Danish Lutheran Mission in America

in the time before 1884

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for the Danish American Archive & Library
by Edward A. Hansen *Lutheran Bishop Emeritus* June, 2005

by P. S. Vig
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FOREWORD

In this book we have tried to give a historical account of the beginning and establishment of the work which has been carried out from the Danish Lutheran Church in Denmark on behalf of their countrymen who have immigrated to this country. The intent was to assemble them around the Word and Sacraments in the Danish language on the basis of the evangelical Lutheran confessions. It has not been our intention to write a full history, in which the main subject is often lost among the many details. Neither has it been our purpose to give just a so-called brief overview, which often overlooks the connections in which a matter must be seen to be understood. Our goal was to give a truthful, impartial, and all around account of the subject. It is our hope that the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, which entrusted us with the task of publishing a *festskrift*[1] on the occasion of the 400th Anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation, will find that the project assigned to us has been carried out satisfactorily with this small volume. It is a book which deals with the beginning of the work, the continuance of which is our church body's task. Likewise it furnishes a background for us as a Danish Lutheran church body in America, to help us participate in the festivities being planned to celebrate the Reformation of the Christian Church. In the same way, we hope that discerning readers will discover that this volume about the beginning of the Danish Lutheran Church's mission coincides well with that event which is the original basis for the anniversary in the Lutheran Church in every country in this Year of Our Lord 1917. In reality that subject may be stated thus: the first fumbling, but significant beginning of that great work of the Spirit and the Word in this latest age of the world: the Reformation of the Christian Church—to the glory of God and to the salvation of souls!

For the *Festskrift* Committee:

P. S. Vig

M. N. Andreasen

C. C. Kloth

Blair in March 1917

[1] celebratory writing

INTRODUCTION

The evangelical Lutheran church in America is a fruit of that Lutheran diaspora mission, which (like the Lutheran mission among the unreached[2] peoples) had its birthplace in Halle, Saxony–and in particular at the university which was located there. No matter whether one regards Pietism, as either right or wrong as a movement, one thing can not be denied; namely, that devotion to the salvation of souls, which it advocated with integrity, drove its adherents to go out to the mission fields, both in reached and unreached countries. It fostered mission both among countrymen and unreached peoples.

At the beginning, it was German Pietists who worked chiefly and with best results among German Lutherans who had emigrated to America. Next, it was their spiritual allies who started mission among the Norwegians and Swedes here in this country. If it perhaps seems otherwise among the immigrant Danes in America, it only appears so, because in reality there were also men with strong touches of pietism who were among the first in this field of labor, and who have endured there for the longest time.

In addition, the Protestant pietism, with its strong conviction regarding the worth of the individual soul, is a fruit of the Lutheran Reformation, which was a reawakening of personal Christian faith, instead of secondhand Christianity. It placed faith in Christ above obedience to the Church. It made clear that loving actions are not a support of faith, but a fruit of faith, which demonstrates itself in good works, i.e., such activities as truly contributing to a neighbor's welfare, both physically and spiritually.

Thus it is totally in order that the Lutheran churches of the diaspora, i.e. the church bodies which are a fruit of that missionary work, at this time (when so many and such important days in remembrance of the history of the Reformation[3] are drawing near) should be a part of the celebration of these great anniversaries.

And how could this better be done for us than to give a report of how this evangelistic work, which we all celebrate, had its beginning among our people here in the far away Western world? The discovery of this land was very near in time to the breaking out of the Reformation. That proximity in time is certainly not just a happenstance. A report of this is intended as the purpose of the pages which follow. It may well serve as the opening chapter of a more fully developed history of our church body in the future.

[2] "unreached" refers to persons who are unaware of the gospel (aka, "the heathen"); "reached" refers to those persons who are familiar with the gospel.

[3] Luther nailed his 95 theses to the church door at Wittenberg on October 31, 1517.

The United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is doubtless among the smallest, as well as the youngest, of the branches of the Lutheran Church in the world. But this church body also has both a history and a prehistory. If the history itself is not a long one, that means that its prehistory is longer. That is therefore the subject which we will dwell upon at the beginning.

Leaves of Prehistory

[NB: This small section was not included in Hansen's 2005 translation.]

When we look at the small church divisions that in 1896 joined together as "The United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America", then none of these church divisions had a particularly long life behind them, as the oldest of them was founded in 1884 and the youngest in 1894, and their history, which is the prehistory of the United Church, could soon be told. However, it is not this prehistory that is particularly in mind here. Before the "Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church Society in America" of 1884, the "Norwegian-Danish Conference for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America" of 1870 must be mentioned; for of the latter society those who founded the Church Society in 1884 were the earlier members. And before the "Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America" of 1894, mention must be made of the "Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America", which itself dates its existence from 1874, since the founders of the "North Church" belonged to this community earlier. But to place the beginning of its history either in 1870 or 1874 would not, in my opinion, be sufficient for the correct understanding of the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Mission in America as a whole or of the formation of the Danish Church as a separate church community. I believe that one must go considerably further back in time, as has been attempted on the following pages.

I. The Immigration of Danes to America

An overview of this subject belongs quite naturally to the prehistory of mission, since it marks out the mission field. The Danish immigration to America is not only diminutive but also recent, as compared with the Germans, for example. This circumstance naturally has a relationship to conditions in Europe. That, however, is a subject which lies outside the bounds of our purpose in writing just now. Likewise the Danish immigration is both diminutive and recent, on the whole, when compared with the Swedish and Norwegian immigration. We are speaking now of immigration in the 19th Century. The United States kept no statistics of immigration prior to 1820. It is interesting to note that in the year 1820 the number of Danes surpassed that of the Norwegians and Swedes. That year there were 20 Danes in America, compared with only 3 from Norway and Sweden. In 1830 there were 189 Danes in the United States, while there were only 94 people from Norway or Sweden. However, the tide turned after 1830, and in the decade from 1831-1840 the number of Danes who immigrated was 1,063, compared with 1,161 Norwegians and Swedes. The next decade, the Danes fell further behind; in that period only 539 Danes came, whereas 13,903 Swedes and Norwegians arrived here.

In the decade from 1851-1860 there were 3,739 Danes who came to America, in contrast to 20,931 Swedes and Norwegians. 9,362 Danes came in the years from 1861-1868, in contrast to 42,357 Swedes and Norwegians who came to America. If we take the year 1871, when our first mission workers came to this country from Denmark, statistics tell us that 22,634 Danes immigrated here that year, in contrast to 145,397 Swedes and Norwegians. These numbers include men, women, and children from the respective countries. There is no doubt that these numbers are understated, since they only include immigrants who landed at American ports of entry. It can be shown that a multitude of immigrants to the United States landed originally in Canada. The Norwegian statistics show that from 1820 to 1870, 152,278 persons immigrated from Norway to America. The Swedish statistics, which are from a later date than the Norwegian, show that from 1851 to 1870 some 93,774 Swedes immigrated from Sweden to the United States As one can see, this brings the total of Swedes and Norwegians in America in 1870 close to 250,000. Denmark's statistics of the immigrants are of such a recent date that they are of no help to us. But there is no doubt that if one estimates the total of Danes immigrating to America from 1820 to 1870 as up around 30,000, he is not far from the reality.

Since we are trying to find the total of Danes in America in 1871, with an eye to the Lutheran mission here, there is one significant remark to be made regarding the total of 30,000.

That is, that in 1870, 4,957 Danes were found in the Utah Territory, namely Mormons who had emigrated from Denmark. Even though comparatively few Danes became Mormons after they arrived in America, there were many who fell away from Mormonism here in this country. However, not all of the Danish Mormons were found in Utah. No small number of them could be found in western Iowa and in eastern Nebraska, as well as in other states.

If you look at Mormon statistics regarding emigration from Scandinavia, you will find that from March 11, 1852 to September 14, 1870 there were 11,817 Mormons who immigrated from Scandinavia to America—loaded in 30 ships. But it is important to know that the overwhelming majority of these Scandinavian Mormons were Danes. Among other things, one can see from this that of these 7,360 Scandinavians, which in 1870 were found in Utah Territory, 4,957 were Danes, 613 were Norwegians, and 1,790 were Swedish. Thus, far more than half of them were Danes. In 1870 there were thus between 20,000 and 25,000 Danes who neither were then, nor had they ever been, Mormons back in Denmark.

It may be of interest to ask how Danes in America beyond those in Utah were spread out over the various states in 1870-1871. This question is answered by the U. S. statistics, which indicate Danes in the population of various states:

State	**1860**	**1870**	**Increase**
California	1,328	1,837	509
Illinois	712	3,711	2,999
Iowa	661	2,827	2,166
Kansas	70	502	432
Michigan	192	1,354	1,162
Minnesota	170	1,910	1,740
Missouri	665	464	201
Nebraska	150	1,129	979
New Jersey	175	510	325
New York	1,196	1,698	502
Pennsylvania	234	561	327
Wisconsin	1,150	5,212	4,162
Utah Territory	1,824	3,133	1,309

In other states were found Danes also, varying from 315 in Indiana to 8 in North Carolina. Most Danes in California were doubtless gold seekers and seafaring folk; only a comparative few were farmers. Many Danes in Iowa were Mormons, as in Council Bluffs and the surrounding area. This was also true in Nebraska, e.g. in Omaha and the adjoining area and Fremont. Other states also attracted the earliest Danes.

The facts cited above show that the majority of Danes in America in 1870-1871 who were not Mormons were found in the states of Wisconsin, Illinois, and Iowa. It is recognized that the first Danish Lutheran congregations were founded in these states by the missionaries sent out from Denmark.

In order to understand the mission's work correctly, it is important to try to discover whether the immigration to these states and the places where these congregations were formed were relatively recent or of longer standing. As far as the states named above are concerned,

this can be learned in part by looking at statistics of the total of Danes, and how they were distributed, by comparing statistics of 1860 with those of 1870, as they are listed above. According to U. S. statistics, in 1860 there were found 9,962 Danes distributed throughout the United States. In 1870, the distribution can be seen in the preceding table (see page 4).

One can note that, aside from Utah, it is in the central states where the greatest increase in immigration occurred in the decade from 1860 to 1870. On the other hand, the increase in both California and New York was relatively small. It can also be noticed that as a rule both Norwegian and Swedish pastors had worked previously in the places where the new Danish congregations were established by Danish missionaries. As far as I know, there is one conspicuous exception: Trinity congregation in Chicago, which was founded by Pastor Adam Dan. Other than that, the accepted practice seems to have been that wherever a single person or a colony had become accustomed over a longer time to be without a church, mission would be nearly impossible there. In other words, the earlier that the immigration took place, the greater hope there was for an active church.

One might ask, did the relatively large number of Danes who immigrated in the decade 1861-1870 go to the towns or to the countryside? The answer is that they went mainly to the towns and cities, because it was there that women and hand workers could most readily find work. Many former Danish 'hired men' found jobs in the sawmill towns of Michigan, Wisconsin, and Iowa. Many former sailors found employment on the Great Lakes, particularly Lake Michigan. Many young Danes found jobs in the factories of the larger cities, e. g. Chicago and Racine. Others worked as section hands on the great railways in Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Naturally, many of them took these jobs with the goal in mind that some day in the future they would own some land where they could build their own home. As a result of this, most of the first Danish Lutheran congregations in America were situated in the cities or towns. It was not until later that they were joined by churches in the countryside. Many of these began as annexes of the town churches, and later became independent parishes, as gradually people began to build their own homes in the countryside.

There can scarcely be any doubt that even in the town churches, former Danish farmers constituted the greatest proportion of the congregation. It is the Danish farmer who has been at the forefront in the work of churches in America. On the other hand, people who lived in the cities in Denmark have been at the forefront in establishing Danish societies of various sorts.

Sources: The statistical information cited is taken from O. N. Nelson's *History of Scandinavians*, Volume 1, page 243 and following. The Mormon information is from *Morgenstjernen*, third year, page 271.

II. Looking at the Danish Immigration

from the perspective of the Church: The first Danish missionaries among Danish immigrants in this country

In both the 18th and 19th centuries, there were not a few Danes who immigrated to America for religious reasons. As far as the 18th Century is concerned, that was the case for the noticeable number of Danes who could be found among the members of the Mennonite congregations in Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and other states, both clergy and lay folk. For them the state church of Denmark was too intractable. For this reason they took up their wandering staffs, going first to Germany, and then to America. It is said that some of the earliest immigrants to Pennsylvania in the 19th Century were Baptists, who came here from Zealand. The fact that Mormons immigrated for religious reasons, when one speaks of lay people, cannot be doubted; they were heading for Zion, the city of the prophets, the holy place located beside the great Salt Lake. Further, it cannot be denied that many of our countrymen, who made the decision in earlier days to immigrate to far away America did not take this step lightly. So, as best they understood it, they prayed that God would be with them on the long, dangerous journey to the foreign land. Not a few testimonies to this have been kept.

However, it is far from certain that the great majority of Danes who traveled to America in more recent times were motivated by religious concerns. Yet we must not forget that the longing for independence and self direction, both economically and politically, is one of the fruits of the Christian religion. This is not to be despised, if we are in truth Protestant Christians, and we are not unaware that this motivation, also among our people, is a fruit of the Lutheran Reformation. And the motivation of longing for this was doubtless what drove many Danes to America. When we look at this in a positive way, who is to say that we are wrong?

The great majority of those who went out were children of the Danish Folk Church, when it comes to personal religion, not greatly different from the others who remained at home. Since most of them belonged to the working, overlooked class, it may be that many of them were inclined to think that they had very little for which to thank the Church. Thus they felt that they could take care of themselves also over in America without the Church's help, if they really ever considered the matter. Some of them, both in the cities and out in the country, had possibly come to think of the clergy and the Church as holding them in ignorance and in dependence upon the higher classes, and had thus become avowed enemies of the Church.

However, there were really not many of that ilk in the earlier immigrations to America, when you subtract the adherents of M. A. Sommer.

If you look at the men in the 40s and 50s of the previous century who became leaders of many of their countrymen in America, these could be noted: Rasmus Møller Sørensen, a school teacher, lay preacher, and member of parliament (he died in 1865) and Mogens Abraham Sommer, former school teacher, social reformer, photographer, doctor, etc.

Both of these men, at least for a time, were strongly religious. One gets an appreciation of that from reading what they have written. But neither of them had much use either for the Lutheran Church or for the folk church in Denmark.

It is really the Reformed branch of the Church which, religiously speaking, has put its stamp most strongly on America, both on our national language, manner of thinking, and mode of living. If you think about it, it could scarcely be otherwise, when you consider our country's history. Remember, that it was the Reformed Church which carried out the earliest mission to the immigrant Danes in America, i.e., the Baptists, the Methodists, and the Adventists. All of these are spinoffs from Reformed theology. Each of them in its own way, and from its own viewpoint, is an expression of the reformed legalistic spirit of the Old Testament, even while wearing Christian clothes and speaking with an evangelical voice. —I carry no stones to throw[4] at the Reformed mission, not even in the representations above, for I know that wherever the Word of God is found, even when it is mixed with cinders, there is the possibility of salvation for a person of simple faith. Nevertheless it is most regrettable that some of the first workers among Danish immigrants to America were of this persuasion. Frequently the people caught by them were the most serious about religion. I do not direct this complaint either against Baptists, Methodists, or Adventists, but much more against those who could and should have been Lutheran leaders and shepherds, also among the immigrant people. But it is too late to complain about this at this stage of the game. Among the Reformed missionaries who sought out the immigrant Danes in America, the Baptists must be named first. Not only because they were the first, but also because they reaped the greatest harvest.

