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Missouri Synod Undertakes Foreign Missions

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IT was 1893, a depression year economically. But it was a great year within the Missouri Synod. At its triennial convention, Synod resolved to open two educational institutions, Concordia College of St. Paul, Minn., and a teachers' college in Nebraska. These were the first schools sponsored by Synod from their very inception. A consecrated Lutheran layman, J. P. Baden of Winfield, Kans., appropriated \$50,000 toward the establishing of a college in the West. This became "St. John's English Lutheran College" of Winfield. Concordia Publishing House dedicated a new building on the corner of Jefferson Avenue and Miami Street. This had cost \$23,570. Mr. Ed. J. Pahl of Michigan City, Ind., wrote the letter which, under God, launched Synod into work among the deaf. Two men who later were to take a prominent place in the history of Synod accepted calls to the St. Louis Seminary — L. Fuerbringer and F. Bente. From May 20 to 23 twelve young people's groups met in Buffalo, N. Y., and organized the International Walther League. And — for us the most important item — the convention, assembled in Holy Cross Church, St. Louis, April 26 to May 6 of that same year, voted to undertake a mission of its own in some heathen country.

What brought about such action? That is a story at least 46 years long, dating all the way back to the organization of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod. Among the eight objects of the Synod, as set down in its Constitution, the second reads: "The joint extension of the Kingdom of God." Thus the Missouri Synod became the first Lutheran church body in America to acknowledge mission work as a definite part of its program, rather than that of a society within the church. There lay the germs for all types of mission activity. But as is so often the case, unless one person takes a particular interest in a proposal, that proposal is not activated. So it was also in the case of foreign missions as we know them today.

F. SIEVERS

No doubt, if the names of all deeply interested in foreign missions were listed, that would form a long, long catalog. But the one who stands out head and shoulders above all the rest is Ferdinand Sievers, Sr. Dr. L. Fuerbringer styles him "the father and spokesman of our foreign missions." We take these notes from his *Persons and Events*. "Sievers must be kept in mind especially as a missionary. In this respect he stands almost on an even plane with Wynken among the fathers of our Church. . . . A more faithful supporter and intercessor the missions could not have obtained. . . . Prayer for the heathen was an integral part of his daily prayer." (P. 53 ff.) So great was his rejoicing over the 1893 resolution that though afflicted with a mortal illness, he still wrote 36 letters of joy concerning the matter within two days of the voting. On May 18 — only 12 days after the convention closed — he observed his 77th birthday and in his prayers also showed his gratitude to God for the step taken, considering it his best birthday gift. Several months later, September 9, he passed away. His last audible prayer in the circle of his family closed with these words: "Lord, have mercy also upon the dear heathen, and help them that they may come to know Thee, their Savior, and be saved. Especially be with me, and lead me out of this vale of tears into eternal life. Amen." This man was God's chosen vessel to keep the Missouri Synod continually conscious of its obligations to carry on missions among the heathen both in the United States and in foreign countries.

It may sound strange to our ears today, but Ferdinand Sievers came to the United States as a "foreign missionary." He had come in October, 1847, in answer to the call of Dr. Wynken through the hands of the Rev. Wm. Loehe of Neuendettelsau. He headed a colony at Frankenlust, Mich., which was to serve as the agency for the conversion of the pagan Indians. Pastor Sievers gave himself to this task with his whole soul. He was active in the movement which led to the transfer of the Indian mission to the Missouri Synod in 1849, even though he was not a member of the Mission Board. Until this work was formally closed in 1868, it found no more ardent supporter than Sievers. When it seemed that Michigan no longer offered a fertile field for this mission,

he made the trip to Minnesota, which led our Church into that territory. This was back in 1856, two years before Minnesota became a State. He endeavored also to keep alive the interest of Synod in the mission as is evidenced by 53 articles in *Der Lutheraner* between November, 1849, and August, 1868, most of them from his pen. As late as 1874 we find the Indians mentioned in synodical reports (*Der Lutheraner*, Vol. 30, p. 165). Long afterwards Sievers kept in personal touch with a number of the Indian Christians. Thus the man who had come to America as a 31-year-old candidate for the ministry and foreign missionary made his influence felt through the years. He had not been in the United States a full three years before he was named chairman of the Mission Board in 1850. He carried this distinction — and many others — with honor until 1893, when he was by special request named to the reconstituted Board of Foreign Missions.

