things so that no one could take offense.

His unselfishness and frugality were great. When he was still in Perry County, where poverty was at home at that time, and in the beginning here in St. Louis, he gladly shared poverty with those under his command. Pastor F. Lochner, who was expelled from his first congregation in the fall of 1846 and was Walther's guest for a time, writes: "It was difficult for me to have to make use of his hospitality, which was so warmly offered and shown to me, for so long, since I saw how scarce things often were with him. Here is an example. Since the wood supply was pretty low and the cash register did not permit the procurement of a cord of firewood, although wood was still very cheap at that time, Walther decided to do his written work in the heated family room for part of the day, which was not very pleasant for him, of course. Fortunately, after a few days, one of the supervisors had something to do with him, and he could not suppress his astonishment to find the pastor, who was writing a Lutheran article and had several volumes of Luther's works on the table in front of him, not working in the study. Although Walther did not really want to come out with the language, the provost had soon noticed what the actual cause of the translocation was, namely when Walther had stayed for a short time for discussion in the cold study room with him. The next morning, a load of wood arrived, and Walther, who was not a little surprised by this, but now also realized immediately where it came from, was able to move back into his study room for the whole day. How modest his

We have already heard how he initially lived in the old asylum building, and how he later refused to accept it when friends offered him a house that had been built for him as a gift. For the books he published he took not a cent in remuneration. If, like other writers, he had demanded or taken gratification for all his writings, he would have become a rich man. But he renounced, as he renounced his own honor, so he renounced temporal profit. In this way he contributed a great deal to the flourishing of the "Concordia Publishing House".*) The profit — and it was thousands of thalers — he let flow into the synodical treasury.

Walther's generosity and charity was great; not only did he give regular contributions for specific purposes, but also when asked to do so on an extraordinary basis, and he always gave generously.

His hospitality was great. His house was open to all lovers of Christ and they were entertained for a long time without grumbling and with pleasure. He wrote to a German theologian who offered to enter the service of the local Lutheran church:

Concordia College near St. Louis, Mo, Sept. 12, 1855.
Dear Sir!

Yesterday I received your honored letter of August 21. I hasten to reply to you. Since I do not have a synodical office, it is

*) Walther took a lively interest in the meetings held by the "Committee for Printed Matter" appointed by the synod and other local friends of the synod, the result of which was the establishment of a synodical printing house. The first printing house building was erected on the synod land. Walther gave the speech at the inauguration ceremony on February 28, 1870. See Lutheran 26, No. 14. Since God blessed the work, a larger building could be erected near the seminary at the corner of Miami Street and Indiana Avenue as early as 1873.

It is not in my power to give you any instructions concerning your future work in the American Lutheran Church. I hope that on your, God grant, happy arrival in New York you will meet President Wyneken, if not in the city, at least in the vicinity, since there is a visitation in the East at this time. Should it not turn out that way, you will not be left without advice from our Vice-President Brohm. By the way, it is very much to be hoped that you will not insist on immediate employment, so that you can be entrusted with a post corresponding to your gifts and strengths. If you should be able to wait a little for this reason, then my house and table will be at your disposal with your valuable family until the Lord opens the right door for you to work in his church. Perhaps it would be desirable that you do not have to take up an office immediately after landing on our coast, if you could first get to know the local conditions through quiet observation and contact for a month or more.

This is my unbiased opinion.

In a hurry!

The Lord be with you and your

C. F. W. Walther.

This theologian then found the most friendly reception upon his arrival here in Walther's house. He describes the hospitality he enjoyed as follows: "The recipient of this letter immediately found the most friendly reception and accommodation for himself and his family (wife and two half-grown children) in the apartment and at the table of Professor Walther and stayed there for a full five months. In order to put into practice the principle that a theologian coming from Germany should first look at the local conditions for a longer time before taking office,

Walther did not allow himself to be put off by the greatest difficulties, even privations. The apartment was limited, only the two side wings of the old college were available. The southern wing was occupied by Professors Walther, Biewend and Rector Gönner and their families. Now one more family had come in. The income was so meager at that time that there was sometimes a lack of bread on the table, where even some students ate regularly. God awakened the heart of the baker R., so that the real starvation was prevented by abundant bread deliveries. And yet this great benevolence was shown throughout the whole time with the same undauntedness and the kindest friendliness. As week after week and month after month passed without a job coming, and the waiting seemed to be too long for the people concerned, Walther said: ‘Otherwise, the desire of pastors is always much greater than our ability to fill the positions. Yes, often so many professions come that we wish we could turn the pastors; but just now no suitable profession wants to come.’ When now and then the recipients of the hospitality expressed their sorrow that they were a burden for so long, he replied: ‘I thank God that he has given me the grace and counted me worthy to serve you. Giving is more blessed than receiving.’ But Walther did not only try to take away the hardness of the waiting time by such sweet consolations, but he was also anxious to put the person concerned into appropriate activity by giving him the opportunity to teach at the college.

A pastor writes: "When I had become sickly and unable to work at the beginning of my term of office, Walther invited me to his house with such warm words that I could not resist. He was convinced, he said, that he had found in me the Lord Jesus Himself.

take. And he faithfully fed me in his home for six weeks."

At parties, birthday and wedding celebrations and other gatherings of friends, Walther always knew how to make the hours extremely enjoyable. There he shared many things from the rich treasure of his experience, there he participated lively when the conversation came to doctrine, to what moved the church in general and our synod in particular, to important events in the world empire. In addition, in his time he was able to amuse society with a fine joke, not with jokes that were not appropriate for Christians, but with jokes that remained within the bounds of godliness.

Walther was a loyal friend. All those who enjoyed his special friendship will have to confess this. How mild he was in his judgment of their weaknesses, how he knew how to tell them what he thought he had to tell them, how he revealed his heart to them! And how sweetly he could talk to them in letters, how powerfully he comforted them, yes, even at times he joked deliciously! His friendship letters are true model letters. All who have received such letters regard them as wonderful gems. Our readers will find a number of them in the appendix.

XXVI.

## Walther a great theologian — as a preacher — what made him a theologian? — his high gifts.

Walther was a great theologian,*) not, as one understands it today, a theologian who takes new, striking paths, brings up a new system of doctrine, founds a new school, as one says, but he was a great theologian in the true sense, as such a one should be before God and the church, a divinely taught divine scholar, who clearly expounded the old apostolic pure doctrine brought back by Luther, thoroughly proved it and bravely defended it, and that for the glory of God and the salvation of the church. Walther did not, as some do, have a particular favorite doctrine, but all doctrines, and that from their center, the doctrine of justification. He was at home in all doctrines and paid attention to all of them, as his edition of Baier's Doctrine of Faith**) shows. However, prompted by attacks, he has especially expounded, substantiated and defended some doctrines and brought them to the fore again. We call the doctrine that the Holy Scriptures, the entire Scriptures, even those that are inspired by words, are the only source of knowledge, rule and guideline of faith and life, the doctrine of the inability of the natural man in spiritual things and of the free grace of God, of justification, of conversion, of the means of grace as the means in which the salvation acquired through Christ is found.

*) See the excellent description of Walther as a theologian from the pen of Prof. Pieper in "Lehre und Wehre," April 1888 ff: "Dr. C. F. W. Walther als Theologe."

**) *Joh. Guilielmi Baieri Compendium Theologiae positivae. Denuo edendum curavit Carol. Ferd. Guil. Walther, SS. Theologiae Doctor et Professor*. 1879.

and by which the faith that grasps this salvation is wrought, of the distinction of Law and Gospel, of the church of Jesus Christ, the invisible assembly of all true believers, its rights, office and regiment, of the Lutheran church as the true visible church of God on earth, of the kingdom of grace of Christ on earth, which remains a kingdom of the cross until his return for judgment (against chiliasm).

His fight against error was a determined one, but not a carnal one; it flowed from zeal for the honor of God and the sole rule of His Word, from love for the misguided souls. In "Zeitgeschichtliche Gedanken" in "Pilger aus Sachsen" (Pilgrim from Saxony), Dr. Delitzsch quotes the following words from a letter addressed to him by Walther: “Believe me, in my polemics I often feel like Joseph, who spoke harshly to his brothers, but then went into his chamber to weep, and only after he had washed his face did he go out among the people again.”

Walther was great as a preacher. His sermons were thorough, doctrinal, and at the same time popular and edifying. He did not set out to tickle the ears, to flaunt his eloquence, but his lectures were nevertheless witty, eloquent, attractive, entrancing.

When Walther was still pastor here, educated unchurched people visited his church, especially on high feast days, in order to hear a lively address, not to enjoy the content of the sermon, but the beautiful form. Walther also increased his sermons, but already from the beginning of his effectiveness, when he was still pastor in Saxony, he was concerned with winning souls with his sermons.

*) In the number of 12 Aug. 1877.

to apply all diligence to the form as well. Mr. C. E. Kühnert in Chemnitz in Saxony writes us that Mr. Gustav Wild, who was Walther's confessor in Bräunsdorf in the years 1837 and 1838, still remembers what Walther preached and told him many things, among others the following topics from the year 1837: Of the characteristics of true humility — Of the abundant riches of divine grace — What is the right visible church of God on earth? 1. which does nothing to it, 2. which does nothing from it, 3. which does not pervert. From the year 1838: Of the true conversion to God — The rebirth a work of the triune God — How wonderfully God leads men to blessedness — Heaven and hell, 1. that there is certainly a heaven and a hell, 2. for whom these places are intended. One confessional speech dealt with the question: Why do most communicants feel no benefit and blessing? 1. because they do not believe that the true body and blood of Christ is present in the Lord's Supper, 2. because they have not yet recognized their sins and done true repentance, 3. because they still live in knowing and ruling sins.

Dr. A. Brömel, in his "Homiletische Charakterbilder" (Homiletic Character Portraits), thus judges Walther's sermons: "He" (Walther) "is as orthodox as Johann Gerhard, but also as intimate as a Pietist, as correct in form as a university or court preacher, and yet as popular as Luther himself. If the Lutheran Church wants to bring its teachings back to the people, it will have to be as faithful and certain in doctrine and as appealing and contemporary in form as is the case with Walther. Walther is a model preacher in the Lutheran Church. How different things would be in Germany for the Lutheran Church if many such sermons were preached!" "That by which Walther has such a forceful effect is, of course, not the form but the content of his sermons. He preaches the whole Word of God as a good Lutheran. Favorite thoughts

he does not have. He preaches the entire content of Scripture with the greatest fidelity to conviction; and that is precisely what is so pleasant. He does not give up one little title of Scripture." "Again and again Walther returns to justification by faith alone." "Because he is so fond of talking about reconciliation with God as the most blessed mystery, and lives and weaves in it himself, that is why he so urgently calls for reconciliation. His speech becomes very lively and urgent when he speaks of this." "The fountains of grace are to him, of course, merely the Word and the Sacraments. With unshakable firmness he clings to the Word." "Into the Word, therefore, he points everyone; here heaven is open, the heart of God is open." But Walther does not weaken the necessity of sanctification.*)

Walther's knowledge of Luther and other theologians who have written instructions for preachers, and his rich experience in the local pastorate put him in a position to write such a splendid instruction for preachers as his "American Lutheran Pastoral Theology" in 1872.

What made Walther such a theologian? Luther says: Prayer, study and challenge make a theologian.

*) Walther's sermon collections appeared under the following titles:

American Lutheran Gospel Postils. Sermons on the Gospel Pericopes of the Church Year by C. F. W. Walther. St. Louis, Mo. 1871.

American Lutheran Epistle Postils. Sermons on most of the epistolary pericopes of the church year by C. F. W. Walther. St. Louis, Mo. 1882.

Lutherische Brosamen. Sermons and speeches, since 1847 partly in pamphlet form, partly already published in journals, presented in a new anthology by C. F. W. Walther. St. Louis, Mo. 1876.

Casual sermons and Addresses by Dr. C. F. W. Walther. Collected from his written legacy. St. Louis, Mo. 1889.