The Baptist religion had come to Denmark in the 19th Century - brought there from America, via Hamburg. The American Baptist minister, Professor Barnas Sears (died in 1880) had studied from 1831 to 1835 in Germany. He had been enjoined by the American Baptist Missionary Society to find out if there was a way open for Baptists in Germany. He did find such a way in Hamburg, where in 1834 he baptized Johan Gerhard Oncken (died in 1884) along with six others, and thus founded the first German Baptist congregation of more recent times. In 1836 in Hamburg J. G. Oncken baptized a Danish Jew, Julius Købner (born in Odense in 1806), who had been converted to Christianity not long before. J. Købner, who originally was an engraver, became very active as a Baptist, both as a speaker and writer. The point which is of special interest to us is that in 1839 Købner founded the first Danish Baptist congregation in Copenhagen—with Peter Mønster as president. In 1840 he founded a Baptist congregation on Langeland, where Jens Sørensen Dyrholm, the well known blind evangelist, was a member. Mønster, who for a time had been one of Grundtvig's disciples, established a Danish Baptist congregation in Aalborg. Because of a disarray in money matters, he was discharged from the regular Baptist congregation (in Copenhagen). He then gathered a new congregation around him. It was in this last named congregation that the Mormon mission won

[4] *John 8:7: "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."*

its first adherents in Denmark, in that most of the membership went over to this new religion. The Baptist congregation in Aalborg also contributed many proselytes to the Mormons. The first Dane to be baptized as a Mormon in Denmark was Ole Ulrik Christian Mønster on August 12, 1850. Doubtless he was a brother of Peter Mønster. This same O. U. C. Mønster, who was born at Gammel-Estrup near Grenaa, was a member of the Mønster-led Baptist congregation in Copenhagen. After his baptism as a Mormon he was ordained as a clergyman. In 1852 he became the leader of the first Mormon Immigration Society, which encouraged Danes to emigrate from Denmark to Utah. He resided in Salt Lake City until 1858, and then moved to Manti, Sanpete County, Utah. There he died on May 13, 1884 in the home of his only son, Adolf Valdemar. He had been blind and deaf during his final years.

As to the Baptist mission among Danish immigrants, which we will not otherwise enter upon, I will only say this much: from 1856 to 1870 some twelve Danish-Norwegian Baptist congregations were established in America; these were in the states of Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, and Nebraska. The oldest of these are the congregations in Raymond, Wisconsin (1856), Waushara County, Wisconsin (ca. 1858), New Denmark, Wisconsin (1859), Clarks Grove, Minnesota (1863), and in Racine, Wisconsin (ca. 1864). Besides these, there were Danish Baptist congregations in Chicago, Illinois, Shelby County, Iowa, Albert Lea, Minnesota, and Neenah, Wisconsin. Most of these congregations were very small. Even though they were called "Scandinavian", or "Danish-Norwegian", most of their members were Danish, some of whom were Baptists from Denmark. However their growth came mostly from Lutheran immigrants, who could understand their language. The most active Baptist missionary in those days was doubtless Lars Jørgensen from Fyn, who was now known by the name of L. J. Hauge (he was born in Stige, near Odense, in 1837).

This man had immigrated to America in 1858, and was no doubt won for the Baptist religion by his countryman (who was also from Stige), F. L. Rymkjær, a sailor, who had himself been won as a Baptist in America, from whence he was sent back to Denmark as a missionary for the Baptists. It is said that Rymkjær was an eloquent and active man; the same is true of L. J. Hauge, who is still living as a longtime missionary among the Indians in North Dakota. To the best of my knowledge, he fell into disagreement with his brothers among the Danish Baptists. After 1866, the Danish Baptist congregations in America had to yield not a few proselytes to a new American religion—the Seventh Day Adventists. Their eloquent advocate, John G. Matheson, a former Baptist, led no small number of his former brothers in faith with him. Along with these converts to Adventism, a former Danish seaman, Chr.. Willerup, led many to Methodism. Chr. Willerup's activity resulted in a number of small Norwegian-Danish Methodist congregations being established from 1850 and on, in the central states. The majority of the members in these congregations were Norwegian. However, there were a number of well-situated Danes, especially in the Eastern states, who were won for Methodism. They contributed sizable sums of money toward its mission in Denmark. As an example one could mention the Danish Consul in New York, merchant Harald Chr. Døllner (who died in 1884).

Probably the man most prominent already in the 1850s was N. P. Lang from Lolland. As a preacher he has been in touch with most of the Danes in the Midwest. He can likely best be characterized as one who would be termed 'free mission' today. He called himself the friend of Jesus. He regarded baptism and the Lord's Supper as only ceremonies, which he maintained

have nothing to do with true Christianity in and of themselves. Lang, who lived at one time in Chicago, published a little collection of spiritual songs, which he called, *The Little Singer*.'

I don't know whether or not Lang was a Baptist at one time. That was, however, the case with Chr.. Westerby, who came to America in 1866. He tells that after he had been a lay preacher for about twenty years, he submitted to baptism, and was received into the Baptist congregation in Aalborg. However, it was not long until his eyes were opened to the truth that the Baptist congregation was far from being the true church of Jesus. He was excommunicated from the congregation. And later here in America he was involved in the establishment of a Danish Baptist congregation in Cuppy's Grove, Shelby County, Iowa. Soon he came to disagree with his brothers there, and he then asked them to remove his name from the association of Baptists. However, in so doing he did not cease witnessing to his countrymen, at least as far as his age and strength permitted.

In any case, the fact that more of our countrymen in America did not become Baptists or Adventists can be attributed to their childhood training, and to the respect for baptism which they had inherited from their parents. It also helped that the Norwegian Lutheran pastors witnessed in strong opposition to these errant movements.

III. Lutheran Mission Among Danes in America before 1870

It is no secret that in the parishes of Denmark in early days, most people came to church chiefly to have their children baptized and confirmed, to have their young people married, and their dead buried. Thus there were many people who only heard a sermon on the great church festivals, especially Christmas and New Year's Day. There are many testimonies to the fact that Danes in America were concerned only to know where they could find a pastor at the time when their children were born. Because children simply must be baptized, at any rate, the first ones. In my time I have confirmed children, Danish children, who had been baptized by English Episcopal priests, some by Methodist ministers, some by Lutheran pastors—Norwegian, Swedish, and German. In one case the father told me that the German pastor absolutely insisted that the child should have his father's first name as his last name, according to custom in Denmark in the old days. And the pastor had his way! —I know from dependable sources that among a number of Danish families from north Slesvig, who had immigrated to Missouri in the previous century, the eldest man in the colony had taken a noteworthy step. He had taken pains to have a copy made of the baptismal ritual found in the Danish Altar Book to bring with him to America. Using that copy, he had baptized the children of that colony, as they entered the world, one after another. He was sure that children should be baptized, and not be heathens.

There were also not so few of the Danish immigrants, who not only wanted their children baptized, but also wished to hear God's word proclaimed, as far as possible in a language they could understand. So there were, also before 1870, not a few Danes who held active membership in Norwegian Lutheran churches, in Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota. Often they were along when such congregations were founded. Many examples of this could be cited. Such was also the case in Swedish Lutheran congregations, in Illinois, Minnesota, and Kansas. Often one partner in a marriage would be Swedish. Among the members in the Swedish Lutheran congregation in Moline, Illinois are named "Jørgen Lindahl from Ribe, Denmark and his wife Eva. Carl J. Sørensen, a son of the well known Rasmus Sørensen, was a member of the Swedish Lutheran congregation in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1852, and doubtless other Danes had membership there as well. Chiefly in Illinois there were Danish members in Swedish congregations, where their children remain until this day. And the same is true several places in Minnesota.

But in a special way it was the Norwegian Lutheran pastors who were active among Danish immigrants in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and other states. In not a few instances, they

founded "Norwegian-Danish" or "Scandinavian" congregations. Of these last named, the oldest of which I can speak is the present Emmaus congregation in Racine, Wisconsin. Its full name is "The First Scandinavian Lutheran Congregation", founded August 22, 1851. Among the first "trustees" of this congregation were John S. Bangs and John Larsen, who both were Danish. In any case Bangs, or Bang, was Danish. In the period from 1860-1870, when there was a very large group of Danish immigrants, the majority of the members were Danish. The pastor at that time, J. Müller-Eggen, therefore wrote a letter to Denmark about the desirability of getting a Danish pastor for this congregation. This occasioned the coming of Adam Dan as its pastor in 1871.

But before 1870 Danes were not only in Norwegian, Swedish, and Scandinavian congregations, but also there were purely Danish congregations, along with unorganized circles of Danes who had somewhat regular service either from pastors, theological students, or laymen. Among the latter we can mention a little circle of Danes who lived in the neighborhood of Luzerne, Benton County, Iowa. It was there that the gifted layman Peter Nikolajsen proclaimed the word. He was from Copenhagen, and had immigrated to New York in 1851, and from there to Benton County in 1854. With a "license" from the Lutheran General Synod Nikolajsen worked for many years among Norwegian immigrants at various places in Iowa. But also in his own little circle he preached and administered the sacraments for a number of years. Nikolajsen suffered many a hard blow from men like Mogens A. Sommer, Lang, and others who visited him or his circle. In his old age he moved to Cedar Falls, Iowa, where he died in the spring of 1893. Another Danish Lutheran congregation which was founded before 1870 was the congregation in Indianapolis, Indiana, which probably was established in 1868 by the current pastor, M. Fr. Wiese (from Falster). At that time he was studying theology at the Missouri Synod's seminary in St. Louis, Missouri. He came from there to visit countrymen in Indianapolis and preached for them. Other Danish students at that seminary established the Danish congregation in Webster Grove, Missouri, also prior to 1870. A Danish Lutheran congregation was established in Perth Amboy, New Jersey by Pastor O. Juul (Norwegian), who was a pastor in New York City from 1866 to 1876. It continues to belong to the Norwegian Synod.

Figure 1: Dean J. Vahl and Pastor V. Beck

Most especially in this connection we must mention Pastor C. L. Clausen, a Dane, who became widely known as the first Lutheran pastor among Norwegians who had immigrated to America since 1843. Pastor Clausen gathered many Danes under his preaching, in Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota. He not only gathered Norwegian-Danish congregations in Minnesota, where he lived and carried out his ministry, but also purely Danish congregations are indebted to him for their existence. The Danish congregation in Cedar Falls, the present Nazareth congregation, is one example. The first connection between Pastor Clausen and the new immigrant colony in Cedar Falls is probably attributable to the fact that in 1866 a number of young Danes came to Cedar Falls from Pine River, Wisconsin. Some of these had served as soldiers in the famous 15th Wisconsin Regiment during the Civil War. They had come to know Clausen, who for a time was chaplain for this regiment. They sent word, asking him to come to preach for the Danes in Cedar Falls. Thus the Danish congregation was founded there in 1870. In the same manner, Pastor Clausen visited and preached for his countrymen in Fredsville, Iowa, Sheffield, Illinois, and other places.

Figure 2: Pastor C. L. Clausen

A further comment: The venerable Jens Andersen, who now lives in Blair, was a soldier in the 15th Wisconsin Regiment, where he became acquainted with the well known Pastor Clausen. He was also one of the first Danes to come to Cedar Falls from Wisconsin in 1866. He has told me how it happened that Pastor Clausen came to preach for the Danes in Fredsvillle (as it is called now) and Cedar Falls. Pastor Clausen customarily preached for some Norwegians who lived at Beaver Creek, in the vicinity of New Hartford, Iowa. These Norwegians, with whom Jens Andersen was acquainted, invited him and the other Danes in Fredsville to come along to their meetings. Instead, Jens Andersen asked them to bring his regards to Pastor Clausen and invite him to come and conduct a meeting for the Danes in Fredsville. Pastor Clausen accepted the invitation, and the next time he came to that area, he conducted a meeting at Fredsville; later he came also to the town of Cedar Falls and preached for the Danes there. At his first meeting he took down the names of all of those who would like to continue to have him preach for them. Jens Andersen thinks that Clausen held his first meeting in Cedar Falls and the surrounding area in 1868. He had to preach in the small farmhouses, where he was at his best.

IV. Danish Members in English Congregations Before 1870

To this day there is a general belief in Denmark, even among those who could and should know better, that the Episcopalian branch of the churches in America is the division that most closely resembles the Danish Folk Church. There has been little or no acquaintance with the English Lutheran churches in America, any more than there has been with the German or Scandinavian. The man who did the most to promote this way of thinking in the old country is probably Dean J. Vahl, who was a member of the Anglo-Continental Society. He translated several articles for them, which set out to show how identical the Lutheran and the Episcopal Churches are. It was this same Dean Vahl who, in seeking information about the religious condition of those Danes who had immigrated to America, did not direct his inquiries to Lutheran pastors in this country, but rather to an American bishop in Chicago. We shall learn more about this later.

Before 1821 there were not so few Danish-born pastors in the English church groups here in this country. As examples, Pastors A. R. Rude and Edmund Balfour in the English Lutheran synod. In the English Church of the Brethren (Mennonite) there were also some, but the greatest number was doubtless to be found in the Episcopal Church. Of these, we will name here only C. F. Kruse, John Gerlow, and Martin Fr. Sørensen - a son of Rasmus Sørensen. Of these three, however, there was only one who worked to some extent among his countrymen, and that only for a limited time when he was pastor in Waupaca, Wisconsin. There he received his bishop's permission to administer the sacraments by using the Danish Altar Book, in cases where he baptized Danish children and gave communion to Danes. This was Cruse, who was born of Danish parents in Philadelphia. He could understand, but not speak, or at any rate preach, in Danish. John Gerlow's activity took place mainly at places where no Danes were to be found.

There were a number of the older and more prominent Danes here in this country who joined the Episcopal Church, or who at least had their children baptized, and who attended Sunday School there. Some had their children confirmed as Episcopalians. That was the case in Wisconsin, e.g. in Hartland, Racine, and other places. It was natural that the children of Danish businessmen who came to this country with little interest in church would join the Episcopalians. It seemed a matter of course, since in their youth back home they had taken for granted what they had always heard, i.e. that the Episcopal Church was, among the church groups in this country, the one most similar to the Church of Denmark. Some few Danes held membership in the English Lutheran congregations. For example, in New York, there were

several who had an awakening under the Swedish preacher at the Bethel Ship in New York. They joined some American Methodist churches. Another part, likewise made up of prominent Danes in New York, became followers of the well known preacher, Henry Ward Beecher. And probably it would be difficult to find any church group in America which did not count some Danes among its membership.

However, the large majority of Danes who immigrated to America before 1860 were situated without any church connection at all. Even if one counts the Mormons, they were lost from the Lutheran Church and the Danish language. This was most evident in city and town populations. The field, which in part was left for the Danish Lutheran Mission to work in, was constituted of Danes who immigrated here to this country in the period from 1860-1870 who were not Mormons from Denmark.

That this field of mission was not actually smaller than it was, is something for which we can thank the Norwegian and Swedish Lutheran pastors. As a rule, they were the ones who prepared the way for the Danish pastors. It may be that the latter were a bit reluctant to observe or acknowledge this, but it is still a fact.