PUBLICATIONS

There were other influences at work also, among them the printing press. One should not underestimate the impact of *Der Lutheraner*, which through the years brought mission news. Sometimes, indeed, one wishes there were much more of it, but withal the members of Synod were afforded a rather wide view. A goodly number of missionary biographies were granted rather extensive space, as were also the records of the conversion of various peoples and countries. A large majority of the membership of Synod had come out of Germany. There they had become accustomed to support mission societies, particularly the two that pledged to proclaim and represent true Lutheranism. These were the Leipzig Mission Society and the Hermannsburg Mission Society. Particularly the former was known as "our" mission. Thus, as far back as 1849 (*Der Lutheraner*, Vol. 5, p. 129) the story of the Tranquebar Mission of the Leipzig Society is given rather extensively. This comment is appended: "This is the beginning, the birth and childhood of *our* Lutheran mission. In the course of time about 30,000 souls have been won for the Lord in Tranquebar." There was also a personal connection. Missionary E. Baierlein had for reasons of health been loaned by Leipzig for work among American Indians until 1853, when he removed to India. He kept up a correspond-

ence with his American friends, and many of his reports and letters are reproduced in *Der Lutheraner*. Karl Graul, the head of the Leipzig Mission, also was a trusted and loved individual. The Hermannsburg Mission drew the attention of Synod to Africa (Natal, Zululand, Bechuanaland), India, New Zealand, Australia, and Armenia. Also this society and its head, Louis Harms, were often featured. Another very influential paper that carried mission news was *Lehre und Wehre*. This monthly professional journal carried an extensive section on contemporary religious events and went rather fully into the annual reports of the above societies and some others. These reports were to be used by pastors in addressing their congregations and societies. Mission items were included on New Guinea, Japan, India, Bangkok, Armenia, and China in that year. In 1879 a new periodical appeared on the scene, *Die Missionstaube*. It was issued by the Synodical Conference, edited by F. Lochner, C. Sapper, and J. Brockmann. While this was issued in the special interest of the mission among the "heathen or at least spiritually neglected and forsaken" Negroes, it lifted the eyes of its readers to many fields. In fact, as one reads the volumes, one is convinced that every Protestant mission in the world was sooner or later reviewed in its pages. It may be significant to note that Vol. 1, No. 3, March, 1879, carries an article: "On to Japan!" In that very month the English companion *The Lutheran Pioneer* started on its way. Statistics of 1892 show subscription lists of 16,000 and 5,000 respectively for these two last-named papers, while *Der Lutheraner* went out to 24,000 addresses. *Die Missionstaube* incidentally was preceded by *Das evangelisch-lutherische Missionsblatt*, issued by the Rev. A. E. Frey of Brooklyn, N. Y. He turned this paper over to the Synodical Conference when *Die Missionstaube* was proposed, but its very existence indicates a mission interest. Nor should one forget the semiofficial journal *Die Abendschule*, which through the years carried many stories of mission interest.

MISSION FESTIVALS

Another factor that must be borne in mind when studying Missouri's undertaking of foreign missions is that of its mission festivals. These were also taken over in good part from the German societies and were prominent in rallying the Lutheran Church to