These three pieces also made Walther. His life was a life of prayer. He studied with iron diligence. Besides the Holy Scriptures, he studied Luther, the greatest teacher after the apostles. He knew Luther's writings exactly, but not only that, he was also a faithful son and disciple of Luther. In a synodical address*) he says: "A disciple of Luther, and as I hope to God, a faithful disciple of the same, I have only stammered after this prophet of the last world everything I have spoken and written publicly up to now." Of Luther's writing "Daß der freie Wille nichts sei" [That the free will is nothing] he said that it had made him realize the greatness of God; from the writing "Von den Schlüsseln" [On the Keys] he had recognized what the Gospel was, and from the writings on usury what true charity was. From experience he could therefore also give excellent instructions for the study of Luther's writings.**) — But also the third piece, the challenge, was not missing. And because God wanted to make a great theologian out of him, he also let him experience many and severe, even high spiritual challenges. It pleased God to throw him repeatedly into the crucible of the cross and tribulation. A pastor, an old friend of Walther, writes to us: "When I visited him once, he looked at me with an almost tearful look and a mournful gesture and said: 'Oh, if only I could die? When I asked him later what had helped him most of all from his temptations, he said: ‘Holy Communion.’ He also complained about the fact that his job entailed having to read so much bad stuff, which caused him a lot of trouble. I comforted him with the fact that it had been the same with Luther, whom the devil had made believe that in the end even the shameful Turkish and Tartar

*) General Syn. Report 1869. p. 22.
**) See the paper, "The Fruitful Reading of Luther's Writings." Lehre und Wehre XXXIII, 305.

faith was a good one. Moreover, all the disgrace of the enemies of the pure doctrine, which they poured out on our synod, hit first and mostly the champion; therefore Dr. Sihler*) calls him "our General Cross Bearer" in his self-biography.

However, God had also equipped our Walther with great glorious gifts in order to accomplish quite a lot through him. Walther had a good judgment, he could easily distinguish the true from the false and weigh the reasons for and against a thing exactly. This gift served him well in the exposition, substantiation and defense of doctrine, in disputations, in religious discussions, in giving expert opinions on how to act Christianly in doubtful cases. [So also F. Pieper, but not L. Fuerbringer] He possessed a good ingenuity, he could grasp a matter quickly and easily, imagine it vividly and find the appropriate expressions for it. This gift showed itself especially in his splendid sermons and lectures. He probably also sometimes delighted his own and friends with a poetic outpouring. It is rare that both gifts are in such high degree with each other in one person. His good memory left him only in his last years. He possessed strong willpower, and God needed an energetic man for what He wanted to accomplish here in this country. He did not abuse his power, which was especially evident in the leadership of the congregation, the Synod and the institution, to arrogate to himself a dominion, but to build God's kingdom. He was hostile to all church politics and went straight through according to what he had recognized as right from God's Word, even if the synod would have gone to ruins over it. He defended the truth and testified against error and injustice, leaving the consequences to the Lord who governs the church, and had firm faith,

*) Sihler's curriculum vitae II, 94.

The Lord will do everything well. Once, when a friend was worried about the outcome of a trial, he said: "Be of good cheer! We will begin with prayer, and what we ask of God, he will give us; for God is faithful, He has promised to give us His mouth and wisdom; He keeps His word; we should only believe. When the Synod was moved by the usury question, he repeatedly expressed that he could not depart from right doctrine even if the synod fell to pieces. To a friend he wrote on March 22, 1869: "We will probably not be able to avoid discussing the usury question together on the occasion of the next General Synod. God help us! Satan obviously has evil in mind. But He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world. If God compels us to undertake this ticklish matter, He will also help us not to be divided over it."

XXVII.

## Walther's blessed effectiveness — has extended far — judgement on that.

Oh, how God has honored Walther to work so beneficially, more beneficially than many others, in His kingdom! What a great building of God is our Synod, on which He worked before others! How many disciples bless his memory, whom he so faithfully instructed, to whom he gave so much good advice,*) to whom he always remained affectionately attached, when they faithfully worked for God's glory and kingdom! How many pastors who did not

*A pastor writes to us that when he was appointed as a candidate to a difficult post and took leave of Walther, the latter gave him courage and excellent advice and concluded with the words: "Always remember: You don't catch pigeons with clubs!"

sit at his feet regard and respect him as their dear teacher, who has instructed and advised them through his excellent lectures at synods, through his writings, especially through his pastoral theology, through letters which they received from him! How far Walther's blessed effectiveness has extended, — far beyond the borders of our synod! How he is remembered with love in the Wisconsin and Minnesota Synods, as well as in the faithful part of the Norwegian Synod! How many members in local synods, who do not agree with us, who are probably opposed to us, gratefully acknowledge that Walther was a great theologian and that the American church owes much to him! Wherever his writings reached, wherever his correspondence reached — in Europe, South America, Australia, Asia and Africa — where would they not have left traces of blessing! Thus Walther received a letter from a princess from Russia, who secretly thanked him for his Gospel sermons.

How the members of the Free Church of Saxony and Other States honor his memory!*) They cannot forget how Walther was and remained their faithful friend and advisor until his end, how he strengthened them in their actions, encouraged them, defended them, so warmly advocated their support.

*) In the 1860s, "Lutheran Associations" were founded in Dresden and Planitz in Saxony, which had come to know the pure doctrine, especially through Walther's writings, and were now concerned with spreading it. When the Saxon church government disregarded their testimony against the non-Lutheran nature of the state church, they left in 1872 and formed their own congregations, which appointed Pastor F. Ruhland at the suggestion of their faithful friend and advisor, Prof. Walther. Soon Pastor Lenk also resigned from the regional church. The Saxons, whose testimony God blessed, then entered into contact with Pastor Fr. Brunn in Steeden, who had faithfully served our synod and who had already left the unionist state church of Nassau some time before.

In the Lutheran Synod of Australia, too, Walther is spoken of with high esteem and the blessing that his writings and letters have also brought them is not overlooked.

We now let follow some judgements of others about Walther's personality and blessed activity — first of all from like-minded circles:

The "Ev.-Luth. Gemeindeblatt", organ of the Wisconsin Synod, expresses itself as follows: "Very versatile was the activity which Walther developed from his appointment as professor of theology until shortly before his death. Large is the group of those who grew up under his leadership to become preachers of the gospel. Walther was not only their teacher as long as they sat at his feet as students, but also in many ways later they were able to experience from him stimulation, support in knowledge, and advice in difficult cases. Thus, at numerous synod meetings, which he had to attend, he gave out of his rich treasure with full hands, and when he spoke from God's word and the confessions of our church and the writings of the doctrinal fathers and from his rich experience, sometimes fundamentally, sometimes illustrating, sometimes rejecting error, he knew how to treat things so clearly and comprehensibly, at the same time so profoundly, so freshly and grippingly, that the simple as well as the learned listened to him with rapt attention and never tired of hearing. One may well say that whoever did not hear Walther in such public lectures did not get to know him precisely from the side where his gifts and his theological achievements showed themselves in the brightest light. In addition, he was often called upon, year after year, by pastors and laymen alike, who needed clarification and advice on individual doctrinal points, difficult cases of conscience, difficulties in congregational life, and so on. Enlightenment and advice

and the expert opinions, which he has given on such occasions, would certainly, if their collection, which had once been initiated, were to be carried out, give a respectable book, a practical continuation of his 'Pastoral Theology'.

"With the mention of this writing, another area is already mentioned in which Walther has been fruitfully active and has exercised a far-reaching influence. There will be few theological subjects and questions about which Walther as a writer would not have let himself be heard. Not only has he written a number of valuable books, such as the aforementioned 'Pastoral Theology', his book 'Von Kirche und Amt', the 'Die rechte Gestalt einer vom Staate unabhängig ev.-luth.Lutheran local congregation' and numerous writings on the smaller scale of 'Lehre und Wehre', but he also presented the pure doctrine in numerous treatises in the journals he started, the 'Lutheraner' and the 'Lehre und Wehre', fought against false doctrines, and evaluated various phenomena in church life. In doing so, he always had the interest to really serve the church with his work; he did not write just to write, or to show off his gifts and his erudition, or for the pleasure of arguing and criticizing, but the respective needs of the church, especially of the Lutheran church of our country, were what determined his choice of the subjects he dealt with. In this way, he has become a role model worthy of imitation for all those who are to be active as preachers and teachers in our church, a role model, as Luther was in the same respect in his time.

"Great, then, was the blessing that God bestowed on Walther's faithful and diligent work, Though the gifts and work of those men who stood by him as co-workers are not to be misjudged and held in low esteem, for that would be to be ungrateful to God and His faithful servants, who also in the service of

of the Lord and His Church. But they were and are certainly the very first in the ranks of those who recognized and acknowledge with heart and mouth that Walther's gifts and his versatile and continuous work were primarily the means by which God so wonderfully promoted the work of the Synod, of which he was first a member, founded teachers and listeners in sound Lutheran doctrine, kept them from going astray, spurred them on to diligent, common activity, kept them in harmony, and increased them from year to year. Primarily through his writings, Walther has exercised an influence far beyond the boundaries of his synod here in America, also in Germany, even as far as Australia, which is by no means to be underestimated, although it cannot be traced so clearly in the wider circles as where Walther had his ecclesiastical home and was a spiritual father in a special sense, in the Missouri Synod."

The "Ev.-Luth. Synodalbote", paper of the Minnesota Synod, says: "Without doubt the whole Lutheran Church has lost one of its greatest theologians in the deceased. Dr. Walther, by the grace of God, has brought the pure doctrine of the Word of God back to the lampstand here in this Occident and has always held this banner high until the end of his life. God grant that we may now faithfully preserve the jewel of pure doctrine that the Lord has given us anew through the faithful service of His servant who was called home, that we may remain firm in the Word of God, give Him alone all glory, and one day depart blessed in faith. But as long as we are still here, let us let the apostle call out to us: 'Remember your teachers who have told you the word of God, whose end look on and follow their faith.' Heb. 13:7."

The "Evang.-Luth. Freikirche", paper of the Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Saxony and Other States, writes: "Probably

Let us wholeheartedly grant the faithful worker and brave fighter, who has literally used up all his strength in the service of God's kingdom, the rest to which he has now entered after fifty years in office; let us rejoice and praise God that He has now called this much-hated and reviled servant to enter into the joy of His Lord; we imagine it, how this humble servant of the Lord, who rejected all honors here on earth, will be adorned with an imperishable crown and how he will shine like the splendor of heaven — for he has pointed many to righteousness — but despite all this, we are filled with a deep sorrow for this dear man, whose face most of us have never seen and who nevertheless stood close to us as a spiritual father, friend and advisor, whose writings have become signposts for us into the Scriptures, so that we have come to understand them as the Word of our God for salvation and have learned to appreciate them more and more and to use them more faithfully, whose letters — they have become rarer in recent years — have filled us with their heartfelt sympathy, faithful concern, selfless love and their joyful and joyful words, Their intercession — the deceased, according to repeated statements in his letters, especially remembered our little Free Church in his daily prayers — certainly often, without our knowing it, strengthened us when we became weary and wanted to go back.

"His personal life was that of a sincere Christian, distinguished by intimate, unfeigned piety, deep humility, great unselfishness, strictest self-restraint, great clemency towards others. Many poor students in particular know about his mercy, his unselfishness shines out from the fact that he gave all the profits of his writings to the Synod and repeatedly refused salary increases, book-

He was content with the fact that he had food and clothing. Thus he set a shining example of true Christian conduct, and for this reason alone his memory should be honored.

"But we must praise God's grace in him even more when we consider what he did for the Kingdom of God. Already at the beginning of his pastoral activity in his fatherland Saxony, which was then in the sleep of rationalism, he bore witness to the truth with such earnestness and zeal that he soon enough incurred contradiction and enmity! It was he, after all, through whom God again gave comfort to the seduced and disturbed Saxon emigrants who thought they had been abandoned by God and man in the forests of America under physical hardship and spiritual temptations! He did it, however, primarily through the teaching of the deceased — not invented or formed according to the republican principles of the Americans — but found again in great distress of conscience from Luther's writings and then from the Holy Scriptures themselves, that the church is essentially nothing other than the small group of those who believe in Christ, and that therefore every congregation, no matter how small, despised, rejected, which only has and wants to keep the word of God pure and true and to use the holy sacraments according to the institution of Christ. It has the right and duty to establish the holy ministry among itself, and for this it does not need any higher church government, no affiliation to a larger organism. After all, it was he, together with many witnesses of Christ who preceded him into eternity and some who are still living, who founded the Missouri Synod 40 years ago, which, under God's blessing, has become a tree whose branches overshadow all of North America. But he laid the foundation primarily by setting forth the right principles according to which a right Lutheran synodal edifice can be built.