V. The Idea of a Danish Mission To Immigrant Danes in America

It is true that many in Denmark did think about America, a land to which their loved ones—children, brothers, sisters, relatives, friends and acquaintances had departed. It could not be otherwise. It is also certain that they followed them with prayers, and with exhortations to keep close to God and His word. Letters from home to the immigrants attest to this. But the idea of carrying on a mission among countrymen here in this country was difficult to consider by a people, who in general counted on the government to take care of the installation of pastors and that sort of thing. And for a long period of time, the government took little notice of how many people had emigrated to America. In addition, one could scarcely expect that their concern for religious matters should extend further than to the children of their own country and the domains of the kingdom. It probably was hard enough to find pastors to go to Greenland and the West Indian Islands, just as it had been earlier to find men for Trankebar[5] and the Guinea Coast of Africa.

And even in the awakened circles of the Folk Church, which almost always had to take up the task of mission both outside and within the country itself, it took quite a long time, relatively speaking, before the idea of mission among their countrymen in America was brought up. In part this was the due to the fact that there was plenty to do there at home, and in part because no one had much of a grasp of how many Danes had left for America, beyond those who were Mormons. The immigration had not taken place directly from Denmark to America, but rather by way of Hamburg, Bremen, or England. Only a few of the immigrants wrote to the journals of Denmark, and there probably none of them spoke of the lack of the blessings of a Christian community. In short: it is not so hard to understand that it took a long time before the idea of carrying on a Danish Lutheran mission among Danes in America was proposed—and an even longer time until the plan was put into motion.

The man who really first proposed to believers in Denmark a serious mission among their countrymen in America was a school teacher in a region of Sjælland[6] from which a comparatively large number had emigrated to America. At that time the man was a teacher in Hallensløv near Tiis-Lake in west Sjælland. His name was N. M. Hansen. From 1875 and on he had been a Danish Episcopal priest at a Danish pioneer colony in Canada. Using the name "Monitor", i. e. "Reminder", Hansen wrote in *Indre Missions Tidende*, No. 13, 1867 a warm, heartfelt and reasonable article advocating mission among countrymen in America. He entitled his article *A*

[5] Modern Tharangambadi on the southeast coast of India
[6] Zealand

Proposal To The Inner Mission Society, in which he made many good suggestions for setting such a mission in motion—one which, he thought "The Inner Mission" in Denmark in particular should undertake. Pastor Vilhelm Beck added a brief postscript to "Monitor's" article, in which he laid weight on the need first and foremost to find a man who was both willing and able to go out on such a task. Schoolmaster Hansen had included these sentences in his article: "And think that an English bishop was over here from America a few years back to look for theological graduates who would establish congregations among the Danes over there. He was unable to find any such candidates. That thought should cause us real discomfort. It becomes evident that something needs to be done about this matter." The "English bishop from America" that Schoolmaster Hansen was pointing to was Henry John Whitehouse, who was the bishop in Chicago from 1852 until his death in 1874. This bishop, highly regarded by his church body, made a trip to Sweden and Denmark in 1866 in an effort to find Scandinavian workers to come to America in Episcopalian service. It was probably on this same trip that Bishop Whitehouse took part in the World Conference of Anglican Church's bishops in London in 1867, at which he gave the opening address. But there were no Danish candidates for the proposed mission of Bishop Whitehouse in America, at least from his denomination. But you may say that this same American bishop really gave a push toward the starting of a mission among them eventually. This is the way it came about.

Among Denmark's clergy the man who was the earliest to call attention to the need to carry on a mission among the Danes abroad, especially among seafaring people, was Dean J. Vahl, who later became very well known. He was very devoted to the English Episcopal Church. In 1856 he was a member of the Anglo-Continental Society, founded by Episcopalians. He was at any rate on good terms with it, as mentioned earlier. As a consequence of this, it was entirely in order that he, in seeking information about the Danes who had immigrated to America, sought this information, not from any Lutheran pastor in America, but instead from Bishop Whitehouse in Chicago. He likely had become acquainted with this prelate at the time of his visit to Denmark. The informational report which the bishop sent to Dean Vahl, was forwarded to *Indre Missions Tidende*—in fact, to the very publication where mission among Danes in America was being discussed. The information is published in this journal No. 27, of September 25, 1867. This article, which is a not unimportant document, deserves to be duplicated here, in its entirety:

The Danes in America

(From a letter to Pastor Vahl from an American Church Authority of High Standing)

> "I have received your letter of June 25, and have read it attentively and with interest. It has prompted me to arrange for a thorough investigation of the Danish population's situation in Chicago and other areas to the west. The Danish population of Chicago runs to several thousand; it is reckoned to be in general about 5,000. Nine tenths of them are entirely indifferent to religion. A great number are outright scoffers.[7] Among those who are more serious, some have joined the Methodists, others the Baptists or Independents. There is only one Danish congregation, which is Baptist, possibly a remnant of Sommer's congregation. That

[7] *Scoffers, i.e. people who treat God's revelation with contempt.*

totals about 60 members. The pastor is a Norwegian, who, because of his accent, is really not understood on the whole by the Danes. In comparison, there are more Danes in Wisconsin than here. Out in the country these Danes are not living as close together as the Swedes and Norwegians. Still, Danes are found in significant groups within our population. Everywhere in our country the religious condition of the Danes is such that I believe it would disturb the Danish Church to a high degree at home, and they certainly would want to call attention to the situation. I do not think that there will be any movement on the part of the Danes themselves to invite a pastor to come over here. Likewise, I do not think that there will be any attempt to procure a Danish service of worship. As Danes seemingly feel no lack because of this, and they will make no contribution toward procuring such. I fear that it will be difficult to get them to value anything which they would receive from such service, even if they did not have to pay for it. A Danish mission would therefore be of the highest importance—both with regard to the large number of Danes to be found, and with regard to the indifference, not to say enmity, toward all religion that they have shown. If anything is to be done, the Inner Mission Society (or a similar association) will have to regard it totally as a mission endeavor.

"It is also clear that whomever is sent out first to investigate or initiate such a mission must be a man of more than ordinary competence. He must have the character and the personal gifts that are needed to win friends for this cause. He must be in possession of a pleasing and open personality. He must be patient under adversity, a man with tact, who understands people's humanity. Since the Danish population is widely spread out, he will need to have good physical health and strength, along with perseverance. Indeed, much will depend–along with God's support–on the suitability of the man who is sent out. Whether this man is a *colporteur* or pastor, his living expenses must be covered by the sending agency, at the very least, for the first year. For the most part, the Danes are farmers, who are not thriving. Those among them who are more well off show very little concern for the others. There are, however, some knowledgeable people who intend to establish a congregation in Chicago, and build a church which could be the center for future evangelistic efforts.

"I have come to the conclusion that it would be most helpful if a chosen group of two or three men, a pastor and one or two laymen of recognized suitability and influence, would come and spend half a year traveling around in the United States. Thereafter they should return to Denmark, to lay before their fellow Christians there the results of their observations ."

It would appear that the report cited above was the result of the Bishop's own visitation which in more than one respect was not written by him alone. It seems to me that there is a rather sizable discrepancy between the beginning and the ending of his letter. In any case, it is quite certain that either the bishop or the statistical tables incorrectly reported the number of Danes in Chicago in 1867. The bishop says that there were 5,000 Danes in Chicago in 1867, whereas the statistical tables have it that in 1870, just three years later, there were only 3,711 Danes in the entire state of Illinois. And we know that the total number of Danes in 1867 in the state was also significantly less. About 1867 we have information from another source , namely a book by a Norwegian author, Johan Schrøder, *Scandinavians in the United States*

and Canada, LaCrosse, Wisconsin, 1867. On page 150 of this book he says, "It is likely that 10,000-12,000 Scandinavians live in that city [Chicago] who support themselves as hand workers and laborers." That testimony sounds more reasonable. But neither half, or even a third, of the Scandinavians in Chicago were Danes!—At least, certainly not in 1867. At the highest estimate, there were perhaps up to 2,000 persons in Chicago who could understand the Danish language. I am including the folks from South Jutland and Schleswig-Holstein, who constituted a not insignificant portion of that number.

The Bishop also anticipates that in a year or so a self-supporting congregation of Danes will be gathered in Chicago, one which will own its property—and that that congregation could become a center for future work among Danes in America. So it would seem that "the indifference to, or even enmity toward all religion."is not as bad among them as it appeared to him.

Bishop Whitehouse says of a Danish Baptist congregation in Chicago, a remnant of Sommer's work (probably a reference to M. A. Sommers) that it was now served by a Norwegian pastor. This too is incorrect. To begin with, M. A. Sommers had no congregation in America, even though there were some who might have been influenced by him from Denmark. And beyond that, the Baptist congregation in Chicago was not composed of Sommer's disciples.

Even though it has thus been shown that on several matters the bishop's information was not dependable (probably through no fault of his), there is still no doubt that his message aroused some attention in Denmark. In particular, his proposal that a commission be sent from Denmark to America was followed up almost in its entirety. Pastor Grove-Rasmussen and the two laymen, A. S. Nielsen and R. Andersen, were sent over here in 1871 by the "Select Committee" from Fyn. Truly enough, Pastor Grove-Rasmussen was here for less than a half year, with reason, but the two others were here longer. One of them is still here.

Before that sending out took place, there were several things involved, each of which gave a push to the eventual reality of a mission among Danes in America. Among these we should mention the visit of Pastor C. L. Clausen to Denmark in 1867. Clausen, who at one time had a seat in Iowa's Legislature as a representative of the district in which he lived, was named by the governor of that state to be Iowa's representative at the World Exposition in Paris in 1867. In connection with that trip to Europe, he visited both Denmark and Norway. In his native country he attended several large meetings, among others, on Fyn, where he spoke of the religious plight of his countrymen in America. He laid their need for spiritual help on their hearts, and followed up with the need to help them by sending workers there from Denmark. Even the Norwegian "Synod" has not disputed the fact that C. L. Clausen was an eloquent man. At any rate, it is certain that his words at these meetings made an impression on many hearts. It was at these meetings that C. L. Clausen became acquainted with Pastor Johannes Clausen at Ryslinge, who had come there the previous year to succeed Pastor Vilhelm Birkedal as parish pastor. He was a man who always had a warm heart for missions, whether it was among his own people or among people in distant lands. Actually he was one of those who, with Pastor C. F. Rønne and Vilhelm Beck, managed to save the "Inner Mission" in Denmark from wandering off into secular lay activity. Pastor C. L. Clausen's visit on Fyn in 1867 can probably be regarded as the impetus for organizing "The Church Society for the Diocese of Fyn", which took place at a meeting in Ryslinge in October, 1868. The mission among Danes in America was on the agenda. It was at the meeting of this society at Odense on October 7-8, 1869 that the Select

Committee for furthering the proclamation of the Gospel in North America was formed. The "Select Committee" (*Udvalg*), as it came to be called, was constituted of pastors Joh. Møller, Odense, Joh. Clausen, Ryslinge, Dr. Ludvig Helveg, Odense, G. Strøm, Marslev, together with Court Council Plesner of Hellerup. Of these men, it was Joh. Clausen who maintained the constant connection with Pastor C. L. Clausen of St. Ansgar, Iowa. He was able to keep them informed about Danes in America, and had promised that if the Select Committee sent any non-ordained men to America, he (C. L. Clausen) would see to it that they were ordained. This was a promise which he kept, as we shall see later.

Perhaps it was not without influence from C. L. Clausen that Pastor J. Müller-Eggen, who was his good friend and a pastor in Racine, Wisconsin in the first Scandinavian congregation (most of the members of which were Danish), wrote in *Indre Missions Tidende* regarding the religious needs of Danes in America. Pastor Müller-Eggen was elected secretary of the "Norwegian-Danish Conference", (of which C. L. Clausen was president), and he secured Pastor Adam Dan to be his successor as pastor of the congregation in Racine.

It is not without interest to note that it was through a society of pastors on Fyn, and through a Select Committee consisting of pastors on Fyn, that a mission among Danes in America eventually became a reality. In Denmark it seems to be true that it is people on Fyn who must take over whenever a new project is undertaken. It was on Fyn that the 'godly assemblies' had a beginning in their time. It was on Fyn that the first 'independent congregation' was formed. So it was also from Fyn that the first and most active workers for the Baptist cause came to America, and likewise the first Danish pastors of the Lutheran Church were from that island. Until this day, some of the most capable workers in the Lutheran mission among Danish people in America are natives of Fyn, both pastors and lay people.

VI. The First Danish Emissaries to America in 1871

There is probably no doubt that the first members of the Select Committee sent out by the society on Fyn were Grundtvigians, or at least men who were close to the Grundtvigian theology. An exception might be Pastor Joh. Clausen, who in his time was very active in the work of Inner Mission, together with Vilhelm Beck. This was true up to the time he became pastor of the parish at Ryslinge. There he could scarcely be uninfluenced by Pastor Vilhelm Birkedal. The majority of the members of the Select Committee were at the same time sincere workers for a Christian awakening among the people. However, when we note that it was in *Indre Missions Tidende* that the idea was first presented of a church mission among countrymen in America, we have to wonder a bit why neither Vilhelm Beck or Dean Vahl were members of that Select Committee, which in a special way was given the assignment of carrying out this idea. It may be that the story of the Danish mission in America would have been quite different if that had been the case. In a letter to the Danish pastors in America, which was published both in *The Scandinavian and America* and in the supplement to *Kirkelig Samler*, No. 15, 1873, Vilhelm Beck says in regard to the church society which Joh. Clausen established on Fyn, "When that society took up its work, Pastor Joh. Clausen asked me if the project of a mission in America could be given to this society, I agreed happily, since I already had so many projects to look after in Indre Mission's work here at home. Thus the matter was taken out of my hands, and I thereafter had no influence upon the choice of the men to be sent as pastors for the Danes in America."

And one would say to this, "Of course not!" However, there is no doubt that both Vilhelm Beck and Dean Vahl would have been otherwise steady members of the Select Committee, as compared with the sometimes hesitant Pastor Joh. Clausen, sincere and lovable as he was.

PAST. JOHS. CLAUSEN.

Figure 3: Pastor Joh. Clausen

DR. L. HELVEG.

PAST. GROVE-RASMUSSEN.

Figure 4: Dr. L. Helveg and Pastor Grove-Rasmussen

Nevertheless it is very significant that when men were finally elected to be sent out to the mission among our countrymen in America, it happened that most of them had been a part of Indre Mission, or were partly in the service of Indre Mission in the home country—even if they were influenced by Grundtvigianism to a greater or less degree. Most often, it has been people like these who were the first to go out in the service of mission. As is known, it was Pastor A. C. L. Grove-Rasmussen and the laymen A. S. Nielsen and R. Andersen who were sent to America by the Select Committee in 1871. The first one named above, as the original leader, was to make a tour of the various places in America where there seemed some prospect of forming a Danish congregation. Then he was supposed to give a report to the Select Committee when he returned to Denmark, and the other two men were supposed to stay in America as future workers in the mission. Pastor Grove-Rasmussen had been chairman of Indre Mission in Slesvig since 1867, and from that time on he was remembered by many as a serious preacher of awakening, as well as editor of the mission publication *Elias.*

It was decided at the beginning that Pastor Thomas Rørdam, at that time assistant pastor in Rerslev and Ruds Vedby on Sjælland, was to travel to America together with A. S. Nielsen and R. Andersen. But in a fall, he hurt his foot in such a way that he could not travel. The Select Committee turned to several pastors, urging that they make the journey in Pastor Rørdam's place, but each of them declined. At that time, Grove-Rasmussen went to Ryslinge to talk to Pastor Joh. Clausen about the church's cause in Slesvig. Thereupon the idea followed of asking him to go. "I have never thought about it," Grove-Rasmussen replied when the possibility of a trip to America was raised. So it came about that Joh. Clausen, Joh. Møller and L. Helveg made arrangements with Grove-Rasmussen for him to make the trip. (Information from Pastor R. Andersen, New York).