the mission flag and instrumental in making the Church known. From reports in *Der Lutheraner* it would appear that at mission festivals one sermon concerned itself with some form of missions in the United States, while the other dealt with foreign missions. Lectures dealing largely with the history of missions were also presented. All this must have tended to increase mission interest. The first of these festivals was reported from Edwardsville, Ill., in 1855. Darmstadt, near Evansville, Iowa, held one in 1858. The first claimed for Wisconsin was conducted by the Watertown and Town Lebanon congregations on October 9, 1859. By 1862 *Hymns for Mission and Bible Festivals* was published, indicating these events had assumed considerable popularity. In 1865 the sermons preached at the Cape Girardeau, Mo., mission festival are placed on sale. In 1872, the silver-anniversary year of Synod, 23 mission festivals were listed in *Der Lutheraner* as being observed in Illinois, Missouri, Indiana, Iowa, Texas, Ohio, New York, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Maryland. We are convinced from other sources that there were many more. In 1881 we find 69 festivals recorded in the above States except Ohio and Maryland, but Nebraska, Pennsylvania, and Kansas are added. The following year these jumped to 102. Omitting Maryland again, the list adds Oregon, Michigan, and Canada. In 1884 we note 138, adding New Jersey, Connecticut, Arkansas, and the Dakotas as newcomers. These festivals became so common that *Der Lutheraner* felt constrained to drop these notices altogether.

Otherwise also missions were considered. Epiphany Day was the logical day for this purpose. The January 22, 1850, issue of *Der Lutheraner* (Vol. 6, No. 11) reproduces a sermon by Dr. Walther titled "Missions to the Heathen a Christian Debt." He points out that this is a debt "here and now" because God has given both the opportunity and means. He does indeed refer to the world-wide work of the Church, but quite naturally concentrates on the work among the American Indians, since that was engaging Missouri's attention at the time. We may be sure that many sermons of the same type were preached in many places through the years. From 1877 to 1896 the *Magazin fuer Ev.-Luth. Homiletik und Pastoraltheologie* lists 31 mission sermons or outlines. This would indicate a call for such material.

THROUGH THE YEARS

Year by year the idea of heathen missions in foreign countries was developed. As already mentioned, Synod formally withdrew from Indian missions in 1868. Before that time it was, through its congregations, also supporting mission societies in Germany as previously indicated. This action became part of a resolution of Synod itself in 1869 (*Proceedings*, p. 101) and remained so till 1876, when most Districts ceased to support the Leipzig Mission, and 1879, when they discontinued supporting the Hermannsburg Mission, because of doctrinal difficulties which made it impossible for them to work together. In all honesty one cannot fail to mention the challenging task faced by Synod in the United States during these years. Already the second convention in 1848 called attention to Oregon. Indian uprisings caused plans for Oregon to be set aside. The gold rush year, 1849, called attention to California, its Caucasian and its Chinese population. Special attention was given the needs of Canada as early as 1856 by the Northern (later Michigan) District. In that year Sievers explored parts of Minnesota. The first missionary, J. M. Buehler, arrived in California in 1860. Fr. Brunn of Steeden founded the "Ev. Lutheran Mission among German Emigrants to North America" (1861) and in the next years trained many men who entered our seminaries and were commissioned as pastors. There was a desperate need for these men because of the speedy growth of the Church here due to the immigration. The year 1863 must have been a heartbreaking one for Sievers, for in that year his Board's report was not even heard at Synod. But he was allowed to come before Synod in the pages of *Der Lutheraner* and did so. Beginning in about 1865, there appeared to be two camps, more or less, as far as mission thinking was concerned. Some felt very definitely that, to live up to the Savior's charge, the Missouri Synod had to enter upon a foreign mission project of its own. Others felt that home missions were the prime duty of the Church. It was almost a refrain: "Home missions are more important than foreign missions." While Sievers was not given any encouragement officially, this encomium was bestowed upon him in the convention of 1866 (*Proc.*, 13th Conv., p. 78) that when all others were discouraged, he the warmhearted

one, moved by a fervent love for the heathen, always turned the eyes of Synod in a new direction and gave all new courage and zeal.