The synod must be built on the principle that it is founded on unity of doctrine, supported by brotherly love, and not a place where some have to rule alone and others only have to obey. After all, it was he before others who, with the rich gifts of a penetrating intellect, a comprehensive knowledge and quick-witted speech bestowed upon him by God, countered the manifold errors arising outside and inside the Synod and preserved the purity of the doctrine! He was not driven to these battles by any desire to quarrel or to be dogmatic, but to protect every Word of his God, over which he was not the master, from any falsification and distortion, to protect the freedom of the children of God, bought with the blood of Christ, against any violation, it was his duty to oppose with certain truth the sense of Pilate [John 18:38] that appears in coarser and finer forms and thereby to warn the souls commanded to him from the abyss into which indifferentism, this cancer of our time, must finally lead. He has introduced hundreds of young men and women to holy theology and trained them to be faithful and capable workers in the vineyard of the Lord. Has he by constant zeal against ungodliness and impudent security uncovered and fought many sins and by preaching the sweet gospel of free grace in Christ comforted many poor sinners, brought them on the right path and spurred them on to true godliness? At a time when the Lutheran Church in America and Germany had almost disappeared in the mire of rationalism and unionism, this man showed by the testimony which he first raised in the "Lutheraner", published in 1844 and now distributed in 18,000 copies, that the Church of the Reformation is nevertheless the City of God, and brought its true treasures to light again! His writings have gone out as a stream of blessings into all parts of the earth, have

but especially his sermons found lovers far beyond the circles that stood first to him! And these writings of his are testimonies of an extraordinary knowledge of church and dogmatic history, especially of Luther's writings, whom he recognized and honored as the only Reformer of the church sent by God, and proofs of humble recognition of the search for grace granted to the Church by the Reformation. At the same time, they are testimonies of a heart filled with ardent love that beats for the salvation of all fellow human beings.

"And we should not honor such a man's memory? We should not refrain from doing so, even if we owe him nothing personally. But we owe him much. For it is precisely through his writings that we have been torn out of the confusion and lack of clarity that is the hallmark of modern Lutheran theology, his testimony has freed the founders of our Free Church from the fetters of the state church, his encouragement has encouraged us, his help has strengthened us. Therefore, may his memory remain a blessing among us until we may follow him out of the misery of this time into blessed eternity.

XXVIII.

## Opinions from other circles about Walther's personality and effectiveness.

We now let follow some judgments about Walther's personality and effectiveness from the circles of those against whom Walther had to fight, who therefore do not conceal their censure, but nevertheless cannot fail to acknowledge Walther's merits.

The "Church Bulletin" [*Kirchenblatt*] of the Iowa Synod, in its June 1, 1887 number, said, "The Lutheran Church is losing in

to the departed one of her most manly fighters, her most blessed witnesses, her most renowned theologians. Since the year 1839 he has put the rich gifts of his spirit to the service of the Lutheran Church of America, and has worked at its upbuilding within the Missouri Synod with whole, full, unreserved devotion, without weariness, with joyful enthusiasm to his end. And God's mercy has prospered upon the work of his hands, and has caused him to behold the fruit of his labor as it is bestowed upon few men. The Missouri Synod with its tremendous expansion, its firmly established organization, its restless ecclesiastical activity ... is in an eminent sense his work, on which he has left the stamp of his spirit in all respects, and in which he was destined to see the realization of the thoughts of his life with his own eyes. The synod he founded and led saw in him its power embodied, as it were, and there are probably very few cases in which an outstanding personality has exercised an equally profound and all-dominating influence in the ecclesiastical community he led. . . . Therefore, we also share the pain and sorrow of his disciples and friends over the heavy loss with all our hearts, and their lamentation: A great man in Israel has fallen' resounds in our circle as well."

The editor of the "*Lutheran*", in an article in the May 19, 1887 issue, first refers to the work of the Missouri Synod and then continues: "We have called attention to these well known facts because they will serve distant readers to appreciate the greatness and influence of the man whose name is mentioned in the title of this article. For no one will question the correctness of our assertion when we declare that Dr. Walther has more than to any other

single human instrumentality, must be attributed the miraculous progress of the Missouri Synod. We do not forget that God alone is the author of all that has been and is still good in that Synod and has been directed by it, and we know that Dr. Walther and his Synod have always been ready to give glory to God. Nor do we forget the able self-denying men, such as the late excellent Dr. Sihler, Pastor Wyneken and others, living and deceased, who stood by him and worked faithfully with him. But nevertheless it remains an indisputable fact that Dr. Walther was the man whose influence in the pulpit, on the lectern, through written work and in the meetings of his part of the church did more than that of any other man to instruct, organize, govern and hold together that great body. He was a very learned theologian, especially quite familiar with Lutheran literature and theology. He knew the writings of Luther and the Lutheran fathers very well and always had them ready for use. This alone made him a master in the synodical assembly. . . . His thorough scholarship, his unaffected simplicity, his self-denying labors, his noble and engaging manners won for him the reverent admiration and love of the men who became his pupils."

"Herald and Magazine" [Herold und Zeitschrift] wrote in the number of May 14, 1887: "The whole Lutheran Church of this country, in some respects even of all countries, has cause to join in this mourning, for a great man has fallen in Israel, whose zeal, faithfulness, and scholarship have influenced the development of the Church even outside its narrower borders, as can be said of no other for a century." "Dr. Walther has exercised great influence on his time, and has produced results

seen during his lifetime, such as are seldom granted to a human being."

And in the number of June 4, 1887: "The success that Dr. Walther has had as a preacher, as a teacher, as a leader, as a church father, is virtually unprecedented in our time and is quite sufficient to establish forever that we are dealing here with a man of unusual dispositions, of significant individuality, of extraordinary working power. We are clearly aware of what we are saying when we say that in many years no man has lived who has had such a formative effect on the church as Dr. Walther."

A correspondent of the "*Lutheran Observer*" wrote in the number of May 27, 1887: "The work which he has directed during these (47) years has probably no equal in extent and duration in a single life devoted to the cause of Christ in this country. Whether we speak of the Missouri Synod, the college at Fort Wayne, Concordia Seminary, the great publishing house, the literature of the body, or of the many church servants sent forth by the same to preach the gospel, the name and influence of this brilliantly gifted and faithful man cannot fail to be mentioned in the process. Whoever writes the life of Dr. Walther will write the history of the Missouri Lutheran Church in this country. He was a noble character. — He had an apt judicium [judgment]. — He was a born leader. The work which he was enabled to accomplish, often under difficulties which would have overwhelmed some who had less faith and perseverance, is an irrefutable testimony not only to his faith in God, but also to those brilliant gifts of government which few men have."

The Leipzig "Allgemeine evang.-luth. Kirchenzeitung" thus pronounces in the number of June 22, 1887: "With him one of the greats in the church of Christ has gone home, a man who

was not only an epoch-making personality in the ecclesiastical history of America and the outstanding leader and collector of the Lutherans there, but whose effectiveness was felt to be powerfully stimulating in the Lutheran church of all parts of the world. The success of his work is almost unprecedented in the recent history of our church and marks him not only as a man of great talents, outstanding gifts, iron diligence and rare energy, but also reveals in him a providential personality, such as the Lord sends to his church when he wants to lead it on special ... ways.

"Admittedly, what actually makes a great theologian in our modern days, he did not have; he did not want to bring new thoughts, establish a new theological system, form a new school; he thought nothing of the humble-sounding boast that we Christians must never think we have the truth, but must always seek it. He was high above such a standpoint of inner disarray and ambiguity. From God's Word he had become unshakably certain of the truth. The Lutheran confession was not a learned template which he had put on his shield as a motto and held on to thoughtlessly and schoolmasterly with vain selfishness; but in difficult struggles, hanging over precipices, often close to despair, he had found in this confession the anchor and basis of all hope, the source of all joy and the light of truth. It had now become the pulse, the heart of his whole life; the whole man stood in this faith, and this gave him this great energy, the unshakable certainty and clarity, in which an amazing erudition and clear dialectically trained mind rendered him great service. Therefore, he did not want to know anything about 'open questions', in which he saw only the pretext of a heart disobedient to the Word of God, and everything,

that contradicted the fundamental article of our Lutheran confession of justification, even in the slightest way, . ... found in him an implacable, destructive adversary. Just as in his theology he wanted to know nothing of open questions, so in his practice nothing of pacts with the world, or of false doctrine. . . He always went straight according to his conscience, even if such straightness seemed to ruin everything. And he has seen that 'straight ahead' is always the best way to the goal. Few have seen such brilliant successes as he has had. He taught us all that all clever diplomacy in the church is the greatest folly.

"In his character there was a peculiar mixture of softness and hardness. Those who know him only from his pamphlets do not suspect that his friendly cordiality was enchanting, that he won hearts with touching humility and modesty. This cheerful humorist, this concerned friend, this polite, fine Saxon, as his coarse, Low German bosom friend Wyneken often jokingly called him, this childlike, cheerful disposition, this deep, warm eye: it was the same that could look as if with consuming rage when he defended his Gospel and led the opponent away with dashing, powerful blows. In this he had something of Luther's character, and one can also say of him, as Melanchthon said of Luther: 'that in all his speeches he is sweet-tempered, friendly and charming, not at all insolent, impetuous and obstinate or quarrelsome, and yet full of seriousness and bravery in his words'.

"As a preacher he distinguished himself by warm cordiality and often ravishingly gripping power; but he clothed his lively thoughts in exemplary form of clear, logical development. He was thoroughly doctrinaire, but nothing less than doctrinaire; everything had its practical point. The two postils [Gospel and Epistle sermons], of which the Gospel Postil has seen its eighth edition in eleven years, and

which has been distributed in 23,000 copies and translated into Norwegian, show him as a theologian who, out of mature experience and diligent study, gives to the congregation what he himself has experienced and on which his life rests. The center of his sermons as well as of all his addresses and writings is for him the Lutheran doctrine of justification. In Lutheranism he recognized the continuation of the apostolic church; his goal was therefore to bring the Lutheran church back to its starting point, to the doctrine of the Reformation drawn from the Word of God. As a teacher, professor and leader of his synod, as well as in often fierce disputes with sects and enthusiasts, he steadfastly and manfully maintained and defended this position. ... The American circumstances demanded such a man, and vice versa, they formed such a man, who in Germany would hardly have become what he has now been able to be for the church. He has reformed, built, and inspired not only in the Missouri Synod and the Synodical Conference, but in the widest circles he has had his disciples. . .

"And just as the ecclesiastical circles are shaken by the passing of this man, so we also find in the daily press of America, even of the most radical kind, honorable obituaries for the great German man. Probably never before has a clergyman in America been borne to his grave with such public recognition and honor as Walther. —"

XXIX.

## Walther's last illness — last speech — last birthday party — 50th anniversary of office.

For fifty years God used this faithful servant in His service; then He harnessed him and let him depart in peace.

During the vacations in 1886, Walther visited his children in New York. He said this was his last visit. Almost all the pastors of the New York Pastoral Conference came to Pastor Keyl in one day to greet Walther and enjoy his company for a few hours. From here he traveled to Cleveland to visit his children there, and attended the Central District Synod held at Pastor Niemann's church (August 4-10). From Cleveland he went to Detroit to attend as a delegate the Synodal Conference held there (from August 11 to 16). He returned sick. However, he did not allow himself any rest, but continued in his strenuous work. When the Western District held its meeting there on October 13 and the following days, he also presided over the doctrinal negotiations. For thirteen years he had lectured at the meetings of this district on the subject "that only through the doctrine of the Lutheran Church alone is all glory given to God, an irrefutable proof that the doctrine of the same is the only true one.*) In this meeting it was necessary to bring the subject to a conclusion. It was a

*) The theses are as follows:

I. Since religion is the way of worshipping God, the only true religion is the one that gives glory to God alone in all its teachings.

II. Since a visible church is an assembly of people who "come to

It was a picture of misery to see how the man, weakened by fever, was not powerless, but was giving a lecture with all his strength. Many wished that someone else would have taken over his work, but again, one had to grant him the joy of bringing his subject to a conclusion. It was a lamentable picture, but also the picture of a man who worked restlessly, without regard for himself, for God's cause. After all, the glorious theme that he brought to a conclusion was the theme of his life: All glory to God alone! Deeply moved and with sobs he concluded his lecture: "So we have come to the end of our theses, which we have been discussing for thirteen years, in which it has been proven that our Lutheran church in all these teachings gives all glory to God alone and never gives the glory due to the great God to the creature. What is due to God, she also gives to him completely. May the good Lord help us not only to rejoice in belonging to such a church, but also to give Him all honor in our faith, confession, life, suffering and death. Our motto in life must be: *Soli Deo Gloria* (Glory to God alone). This is what the angels sang immediately after the

If a person "professes" a doctrine and religion, then only the one that gives glory to God alone through all its teachings is the true one.