In the report of his travels in America, which Pastor Grove-Rasmussen published in *Nordisk Maanedskrift* in 1871 (also in an off-print), he reveals himself as a Grundtvigian. This can in part be explained by the fact that he had been sent on an errand for the Grundtvigian Select Committee. It can also be explained in part by the fact that his post had been in South Jutland, where he quite naturally could not avoid laying great weight on Danish patriotism. This report offended many of his followers in South Jutland, where he had worked as a free pastor since his dismissal by the Prussian Government in 1870. All this no doubt contributed reasons for his rather hasty return to Denmark to seek a call as pastor there.

"Lay preacher Nielsen", as Grove-Rasmussen termed him in the preface to his report, was at that time about forty years of age (he was born in 1832). He was born in Aalborg. During a two-year stay in Norway he had experienced a spiritual awakening. After his marriage he settled in Vendsyssel, where he conducted some "godly assemblies" in his home—after seeking counsel about it from Bishop Kierkegaard. He himself was the speaker at these assemblies. From 1867 to 1869 he traveled in the service of Indre Mission as a *colporteur* and lay preacher, most frequently accompanied by his good friend, Pastor N. A. Buchwaldt, who at that time was the parish pastor in Dronninglund. Later, Pastor P. K. Algreen, who was parish pastor in Vrejlev and Hostrup at the time, influenced him in the direction of Grundtvigianism. After he had cut his ties with Inner Mission, Nielsen spent a winter at Testrup Folk School near Aarhus. After this, he signed up to go to America as a missionary sent out by the Select Committee as their representative. Over here A. S. Nielsen, a gifted and competent man, came to play an important role among his countrymen in a Grundtvigian direction , both directly and indirectly. But all who knew him would agree with me that Nielsen was marked all his days with the school

where he had started. There was a call to awakening which permeated his proclamation which no one could mistake. One may be reasonably sure that Pastor Vilhelm Beck had A. S. Nielsen in mind, when he in the previously mentioned letter to *Kirkelig Samler*, 1873, page 210, says of the Danish pastors in America, "According to my knowledge, only one of them belongs to the Grundtvigian direction of the church, whereas the others were Grundtvigians in their native towns, yet still maintain a heartfelt relationship with Indre Mission in Denmark."

It is well known that "Missionary student R. Andersen", as Pastor Grove-Rasmussen calls him in the preface to his report on travels in America, had from his earliest youth belonged to the "godly assembly people" on Fyn. He was comfortable with the literature which was to be found in these circles; many witnesses can be found to attest to this. In 1874, when there was talk that R. Andersen should make a trip to Denmark, the pastor of the parish where he was born (Asperup) on Fyn—the well known Pastor M. Melby—wrote to Dr. L. Helveg in Odense in this connection, "R. Andersen is hardly known here in his native parish, at least outside of the narrow godly assemblies where he sought his fellowship." The extent of his training, before he went to America, was what he received under Pastor Johannes Clausen in Ryslinge In his time he had been assisting pastor in Vejlby on Fyn, a parish adjacent to Asperup. He (R. Andersen) had resided with Clausen a couple of years, and had received training, probably most with the goal in mind that he would go out as a missionary to the lands unreached by the Gospel. When the Select Committee sent him to America, it was with the thought in mind that he should seek a place as a teacher of Danish children. Grove-Rasmussen remarks that it was not possible to find such a place for Andersen. So it was that he came to be a student at the seminary in Marshall, Wisconsin under the (Norwegian-Danish) Conference. He was ordained as a pastor in Waupaca, Wisconsin in 1872.

Now that we have seen that the Select Committee was mainly of Grundtvigian orientation, while its emissaries could be described mostly as men of Inner Mission stamp, it is in order to follow the emissaries, in the words with which Grove-Rasmussen has described it. Their ocean voyage was on the large German steamship "Thuringia" from Hamburg to New York, where after having sailed for twelve days, they landed on June 12, 1871. It may be of interest to remark that in the month of May, 1871, about a month before the emissaries of the Select Committee began their voyage to America, eight missionaries from Utah arrived in Scandinavia. Seven of these were Danes belonging to the seventy Mormon jurisdictions. Among these seven Danes was the present Danish-born Mormon apostle Anthon H. Lund. (Cf. *Morgenstjernen*, annual three, page 74, in a list of "Missionaries sent from Zion to Scandinavia"). These emissaries from Zion no doubt thought that they were true clergyman, and unfortunately, altogether too many of our countrymen thought this too. In the same way, it is interesting to see the ship "Minnesota" landed in New York with 389 Scandinavian Mormons on board, under the leadership of Elder W. W. Cluff. The Mormon statistical tables include these 389 in the 32nd emigrant group since 1852! These people, who were a fruit of the Mormon mission in the Nordic countries, arrived in New York just a month after the emissaries of the Select Committee. One can hardly refrain from making a comparison between these two mission efforts, painful as it may be. But we must proceed further! After a couple of days stay in the big city of New York, where [Counsel] General[8] C. T. Christensen had given them every possible help, the three emissaries traveled on together to Chicago.

[8] Ed.: Perhaps Consul General

The chairman of the Select Committee, Dr. Ludvig Helveg, had a comrade from school days in Chicago, a banker named Ferdinand Winslow. Dr. Helveg had written a letter to Winslow, which he had published in *Fremad,* a journal for which he provided the main financial support. This letter, which was made public in *Fremad* issue No. 23 in 1871, bears the date of May 13, 1871, Odense. The existence of the Select Committee is made known to countrymen in America, and it is noted further that "Pastor Grove-Rasmussen and lay preacher Nielsen have traveled to America for this purpose: 'to gather Danes for worship in homes, and young people in Danish schools'." Dr. Helveg requests that these emissaries receive a friendly reception, and that people will further this cause in any way they can, each in his own circle. The editor of *Fremad* adds this note: "Information concerning the above can be addressed to Fred S. Winslow, 2 South Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois." *Fremad*, which went out of business in the great Chicago fire, extended a very friendly welcome to the Danish mission and its emissaries.

In Chicago, however, the paths of the three men separated. First, R. Andersen became sick, and was admitted to a hospital in Chicago. There is a thoughtful remembrance of that stay in St. Luke's Hospital in Chicago during July, 1871 found in the first year's publication of *Kirkelig Samler*, page 129-130, where you find a poem that R. Andersen wrote on the basis of the 23rd Psalm.

A. S. Nielsen took off from Chicago for Luzerne, Benton County, Iowa. Here he came to the previously named P. Nikolajsen, who had asked by letter that one of the three emissaries of the Select Committee would visit him. Nielsen doubtless traveled to Luzerne with the thought in mind that there was the possibility of a Danish congregation there. It soon became apparent that such was not worth discussing. For one thing, there were only a few Danes in that area, and for another, because Nielsen and Nikolajsen, who were both disciples of Grundtvig, albeit at different times, could not agree about many subjects. Nikolajsen, who was a bit of a rigorist, thought that Nielsen put on airs. For example, he had left his suitcase stand at the railway station platform. Nikolajsen promptly informed him that in America no man need be ashamed of carrying his own suitcase. But perhaps the worst affront was that, when Nielsen confessed the Apostles' Creed, he used the expression "He descended to the realm of the dead." Nikolajsen, on the other hand, firmly believed in saying, "He descended into Hell." So he did not hesitate to upbraid Nielsen for altering the words of the faith held in common. To him that was heresy! And in this area Nikolajsen was not to be trifled with. This trait of his was something that both M. A. Sommer and N. P. Lang had discovered as well. Not for nothing had Nikolajsen been a disciple of Jacob Chr. Linder and C. Chr. Harmsen. He stayed in America for some twenty years.

When Nielsen saw that no congregation could be organized in Luzerne, he made the decision to travel to St. Ansgar, Iowa, in order to meet there with Grove-Rasmussen, and to get information from C. L. Clausen about places where there were many Danes. However, Nielsen did not reach St. Ansgar at that time. Instead, wonderfully enough, he came to that town, where he was to work in the future for a number of years—a place which always had a special glow about it for him. On his way from Luzerne to St. Ansgar he stopped in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where he had to change trains. At the station he was waiting for the train which would take him further. But here he got into a conversation with a somewhat befuddled countryman (who probably had been imbibing too much liquor). When he heard that Nielsen was looking for places where he could find Danes, the man said to him, "If you want to find Danes, then go to Cedar Falls; there are plenty of them there!" Nielsen followed through on this hint, and

traveled to Cedar Falls, Iowa. There he found not only countrymen whom he could talk to (and he did talk to them), but also he learned that Pastor C. L. Clausen came to preach to them upon occasion—and that in fact, he was expected there the following Sunday.

So Nielsen remained there, until Clausen came, accompanied by Grove-Rasmussen. As it happened, not a few of the Danes in Cedar Falls at that time were from the Holbæk region. In Denmark, some of them had assembled to hear the well known Peder Pedersen Nyrop, who was the first chairman of Indre Mission in Denmark. One particular family, I know, had been members of that free congregation which Peder Pedersen Nyrop organized after he left the Danish Folk Church. Pedersen had held services several times in this family's house and had experienced that a mob surrounded the place, throwing insults and stones to disturb the assembly.

Grove-Rasmussen had traveled from Chicago to Milwaukee, and from there by way of Hartland (which he called Hardland) to Madison, Wisconsin, coming at last to St. Ansgar, Iowa. Here he stayed in the Clausen parsonage for three days, and learned from Clausen of places where Danish pastors might be needed. Among those that Clausen named were Neenah, Wisconsin and Sheffield, Illinois. Further, he said, "Just send pastors over here, there are plenty of opportunities." Besides Clausen, Grove-Rasmussen was in touch with his assistant pastor in St. Ansgar, along with a Norwegian pastor. Grove-Rasmussen preached in Clausen's church on Sunday, and then traveled together with Clausen to Cedar Falls, Iowa, where they met Nielsen. "It was a wonderful happenstance, in which I see God's leading, that we came into contact with Nielsen in Cedar Falls," he writes in his travel report. They then came to an agreement that Nielsen should stay for a while in Cedar Falls, where Grove-Rasmussen thought that there was no little spiritual movement. It might be just the place where he could find the pastoral calling he was looking for. After this, Grove-Rasmussen took off by way of Cedar Rapids to Omaha. There a certain "Merchant Amanson" gave him a friendly reception. The next day he preached there for his countrymen. He wrote, "In Omaha there are more than a thousand Danes, and a congregation could well be established there which would thrive." As far as his estimate of the number of Danes in Omaha is concerned, it seems to be in agreement with the statistical tables, which state that in 1870 there were only 1,129 Danes in the entire state of Nebraska. However, experience has not born out the prophecy he made that a congregation established there would thrive. Grove-Rasmusssen also calls attention to Fremont (which he called Fairmount) and Council Bluffs, as possible annexes to the congregation in Omaha. From Omaha, Grove-Rasmussen continued to Grand Island, Nebraska, which became the westernmost extent of his limited tour in this country. He experienced a celebration of the 4th of July there, along with a strong windstorm, which however did not cause damage in Grand Island. He mentions that in Grand Island he spoke with a man "...who had undertaken the formation of a Danish pioneer colony at Luckford, two miles from Grand Island. He asked me most urgently to secure a pastor for them out there. They would see to it that a church building was provided, along with a house and 100 acres of the best land as a parsonage." The man he was alluding to here was Lars Hannibal. "Luckford" is most likely Loupford, which is situated considerably more than two English miles from Grand Island. I have heard the report of their wish to secure a pastor in a somewhat different edition. Lars Hannibal offered the above-mentioned benefits to Grove-Rasmussen, provided that he would join the effort and serve as the resident pastor. But the pastor did not want to do that. In Grand Island, Grove-Rasmussen baptized nine children. From there he returned to Omaha, where he conducted a service of Holy Communion

for several families of believers. It was his intention then to travel from Omaha to Davenport and Burlington, Iowa. But the complimentary ticket which he had hoped to receive did not materialize. So he traveled instead to Sioux City, and from there by way of Fort Dodge to Cedar Falls, Iowa. There he found Nielsen grappling with the possibility of making the trip home to Denmark, in order to get his family, and also, if possible, to be ordained. He learned that Nielsen and his proclamation of the Gospel had been received with much enthusiasm by the Cedar Falls congregation. From Cedar Falls, his journey continued to Minneapolis, where he found very few Danes. Moreover, he became ill there. He then traveled by way of Milwaukee to Chicago. From there his journey continued across Canada toward home. As nearly as I can calculate, Grove-Rasmussen had spent only a good month's time in the United States.

Thus his report of conditions in America could at best hardly be termed complete. And one does wonder why he traveled through Racine, Wisconsin at least twice without making a stop there. At that time it was the city in America where, comparatively speaking, there were the most Danes.

However, for us, who are now able to look back upon this earlier time, there is especially one point in this mission report which needs to be noticed. Consider that this report, the first which had come out, appeared in a Grundtvigian periodical in Denmark. This point is important, because it laid the foundation for the split in the Danish Lutheran mission in America. That point is this: In reporting on the Norwegian-Danish Conference, Grove-Rasmussen wrote as follows:

> "The Danish-Norwegian Conference, of which Clausen is the chairman, will surely give a cordial reception to those pastors from Denmark who it is hoped may arrive here. However, joining ranks with them is not likely to happen. This they will not do for the reason that the first article in the doctrinal statement of the Conference is that 'the Bible is the only source for Christian faith, life, and teaching.' That statement is one that no pastor of the Danish Folk Church can honestly accept, - especially after the light has arisen for us about the relationship between the written and spoken word. It will be very difficult to have that article changed, because the same light that burns so brightly in our church offends the eyes of many Danish and Norwegian Christians, also in America.
>
> "In the words cited here we are informed that what is written is not the Word. Simultaneously, we learn that the light which has arisen in Denmark does not come from the Holy Scriptures. But if at the beginning those Danish pastors had joined the Norwegian-Danish Conference, which was surely the wish of Pastor C. L. Clausen, who was president at that time (and which not a few young Danish pastors did join later on) the history of the Danish Church in America would have looked considerably different than it does now. It appears to us, who are upon the scene now, that it would have been of benefit for the young pastors who were all new to the work in America, that they would have acquired some training from older, experienced men, such as for example, C. L. Clausen.. He had already been in the work over here some thirty years. It is evident that Pastor Vilhelm Beck, who knew the mission work well in Denmark, also felt this way. That can be seen from his "Declaration" which was published in the first year's issues of *Kirkelig Samler*, as a supplement to No. 15. There he wrote, "I continue to follow this (matter) with great sympathy. I was

> of course willing to give my counsel, when it was requested. —And it was requested. There was a Norwegian pastor who consulted with me. He was among those who gave the first push to get the work started. Then, after the Danish pastors had begun their labors in America, he asked my advice about how far he should go in encouraging the release of the administration of the Danish congregations to the Danish pastors. The alternative would be to continue to have them under the administration of the Norwegian pastors. Inasmuch as my premise was that these Danish congregations were in fact being served by Norwegian pastors, and I was expecting that the society on Fyn would continue to conduct mission in America by using Norwegian pastors, I advised the Norwegian pastor that, considering the lack of knowledge of the new situation on the part of the Danish pastors who were being sent out, as well as the fact that these men were newly arrived in the office of ministry, it would be advisable that they would continue to administrate the Danish congregations, as long as they were willing. Only when the Danish congregations themselves requested it, the administration could be turned over to the new Danish pastors. Shortly after this, I learned that the society in Fyn had really never used the help of the Norwegian pastors in the American mission, and that the Norwegian pastors never really had any supervision of the Danish congregations. At any rate, that was what Danes in America wrote to me. But I did not know this, at the time I gave my advice."