When 1868 struck, Sievers felt that to maintain Synod's interest in missions to the heathen, some purpose would have to be assigned to gifts for missions. Upon a request from Baierlein he proposed that Synod furnish periodicals gratis to missionaries and national workers who would request them. Synod approved. In 1872 he reported expending \$193.95 to transmit English books (one wonders which they may have been), *Die Abendschule*, *Der Lutheraner*, *Lehre und Wehre*, and *Das Schulblatt* to East India. This practice continued through the years and certainly made Missouri's position known in many new areas. At this time Sievers had a second proposal, which was, however, never carried out. He felt that men must be specially prepared for missions to the heathen, and opportunities for missions must be sought out. Therefore he advised the election of a Director of Missions to take this matter in hand. In his opinion the land purchased for the Indian mission in Michigan would be an ideal site for this mission institute.

THE SYNODICAL CONFERENCE

The year 1872 saw also the founding of the Synodical Conference. One of the purposes of this organization was to help the various synods in their mission work. In the second convention (1873) the Institute for the Deaf and Immigrant Missions are mentioned as projects worthy of support. Work among the Negroes found its proponents, and in 1877 J. F. Doescher was commissioned to undertake the assignment. This mission met with such favor that shortly the complaint was voiced that home missions were not receiving sufficient funds because of Negro missions (1878, *Der Lutheraner*, Vol. 34, p. 141).

The efforts of Carl Vogel, formerly a China missionary of the Dresden Society, among the 300 Chinese in St. Louis was brought to the attention of the Conference. The Synodical Conference sponsored this work until the death of the missionary on November 3, 1875.

Then came *Der Lutheraner* of January 15, 1876, carrying somewhat startling news. In India five missionaries, E. Schaeffer, Fr. Zucker, C. M. Zorn, A. Grubert, and O. Willkomm withdrew from

the Leipzig Society for doctrinal reasons. Zorn particularly had corresponded with Dr. Walther, and when it came to the parting of the ways with Leipzig, Walther sent 500 pound sterling to pay travel costs of these men to the United States. He suggested that two might stay in India and open work for the Synodical Conference. But for some unknown reason his letter did not reach the men until they had already returned to Germany. Walther appealed to the Districts for approval of the disbursement of so large a portion of the mission treasuries. The Districts agreed without dissent. In 1876 Zorn and Zucker were installed at Sheboygan, Wis., and Williamsburg, N. Y., respectively. This, of course, climaxed the break with Leipzig referred to earlier. It might be said in passing that on his way west from New York Zorn traveled over Michigan and visited Sievers. What a mutual pleasure that must have provided!

The very next year Sievers addressed letters to the various Districts, or members of the same, asking them to express themselves on the matter of foreign missions. Illinois was ready to propose action to General Synod and suggested a committee to formulate plans. "First we must know what we want, then we can proceed," was their reaction. The Central District was specially interested in the Dakotas and Minnesota and Negro work. The Northwest District emphasized Negro missions and felt it could propose a man suited for the position of Director. The Western District also expressed itself for Negro missions and witnessed Doescher's commissioning. No doubt much of this action was influenced by the resolution of the Synodical Conference of the same year (1877) to open a heathen mission among the Negroes. But Sievers was looking beyond this to Japan, Ethiopia, India, and Australia.

In the 1878 convention of Synod there was some discussion on the point whether the Mission Board should even be continued. It was, but its chief function was to hold and administer and, if possible, to sell the land of the Indian mission advantageously. It was also to supply synodical literature to missionaries in foreign countries who requested the same. A second board, the Board for Home Missions, was established in this year.

For a while attention was riveted on the Negro mission of the

Synodical Conference. But one does find other stirrings. Among pastors of Synod we find one Eggert (1872), who had served among the Hottentots for 19 years; one Suesz (1873), also from Africa; M. Otto (1879), from India. We have already told of Zorn and Zucker (1876). No doubt there were other men who kept alive thoughts of foreign lands in the hearts and minds of Missouri's membership, even while the home Church was almost bursting at the seams due to the immigration of so many Europeans and also preoccupying itself perforce with various doctrinal controversies.