III. Only through the teaching of the Lutheran Church is all glory given to God alone; this is evident from its teaching, among other things:

1. Of the Word of God; 2. Of the cause of sin, death, hell, and damnation; 3. Of divine providence; 4. Of the general will of God in grace; 5. Of the reconciliation and redemption of the human race; 6. Of the justification of the sinner by grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ without merit of works; 7. Of the necessity of regeneration, sanctification, and good works; 8. Of the foundation, validity, power, and immutability of the means of grace; 9. Of conversion; 10. Of the invocation and worship of God; 11. Of obedience to men in matters of faith and conscience; 12. Of the election of grace.

Savior was born. That was the first thing and is also the main thing. God has regained His glory through Jesus. We have borne nothing of it but shame, but in that God has regained His glory, we have eternal blessedness. Blessed are all those who believe this from the heart! They will then see all the holy angels and continue the song of God's honor, praise and glory from eternity to eternity. God help, dear brethren, that one day we too will be among this multitude and then with all our heart truly give all glory to the dear God. For here we cannot, our shameful flesh clings to us. But there, when God has taken the old flesh from us, our doctrine will not only be theory, but we will also practice it. O Lord Jesus, help us all to do this. Amen." *)

The Synod thanked him most sincerely for the work he had put into the lectures he had delivered during the last thirteen years, and at the same time expressed the wish that he might suspend his lectures for a while because of his sickly condition. But he did not follow the instruction, he did not consider himself entitled to stop the work assigned to him by the General Synod at the request of a district; even the suggestions of others to allow himself a time of rest were in vain, he continued to work until he completely collapsed.

On October 25, he celebrated his birthday. When in the evening his colleagues, relatives and friends gathered at his place as usual, he devoted himself to them in the well-known kindly way, but one could well notice that it was not done without straining his strength.

Soon after, his condition worsened, but he continued his work. On Wednesday, November 3, he attended the

*) 27th Synod Report of the Western District, 1886, p. 58.

In the evening of that day, he finally promised the supervisory authority that he would cease his lectures. When he could no longer be up, he lay on the sofa for a while, but his brother-in-law, pharmacist H. Bünger, forced him to lie down in bed. "You bring me in here," Walther said, "I won't come out again. At the beginning of December, his daughter, wife of Pastor Keyl, came here to take care of him. His son, Pastor Ferdinand Walther, also came here three times for the same purpose. In December he became weaker and weaker, his feet would no longer carry him, he could no longer walk.

January 16, 1887, was approaching. The 2nd Sunday after Epiphany was the day on which he had been ordained 50 years ago and had entered the sacred ministry. It had long been thought of celebrating the day of the 50th anniversary of his ordination accordingly, and how many had sent up hot wishes to God that Walther might experience this high and rare day of honor in good health! But God's thoughts were different from ours. With Walther's continuing weakness, there could be no question of a grand celebration. However, God granted him the joy of experiencing this day, and a celebration did take place, even if it was not as great as was initially intended. The infirmary was furnished by a committee of the congregation with new, splendid, comfortable furniture. On Sunday morning, jubilant sermons were preached in the local churches. Already early in the morning the students had greeted Walther with a song and offered him their congratulations through a deputation. After the morning service a number of friends from out of town congratulated him: Prof. Crämer accompanied by Mr. Uhlig, Pastor Schieferdecker and Pastor H. Sauer and Mr. Meyer from Fort Wayne. After the afternoon service, the following introduced themselves

the four delegates of the four parish districts, the pastors of St. Louis, the members of the faculty of the seminary, Prof. A. F. Hoppe and Mr. Barthel introduced the dear jubilarian. Walther received the well-wishers in the new invalid chair. First, Mr. Weise, who had already belonged to Walther's congregation in Bräunsdorf in Saxony and had attended his ordination, congratulated him on behalf of the congregation. Deeply moved, Walther expressed his gratitude for the love shown to him by the congregation so far and praised the undeserved grace with which God had blessed his, as he humbly confessed, little work. Pastor Otto Hanser spoke on behalf of the ministry, Prof. R. Lange on behalf of the faculty. Afterwards, Pastor W. Achenbach presented him with the sum of $3000 in gold collected by synod members. All congratulators shook hands with him and congratulated him briefly. To the congratulations offered to him he replied, among other things: "It is true that God wanted to use me, a wretched man and a poor sinner, out of undeserved grace, to carry out His work. It would be ingratitude if I wanted to deny that God has done great things. Only He, not I, deserves the honor. ... I have received much praise and much blame from men in my life, but you can believe me, dear brothers, I have become indifferent to both." When he then praised and thanked God's rich grace and confessed that when he looked at himself he had to be ashamed before God, his voice failed him, he covered his eyes with his left hand, tears flowed down his cheeks and the longing of his heart was revealed in the words: "Out, out ... my God! out of this wicked world." On the anniversary day and already in the days before, Walther received many congratulatory letters from near and far. The day after, he dictated a letter of thanks to his son, Pastor Ferd. Walther, which was published in the

the next number of the "Lutheraner",*) which was published — without his consent — in a festive decoration with his picture, was published. The same reads:

"In Christ beloved and revered brothers, friends and benefactors!

In the last few days, and especially on the day of my fiftieth anniversary in office, I have received an almost innumerable number of the most wonderful letters of congratulations, partly from entire congregations, partly from pastoral conferences, partly from individual pastors and teachers, some from colleges of teachers together with their pupils and students, some of which have shamed me so deeply that I might have crawled into the earth, and others have urged me to shout aloud to God about the exuberance of my brothers' love.

My heart demands that I express my thanks. However, my physical infirmity still prevents me from doing this in more detail. It has been reported here and there in the papers that my physical condition has improved more and more every day; this is indeed the case. God's goodness be fervently and humbly thanked for this! However, it is not the case with my illness that it only resulted in great physical weakness, but rather that a complete absorption of all my bodily forces was the illness itself, from which I have been suffering for months now. This weakness of mine is still so great that, to mention only one thing, I can hardly walk three steps without support; indeed, if I try to take ten or more steps, even with the support of others, I lose my breath and come close to fainting.

*) "Lutheraner," Vol. 43, No. 3.

My dear brothers, friends and benefactors will therefore consider it best if I postpone the drafting of a detailed letter of thanks until I have overcome the complete exhaustion of my, especially physical, strength, if it should please God so. Then I intend to write a circular letter, reproduced by printing, and send it to my dear well-wishers. In it I will also commemorate the great, in part most precious anniversary gifts, so that I, unworthy and miserable human being, have been honored on this occasion. Until then, it may suffice that God has inscribed these gifts of undeserved love in the book of retribution with indelible writing.

Signed with deepest humility and grateful heart St. Louis, January 17, 1887.

C. F. W. Walther,

Pastor at Lutheran Congregational Church of St. Louis, Mo."

This letter also shows us his great weakness. Soon he could no longer leave his bed. As difficult as it must have been for such a restlessly active man to lie inactive, he patiently submitted to God's will.

## XXX.

### Uplifting sick — death bed — blessed farewell — funeral.

Except for the last month, he expressed interest in the welfare of the church, the synod, the institution. "Oh, that only," he declared, "our Synod perseveres in what it has! God has shown it such abundant grace, — and that it only keeps a pious ministry and does not allow unworthy persons into office!" Once he told his son that all students should prepare a paper on the subject: "What must a young preacher preach above all things, if he wants to make his congregation blessed?" He continued to administer the funds received for poor students for quite some time. Up to one month before his death, he insisted that his students pay their contributions to the congregation regularly. But the closer he came to the end, the more his interest in his closer and wider surroundings receded, and his mind was directed only to one thing, a blessed end through Christ. While in the former time he had still cherished the hope that he would once again recover and be able to resume his usual work, he later gave up these thoughts and looked forward to being released from his duties and longed for redemption.

He often confessed that he felt great joy when he let pass by his spirit the many great benefits that God had shown him during his long life. Once he said that many thought him to be a rather stiff-necked man who could not be dissuaded from his opinion, but he was sure that this "obstinacy" was a *donum Dei* (a gift of God). Until his last days, he often praised it as a special grace of God that He had protected him in this last illness from severe spiritual challenges, which he had to face in his last years.

He was not spared earlier illnesses. He consoled himself of God's gracious election and allowed himself to be comforted with it. Once, when Pastor C. C. E. Brandt visited him with Pastor Bartels, he lamented, "O, how great patience God must have with me poor sinner, ah, sin, sin!" — and then, when he was comforted from the Gospel, he rejoiced in the divine consolation and, weeping tears of joy, exclaimed, "Alas, if we had not the consolation! The faithful Savior! Oh, that will be glorious when we see Him whom we have not seen here and yet loved. Would that I were there already! But, God willing!" To Pastor Wangerin he once said, "I pray with the dear children: 'Take me into your heavenly kingdom, make me like your angels.'" On Sundays he used to have his daughter or son read to him the sermon from Heßhusius' Postille.

In the last weeks he often lay asleep and was unconscious. When, during this time, this writer said to him at a farewell visit: "The Lord will not forsake thee nor fail thee; he will mightily assist thee," the weary man said, turning his head a little: "Especially in the last hour! Often from his heart came the sigh, "God, have mercy!" Often he prayed: "Christ's blood and righteousness — this is my adornment and garment of honor," etc. When Pastor O. Hanser took leave of him, he answered his question whether he was looking forward to the heavenly glory with yes. In the week before last, his son had to read the following passages of Scripture to him: 1 John 2, Psalm 103, John 14, 15, and 17, 1 Peter 1, and the songs: "In thee have I hoped, O Lord," etc. (No. 365), "Jerusalem, thou high-built city," etc. (No. 443), and "There is yet a rest," etc. (No. 443).

On May 4, the General Synod was to meet in Fort Wayne. The departure of his colleagues who had to go to the Synodical Assembly was most painful; they knew that

they would not see him again in life. On May 4, when his son reminded him that the synod was about to begin, but that he would soon be called to another assembly, that of the patriarchs, prophets and apostles, he replied, "That will be wonderful!" From that day on, it was possible to speak to him intelligibly again and he grasped everything that was said to him, whereas the days before he was almost always unconscious. He must have sighed a lot: "God, have mercy! Oh God, do not leave me!" but he also confirmed the consolation of death, which he was given from God's Word, until the end either with a yes or with a nod of the head or a handshake. When an old parishioner visited him on May 5 and began the 23rd Psalm ("The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want"), he said the whole Psalm. On the evening of May 6, at his request, Pastor Stöckhardt prayed again with him and the relatives, and then recited to him the verse of the Evensong, "If this night shall be the last in this vale of tears, then lead me, Lord, into heaven to the chosen number," etc.; whereupon he said, "God grant it!" To the question put to him by Pastor Stöckhardt, whether he now also wished to die confidently on the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, to which he had testified all his life, he answered with a loud, clear yes. Towards midnight he seemed to be in severe pain once more, and then said, "It is enough!" Since then he seems to have felt no more agony. Saturday, May 7, he lay dying all day, as they say, but retained consciousness to the last and clearly indicated that he well understood what Pastor Stöckhardt, Prof. Schaller and his son told him. In the evening at 5½ o'clock he passed away gently and quietly.

The synodical assembly at Fort Wayne was braced for a message of mourning from the first session, but was terribly shaken when it now arrived. The interior of St. Paul's

Church, where the synod held its meeting, was draped with mourning flags by the members of the congregation. The meeting on Monday was opened with a funeral service. So that the synod would not be interrupted and so that as many synod members as possible could take part in the funeral, it was postponed until May 17 at the request of the synod.

On Friday, May 13, in the afternoon, the embalmed corpse was brought to the seminary building and laid out there in the large hall, near the lecture halls. When leaving the house of mourning, Pastor Stöckhardt gave a speech and a prayer. The coffin, carried by eight students, was followed by the mourning survivors: the two sons of the deceased, Pastor Ferdinand Walther and Mr. Constantin Walther, Pastor St. Keyl and his wife and daughter, and Pastor H. Niemann (whose wife, the youngest daughter of Dr. Walther, was unfortunately prevented by illness from coming); they were joined by the other students.

The seminary building was draped in black inside and out. The apartments of the professors, as well as those of the community members living here, were also draped in black. The students took turns keeping watch.

On Saturday evening an English funeral service was held in the auditorium of the seminary at the request of Americans, in which Pastor Birkner from here spoke.

On Sunday afternoon the body was taken to the Trinity Church. Before that, a ceremony was held. There was a large number of people who came to the event. The large auditorium could not hold them all. Pastor Stöckhardt gave an address on 1 Cor. 2, 2. A large crowd followed the body on foot, despite the threatening weather. The Dreieinigkeitskirche (Trinity Church) was dressed in mourning pennants inside and out. Many, many

entered the same still that day and on Monday and Tuesday morning, to take another look at the face of the dear deceased.