Aside from the fact that Vilhelm Beck was grounded chiefly in folk church methods, his intention in regard to "the new Danish pastors", as he repeatedly termed them, was sufficiently clear. The fact that "the society on Fyn", i.e., the "Select Committee" had not made use of the help of the Norwegian pastors in carrying out the mission in America was patently grounded on Grove-Rasmussen's report, referred to above. On the whole, it is remarkable to see the way the Select Committee, by sending out the three first men to America, was basically following the recommendation which Bishop Whitehouse had made in his letter to Dean Vahl. In the same manner, they followed Grove-Rasmussen's viewpoint that the young Danish pastors in America could hardly work with the Norwegian pastors and their conference. Ironically, it was the Norwegian pastors' preparatory work for which they could be thankful. They didn't have to start on bare ground.

But the Select Committee was young and inexperienced, as were the new pastors in America. Of these Pastor Vilhelm Beck wrote, "In regard to the suitability of the Danish pastors, I have truly felt that some of them were too young and inexperienced to deal with the difficulties of the as yet unknown American situation. Indeed, I expressed this with the purpose and intention that they might be placed under the supervision of experienced pastors for instruction[9]." Although we have lingered with this point in Grove-Rasmussen's report at such length, I regard it as both accurate and reasonable, here at the beginning of the story, to set forth the signposts which indicated the path the young pastors should follow, and did follow, naturally enough. How could they do otherwise, when their leaders back home also followed the direction which their emissaries recommended to them?

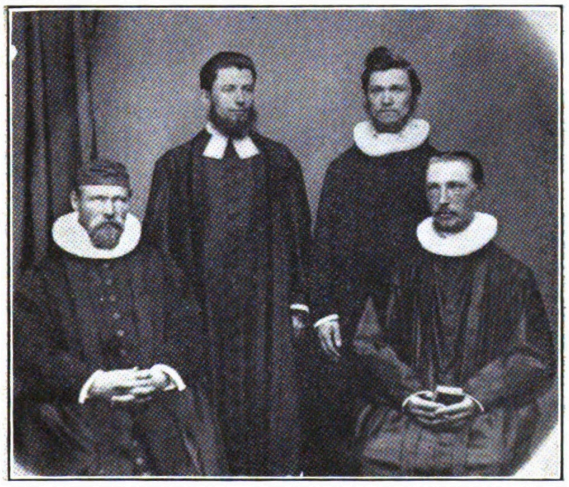
[9] (Cf. his 'Declaration')

VII. The First Ordination and the First Organization in 1871 and 1872

Opposition

We have already heard that when Grove-Rasmussen was in Cedar Falls for the last time, he found A. S. Nielsen getting ready to travel to Denmark to get his family, and if possible, to be ordained. These last words may hint that he was expecting to be ordained in Denmark. I have understood, as previously discussed, that Pastor C. L. Clausen during his visit in Denmark—or perhaps later by means of letters to Pastor Johannes Clausen in Ryslinge—had promised to see that the emissaries sent by the Select Committee would be ordained. It may be that over there, after Nielsen's return home from America, the Select Committee had written to Pastor C. L. Clausen, requesting him to ordain Nielsen. Be that as it may, it is clear that the congregation in Cedar Falls—with Pastor C. L. Clausen's approval—extended a letter of call on July 10, 1871 to A. S. Nielsen. We also know that this letter of call, which possibly was shaped by Pastor Clausen, was signed by five men of the congregation. Likewise, it is a fact that A. S. Nielsen took the letter to the Danish Consul in Chicago, who at that time was pharmacist Carl Dreyer, and got him to endorse the call with his official seal and signature. In further comment on this matter, in an outline of A. S. Nielsen's life, printed in O. N. Nelson's *History of the Scandinavians in the United States,* (Volume 2, page 426) a notation was made, "As a historical curiosity, one can note that Nielsen had the Danish Consul in Chicago endorse this call with his signature. The letter had been written and sent by five members of the congregation in Cedar Falls to the Select Committee in Denmark. In this letter they requested the Select Committee to ordain Nielsen as their pastor. This occurrence provides an excellent illustration of the various attempts which were made in vain to bring the pioneers of the West under the control of the European state church's machinery, or at least, under its influence. In any event, Nielsen was not ordained in his home country, because, it was said, the time of his theological education was too limited.—But the Select Committee recommended that he be ordained by Pastor Clausen, making full use of the Danish ordination ritual. And this is what happened."

Since the quotation made above has long been in print, and is a matter of historical record, allow me to add a few remarks to this by way of orientation. The fact that A. S. Nielsen had his Letter of Call endorsed with the signature of the Danish consul, probably took place as a result of the advice of Grove-Rasmussen. It was because the consul was a royal Danish official; thus the official testimony must be of importance, when it comes to the ordination of a layman by a Danish bishop. One would not expect that either the ordinand or his congregation would by this be placed under the jurisdiction of the state church, since such an ordination



N. THOMSEN. A. DAN.
A. S. NIELSEN. R. ANDERSEN.

Figure 5: Pastors Thomsen, Dan, Nielsen and Andersen

would be considered as an exceptional occurrence—in somewhat the same way that Missionary Børresen's ordination was regarded later on. To regard Nielsen's training as being too limited would be an incompetent judgment in this connection. In the first place, it is not known that his competence had to be determined by an examination which could be said to have failed, and was therefore denied ordination. In the second place, everyone who has ever known Pastor A. S. Nielsen is aware that he was not a learned man, and he never pretended to be such. Yet he was a very well enlightened man. In the third place, the reason that Nielsen never attained ordination in his home land is probably neither his personal qualifications, his limited stay in the land of his fathers, nor his training. Rather, it was determined upon the principle: should men who are not academically trained be granted ordination? One can surely say that the bishops in Denmark would tend to assert that they would not and could not involve themselves in such a question. —Certainly not Bishop Martinsen, whose voice in such matters was decisive.

Really, it can almost be called a tragedy that the Folk Church which Pastor Nielsen, as well as the other Danish pastors, constantly spoke of as "our mother church" —regarding it as a place of "freedom and openness" —was constantly held up as a model that we Danish pastors and congregations in America should follow. It is tragic that this same Folk Church through its leaders in effect turned their back on Nielsen, and along with him, on the entire Danish mission in America. They turned their back when he sought an ordination to work as a pastor among his countrymen in America. It was Pastor A. S. Nielsen's devout desire to be ordained by Bishop P. C. Kierkegaard in Aalborg. Earlier the bishop had been his counselor in the matter of conducting the godly assemblies. Even after this, he esteemed him as a person to be regarded highly. (Pastor R. Andersen has affirmed this statement.) The following information, for which I also give Pastor R. Andersen credit, can perhaps reveal Bishop Martensen's line of thought on a matter such as we are discussing here. When he was introduced as Pastor Andersen from America, the bishop asked him, "By whom were you really ordained, Pastor Andersen?" When Pastor Andersen, who had not failed to notice that the bishop called him "Pastor," answered,

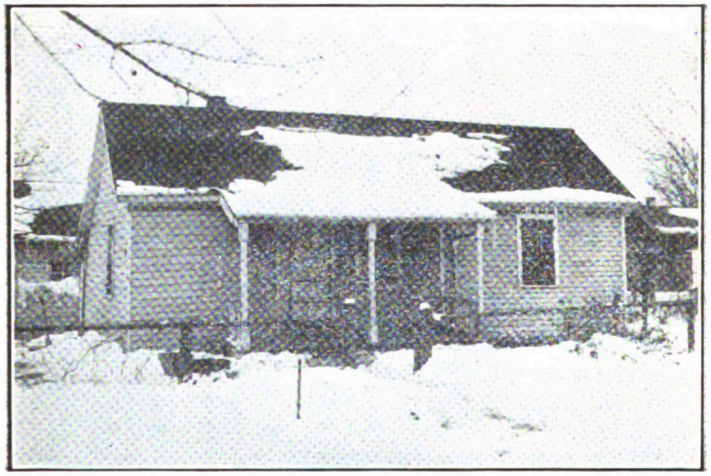


Figure 6: Andreas Sørensen." home in Neenah where the Missionary Society was founded, 1872.

"I was ordained by Pastor A. S. Nielsen, Your Excellency," (this was the mode of address to a bishop in those days) and then added a query of his own, "Is this a departure from Danish Church practice—being ordained by a pastor?." "Yes," the bishop responded, "It is a significant departure!" Then Pastor Andersen continued, "Notwithstanding, it is not absolutely forbidden in the Augsburg Confession, Your Excellency." The bishop then said, "No, perhaps not; but it is a serious departure nevertheless!" Beyond that, Pastor Andersen added, Bishop Martensen seemed quite up to date in regard to American church conditions.

It is to the credit of Pastor Nielsen that he did not return this coolness. It can be of interest to compare this proposed ordination in the autumn of 1871 with the ordination of a layman in 1874 which actually occurred. I would cite the case of Cornelius Appel, the principal of a Folk School, who was ordained to the ministry at Askov Folk School on July 30, 1874. This was presided over by Pastor Vilhelm Birkedal, together with eleven other pastors of the Danish Folk Church. The twelve clergy who participated in this ordination service were tried in the supreme court and penalized with a fine; however, Appel was continued as an ordained pastor. The point is, that twelve Danish pastors of the Folk Church had the courage in 1874 to ordain a layman for the clergy to serve as a pastor for Danes in South Jutland—and among those who were so courageous was the Chairman of the Select Committee, Dr. L. Helveg, as well as Pastor Johannes Clausen.[10]

However in 1871, the Danish pastors who were members of the Select Committee had only enough courage to request C. L. Clausen to ordain a layman, A. S. Nielsen, to serve as a pastor for his countrymen in America! I leave it to the reader to draw his own conclusions from these facts.

No, Nielsen was not granted his wish to be ordained in Denmark. Over there, only those have been ordained who were candidates in theology from Denmark, and then only on the condition that they would report on their work annually to the bishop by whom they had been ordained. The Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs in Denmark at that time (I have heard that this might have been Em. Rosenørn, but in 1870 he was replaced by C. Hall) sent a letter of

[10]Cf. L. Schrøder: *Ludvig Helveg, A Memorial, 1884,* page 290.

recommendation along with A. S. Nielsen to the church in Cedar Falls. That letter, together with the letter of call which that congregation has extended to Nielsen, was given after Nielsen's death to Chief Librarian J. Christian Bay in Chicago, who then sent both documents to the Royal Library in Copenhagen. (Information given by J. Christian Bay.)

Nielsen returned to America with his family, and with a written request to Pastor C. L. Clausen from the Select Committee to ordain him in accordance with the Danish Church ritual. Pastor Clausen acceded to this request, and on November 17, 1871 he ordained A. S. Nielsen as a pastor in St. Ansgar, Iowa. At the same time he ordained two Norwegian candidates, O. Amundsen and Joh. A. Berg, author of *Den norsk-lutherske Kirkes Historie i Amerika* (1914). A. S. Nielsen has told me that a year after his ordination, the "Conference" voted at its annual meeting that no one should be ordained in this church group in the future other than those who had been authorized for ordination. So Nielsen thought that it was barely in the nick of time that he got through the door. In any case, the first of the emissaries sent to America by the Select Committee was ordained as a pastor, but without membership in any church body. The hint that Grove-Rasmusssen had given in his report about this was followed out in every detail.

The first of those men sent out by the Select Committee was thus ordained. However, A. S. Nielsen was not the first ordained Danish pastor in America, nor was any other of the 'new Danish pastors', as Vilhelm Beck speaks of them in his 'Declaration'. Niels Thomsen, one of the first students at the Danish Mission School, was sent in 1865 together with P. Andersen as missionaries to India. There in 1868 he was ordained to the ministry by Missionary C. C. E. Ochs. However, he left the Danish mission in India and sailed to America, where he had a couple of brothers. These brothers owned land in Jackson County, Kansas, where a society of Danes in Chicago had established a Danish colony. The venerable J. H. Platz, who now has lived in Blair, Nebraska, for many years, has told me that he was the director of the society's colony in Kansas. As such, he had written to the leaders in Chicago, asking them to send Danish farm boys to be employed in the hard labor of breaking the soil and setting up hedges, etc. in the new colony. Among those who were sent to him from Chicago was N. Thomsen, among others. When Platz had asked him if he was a farm boy, he answered in the negative. He was born out in the country and was accustomed to farm work from his youth, but had now had nothing to do with it for several years. However, for the present, he was willing to work for diminished wages and do what he could. Platz, who thought well of him, allowed him to remain for a time. But at last he found it impossible, because of the other Danish farm boys. The latter were continually teasing him because he couldn't keep up with them in the farm work, but perhaps even more, as Platz expressed it, because he was "a man of God" and thus a pastor and Christian believer. "Those were raw days then," he added. Platz noticed an advertisement in *Fremad* from some Danes in Indianapolis, Indiana. They were seeking a pastor—one who did not belong either to "The Synod" or "The Conference", if such could be found. Platz called Thomsen's attention to this advertisement, thinking that this might be a place for him. But Thomsen wanted to hear no more about this. He did not want to be a pastor. Platz urged him to write to these people anyway. He wrote a strong recommendation for him, which all the farm hands were glad to sign. It was thought that there were about twenty of them. Thus it developed that the people in Indianapolis extended a Letter of Call to N. Thomsen, which he then accepted. He later wrote a letter from Indianapolis to Platz,

thanking him for what he had done for him. Platz maintains that this took place in the spring of 1871.

In other words, N. Thomsen is the first of "the new Danish pastors" in America. It was through the publication *Fremad* that Thomsen learned of the other emissaries the Select Committee had sent to America, and that they heard of his installation as pastor in Indianapolis. But one thing is certain: N. Thomsen was not a disciple of Grundtvig or of his viewpoint, even though from the beginning he took an active part in the work of the Danish Church in America. But the more the newer Grundtvigian elements gained control, the more separated Thomsen came to feel. He is probably the one of the earliest Danish pastors in America who, upon a closer look, made the deepest impression—some of which are recognized even today by those most closely associated with him. Thomsen was born on August 5, 1842, and died on April 18, 1892 in Gowen, Michigan, where he was buried.