In 1880 money was gathered to help send pastors to Australia. In 1883 the Central Illinois pastoral conference urged the opening of a Jewish mission, and the Baptism of the first two Jews is recorded (*Der Lutheraner*, Vol. 39, p. 156). The Saginaw Special Conference (Sievers' own) proposed to the Michigan District of Synod that it memorialize the General Delegate Synod to the effect that heathen missions should be prosecuted more vigorously by the Synodical Conference.

The Synodical Conference convention of 1884 then heard the appeal, especially for Japan. That there existed a desire for such work among the congregations was recognized, but the same arguments one hears almost year after year from now on are heard here. They can be summarized thus: "Are we not already doing heathen missions among the Jews and Negroes? Are we not occupied with home missions? God has not yet given us a clear indication as to a field to be occupied [*kein Fingerzeig Gottes*]. What if we neglected those of our own land and went to East India, for example?" But there was a serious problem: People were contributing for foreign missions! What should be done with the money received? It was to be put into a fund that would be held ready against the day when we entered upon such missions. Not all were ready to wait. They selected missions and mission societies on their own and supported them. When the Missouri Synod met that year, the New York Pastoral Conference proposed Armenia as a field. It even had a man ready to go, one Tschopurian (*Proc.*, 19th Conv., 1884, p. 67).

In 1885 and 1886 an unidentified layman at the Southern District convention asked on behalf of his congregation whether we

should not undertake foreign missions. The only possible satisfaction given him was that the Board was looking for an open door. The Board was looking about! Sievers came before the 1887 convention of Synod pointing to Asia, Africa, Australia, China, Japan, East India, and Central Africa. And \$13,548 were available. And Synod's action? "Resolved that the Synod empower the Board of Foreign Missions to take the introductory steps toward the opening of heathen missions also beyond our own country on behalf of Synod." Special reference was made to Ceylon. The Board was to look about for a Director of Missions and for young men who would go out (*Proc.*, 1887, pp. 63, 66).

In the same year the first sessions of the California and Oregon District were held in San Francisco. These sessions were attended by a Japanese Christian who spoke fluent German and planned to prepare himself for the ministry. The young men's society of St. Paulus Church of that city was encouraged to take this young man under its wings and sponsor his education. While his name is not mentioned, this is undoubtedly H. Midsuno, of whom more later.

We have been unable to discover what action was taken by the Board as a result of the enabling resolution of 1887. For a few years we hear little besides the reports on foreign missions conducted by other groups, as these are given space in the periodicals of the Church. Now and then one finds a poignant cry as in *Lehre und Wehre* (Vol. 35, p. 392) of 1889: "It is to be regretted that the Lutheran Church, with the pure Word of God, has not yet taken hold in this land, which promises so much. God grant that this may soon take place!" The land was Japan.

QUICKENING PULSE

The convention of 1890 was unwilling to renew the resolution of the previous convention. But now a whole variety of actions made it certain that the 1893 convention would institute foreign missions. Dr. George Stoeckhardt wrote a series of eight articles on "Church Conditions in the Old Fatherland" for *Der Lutheraner* of 1891. The last two installments concerned the Leipzig and Hermannsburg Mission Societies, their origin, work, and present status. He also traced Missouri Synod relations with these societies.

The conclusion reached in both articles indicated that Missouri had no foreign mission it could call its own (p. 60 ff., p. 76 ff., Vol. 47). In the following issue came an article by the F. Sievers, father and son: "Shall We Not Begin Foreign Missions?" (P. 86.) This was written at the request of the Saginaw Special Conference and analyzed and gave answer to all the objections raised against the undertaking. A summary would reveal these points: "Is there not already a manpower shortage? Yes, but God might well make this even more severe if we refused to undertake this mission. Do we have men with the required gifts? Should ours be the only Church without such men when it is the largest Lutheran body in the world? Foreign missions cost very much money! They do, and God has given us enormously much money. Could we not do more with the same amount of money spent in home missions? Is that a fair measure? Those among whom home missions are carried on have some light available. The heathen have none! Do we not carry a double, even a tenfold, obligation to bring them the light?"