On Tuesday noon the body was taken to its final resting place. At 11 o'clock the students, professors and pastors, local and foreign, teachers, congregational leaders, etc. gathered in the schoolhouse on Barry Street, in order to move from here in a solemn procession to the Church of the Holy Trinity. At 12 o'clock the funeral service began, in which President Schwan preached on the 90th Psalm and Prof. Crämer spoke on 2 Kings 2:12 at the altar. The bearers of this celebration were the professors of the seminary and the pastors of the city. Pastors of our synod came from all parts of our country to pay their last respects to the beloved deceased. Other synods were also represented: the Honorable Minnesota Synod by its President, Pastor Albrecht; the Honorable Wisconsin Synod by the professors of its seminary in Milwaukee, Notz and Gräbner; the Honorable Norwegian Synod by its General President and Professor Larsen of Decorah. No funeral of a theologian in America has been attended by so many theologians. The city of St. Louis has hardly seen a larger funeral.

At the grave, Pastor O. Hanser held the eulogy on Dan. 12:23. Prof. Larsen (of the Norwegian Synod) could not refrain from giving a short speech to testify how much the Norwegian Synod also owes to the dear deceased. We share the heartfelt words here:

"Among the large crowd of mourners gathered at this funeral service is also a small number of pastors from the Norwegian Synod, among whom is the General President of this Synod. We would like to express our condolences on behalf of so many of our-

We would like to express to our brothers and sisters the heartfelt gratitude we feel towards God and his servant, the dear, now deceased Dr. Walther, for all the good things that have flowed to us through him. And we cannot but take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the entire Missouri Synod, of which he was the first man and which is so strongly represented here, for the great and self-sacrificing love which has been shown to us by this Synod for almost thirty years. Since 1858 we have had, certainly without interruption, students in their theological seminaries. About half of our pastors have studied in these seminaries, and most have enjoyed Walther's teaching. What blessings they, and through them their congregations and our people, have had from this, who can measure? But also the rest of us, partly older pastors of our synod, who did not receive instruction here as registered students, did we not also sit at Walther's feet? Of course, we did, and far from being ashamed of it, we consider it an honor and even more a great blessing that has been bestowed upon us. Our people have also been blessed by Walther and the Missouri Synod in that not a few writings have been translated from here into our language and spread among our countrymen. We mention especially Walther's Gospel Postils and the wonderful little book "The Right Form of a Local Evangelical Lutheran Church Independent of the State".

"The faithfulness both in the preservation of divine truth and in the striving for true holiness, to which Walther and the Synod, of which he was the first man, so powerfully guided and encouraged us, this faithfulness — let this be our wish and prayer today — may the dear deceased long survive both in our Synod and in his own! This be done for Jesus' sake! Amen."

The students also sang their funeral songs at the grave of their beloved teacher, as at the preceding ceremonies. Pastor Sieck said the Collecte and Blessing and Pastor Wangerin, after singing the funeral hymn "Nun lasst uns den Leib begraben" (Now let us bury the body) etc. (with a counter-call) said the Lord's Prayer. The tomb into which the coffin was lowered was walled. A strong stone slab covers the coffin.

Blessed are they that die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, the Spirit saith, that they should rest from their labors: for their works do follow them. Revelation 14:13: Walther's blessedness will be no greater than that of other sinners who are saved through Christ, but his glory in heaven will be especially great; he has labored more, struggled more than others, borne the reproach of Christ more than others; so much the greater will be his glory.

* *
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**Remember your teachers who have told you the Word of God; to which end look and follow their faith**.

Hebr. 13, 7.

# Letters.

## To a friend in Wisconsin,

who had chosen him as godfather of his child.

St. Louis, Oct. 20, 1877.

My dear sir !

Returning from my trip to this year's meeting of our Synod of the Western District in Altenburg, Perry Co., Mo., I find among a whole pile of correspondence received in my absence your dear letter of the 8th of this month. This letter, among the many letters of concern that I found, was one of the joyful letters that rarely find their way to me. And what a surprise you have given me! How could I have suspected that you would think of me when you were choosing godparents for your first olive branch! Well, I accept your honorable proposal in God's name. As much as God gives me grace, I will also diligently remember little S—er Walther before God, who is condemned to bear my poor name. But just remember that after you have given my name to a dear offspring, you must not forget to call upon God to keep me in the right faith and confession, so that your dear child will never find cause to be ashamed of me.

God let the little heavenly plant grow up nicely in the garden of your precious family, protect it from the poisonous worm of unbelief and misbelief, of sin and worldly vanity, and finally transplant it after it has borne much fruit for church and world.

I ask you to send the child to church soon, so that it may go to the garden of eternal paradise for the sake of Jesus Christ, to whom it was grafted as a vine in holy baptism. May God also grant the dear mother of the child, whom I ask to greet with all my heart, a joyful church visit soon.

Please, greet also from me your dear pastor, my dear friend, Pastor

.

Greetings with grateful love

Your Brother and Godfather in the Lord

C. F. W. W.

**To a friend here.**

Concordia College near St. Louis, Oct. 23, 1854.

Dear friend and brother in our common Lord, Jesus Christ!

I cannot refrain from expressing my heartfelt congratulations to you today, on your birthday, for your spiritual and physical well-being, since it will not be possible for me to personally pay my respects to you today. May the Lord, who has brought us together here in His kingdom of grace, continue and complete in you, as in me, the good work of faith which He has begun here, so that we may one day rejoice eternally before His face. If he has saved you many a tear in this wandering valley, I plead for you and your dear relatives: Lord, even if wonderful, only blessed, only blessed!

At the same time, I take the liberty of enclosing a little book, which, of course, has no earthly value, but for every day of the year a

The booklet contains a fresh drink of water of eternal life, which the highly experienced Luther drew from the well of the Holy Scriptures. May this booklet serve not only as a reminder of your least friend, but above all to help you take a few moments each day to sit down with Luther at the fountain of life and to take at least one step to revive and refresh your soul.

My dear wife unites her wishes for your dear welfare with those of of your most devoted

C. F. W. W.

**To a pastor,**

who did not receive a reply to a letter for a long time and feared that he had hurt him.

December 17, 1861.

" I don't need to tell you that a hundred different kinds of business, in which I am always buried, are the main cause. Now, just in the vicinity of the festival, work is piling up for me, but just this has reminded me quite vividly of my old great guilt. So I have come, albeit late, with the heartfelt desire to talk you out of such dark thoughts as you have had against me. Oh, my dear brother, how would it be possible for you to offend me in such a way that I could feel it to the point of resentment? Nevermore! I am a poor, miserable sinner, and cannot breathe for a moment without the grace of poverty and sin, without being lost, but God has worked this in me, that I can love with all my heart those who love and confess His pure Word, and gladly suffer shame for it, and with right earnestness hate those who traffic in it. Such (confessors)

- and you are one of them — can also give me a rough puff without me feeling anything other than a love puff in it. But you have not even done me such a labor of love. On the contrary, you belong to the many who rather coddle me, so that I could become a completely spoiled child, if another pedagogue did not take care of me and always applied to me from time to time the portion of blows I deserve."

## To a pastor in Michigan,

who had sent him apples from his garden.

St. Louis, Dec. 10, 1876.

Dearest and most beloved friend and brother!

If you consider me to be a person who must have a rather ungrateful heart, I should not complain. It has been a long time since you so generously gave me a large supply of apples, and still you have not received a word of thanks from me! Of course, this looks quite disgusting. But I have an excuse, which, I hope from your kindness, should at least bring me a mild verdict. Before I traveled to the meetings of the Book Committee in Addison, your desired gift had already been announced by a card in an idiom which, as we know, is a Spanish village for our local postal workers, but it had not yet arrived. When I had now returned home, and my wife had not told me of its arrival, I went there under the impression that perhaps - - if not buyers - there might be customers for this "edible commodity" along the way. customers for these "edible goods" might have been found on the way, and I silently surrendered to my, as I thought, harsh fate.; until

finally, for once, I had apples on the table that tasted excellent (because I had already had to say goodbye to fresh apples forever for the sake of my toothlessness). I asked: Where from these good apples? My wife: They are from the ones given by dear S! What? I asked in surprise, have they arrived? What? replied my honor, don't you know? And so it went on. You can imagine my sad shock, because I immediately thought of what you would think of me. Well, *facta infecta fieri nequeunt*-; so I hereby express my sincere thanks to you belatedly. May the next fruit harvest bring you twice as much more; for I unfortunately have no equivalent for it myself.

I remain your debtor. -

Your grateful (!)

C. F. W. W.

**To a friend in the East,** who repeatedly sent him a refreshment.

St. Louis, Mo, April 15, 1883.

"... What shall I say now? On the one hand, I would only like to speak of the deep shame which seized me on receiving the great gift, and of the burden which your so completely undeserved kindness has thereby placed on my conscience; on the other hand, however, I can see that this would be a bad way of thanking you, since your intention was obviously not to shame and humiliate me, but to please and uplift me. So I will confess to you quite openly that, as much as I see myself humiliated by your unparalleled kindness, the feeling of joy has finally won the day with me. I dare to look at it this way,

that God Himself has awakened you to give me poor people joy, especially now, when my name is more than ever rejected as a malicious one (Luke 6:22.) and when it often seems as if God has abandoned me and given me into the hands of malicious enemies. Oh how sweet it tastes to receive proof, even from afar, that hearts still beat for us! Oh, then, for your great, so completely undeserved love, you have my deepest and most humble thanks. May the Lord write this great gift of yours for the least in His kingdom in His book, in the book of retribution, so that one day, for Jesus' sake, your name will be read not only from the book of life as a chosen one, but also from God's account book as His great creditor. (Rev. 20:12. Phil. 4:17.) Oh how I will then leap and jump when I see how much my Savior will repay you for what you have done to me, His most unworthy servant! Meanwhile, I will continue to include you in my daily prayers and ask God to bless you abundantly in heart and family, in body and soul, in temporal and eternal goods. But it goes without saying that the giving of gifts on your part must now come to an end, and even if, God forbid, I should live to be 80 years old. Leave me now entirely to the mercy of God. He will now lift and carry me in my old age for the short time that He may still allow me to live, refresh me on my deathbed, keep me in the faith and finally allow me to pass away in peace. For God to do this, let out a sigh for me to Him in Jesus' name now and then.

Greetings from the bottom of the heart

Your humbly and lifelong grateful

C. F. W. Walther.

## To the same.

March 5, 1881.

Dear friend and patron!

God's grace in Christ to greet you!

The free grace of God in Christ is now, as you can imagine, the subject that occupies me day and night. The controversy that has broken out over the doctrine of the election of grace compels me to do so. "So now it is not up to anyone to will or to run, but up to God's mercy" (Rom. 9:16), these are the words that resound continuously in the ear of my soul and which God lays on my heart like an iron breastplate, against which all the arrows of speculative reason that my opponents shoot at me bounce off. Yet those words of God are also so completely in harmony with my own experience. When I ask myself: Why did God take me out of the lost world and bring me to the knowledge of His dear Son? Why has the gospel become a smell of life to me, while it is a smell of death to thousands around me? Why has the sun of truth risen for me, while next to me almost everything walks in darkness without God, without a Savior, without a Comforter? Am I not a hair better than these, by nature. "If something good in life is mine, then it is truly yours. — All these questions are answered by this little saying: "So it does not depend on someone's will or running, but on God's mercy. Yes, this eternal mercy, "which transcends all thinking," is the key that unlocks the riddle of my poor life for me alone and at the same time solves the mystery of the choice of grace for me; so that nothing shall tempt me from this fortress. If I wanted any cause of what God has done to me,

I would be the most ungrateful person on God's earth, and I would idolatrously give myself the glory that is due to God alone.

C. F. W. Walther.

## To the same.

St. Louis, Mo, March 8, 1884.

That I belong to the brethren of the Lord, and to the "least of these", I dare to firmly believe on the basis of Christ's love as the Savior; despite the fact that I do not consider myself worthy from the bottom of my soul to be called the shoehorn [*Schuhhader*] of the feet of Christ, the Lord of Glory, and despite the fact that right now I am hated more than ever, and that they separate me and rebuke me and reject my name as a malicious one (Luke 6:22.), because I am confident that it is only "for the sake of the Son of Man", not because I am really a heretical Calvinist, but because I want to leave the honor to my Lord Jesus alone, namely to leave this honor, that it is only His grace and mercy, if a lost sinner is found, converted and finally saved, while the one who is not found is not lost because God has not also searched for him, but only because he has not allowed himself to be found.