Another man, who came to America from the mission field as Thomsen did, and who was also ordained by A. S. Nielsen, was Adam Dan. After he had tried many things in his early youth, among others attending Gedved Seminary for a time, he enrolled at the mission school in Basel. From there he was sent out to the mission among the Galla people in East Africa. However, he never actually got there, because war and illness compelled him to travel to the north. He was in Jerusalem, where Bishop Gobat had secured a place for him as a teacher at the Syrian orphanage. There he received a Letter of Call in 1870 from the Danish congregation in Racine, Wisconsin. He accepted this, and arrived in America in 1871, with a recommendation from Vilhelm Beck, among others. On July 6, 1871 he was ordained as a pastor in Racine, Wisconsin by his predecessor in this place, J. Müller-Eggen, who was secretary of "The Conference." A railroad accident prevented J. Olsen, vice-president of "The Conference", from being on hand to carry out the ordination ritual. Thus both Dan and Nielsen were ordained within "The Conference", but neither of them formally became members of that church body. It also needs to be pointed out that they were not the first Danes to be ordained as pastors for Danish congregations in America. That honor is probably to be given to Pastor M. Fr. Wiese (born in 1842 on Falster), who was ordained as pastor for the Danish congregation in Indianapolis in 1869. However, he belonged to the Norwegian *Synode.* Another Danish man, E. P. Jensen, also belonging to the Norwegian *Synode,* was ordained in 1871 as pastor of the Danish congregation in Indianapolis, most likely as a successor to Wiese there. That congregation must have divided, inasmuch as we have already seen that N. Thomsen was also called to Indianapolis to be pastor in 1871.

This much is to be said about "the first ordination." When Pastor P. Kjølhede in "The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America"[11] is writing about the sending out of A. S. Nielsen and R. Andersen, along with A. S. Nielsen's ordination, and avers "...this beginning effort to assemble the Danish people in America around the Lord's Means of Grace", etc., etc., it is simply not historic. It was really the Norwegian Lutheran pastors in America who made the beginning effort to gather the Danes around the Lord's Means of Grace. It is really a big question as to how many Danes would have been gathered, if the Norwegians had not already made this beginning effort. The four of them—A. S. Nielsen, A. Dan, N. Thomsen, and R. Andersen—entered a field where the Norwegian Lutheran pastors had ministered before them.

[11]Cf. *Danske i Amerika I,* second part, page 32

The First Organization, 1872

Of the three new Danish pastors who were in America since November 17, 1871, only one, A. S. Nielsen, was formally recognized by the Select Committee at that time. Dan and Thomsen were acknowledged by the Select Committee at the time of Pastor J. A. Hejberg's trip to Denmark in 1875. When he came back, he brought with him a document from the Select Committee which took notice of their recognition. But since Nielsen was the oldest man among the emissaries, who was also the first to be ordained, it was natural that the two younger men regarded him as the Special Committee's actual representative in America. Thus he would be also the actual president, the one to ordain the younger and later emissaries. At any rate it is certain that A. S. Nielsen ordained two of the Select Committee." emissaries in 1872. The first of these was R. Andersen. When he had recovered from his bout with smallpox and had been released from the Chicago hospital, he enrolled—doubtless with the support of the Select Committee and the recommendation of A. S. Nielsen—at Augsburg Seminary, the ministerial training school of "The Conference", which at that time was located in Marshall, Dane County, Wisconsin. Even though R. Andersen had received a letter of recommendation from Dean Vahl sent to Bishop Whitehouse in Chicago, he did not hear from the bishop until he had arrived at Augsburg Seminary. The bishop had offered him a free stay and training at the seminary in Nashotah, Wisconsin. Naturally, this was built upon the understanding that after his training he would enter the ministry of the Episcopal Church. (Information from R. Andersen).

Andersen's teacher at Augsburg Seminary was Professor August Weenaas. Likely it was not always that the teacher and his pupil could agree on the religious views that R. Andersen held very strongly at that time. In any case, he was a member of the last class of theological students from Marshall, inasmuch as Augsburg Seminary was moved the following year (1872-1873) to Minneapolis, Minnesota, where it has been located since.

From Marshall, R. Andersen made a Christmas holiday visit to his countrymen in Waupaca, Wisconsin. This was one of the places that Grove-Rasmussen had included in his travel report, giving the information that there were many Danes there, with room for a congregation. Until this time, the Danes had been called together, some by Martin Sørensen named earlier. Others had gathered around the Norwegian pastor, A. Mikkelsen, at Scandinavia. Meetings were held in the home of Jens Christensen (Damgaard). H. N. Thorup, who will be discussed later, had held a school for Danish children in Waupaca in 1868. In 1870 the Danes there extended a call to him to become their pastor. But Pastor Mikkelsen had raised an objection to this, and advised Thorup to join the Norwegian *Synode.*

Thorup did not want to join the *Synode* people, and went instead to the school in Marshall for further training. The Danes then extended a call to Rasmus Andersen, who then on the basis of that call was ordained in Waupaca on June 26, 1872. He was ordained by A. S. Nielsen, attended by A. Dan of Racine, and N. Thomsen of Indianapolis. In this way he became the fourth one of the new Danish pastors in America. The meeting in Waupaca upon the occasion of R. Andersen's ordination was the first time all of these men were gathered together for discussion of their experiences during their first year of ministry. It was also the first time that they had opportunity to become personally acquainted. Credit for this meeting could be attributed to R. Andersen, who was ever the person to assemble people, who in this way brought these pastors together on this occasion. A. S. Nielsen, who ranked highest in age (40 at that time) was chosen as presider. N. Thomsen, who was born in 1842, was ten years younger. Adam

Dan and R. Andersen were both born in 1848, and thus were also correspondingly younger. But these men, who otherwise were individually quite different, had one thing in common: they were eagerly involved in the mission in which they had been placed, and they tried to reach out as far as they could to their countrymen who were scattered abroad. They did this not withstanding the low salaries they received. One could not say that their compensation placed them among those richly remunerated.

On September 8, 1872 (well known as Grundtvig's birthday) A. S. Nielsen carried out his second ordination in Cedar Falls. The candidate on this occasion was Pastor A. L. J. Søholm of Des Moines, Iowa. He had a call from Perth Amboy, New Jersey, which was one of the places where a Danish pastor should be placed, according to Grove-Rasmussen. He had pointed to this place in his travel report from America. Søholm, born in Nørre Aaby parish on Fyn, June 16, 1844, had grown up in Southern Jutland. He was a seminarian from Lyngby, who had been a school teacher in the region of Ribe for about three years. Then he was sent to America by the Select Committee in 1872. He was a member of that circle which had gathered around Pastor Grove-Rasmusssen, thinking that he was not Grundtvigian, because Søholm had never belonged to that view. From the very beginning he was a tireless worker in the service of the church—and is that yet, in spite of his 72 years. There are many people around the country who remember Pastor Søholm from his ministry, not only in New Jersey, but also New York, Wisconsin, and Iowa—and they remember him with thanks. Among the many places in the eastern states where Søholm preached was Philadelphia, where a group of Danes were gathered around his preaching. As I understood him, they formed a congregation, which he expected would extend a call to him. About this time Pastor C. L. Clausen was in the city. For the sake of his health he had moved to Virginia. Then suddenly Søholm was informed that the congregation had called Pastor C. L. Clausen to be their pastor! That was likely in 1874.

At the same time that Søholm was ordained in Cedar Falls, Iowa, the two youngest of the Danish pastors, R. Andersen and A. Dan, had a meeting in Neenah, Wisconsin—a place which Pastor Andersen had occasionally visited from Waupaca, assembling his countrymen around the proclamation of the Word. Toward the end of the 60s a fairly large group of Danes had emigrated, both from Neenah and Waupaca, to Polk County in the northwestern part of Wisconsin. There, led by M. C. Pedersen, they built the pioneer colonies of West Denmark and Luck, Wisconsin. Those left behind in Neenah - who had not broken off from the Lutheran Church (some of the Danes there were Baptists, and later Adventists) belonged to the Norwegian Lutheran congregation pastored by Johan Olsen, the successor of C. L. Clausen as president of The Conference. He was a man of whom I have heard many of the older Danes speak with great regard and appreciation. But at this aforementioned meeting on September 8-9, 1872, the Danes in Neenah organized themselves into a special congregation under the name, "Our Savior's Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church", and they severed their connection with the Norwegian congregation "in a friendly and brotherly manner", according to the report of this.[12] Our Savior's Church then extended its call to Pastor R. Andersen, who became their first pastor. At this same meeting on September 9, 1872, the two pastors named above and several laymen decided to unite in a common effort for the extension of God's Kingdom under the name "The Church Mission Association." At the same time it was agreed to publish a periodical, *Kirkelig Samler,* twice a month or more frequently, if appropriate support could

[12](Cf. J. C. Jensen, *American Lutheran Biographies*, page 33)

be found. The subject of forming a mission society and publishing a paper had already been discussed at the time of R. Andersen's ordination in Waupaca. Pastor Dan was elected as the editor of the paper. Each of the members of the Society signed a pledge of five dollars, to cover the costs of publishing the paper. It cannot be determined from whom the idea came for the formation of such a society. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that the pattern which was their model was the "Church Society for the Inner Mission in Denmark". This is also shown in the mission statement of the Society, which was given out in the first issue of *Kirkelig Samler,* No. 1, October 1872. The report continues with the method of operation: the holding of both large and smaller meetings and the sending out of lay preachers. Also the purpose: "To gather people into the church, so that the House of God may be filled with people who are saved." This is laid out as the agenda. The "doctrinal teaching concept" in this issue perhaps tends toward the Grundtvigian direction, but on the other hand, it is written so that any Lutheran Christian can sign it. "The Society will by the grace of God consist only of members who establish their faith on the foundation of Christ's Church, which is the rock, Jesus Christ. It will seek life through what he has instituted, and light from the prophetic and apostolic words, which are transmitted to us in the Holy Scriptures. The Society will absolutely not become a 'new synod,' and the publication 'is not to be an organ for any one particular party in the Church', but along with the Society itself 'belong completely and entirely to the old Lutheran division of the Church.'"

It was probably intended that the Grundtvigian outlook should be regarded as the true Lutheran one, even if that is not stated in so many words. Some will find it expressed in the subtitle of the paper, "For Christian edification and our society's (*folkelig)* improvement on the basis of the faith." Along with this, the name of the publication was to be *Kirkelig Samler*, a name openly taken from a periodical which the well known C. M. Kragballe published in Denmark from 1855 to 1862. In this publication Grundtvig himself wrote the essays which later were published separately under the title, "The Christian Doctrine for Children." However, it is a greatly modified Grundtvigianism which appears in the American version of *Kirkelig Samler.* Of the purpose and program of the Society it is stated, "It is based on the holy catholic church's baptismal covenant and the Holy Scripture to the congregation. It stands in full agreement with our Danish Lutheran Mother Church's confessions." On the whole this statement looks like "modified Grundtvigianism in Inner Mission forms."

It was the two youngest Danish pastors who made arrangements for the formation of "The Church Mission Society." Consistently enough, Pastor N. Thomsen's name stands first among the signatories to this program. Although Thomsen was not present in person at the meeting in Neenah, he declared himself to be in agreement with what was done there. Of the three laymen among the signers, R. J. Radick of Neenah was from the Inner Mission persuasion in Fakse, Sjælland. Mads Poulsen of Neenah was from Nørup Parish at Vejle, where the well known H. Svejstrup had been pastor. A. J. Rasmussen of Racine, the third layman who was along at the formation of the Society, was from Korup on Fyn, and later worked as an emissary of the Society several places in Wisconsin. There is one name which is not found among the signatories, and that is Pastor A. S. Nielsen of Cedar Falls. We have already heard that he was not present at the meeting in Neenah, but then N. Thomsen was not there either, and he signed on to the Society's program anyway. It is hard to imagine that the pastors who were present had not urged Nielsen to sign it also. But, as is known, he was no friend of societies, constitutions, and that kind of thing. It is possible that he thought that it was too soon to form

a society just now, if indeed one should be established, at any rate without the authorization of the Select Committee to take this step. One also does not find that Nielsen had signed any pledge to enable the publication of the paper. It is not until we look in the December issue of *Kirkelig Samler* that we see that he had sent in money to the paper for ten subscribers in Cedar Falls, two in Luzerne, and two in Blairstown, Iowa. Even more time passed before Nielsen sent in any contribution to the contents of the paper. The first example of such from his own hand is a verse of Grundtvig, which he calls "the holy scripture," and in which "the word of faith" is presented as "the key" to what is otherwise, "the dead scripture." One can find that verse in the publication for February 1873.

In the March 1873 issue one can find "Baptismal Covenant and Baptismal Promise". written by Dr. Skat Rørdam, and sent in my Pastor A. S. Nielsen of Cedar Falls. He is clearly the most distinctly Grundtvigian of the new Danish pastors. The next one to closely resemble him is Pastor A. Dan, editor of *Kirkelig Samler*, whose chief contributions to the paper consist mainly of excerpts and citations from moderate Grundtvigian pastors who wrote in Denmark - more especially those which serve to show that the scriptures are not the Church's foundation or the source of life, and which on the contrary, lift up the sacraments. And constantly, attention is called to the fact that this is what one learned back home in the Mother Church. It was not always, however, that these articles met with fair wind. When the editor, for example, in *Kirkelig Samler* No. 1, reprinted a piece by J. Paludan-Müller, "Concerning God's Word," one can find a note in the No. 6 issue to the effect that some subscribers to *Kirkelig Samler* had not appreciated the so-called Grundtvigian sentences in Paludan-Müller's article "Concerning God's Word'." The editor then explains that J. Paludan-Müller is not a part of the Grundtvigian tendency, and that *Kirkelig Samler* is not a partisan publication, and so on.

Pastor R. Andersen's standpoint is the closest to that of Inner Mission, to judge by his articles in *Kirkelig Samler,* although he is to some degree influenced by the Grundtvigian viewpoint. Pastor N. Thomsen's contributed articles to the paper are clearly the most serious and sound. In my opinion his little article in *Kirkelig Samler* No. 1 entitled "Longing for Holiness" presents the best case for a "Church Mission Society." Remarkably enough, it is only in the beginning that one can find anything that he has sent in, whereas the opposite seems to be the case with A. S. Nielsen.

If one reads through the first year of *Kirkelig Samler,* and pays attention to the announcements of meetings and mission journeys in various states, one can note something like a spring breeze in the air. There is action in the work everywhere. In several states, churches are being erected, e.g. in both Chicago and Cedar Falls. Not a few contributions are being sent in to this mission, and to the mission among the unchurched, as well as for support of the publication itself. And new workers constantly appear, to work for the furtherance of the paper. Within a year after the founding of *Kirkelig Samler*, three laymen have been accepted to work as colporteurs and preachers in some of the smaller circles, where many Danes were not receiving pastoral care. The three laymen were all from Fyn. Jens Jensen from Trunderup Parish worked at first in Chicago, and later in Wisconsin. Now, as an old man, he lives in Kimballton, Iowa. Jens Rasmussen, 43 years of age, now situated in North Cape, Racine County, Wisconsin, did some traveling to Waushara and Adams Counties, Wisconsin.