The pen is powerful! Pastor John v. Brandt of Albany, Minn., reacting to this article, addressed a memorial to his Minnesota-Dakota District convention in 1891 and was given the floor to expand on it. The District resolved to support foreign missions with a whole heart and suggested that Synod should undertake this work at an early date. To get action, it instructed its secretary to circularize the other Districts to secure similar action from them. This took place in the church at Lewiston, Minn., of which F. Pfothenhauer was pastor. (*Der Lutheraner*, Vol. 47, p. 111.) And action followed. The Canada District stepped in line, expressing joy at the possible new work and at the same time calling for the support of existing endeavors. The Central District instructed its delegates to work toward beginning foreign missions, as did also the Eastern Wisconsin and Michigan. This last District voted undertaking the new venture at the earliest possible moment. The Central District could hardly help itself in voting as it did, since Pastor Weseloh of Cleveland presented "Thirteen Reasons Why Missouri Should Undertake Foreign Missions." These were later reprinted in *Der Lutheraner* (Vol. 48, pp. 86 ff., 95 ff.) The Minnesota-Dakota District discussed the matter a full afternoon again in 1892 and reaffirmed its previous action.

In the meantime President H. C. Schwan had received a letter from Missionary Nils Astrup of the Norwegian Lutheran Mission in Zululand. He reported the opening of a new field north of theirs and asked Missouri to occupy it, promising all possible assistance in getting under way. President Schwan took this letter to the District Synods, and Canada, Iowa, Kansas, and Michigan openly expressed their joy at the news. The Nebraska, Southern, and Western Districts concurred in the action of the other Districts relative to foreign missions.

The Synodical Conference convention of 1892 was minded the same way. *Der Lutheraner* (Vol. 48, p. 153) well summarizes the action in these words: "Also the matter of missions to the heathen was thoroughly discussed. The Synodical Conference encouraged the individual member synods to consider this matter at their next convention and to formulate resolutions accordingly." Incidentally, the Wisconsin Synod at this time undertook work among the Arizona Indians, and it was largely at Wisconsin's urging that the above action was taken at all.

THE 1893 CONVENTION

And so the year 1893 arrived. The Missouri Synod had become a sizable organization during the forty-six years of its existence. It numbered 580,000 souls, 333,000 communicants, 1729 congregations (not counting preaching stations), and 1,237 pastors. Much business was before the 22d General or Seventh Delegate Synod. Our interest is of course, focused on foreign missions. We excerpt the report: "The Lord has His hour in which He moves hearts to agree to that for which He has sent His people. Until this hour has struck, no good work can be done by them. . . . For our Synod the hour is now come in which the Lord is directing us to a new activity in missions among the heathen. That for which individuals or small groups within our Synod have been sighing to God for decades, namely, that we might again have a mission of our own among the heathen, this it seems is being fulfilled in a most wonderful way. The Lord has newly warmed the hearts for missions among the heathen and shows us not only that the doors to the heathen have opened throughout the world, but has also poured into our laps the means for this new mission activity. Now one hears not only a few single voices among us that desire a

genuine mission of our own among the heathen, but all synodical Districts have come into this meeting so that, besides other important business, they might thoroughly discuss the establishment of the desired mission among the heathen. It is now a rather general desire of our Christians that a mission be begun in a heathen country. The General Mission Board brings this before General Synod as a definite resolution. Your committee believes that this desire should be heeded." The resolution was accepted.

By regular proposal and resolution Japan was chosen as the field. It was decided that as soon as the missionaries had progressed sufficiently in their study of the native language, they were to open schools and carry on evangelistic work. A Director of Missions was also to be chosen, for the first on a three-year basis. A board of ten men was to be elected. A fund of \$11,391.71 had accumulated for this undertaking, of which almost \$1,000 had been gathered during 1892.