C. F. W. W.

## To Pastor S.

Concordia Seminary at St. Louis, Mo, Sept. 15, 1870.

My dear pastor!

As sorry as I am, I find myself in the position of having to accept the invitation of your dear congregation, which is so valuable to me.

to refuse. Not only am I only today beginning to recover from a rheumatic illness, but my office with its so many different businesses does not allow me to be away even for a few days. With my many official trips, I am hardly able to finish my lectures and to keep up my official correspondence in an emergency, as well as to deliver my contributions to our journals. I do not want to mention my work as a local pastor. I therefore ask you to be my advocate with your dear congregation and to justify me as best you can. My refusal really has its reason not in unkindness, laziness or indifference, but in my inability. It pains me enough to always read how my colleagues have served on such occasions, while I always have to bear the ignominy as if I were unfit to serve outside our congregation. Therefore, tell your dear congregation my thanks for your invitation and ask them to forgive me for the sake of Christ if I do not respond to their love.

Your sincere friend and brother in the Lord

C. F. W. Walther.

**To Rev. W.**

St. Louis, Mo, Sept. 5, 1877.

My dear brother!

As difficult as it will be for me to turn down your kind and honorable invitation, I am unfortunately compelled to do so. It is probably true that if I were to come, I would only have to sacrifice Saturday afternoon and Monday morning for the journey.

But I am such a poor wretch that the preparation would take me much more time than I can spare now after almost three months of travel and now at the beginning of the new course of study. It is a real torment to me to have to appear so unkind, but God knows that it is not unkindness that causes the refusal to come, but the feeling of my duty not to miss what is absolutely necessary above what is useful. So I beg you, do not be angry with me, but have pity on a man who owes more than he is able to do.

May the Lord be with you and with your deeply humbled

C. F. W. Walther.

**To the same.**

St. Louis, Mo, Oct. 12, 1878.

My dear pastor!

If my missionary sermon has really been a blessing in the hearts of your dear parishioners, God be praised for it in humility. I must also say here, "If anything good in life is mine, it is truly yours." But the sermon is so inaccurate that I would be ashamed to put it into print. What it contains, of course, are purely sacred truths taken from God's Word, of which I do not need to be ashamed, which I also want to confess with joy before the whole world and Christianity. But in sermons of better preachers than I am an old, worn-out man, all this is said much better than I have said it. Therefore, please express my humble gratitude to your dear congregation, and especially to the leaders, for their

have had such great patience with me, and tell them that if sharper eyes, which do not look at my words in love as they do, were to read my sermon, they would say that this sermon would have been better left unprinted.

I still think with joy of the beautiful day in your dear B. May the Lord keep the dear B-ites in His grace and truth!

Greetings to you and your dear wife

Your sincere friend and brother in the Lord Jesus, who loves you dearly.

C. F. W. Walther.

**To his children in New York.**

St. Louis, Mo, July 29, 1873.

Dear children!

Just this morning I had made up my mind to finally write a few lines to you, too, when we received your dear letter of the 26th of this month with its so quite unexpected heart-shattering news of mourning. I would so much have liked to write to you quite cheerfully, after God has once again graciously helped me, but who is so strong that he could write cheerfully after such a message? I am not able to. But neither do I grieve like those who have no hope, and I hope the same of you. We know that our burial places are God's fields, in which we sink the bodies of our deceased as noble seeds, in the certain, irrevocable hope that they will one day return on the day of harvest.

and that we, who are then reunited with their soul, will see them again with blissful delight, embrace them and have them forever. The most difficult thing in such cases for our poor heart is always that the blows of God do not feel like blows of love, but like blows of wrath. But we must overcome this by faith. For God's Word tells us on all sides that we must enter the kingdom of God through many tribulations; that God chastises those whom He loves, yes, that if we were without chastisement, we could not be His true children, but would have to be bastards. Is it not foolishness, then, to doubt his love for us because God visits us with crosses more than others, and to be concerned that God wants us to understand that he is angry with us? Rather, we should think that God must prefer us to others whom he does not dignify with such a heavy cross. Assaph gives us the example that it is difficult for the children of God to be happy when they see that the wicked are doing so well, that they are not in misfortune like other people, and are not afflicted like other people, yes, that in their happiness they look at the children of God with scorn and say: "What should God ask about them? What should the Most High regard of them?" Therefore Assaph writes, "But it grieves my heart and stings my kidneys that I must be a fool," namely, before the children of this world. (Read the whole 73rd Psalm!) Job went through the same challenge. He said: "Why do the wicked live and grow old and increase in wealth? Their seed is safe around them and their offspring are with them. Their house is at peace from fear, and God's rod is not upon them. Their young children go out like a flock, and their children leap and skip. They exult with timbrels and harps, and are merry with pipes. They grow old on good days and are terrified

hardly a moment before hell." (Job 21:8-13.) May we now be surprised, when such great saints have been vexed in their accident, that our faint hearts also find it difficult to calm down? Certainly not! But let us also learn from them to overcome our temptation. For they not only lamented as I have said, but also soon recovered their composure. As Assaph finally says, "I would almost have said as they did, but behold, I would have condemned all thy children that ever were." Therefore "nevertheless I abide always with thee, for thou holdest me by my right hand; thou leadest me according to thy counsel, and receivest me at last with honor." Job also continues in that passage, "But, behold, their goods are not in their hands; therefore let the mind of the wicked be far from me." (Read also the whole 21st chapter of the book of Job.) Behold, one should tremble over those who are always well off, whose children grow up like trees in the forest and who bless themselves as blessed of the Lord! On the other hand, when God pours us the cup of tears, we should say to God, "How can I repay you for your faithfulness, with which you lead me to eternal glory?" — Last Sunday, the death of two children of a family was announced from the pulpit. How one regretted there generally the dear parents! And what happened? At the end of the service, the preacher came to the altar and announced that he had just received the news that after the two children, the third had also died. All three were therefore buried in the ground at once yesterday. Let this also comfort you, dear children. God has taken only one from you and left two. Thank Him for this and ask Him childlike with us that He may preserve these two for you according to His great goodness. You have not lost the ones who have passed away. You still have six children, only that four of them are already in heaven and are waiting for you there. What will

What a joy it will be when you see her again! As it says in that song:

Will not that be joy,
When what death takes,
We will be met
And cheerfully catch up;
When one will gladly embrace,
What thränend you leave?
Won't that be joy?

(See last song in the "Prayer Treasure.")

Now, be most earnestly committed to the grace, mercy and comfort of our God and Savior together with your dear children! May He fill your grieving hearts with peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Your father, painfully grieving with you, but also abundantly comforted

C. F. W. Walther.

## To his brother-in-law, the late Cantor Th. E. Bünger.

St. Louis, Mo, May 16, 1876.

My dear brother-in-law!

The first rumors that you were seriously ill reached us when the Synod of our Western District was meeting here. In my great urge to work, it was not possible for me to assure you of my heartfelt sympathy by letter. I could only entrust your body and soul, together with your entire dear family, into the hands of the faithful God in prayer. We already heard again that you were recovering, which made us very happy. But now we have seen from the dear lines of your mother that you are still very weak. I can

I can imagine how difficult it is for you to be withdrawn from your beautiful profession, which is so dear to you. But you are a child of God and are in the service of the Crucified One, so it cannot be otherwise than that you, as a crusader, must wear the cross as your badge of honor. Therefore only be confident! The fact that one trouble after another comes to you is only a proof that your house is a house of God, not the house of the rich man who lived all his days gloriously and in joy. But in his house God diligently enters, but as in Job's house with his dear cross. We are such a poor household even after our conversion that we cannot stay with our God and Savior without tribulation. The cross is God's shepherd dog, which must always bark at us so that we do not leave Christ's flock, either inwardly or outwardly. But how long will it be before the tragedy of this life will also be played out for us, and the days will then be the dearest to us in which the Lord has afflicted us with hardship.

Hopefully, if we are both still alive, I will see you at the Synod in Quincy. Until then, may the Lord strengthen you so that you may soar again like an eagle. A thousand warm greetings . . . from your father, who is bound by the ties of blood and faith.

Dearest to you

C. F. W. Walther.

## To the late Pastor F. Wyneken.

St. Louis, Dec. 30, 1865.

Your old friend and brother

The year is drawing to a close. I feel as if I could not close it without first talking to you once more, for I repeatedly hear that the good Lord, who was never

pleased to bed you here on roses, has again placed you on rather sharp thorns, so that you have to tend to your room and are already tired and miserable from writing a few lines. So the days have also come with you, of which we may say according to Scripture itself, I do not like them. That they have already set in so early with you is of course not to be wondered at. God has given you the great grace to deny for your dear Lord Jesus, in the days of your full strength in body and soul, everything that is and may be pleasant to man and that is so necessary for his strengthening and preservation in body and soul, and now — does He only not do a miracle to prevent the occurrence of the natural consequences of a life full of work, strain, sorrow, worries, anxiety and a thousand kinds of temptations. But, my dear Wyneken, now also recognize with gratitude that your wretched body and your mind, so often sunk in melancholy, are truly nothing other than the hallmarks of the Lord Jesus, so that you are adorned. I am confident that the song of defiance is also yours to sing: "I will not die, but live and proclaim the work of the Lord," Ps. 118, but even if your day of life was drawing to a close, you still had the grace before millions to live a life that greatly broke off the realm of the devil, death and lies, and won many, many souls for the Lord Jesus. The devil will certainly make everything small and insignificant to you in your tribulation, but only the devil, but God wants you to triumph and say: "By the grace of God I am what I am and His grace has not been in vain for me. Even if your small faith obscures all this for you in the hour of challenge, it is and remains true, and all Christians who knew you will one day in eternity bear witness to the fact that you belonged to the few who "gave up their souls for the name of our Lord Jesus".

Christ." Acts 15:26. But the shorter God has kept you here and still keeps you with His comfort, the more glorious will be your crown and the refreshments you will enjoy at the "time of refreshment before the face of the Lord".

You know, dear Wyneken, how things were with me six years ago when you came here with Crämer and your love for me, a miserable human being, made it possible for me to go on a journey to recover body and soul. It seems to be similar with you now. Although I am not sure whether a journey to another climate is the right means to restore your health, there is no doubt in my mind that you must now submit to a cure while completely giving up all work. No resistance will help here. If you did not want to understand this, you would take on a responsibility for your life, which does not belong to you, but to your neighbor, which you could not bear in time and eternity. The sudden change of your way of life, the transformation of constant movement and excitement into silence and into a walk in daily tracks has obviously brought about a dangerous revolution in your constitution, which, if you did not want to keep still now, would have to have no other than a ruinous course and outcome. I therefore implore you by your love for the church, leave everything now and accept a substitution. — If, however, you should not want to go along with this and still not be healthy, you would require me to come to Cleveland myself and follow your example of six years ago. May He strengthen your faith and hope and fill you with abundant comfort. He hears our groaning and grant you, like Hezekiah, only fifteen more years.

With sincerest love Yours

Walther.

## To the same pastor E. M. Bürger.

St. Louis, May 27, 1879.

Dear old brother and friend in the Lord!

To whom God sends such a great cross, after he has already turned gray in his faithful service, he must have decided to make him especially glorious in that world. You too can take comfort in this. Think of all the many saints and heroes of God of whom God's Word and the history of the Church tell us. What was their whole life mostly? — Misery, unspeakable misery. But for what would they give this misery now? Not for a thousand worlds. For their seed of tears has now sprouted, and behold, it has brought them heavenly eternal glory. So persevere, you too! Even if it seems that the Lord has forgotten you, it only seems that way. Just your heavy cross is a proof that the Lord has not forgotten you. You lie in the crucible and in the furnace of misery, to shine and shine there forever as fine, purified gold. Oh, how you will rejoice when you have finished! With what rejoicing you will count the many pearls in your crown, into which your sighs and tears will have just been transformed! Nor do I think that I am sitting on roses. My distress is, of course, quite different from yours; but it is a question, if you should feel my daily heartache, whether you would exchange places with me. But I do not want to burden you with my worries and cares and therefore keep silent about me. Let us only pray for each other diligently an Our Father. I truly need it as much as you do. All my hopes have perished, only the one shines for me, that the Father in heaven will soon deliver me from all kinds of evil of body and soul, good and honor, and at last, when my hour is up

For the sake of my Lord Jesus, He will bring me, a wretched sinner, to a blessed end and will take me with grace from this pit of misery to heaven. "Eia, were we there! Eia, were we there!"

So take comfort with me, dear old friend and brother! A few more moments and we will be through and then celebrate the right jubilee.