The third, and youngest person of the three, was Anders Frederik Andersen from Køng, Højrup Parish on Fyn. He emigrated to America in the spring of 1873, and arrived in Racine,

Wisconsin. A. Fr. Andersen, who was a believing young man of Inner Mission convictions about 30 years of age, had been a student at Voldby Højskole at Grenaa. Of the laymen, he was the one who traveled the most and reached out the farthest. You find him in Omaha, Nebraska already in June 1873, where he did handwork a part of the time (he was a cabinet maker by trade). He also had conversations with individuals, and at times preached for those who wanted to get together. Andersen was in Omaha until about 1875, at which time he accompanied a number of Danes from Omaha who had secured land in Kearney County, at Frederiksborg. He and his brother secured land there, and remained until the late 80s. From this location he went out to visit most of the places in Nebraska and northern Kansas where Danes could be found. There are probably not many of the earliest settlers in Nebraska who did not know A. Fr. Andersen They would give him high marks as both a capable and self-denying worker in and for God's Kingdom. Later he withdrew from the Danish Church to join the "Conference," where he worked together with the Danish pastors. Later he traveled to the West Coast, where he lived for a number of years in the vicinity of Portland, Oregon, and at last in Eugene, Oregon, where he died on August 11, 1911 as a member of the Danish Lutheran Church at that place.

Figure 7: The Old Nazareth Church, Cedar Falls, Iowa

In "Announcements from the Danish-American Mission" (No. 2, 1872) an appeal to the Select Committee from Danes in Chicago is found, dated April 25, 1872, urging that a pastor be secured for them. They promised an annual salary of $500. The letter is signed by eight Danes residing in Chicago. In 1873 a new worker came from Denmark, the first candidate received from the University of Copenhagen, Joh. A. Hejberg, who arrived as a pastor for his countrymen who had emigrated to America. Hejberg (born 1848) was ordained on May 14, 1873, by Bishop Martensen upon a call from Trinity Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chicago. This congregation had not found it easy to get a pastor from Denmark. The first man they had called was Candidate in Theology A. Jensen, head teacher at the *Realskolen* in Køge. He had been recommended by the Select Committee, but declined the call. When it came down

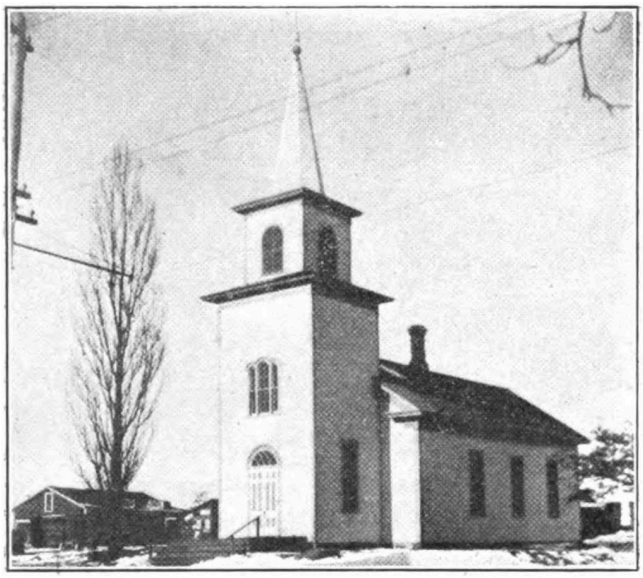


Figure 8: Old Church of the Holy Spirit, Waupaka, Wisconsin

to it, the reason was that his family made objections.[13] To take his place the Select Committee recommended Candidate J. A. Hejberg. In the meantime, there was a pastor in Denmark who recommended himself for the position. This man, who had no doubt been required to seek permission to leave, was granted this graciously. At a later time I have met this man; he had become a property dealer in Copenhagen. His offer to the congregation in Chicago was not accepted. But the young Pastor Hejberg, who already on July 27, 1873, was able to dedicate the new church which the congregation built on Chicago Avenue, was an energetic and capable worker in the mission field among Danes in America. Pastor Hejberg was a man with a strong sense of order and great practical ability. He understood how to awaken respect for the church, not only in Chicago, but wherever he touched the lives of Danes over here. Unfortunately, he only stayed for six years in America. After his return to Denmark, he became chairman of the Select Committee, and continued in that position until the Danish Church was rent by a split in 1893. Dean Hejberg was in America in 1892, and tried to pour oil on the troubled waters at the annual meeting in Waupaca in 1892. Fortune did not favor that attempt, however. In spite of his young age when he came to America in 1872, he soon became the real leader among the Danish pastors. In the fall of 1873 another Candidate in Theology came from Denmark, namely H. Rosenstand, who was assigned work in Manistee, Michigan. Likewise, he also did not remain long in this country.

Opposition

Now that we have heard a little about the first workers, it is in order that we take a look at the other side. There are many witnesses to the fact that the new pastors got a good reception from their countrymen in both the cities and rural areas, not especially because they were Grundtvigian, but because they were Danish, and could strike familiar chords from the

[13] Cf. *Kirkelig Samler,* Year 1, page 119

homeland. Certainly it was true, as an elderly immigrant in Racine, Wisconsin said to me many years ago, "Pastor Vig! The Danish Church came to us here in this country like a ray of sunshine in the midst of all the Norwegian squabbling which surrounded us."

It was not infrequently that the Danish pastors used the expression, "we Danes here in exile."in their sermons. No doubt it was natural enough for those who had recently had left home that should regard everything in America as foreign. It probably took considerable time before the Danish pastors became American citizens. Some never did take that step. A. S. Nielsen did not want to apply for U. S. citizenship, because he felt that the United States had sneered at Denmark at the time when purchase of the West Indies islands was under consideration. He got into trouble on one occasion when he used the expression "we Danes here in the foreign country." It was at the rural congregation near Cedar Falls, Iowa. The man in whose home they were meeting maintained that the Danes in America did not live in "wretchedness" (a confusion of the Danish words *udlændighed* and *elendighed)* and was offended. Even though Nielsen tried the best he could to convince the man that he did not use this expression with the meaning which the man thought he did, he continued to take umbrage and would not let Nielsen hold meetings in his house again. The irony in this story is that "foreignness" and "wretchedness" are recent and earlier expressions of the same thing.

But there is also evidence enough that the Danish pastors found no primrose path here in this country. They had to pay dearly at the end of the day for their insistence upon their own self identification. No doubt difficulties came also because the banner they had hoisted in *Kirkelig Samler* was not regarded as truly Lutheran. They considered themselves to be in total consonance with the People's Church in Denmark. That may have been true, if only the practice of the Danish Church is taken into consideration. These men were young and inexperienced, and failed to understand that it is important to hold high the flag of the Lutheran confessions when surrounded by many and various sects. When they failed to do this, they came to be regarded as another sect—indeed, a dangerous sect within the Lutheran Church. And how could it be otherwise, when one considers the standpoint they had taken?

The Norwegian Synod *(Den norske Synode)* had, as is generally known, had its beginning as a Grundtvigian synod here in this country, basically with the same confession as that of the Church Mission Society. But then in Scandinavian circles the *Synode* came to be the great accuser, having been in school with the German "Missouri Synod." And even though the *Synode* and the *Konference* (the Danish-Norwegian Conference) were not unlike dogs and cats, there was one thing they could agree on. That was to oppose and warn against Grundtvigianism as un-Lutheran. Of this this there is much evidence. In *Kirkelig Samler,* Nos. 4 - 5 , Year 1, the editor writes, in connection with some remarks he carries from a letter received from Pastor Vilhelm Beck:

> Finally, let it be said that I have found it necessary to write this with great reluctance, and only because there have been warnings against us in various published writings, saying that we have fallen away from the Mother Church, and that we are totally opposed to 'The Inner Mission.'

This appeared already in 1872, and in 1873 it was scarcely better. When Pastor Dan wanted to hold a meeting for Danes in North Cape, Racine County on June 15, 1873, application was made to the Norwegian *Synode* congregation requesting the use of their church for the meeting,

this reply came back, "The former pastor of this church, who for the present is still giving supply service here, Pastor M. F. Wiese of Chicago, has seriously advised the congregation against granting permission to 'the notorious Scripture-denier Adam Dan' to preach in this church." And so it went, one blow after another, both in Michigan and Wisconsin, and other states. Pastor Søholm wrote from Perth Amboy, New Jersey that he had to put up with attacks from the pastor of the Norwegian *Synode* and his adherents, as well as from the Methodists (*Kirkelig Samler,* Year One, p. 119). And just as it was with pastors of the *Synode*, so was it also with those of the "Conference." In *Almindelig Kirketidende* No. 7, 1873, Dean Vahl shares a letter from Pastor J. Müller-Eggen, Pastor Dan's President in Racine, Wisconsin. In this letter he says, "Of all the false teachings in the Christian Church, Grundtvigianism is for us the most pernicious danger that afflicts the soul. We see them associating with Baptists and Methodists" (*Kirkelig Samler,* 1873, Page 190. "Them" in the last sentence probably refers to the Danish congregations in America.

These certainly were plain words for your money. But the worst for the new Danish pastors was that their opponents could make use of statements from significant men in Denmark as proof that these pastors named were in conflict with the Danish Folk Church. From Pastor Vilhelm Beck's "Declaration" we have already seen that his name was misused in this connection. The reason he came out with his declaration can be seen from these lines from his preface:

"Since it has come to my knowledge that my name is not only used, but also misused in the course of these conflicts which have arisen in America by the placement of these new Danish pastors, I feel compelled in the interest of the truth to say a few words which may help an understanding of my position in this matter." (*Kirkelig Samler*, Year 1, page 209).

It was likely Pastor J. Müller-Eggen, who had written to Vilhelm Beck and had received letters in return. But this exchange did not satisfy him. In 1872 he turned, it seems, on behalf of the "Conference," to Professor H. N. Clausen, doctor of theology at the University of Copenhagen. He posed a question as to whether Grundtvigianism was approved by the Danish Folk Church. To this Professor Clausen responded in the negative. He got his son-in-law Pastor R. Frimodt, along with Pastor N. C. Blædel, to jointly sign a declaration to this effect. This was no doubt sent to the inquirer in America, but also a bit later it was published in the paper *Fædrelandet* in Copenhagen. Perhaps the gist of this concern can best be reflected in Professor Clausen's own words in the second part of his paper, "The Story of My Career and Times" (Pages 547-548):

> "A written request came to me from the secretary of the Norwegian *Synode* in America (and from several other theologians and ecclesiastical authorities), occasioned by some Danish pastors who were disrupting their congregations in America by public pronouncements, e.g. scripture is not the Word of God, but a book of comfort; not the scriptures, but the Church's teachings are the touchstone and rule for a man's faith, doctrine, and life; scripture must be tested by the faith of the Church, and so on. This, it is asserted, is what is believed and taught by 'the Living Congregation' in Denmark. I was encouraged to answer this question on behalf of the Danish Folk Church, insofar as a reply could be given, considering the prevailing conditions in the Church. I prepared a very brief written response, which was subscribed to by Pastor Blædel and my son-in-law Frimodt; I cited portions of the Augsburg Confession relating to the Holy Scriptures, and I cited the vow which is unaltered now as

> ever, which is to be made at ordinations in the Danish Folk Church. I repudiated the positions they maintained that the opinions of those who adhere to a particular party, as being those which the Danish Folk Church has never recognized."

No matter how little opportunity had been given in the form and content of this carefully considered reply, it nevertheless was unavoidable that this piece, first published in Norwegian papers, was constantly referred to as "a bull of excommunication." Throughout the year following, the Grundtvigian pastors provided speakers with material for complaints and protests.

It scarcely needs to be added that the old professor mistook "The Konference" for the Norwegian *Synode* in America, a mixup which can easily be understood from his standpoint. That which Prof. Clausen is aiming at in the conclusion of the citation is the intense attack from the Grundtvigian side, which was not directed at the leading man, Prof. Clausen, but against Pastor Blaedel, one of the fellow signers. This came especially from pastor Vilhelm Birkedal in Ryslinge, a neighbor pastor of Johannes Clausen. At first, articles showed up in the paper and later in small pamphlets—two from Birkedal's side and two from Blaedel's side. This intense conflict is known in the literature of the time as "The Controversy Over the Catechism," which was the title of one of Blaedel's treatises. The reason for this title was the assertion by Pastor Blædel that the Grundtvigians had corrupted Martin Luther's Small Catechism, and had lifted up an edition of this book which P. A. Fenger had brought out, in which he says that that word of God (which is attached to water in such a way that it becomes a baptism) is the word of renunciation and faith. In addition to these two, there were several others who put their pens to paper, among them both Dean Vahl and Bishop Monrad.

This entire conflict, the details of which lie outside the boundaries of our project here, is seen at the end of the day as being as bloody an irony as one can find. The "freedom and room for differences" which supposedly prevailed in the Danish People's Church, *Folkekirke,* was a concept about which we in the Danish Church in America were reminded very often. Naturally, the Select Committee from Fyn protested against this declaration, since its emissaries in America had indirectly provoked its issuance. The Select Committee composed a protest to it, which Pastor A. S. Nielsen managed to have published in a Norwegian publication, *Skandinaven og Amerika* (the Scandinavian and America) on March 4, 1873.[14]

To be fair to the newcomer pastors in America, one should notice that the expressions they used about the Holy Scriptures were what they had used in the Church of Denmark. They were indeed following the <u>practice</u> of the Danish People's Church, which was the right thing to do. Prof. Clausen, on the other hand, based his declaration on the <u>confession</u> of the Folk Church. Seen in that light, he also was right. Grundtvigianism has never belonged to the Danish Folk Church. However, there have been pastors and also bishops in that church who have advocated the Grundtvigian point of view. It was the intention of the pastors of the Conference, as far as one can see, to make practical use of the letters and declarations they had received from Denmark. In this connection one could read what appeared in *Kirkelig Samler* of March, 1873:

"In Racine, Wisconsin it is alleged in the public press that four members of the Lutheran congregation have charged Pastor Dan with 'false, un-Lutheran doctrine' etc. These four men, together with a few others, mostly Norwegian, have formed their own congregation, and have declared Pastor Dan dismissed. They claim to be 'the only true Lutheran congregation', and

[14]Cf. *Kirkelig Samler*, No 8, 1873 page 103.

thus they have exclusive right to the church building. They also claim that all those who want to keep Pastor Dan as pastor (which was just about the entire congregation, with the exception of the above-named seceders) are no longer members of the congregation."

It was obvious that the "Konference" was at the head of this whole matter. One can detect this from letters coming from the "mother church." Several pastors in the "Konference" had been in Racine during the preceding month, contrary to the expressed wish of the congregation, in view of the fact they did not belong to any synod or conference. They wanted to be an independent entity, freely considering themselves a part of the "mother church."

Thus it was obvious that Grove-Rasmussen had it right, when he wrote in his report of his travels, "Certainly it is obvious that the very Light which shines in our church is troubling to the eyes of many, including both Danish and Norwegian Christians in America." Jens Chr.. Poulsen of Luck, Wisconsin, a layman, who was one of the few in America who actually knew the heart and center of Grundtvigianism, wrote to Pastor Dan (you can read his letter in *Kirkelig Samler,* first year, page 140): "Yes, dear brother! I had an intimation that it would be a tough battle, as soon as friends of 'the Churchly View' stepped forward openly with the Living Word in their hearts and mouths, here among the many confusing voices shouting to high heaven that their 'scriptural principle' alone was truly Lutheran. When rightly seen, their view has a strong Reformed touch (I should probably say spirit, because the innermost kernel of their belief is Reformed)." This same writer continues, "For nine years I have seen and heard the Norwegian clergymen dispute here in this country, and during this time I have become acquainted with the whole sorry business. Constantly the whole dispute has revolved around nothing else than their own 'propositions', viewpoints and interpretations, which they defend to the bitter end as if these were the cause of the Lord."