The first board was a truly representative and highly qualified group of men. Profs. F. Pieper and A. L. Graebner represented the St. Louis Seminary. The pastors O. Hanser and C. F. W. Sapper, editors of *Die Missionstaube*, F. Zucker and C. M. Zorn, formerly Leipzig missionaries to East India, A. E. Frey, who had published a mission paper on his own before *Die Missionstaube* was launched, and, of course, F. Sievers, Sr., represented the clergy. Mr. Louis Lange, publisher of the family magazine *Die Abendschule*, was the layman. The last two were, however, never privileged to serve because the Lord called them home before the first meeting on October 4 and 5, 1893. They were replaced by Pastor Joseph Schmidt of Saginaw and Mr. Robert Leonhardt of St. Louis.

All eyes were now on Japan. The church papers quite naturally gave increasing space to Japanese events. Attention of the Board was focused on H. Midsuno, student at Springfield, a native son of Japan. Because of family conditions he had to return home before regular graduation time. He took his examinations and was recommended to the Board by the faculty. He was granted the fare to Japan, and for a while his activities can be traced in Japan, but he does not seem to have received support after his return to Japan. Some who know him indicate there were personality difficulties. It appears also that the Board could not find young men ready to enter this new mission, and so the field was not occupied.

Shall we look askance at anyone who may have demurred? Hardly. To be altogether truthful about it, the church papers and the daily papers had to report that the doors so widely open were slowly but definitely closing. "Japan for the Japanese" was the cry. The missions and churches already established did well to hold their own as is evident from the history of missions in Japan. Up to 1892 everything had been surging forward, but then a reversal set in. The Sino-Japanese War also hampered mission work. Only six months after Synod's resolution was passed, *Lehre und Wehre* issued a ten-page article on church conditions in Japan and indicated how work was becoming ever more difficult (Vol. 39, October, pp. 298—307). Earlier the same journal had shown that while missionaries were once welcomed, they were now being insulted.

TO INDIA

Then eyes turned elsewhere. Two Leipzig missionaries were dismissed from their work in East India because of their insistence upon the doctrine of the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. They were Theo. Naether and Franz Mohn. After their dismissal they came to Germany and met with members of the Saxon Free Church, who shortly affirmed that they were united in faith and confession. The two men were then recommended to the Missouri Synod as possible foreign missionaries. They were brought to the United States and visited a number of District conventions, congregations, and conferences. Uniformly they were accepted as brethren in the faith. *Lehre und Wehre* used many pages of small print to give the pastors rather complete detail on the whole case. The Board also was active and appealed to the Districts for permission to switch from Japan to India. This consent was given gladly, though California was not ready to relinquish Japan, since H. Midsuno was currently surveying the situation in Japan. Several other Districts also held rather lengthy discussions before yielding the cause in Japan. They were not unwilling to enter India, but did not want to give up the other.

Then came the 21st Sunday after Trinity in St. Charles, Mo. The Western District was in session and also the Board of Foreign Missions. Professor Graebner and Pastor Zorn had examined the credentials of the two candidates from India and had given as-

surance that both their doctrine and life measured up to the standards of Scripture. Lest anyone think this was superficial work, done in a few hours' time, we can assure him that the Board's files contain correspondence — and lengthy reports and letters in small handwriting — through which agreement in doctrine and practice was established before the men were given funds for the trip to the United States. On that October 14, 1894, in the presence of the Western District and of the entire Board of Foreign Missions, the two men were solemnly commissioned by President H. C. Schwan, assisted by Prof. A. L. Graebner, secretary of the Board, and Prof. Fr. Zucker, Director of Missions. Pastor C. M. Zorn preached the sermon. And therewith the resolution of 1893 was activated and the Missouri Synod definitely launched into foreign missions.

F. Lochner, an ardent supporter of missions for years, rejoiced: "Thanks be to God that He has so unexpectedly honored Synod by permitting it to share in the East India Mission!" To this exclamation he attached the prayer of the pioneer Lutheran missionary to India, B. Ziegenbalg, which he had spoken for the conversion of the Tamils. (*Der Lutheraner*, Vol. 51, p. 107.)

Many prayers breathed through the years had found an answer. Many more would be needed for a successful future in the foreign missions of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod.

St. Louis, Mo.

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