Unfortunately, time does not allow me to pour out my heart to you any longer. Apart from my lectures, my work from morning to evening consists almost exclusively of writing letters and sighing.

Please, greet your dear helpmate and homemaker. God grant that I may see you once more before we go home.

Your dearly loving and honoring

C. F. W. W.

## To a student who has fallen ill.

St. Louis, March 1, 1869.

My dear sir !

It has long been my intention to reply to your dear letter of January 28th with at least a few lines; but there was always an obstacle. Please do not take my silence as proof of my lack of interest in your well-being and woe. I am quite shocked by the note I received about your condition. The same thing happened to me that you write about yourself, that you sometimes cannot find an answer to the question: Lord, why? But if I do not ask my heart, but the right counselors, the good Word, I

receive a sufficient answer. The Lord has obviously taken you to a higher and better school than you can have here. The stay on your way to the goal is without doubt not a delay. God only wants to establish you more deeply, and this only happens through the dear cross. Challenge alone teaches us to pay attention to the Word. In adversity, the soul becomes so bright that one soon learns to understand this, soon that saying, just as with the rising of the sun this, soon that object becomes visible. As God's servants, we are to comfort with consolation, so that we have been comforted; but how can we do this if we have not become true objects of comfort in inner and outer affliction? How did God stop Luther, seemingly leading him on many detours, before he — it was in the 34th year of his age — took up his office as reformer? But there it turned out, the "detours" had been just the straightest ways to the goal. May God grant you a firm faith that you, too, are on the straightest way to the goal that the Lord has set for you in his eternal counsel. I confidently hope that the terrible eventuality of which you write that you could possibly lose your hand yourself will not occur. No, I hope that the Lord has not led you to us in vain and made the decision mature in you to serve the Lord in His Church. He will certainly lead out His work. Only wait for the Lord, be confident and undaunted and wait for the Lord! Do not let the thought enter your heart that perhaps God wants to help you up again, but that he does not want you to work in his vineyard. Your conduct shows the opposite. God needs pure gold; that is what you are to become, that is why he throws you into the crucible over the fire of hot temptation. You have put your hand to the plow; now do not look back. The enemy prepares himself, sharpens his weapons, and is not content to preserve his palace, he is storming.

Christ's strongest castles, he would also like to drive the orthodox out of their fortress. We therefore need men who have experienced the glory of the Word, every word, in the challenge; who know that eternal life is locked up in each one and that therefore eternal life can also be lost with each one, each one has to be defended up to the blood.

Now, the Lord comfort you, strengthen you, establish you and help you that you may soon return to us and be able to draw again with us from the fountain of Israel, which has water in abundance. Give my regards to my dear, unspeakably beloved brother — from me.
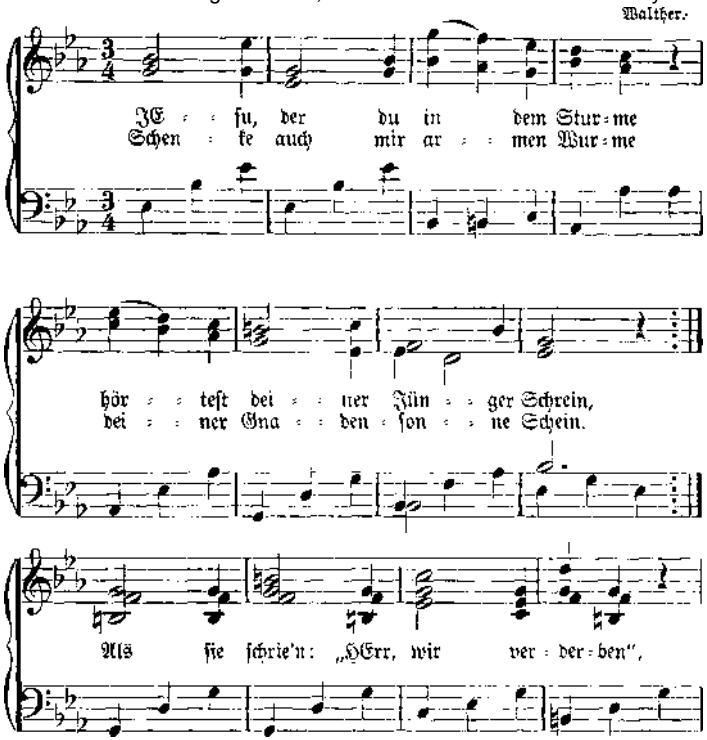
Your comrade in the kingdom and in the tribulation
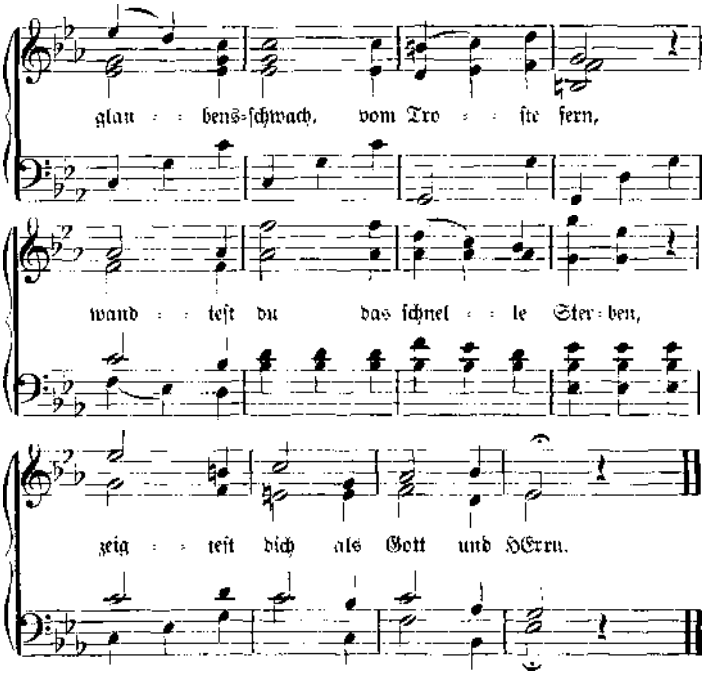
C. F. W. Walther.

# Poems.

# In the storm.

Evening March 16, 1860 on the Mexican Gulf near Key West.






Though you first punished the trembling
The small-faith crowd of disciples,
The full of courage in good days,
But now full of doubt was;
But you could not break
The crushed weak tube,
Nor take revenge on the little girl,
That the flame lost its glow.

You stand up, and wind and wave
Do you give the order ominously:
"Silence, silence!" — and to the spot
The dark sky becomes bright;
The howling of the storm is silenced
And the wave's roar is silent,
All clouds disintegrate
And the sea resembles the mirror.

Falling down before you in amazement,
Who saw the divine act,
The glow of your faith returns,
Fueled by the Spirit's wind.
"What a man is," others ask,
"To whom the storm is obedient?"
Also carry them in the heart
I have a hunch that you are the Christian.

But I — do not suspect it, I have
It believed and recognized,
And your spirit, the highest gift,
Is for it me pledge:
That you are Christian, the Savior,
The living Son of God,
Lord of Lords, God of Gods,
He who reigns on God's throne.

Therefore I call without wavering
From the depths, O Lord, to you,
Whether also burst all the planks,
Whether the keel sinks sheer,
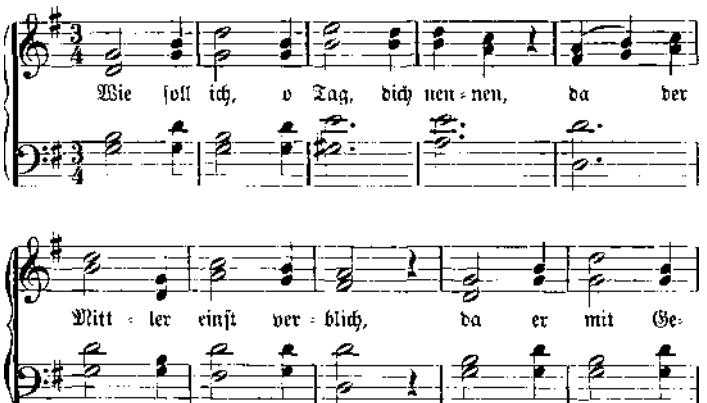
Whether all sails also tear.
Whether each mast also breaks:
Help me, O Lord, as you promised.
Stay in stormy night my light.
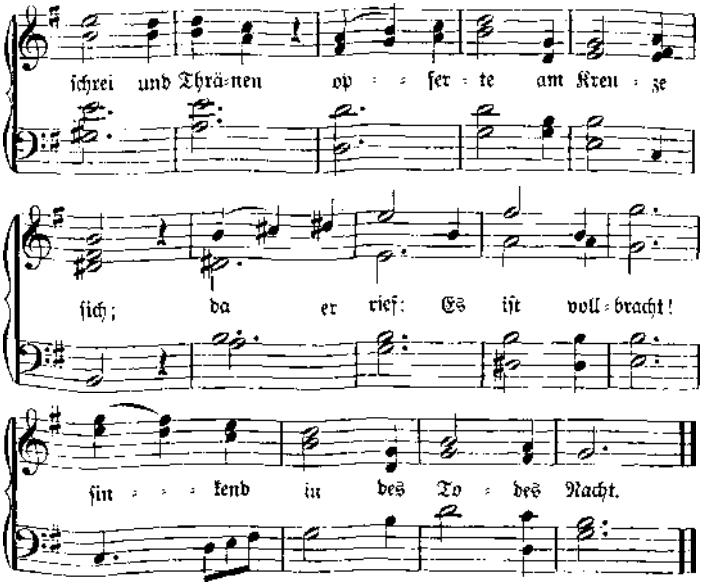
But — shall I sink into the sea, -
Now then, Lord, as you will,
Let the star of grace twinkle for me.
Who stills the storm of the heart.
Without you, life is death,
With you death of life's lap,
Without you, happiness is ruin,
With you hell heavenly lot.

Black [or Good] Friday,

April 6, 1860 on the Ocean.

**Walther.**






Day of wrath, day of fury!
Look, the sword of the judge is flashing.
This — O sure man, hear it! —
Drinking atonement blood in streams.
Today, what God threatened happens:
Sin is followed by death.

Even the heart of the native
Meets the father's vengeful rage,
When he willingly gave the lost
The abomination of sin.
Earth and sky may pass away,
Eternally the right must exist.

Woe! happens on the green branch
This, where is the scrawny one going?
Suffers innocence such pranks,
Sinner, how will you escape?
O day when God's curse
Fulfilled according to his book!

But not for his own sins
Died the Lord of Glory,
Love that can not fathom,
Make him ready for death.
To buy us child right,
The eternal son becomes a servant.

Therefore, heart, let it resound
Today loud your jubilant song.
For, — O comfort of sinners! for all
One died today on the cross;
Pay One of All Debts,
Such is the grace and mercy of all.

O then, welcome to me,
Blessed Friday, day full of salvation!
Sinners, not the proud pious
The consolation is bestowed upon you.
Also for my sins flood
Flows today of reconciliation blood.
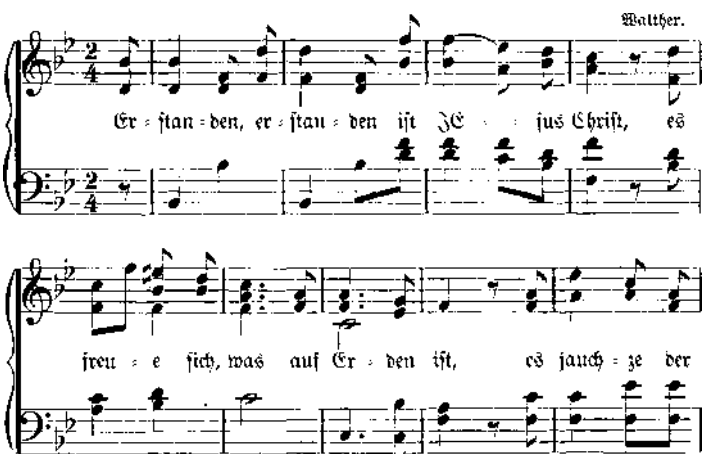
So roar, you waves, —
I swim on the sea of grace;
Roar down from the arch of heaven,
Thunder, like the host of hell —
I am surrounded by soft and gentle
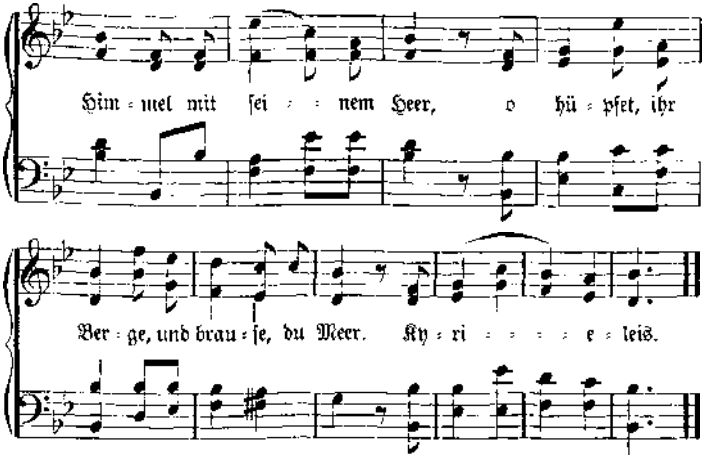
God's holy wind of grace.

Mast and flag of my ship
Is the cross of Golgotha,
With it I laugh every riff,
Every sandbar I close.
In the sea of grace breaks
Me the hope anchor does not.

Merrily I sail on today
To my sweet home,
The one on the cross is my companion
After the land of eternal rest.
Soon I shall see what I sought,
Through His blood — Heaven's Bay.

On the first Easter Day, April 8, 1860 on the Ocean.






The enemy triumphed on Golgotha,
Hell rang through Victoria,
For at last the darkness had
Power The prince of life brought to the cross.
Kyrieleis.
But, in spite of you, hell, and in spite of you, O world,
The Duke of Salvation keeps the field.
Hardly had passed the days three,
So your prisoner was loose and free.
Kyrieleis.

Where is your sting now, O form of death?
Where is your victory now, O power of hell?
Where then, O sin, is your power?
Now, Law, where are your curses and imprisonment?
Kyrieleis.

The eternal Son became man voluntarily,
He voluntarily left the heavenly throne,
Voluntarily he suffered disgrace and torment,
Voluntarily he mounted the cross stake.
Kyrieleis.

He pays for the guilt of mankind with suffering,
Atone for their crimes with death in patience,
Drank the cup of wrath for them
And tolerated for them the horror of hell.
Kyrieleis.

But behold! no death and no grave holds him,
He comes out of the battle as a victory hero,
The land of the dead is overthrown forever,
And Satan lies powerless in chain and band.
Kyrieleis.

The will of the law is fulfilled,
And thus the Eternal Wrath is satisfied;
So then, he who vouched for us is gone
And rises as a head from the earth's womb.
Kyrieleis.

Therefore arise! Be merry, you sinful generation,
Through Christ's revival, you are righteous,
How your crimes devoured his grave,
So to you now his life won innocence.
Kyrieleis.
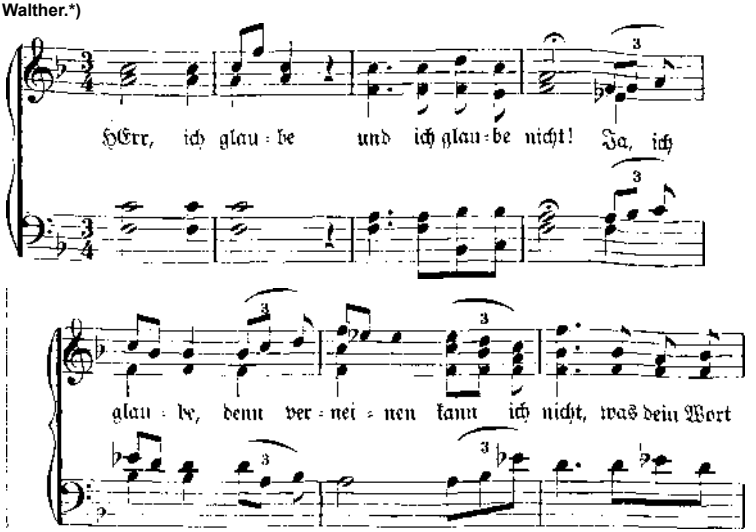
What is it, O sinner, that you are so timid,
And complain about the army of your sins?

The Father has long since declared you righteous
And granted to you what you seek in Christ.
Kyrieleis.
The Lord is risen, the tomb is empty,
The army of our sins has now fallen asleep;
Now rejoice all that is called sinners,
And praise the Father, Son and Spirit.
Kyrieleis.
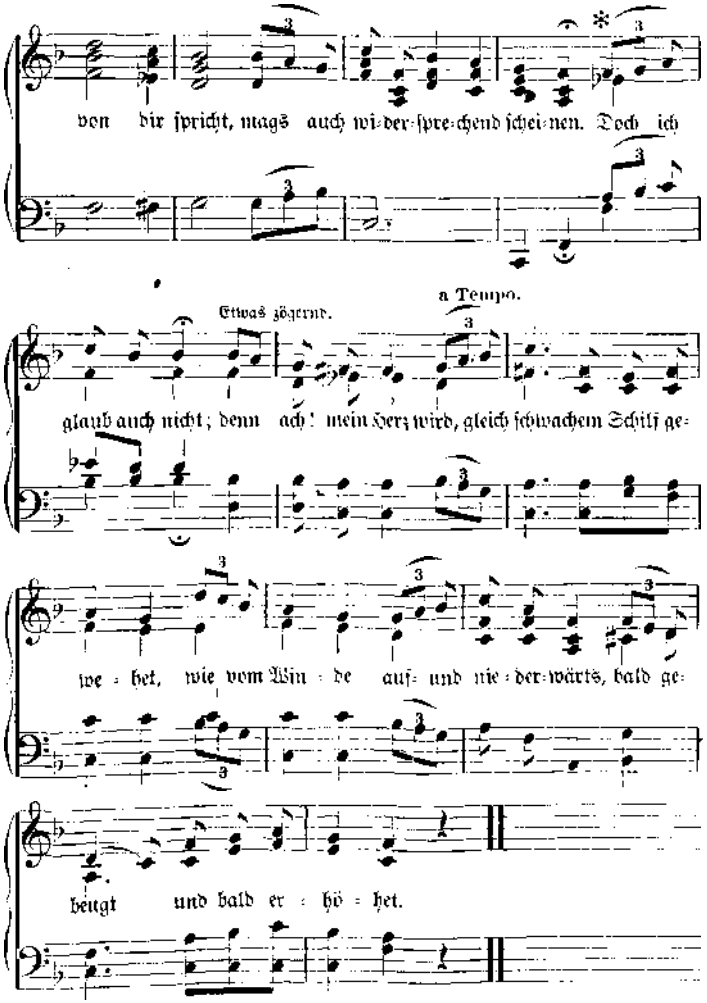
## On Sunday Quasimodogeniti,

April 15, 1860 on the Ocean.

**Walther.*)**




*) In Waltber's diary there are notes only for the first half. Upon request, Fr. Lochner has — for completion — set the other half, indicated by an asterisk *, to music.


von dir ſpricht, mags auch wi-der-ſpre-chend ſchei-nen. Doch ich
Etwas zögernd.
a Tempo.
glaub auch nicht; denn ach! mein Herz wird, gleich ſchwachem Schilf ge-
we-het, wie vom Win-de auf- und nie-der-wärts, bald ge-
beugt und bald er-hö-het.

Lord, I believe, and I do not believe!
Yes, I think, because I look
Longing for your face;
Nothing is otherwise I build on.
But I do not believe either; for my fault
Presses me to the ground, I am afraid,
That it is greater than patience,
Which my army of sinners demands.

Lord, I believe, and I do not believe!
Yes, I believe; your gifts
They alone are the light of my life,
No worldly lust can refresh me.
But I do not believe either, because a thousand times
I've already forgotten yours;
Still my number of sins is increasing,
Who likes to count them, who measure them?

Lord, I believe, and I do not believe!
Twofold is my whole being;
Don't go to court with me over this,
But let me still recover.
Help conquer the unbelieving mind;
Make strong in you my weakness,
Let me escape completely from the world of sin,
Wake up completely in your image.

# I am a Christian.

April 26, 1860 on the Ocean.

I am a Christian, a priest,
A king and prophet,
Even if my heart is still gloomy
Pleading for light and mercy,
Even if I do not feel anything,
As anguish and distress of soul,
And my great sin
Wanting to shoo me away from God.

Not worthiness, not works, —
Faith is my glory,
It gives strength to the weak,
Consecrate me to the priesthood,
Gives royal dignity
Me beggar wonderful,
And put away the blessed burden,
Being a prophet to me.

In the priestly adornment of grace
And righteousness
I once stepped out of the bath
Ready for baptism;
Then with holy oil
To serve in the sanctuary
Anoint my soul,
To God's praise and glory.

Mine is to come before God,
Now nevermore denied,
My pleading and praying
Answered at all times.
I don't need a guarantor either
And no mediator's word,
The lamb that let Himself be strangled,
Keep representing me on and on.

God stands with pleasure,
What I sacrifice to him,
Let it be my heart, my will,
What I thought, what I have done.
Is everything also stained
With great sinfulness,
So it is covered after all
Through Christ's grace and salvation.

To all temple estates
I also have the power and the right,
As a donor and as a guardian,
As the archpastor's servant;
The Word, the Sacraments,
The key sacred good
God has put into my hands
Through Christ's blood.

Because not only priesthood,
Also the office of prophet,
I wear it as an ornament of faith,
Which comes from heaven.

From darkness to clarity
Called me God's Word,
So that from its truth
I witness on and on.

What through its revelation
I was told about salvation,
And He let me experience
In the bottom of my heart,
And what in my soul
From him it is written,
The preach and tell
The world I as a prophet.

But this was still too little
To my glory,
I became even more - a king
In time and eternity!
Though I wear no crown,
Like princes of this world,
But in the Son
In heaven ordered long ago.

Therefore, no man can command,
What is due to me as a Christian,
Only one is destined for it,
Who guides my conscience;
It is the one and only Master:
His name is Jesus Christ,
The king himself of spirits
And is Lord of Lords.

Bow in deep humility
Before His face
I my knees and remain silent,
As often as He speaks to me.
But has this king
Appointed co-regent
And me also subserviently
Made the whole world.

Lord over all things,
I am prince everywhere,
For what large, what small,
It serves me all around.
Does my transgression serve
For me only to humility,
Temptation drives to pray,
To faith, need drives me.

I see the jaws of death
Opened against me,
So that only means me awake
And fight chivalrously.
So I rule over sin
And about the world and hardship,
And finally overcome
I myself the bitter death.

Then I take one with pleasure
My Heavenly Principality,
That God has prepared for me
For eternal ownership,

Then at my feet lies
World, sin, hell and death
And I can then enjoy
God without struggle and hardship.
But, Lord, what you have given,
Is, ah, so easily wasted,
That is what still offends me,
What hurts my soul.
Help me until I grow cold,
That I am faithful in the faith
Manage the priesthood,
Prophet and King.

## For the birthday of his wife.

(With a dress.)

Here is a dress, my dear heart;
This is my gift today
For you, who in joy and pain
You will gladly follow me to the grave.
It is probably very small,
What your eye sees here;
But I also wrap my heart in it,
That glows with love for you.
So take it and believe me:
Probably this dress will soon become fashionable,
But my love will be for and for
Still blazing bright and brighter.

But now you accept with joy,
What I lovingly give you,
So I ask you, the high sense
The small gift consider.
I offer you an earthly dress,
To wrap the body that is allowed,
But I ask for mercy,
To fulfill my wish:

As you once did in the baptism bath
Jesus have put on,
So let Him stay after His grace
Eternally weighed to thee!
He wants with His dress of innocence
Always adorn your soul,
And you so full of righteousness
The father always behold!

The dress flashes red that my hand
To you today cheerfully donates.
So wear it, as a pledge to me,
That your love does not end;
That fiery as on the wedding day
Your heart always burns for me,
So that I may boast joyfully:
It is you that I call mine!

# Words of comfort,

at the coffin of little Emma Lange offered to her grieving parents by one of her sincere friends.

"In Jesus' wounds I fall asleep",
Your dear little daughter spoke;
She fell asleep on it,
Dwell now with Jesus sheep.

The shepherd who buys the lamb,
With his blood it baptized,
Quickly carried it home
After short days of life.

He saw danger threatening the sheep,
So he shouted high from his throne:
"I have chosen you,
You shall not be lost!"

"Come, dear little sheep, come quickly!
I will carry you softly and gently
To my heavenly garden,
Where angels of yours wait."

In eternal youth it grazes there
On green meadows now away and away,
Drink from the stream of joy
In God's eternal today.

O parents, restrain the course of tears
And look up to heaven in faith!
O listen, already she sings merrily:
"Praise God, now I am blessed!"

Follow their child faith,
So on that day you will
Also again with delight
Press them to your heart.