By way of contrast, J. Chr.. Poulsen views the proclamation of the Danish pastors "as a voice which betokens spring." It is a sure thing that the Norwegian pastors with their disputes and wrangling made people sick and tired of the kind of Lutheranism which presented itself in such form. Frequently they came to view a Lutheran pastor as an argumentative person. He might be preaching correct doctrine, but not in an evangelical spirit, to say nothing of with an evangelical purpose.

It is tragic to discover at base that this entire dispute in the final analysis can be traced back to two Danish bishops. One was Bishop Erik Ludvigsen Pontoppidan. who wrote "The Truth about the Fear of God" in the 18th Century. He was contesting the dead orthodoxy of his time. The other, in the 19th Century, was Bishop N. F. S. Grundtvig expressing his so-called "Churchly Viewpoint" (1825) in which he earnestly intended to give a death blow to the rationalism which contradicted Christianity. But he shot his arrow so far over the target that his point landed in Roman Catholic territory.

When the Norwegian pastors were acclaiming "the teaching of our childhood," they had in mind a diluted version of Pontoppidan's "The Truth about the Fear of God." That message was so deeply imbedded in the Norwegian consciousness that many had no insight beyond that. Thus it became a strong defense for the Lutheran Church in this country.

In Denmark, however, our people had also learned Luther's Small Catechism with its explanation. Beyond that they had learned many additional truths, with the result that what they had learned in childhood did not have the same grip upon them as it did on the Norwegians in this country who felt at home with what they had learned. The Danish settlers, on the other

hand, looked upon this dispute as a wrangling over human interpretations, with each contestant feeling that he had the truth on his side. They felt that this was not especially edifying for anyone looking in from the outside.

The clergymen of the Conference felt that in fighting Grundtvigianism they were contending for the "formal principle" of the Lutheran Church. That cannot be denied. But the fact that they could win the battle against Grundtvigianism with the help of secular courts was surely not included in the "formal principle" of the Lutheran Church. Their manner of debate did not help in carrying out that principle either. There was much more that was a consequence of the Norwegian propensity toward disputation.

In actuality, there was a court case. Pastor Dan himself notes that he was selected to be "the sacrificial lamb."[15] He wrote, "Hardly anyone gets to feel the brunt of this as strongly as I do. My Norwegian brothers of the cloth have come up with the strange notion that in my person the Grundtvigianism which they have so hated and banned has come to America as contraband goods." Full pursuit of this story is beyond our scope here. We can only note that the fragment of the congregation which withdrew in Racine accused Pastor Dan of teaching false, un-Lutheran doctrine, as has been noted previously. Numerous witnesses were summoned into court to witness to this. One could name among them members of the faculty of the Theological Seminary in St. Louis: Professors Walther, Schmidt, Crämer. Schaller and M. Gunther. The verdict which they brought forward can be read in *Kirkelig Samler,* 2nd year, page 250. So what was the upshot of the matter? Perhaps the best answer can be found in the *History of Racine and Kenosha Counties, 1879.* From this impartial witness we learn the end of the matter. "The case was decided December 12, 1874, and the pastor, Adam Dan, was found guilty of preaching false doctrine. However, the party adhering to him being the majority, the court gave them (Dan and his followers) the church property and the original name of the congregation." (Pages 397-8).

But was that the end of the matter? Unfortunately this must be answered with an unconditional "No." Now not only the base for the split in the Danish mission had been laid—although it really was laid some three years earlier, but also now the split has actually taken place. From this point on there are two contending missions among Danes in America. Both of them claim to rightly carry the Lutheran name.

On the one side could be heard: "these people are not just 'Danes', but they are heretics, Grundtvigians." This assertion was absolutely untrue of the large majority of the Danish Christians and a considerable number of its pastors.

On the other side one could hear this assessment: "These people are disputatious, super-orthodox Norwegians, who deny their baptismal covenant, putting their own narrow-minded interpretations of the Bible in its place. They call themselves Lutheran, but in reality they are Reformed! God save us from getting into confusion like that!"

They reasoned: if we join the *Synode*, the *Konference* says that we are going astray. If we join with the *Konference*, the *Synode* says the same thing of us! —This is not a contrived view of the situation painted here. Unfortunately, it is a true picture of the reality.

We can be grateful to both the *Synode* and the *Konference* that they lifted high the Lutheran scriptural principle, for without this the Church cannot stand. But even more we

[15] Cf. *Kirkelig Samler*, first year, page 222.

must regret that they did this is such an unevangelical spirit. On the one side, we can be thankful to the Grundtvigians that they lifted up the ancient basic confession [the Apostles' Creed] which has always been the reply of God's people on the basis of the revealed word of God, to both Jews and Gentiles. They also emphasized the sacraments as instituted by the Lord, as his actions in and with his assembled people. But even more deeply we must regret that they did this in an unscriptural and un-Lutheran way. The consequences of the one-sidedness of both parties are unfortunately all too well known to this day. But that which we recognize now has its roots in past history. If the situation at present is to be understood, we must study the history of the past.

VIII. The Danish Church in America

In 1874 the number of new Danish pastors had increased to nine, in that J. Pedersen and O. L. Kirkeberg, the first candidates from the pastoral training school in Askov, had arrived in the early summer from Denmark. Of these nine, the oldest one had only been in America for three years. On June 27, 1874, when eight of these men were assembled at a meeting in Racine, Wisconsin, they agreed to change the name "Church Mission Society" to "The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America." Beginning in July, 1874 the publication "The Church Gatherer" began its appearance, "published by the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America." And the Danish Church thus dates its name, if not its existence, from that year, 1874, and from that meeting. I am unable to say who made the proposal for this significant change of name. It was not A. S. Nielsen of Cedar Falls, Iowa, since he was not present at that meeting, any more than he was on hand at the establishment of the "Church Mission Society", as was remarked earlier, and probably for the same reasons as applied then.

As far as I know, no announcement had been made in advance of this meeting that a matter of such consequence was on the agenda for consideration and approval. Neither do I have any information that the "Select Committee" in Denmark had urged this, or that they had any knowledge that anything like this was under consideration. It seems a bit out of the ordinary that such an important step was taken in such circumstances, and that anyone would dare to do it. It would thus seem that any group of clergy and laymen brought together by happenstance who decide to do it, can thus form a Mission Society and call it "Church" —or anything else they please. But the establishment of a Church is, as far as I can see, a completely different matter. Such a step should not be taken off in a corner, without careful and serious consideration. Certainly it should not be without a public notice and invitation to everyone, both lay and learned, to be present and to approve something which concerned them all, if they are among the baptized. I am aware that the real intention in changing the name was to let it be known that the desire was to stand connected to the Danish Folk Church as close as possible. It is likely that everyone was in agreement about that, even if all did not understand it in the same way.

But someone could say, "Were there not other Danish Lutheran pastors in America than those assembled at the meeting in Racine on June 27, 1874?" To this question one must answer, "Yes, indeed there were." This contention will later be proven. But even if there were no others, it still remains that a change of name from "Mission Society" to "Church" should never have been undertaken in the way it was, not least for the sake of those who assumed this name.

"The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church," with special emphasis on *Danish,* was in fact only a name. It did not have a constitution. No doubt the intention was that the Church

Mission Society's program was still in effect. However, one hears nothing about this in 1878. when the Danish Church in America finally got a constitution. But in this very name both a purpose and a confession were taken for granted from 1874, i.e. that even as the Evangelical Lutheran Church was the only authorized church in Denmark (in which all other groups were regarded as sects), so also it would be with the "Danish Church" here in America. Any entities found outside of this were to be regarded as part of the motley array of sects. So consequently one would find the children, the real children, in this fold. Was this not the trend of thought in those early days? And if it was not, we see how evident it is that the one who would understand the line of thought in our present day must study the history of the past. The one who wants to know why the water in the creek is the way it is, must investigate the sources. Thus, in that regard, the change of name at the meeting in Racine on June 27, 1874, is of highest importance.

And despite the fact that this prehistory extends only to 1884, it is not out of order to insert this remark here: at the closing of the assembled Danish Lutheran Church's meeting in Racine in September 1893, there were twenty some men who very quietly sat down to make the decision that any pastor or congregation which did not subscribe to the newly adopted constitution within a given time frame would be excluded from the Danish Church in America. That which the meeting in Racine in 1893 took upon itself is simply the logical consequence of what the assembly in Racine in 1874 took upon itself. However it is quite unlikely that those who approved the name change in 1874 had any intimation that such consequences would follow. It is difficult to contemplate any greater contradictions than these: on the one side, the Conference was writing and asserting publicly that Adam Dan and those who took his part (he was the president of the "Church Mission Society") are all Grundtvigians, and that Grundtvigianism is a more dangerous sect than Methodist and Baptist sects. On the other side, the Church Mission Society was presenting itself as "The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America". Just here the split in the Danish mission in America is truly revealed. Thus a large segment of Danish Christians in America, who wanted to be faithful to the Word of God and Luther's doctrine, stood in opposition to the Danish Church in America from that time on.

I have said above that the Danish Church in America had no actual constitution before 1878. To be sure, it had a constitution for congregations as early as 1874, if not before. I have no knowledge that this constitution ever was published officially in *Kirkelig Samler.* But it can be found nonetheless in all of the oldest congregations of the Danish Church in America. For instance in the record or minutes of the congregation for October 1, 1876, on page 1, you can find the following: "In opening the meeting Pastor Kirkeberg read six paragraphs authored by Pastor A. S. Nielsen. These were recommended to the congregation as the most important and basic sentences in its constitution." These paragraphs follow[16]:

As far as I know, these paragraphs have ever since been "the basic sentences" in all of the constitutions of the Danish Church. It can be seen that they are set forth in such a way that the Grundtvigian view is presented in them, even if not patently requisite. But there are also many other things included in them, e.g., the stupid idea that congregations are prohibited from belonging to any church synod in America, including the Danish Church in America. Even if not intended thus, this is nevertheless the real meaning of the words as they stand.

[16]Cf. Supplement II. page 93 ff.

Now that we have seen both the reasons for the split in the Danish mission in America, and simultaneously its obvious unfolding, it is in order to turn to another side of the mission among Danes in America.

IX. Two Danish Seminaries in America

Clergymen in the "Church Mission Society" and later in "The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; have certainly not been the only Danish pastors in the Lutheran Church in America, even though they did everything possible to be thus regarded. On the one hand, they refused to be known as Grundtvigian, and when that accusation was flung at them, they repudiated it usually by maintaining that they were only continuing the stance of the Danish Folk Church, or that of the Mother Church, and they rejoiced in that light which the Lord had permitted to break forth there. My source for this observation comes from what was expressed publicly in *Kirkelig Samler.* Contrasted with the contentions and splits which occurred in the Norwegian synods, they would point to the Mother Church in Denmark as a shining contrasting model to this. "The Contention About the Catechism" surely provided abundant witness that pastors could collide also in the Mother Church. But *Kirkelig Samler* was careful to show how many there were in Denmark who thought that Professor Clausen and Pastors Frimodt and Blædel had really conducted themselves insolently.

I have entitled this chapter "Two Schools for Training Danish Pastors in America." But now I must hasten to say that these schools were Norwegian, even though some Danes were among their students. Thus there was the Norwegian *Synode's* seminary, first in St. Louis, MO, then in Madison, Wisconsin, and eventually in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota. In all of these places there had been Danish students, even Danish seminarians from Jelling and Danish Folk Schools, such as Rødkilde on Møn. Two of the students from the seminary of the *Synode,* namely the Danish men M. Fr. Wiese and E. P. Jensen, were even ordained upon calls from Danish congregations before A. S. Nielsen, about 1869 and 1871. Another man born in Denmark, H. P. Duborg, was a pastor in the Norwegian *Synode* from 1861 to 1871, when he rejoined the German Missouri Synod. In the later years a relatively larger number of young Danes could be named who had studied at the seminary of the *Synode*, and who were ordained from there upon call to Danish congregations in America. In the records they are listed under the rubric "Danish Pastors." Pastors of The Danish Church referring to them tended to brush them off with the scornful remark that they were "Norwegian." Even though the well known Pastor O. L. Kirkeberg was of that group, he was a member of "The Danish Church" and was considered a good "Danish" pastor in spite of that.

But the Norwegian *Synode's* seminary was not the only school which trained young Danish men to be pastors among their fellow countrymen in America. Neither were they after the first emissaries from the Select Committee in Denmark had come to this country. One such

pastor who exemplifies this was my old neighbor in Luck, Wisconsin, the late Pastor H. N. Thorup. Thorup, who had taken his name from his home town on Sjælland, came to America in 1868. He began his work conducting a school for children in Neenah, New Denmark, and Waupaca, Wisconsin. At the last named place, he was encouraged by Pastor Mikkelsen to join the Norwegian *Synode.* But Thorup was unwilling to do this, since he thought that church body was guilty of false doctrine, for example on slavery and other issues.

Instead, he enrolled at Augsburg Seminary in Marshall, Wisconsin, where Professor A. Weenaas was his teacher. From here he received a call to a Danish congregation in Two Rivers (now Elmdale, Minnesota), and he was ordained to be pastor there on August 9, 1872, by Prof. Weenaas. In 1873 Thorup left Two Rivers to go to Hartland, Wisconsin, where he remained as pastor until 1881, when he was called to Polk County, Wisconsin. Here he stayed under changing conditions until his death in the winter of 1909, belonging first to the *Konference*, and later the United Norwegian Church. In the first year of *Kirkelig Samler's* publication, No. 9, Pastor Thorup wrote a sermon under the title, "Launch Out Into The Deep." To this the editor added a somewhat snide postscript, noting that Pastor Thorup had taken most of his sermon from *Indre Missions Tidende,* along with the observation that he was not a Grundtvigian! This must have irritated some readers of the publication, as was made plain in a subsequent issue, where another postscript can be read. There had certainly been others who had contributed sermons to the paper, making use of the words of others. Thorup, then, was one of those who had arrived in America before the Select Committee's emissaries.

But even after two of these had arrived in America, and after the Select Committee, as we shall learn later, had established two other pastoral training schools in Denmark, young men came to America from Denmark to seek training in this country, in order to work as pastors among their countrymen. Some even had brought recommendations along from pastors in Denmark to the Norwegian-American professors. As an example, one can name Pastor A. M. Andersen, presently editor of the publication *Danskeren* ["The Dane"]. Pastor Andersen, who was born in 1847 and who had grown up from childhood in the awakened circles of the Vejle region, had enrolled as a student in 1847 in the Folk School at Ryslinge. Here, where he had become well acquainted with Pastor Joh. Clausen, he felt a tug to go to Danish circles in America to serve as a teacher of children. It was the same idea which had prompted C. L. Clausen to travel to America in his time. When Andersen, after his time at the Folk School became a teacher in his home area, he applied to Dean Vahl, who at that time was a parish pastor in Øster-Snede, for counsel about America. After Andersen had written several dissertations for the dean, Vahl thought it would be best for Andersen to seek training as a pastor, and he advised him to seek such training at Augsburg Seminary in Marshall, Wisconsin. Vahl gave him a letter of recommendation to the teachers there. As he was leaving, the dean said to Andersen, "If your application is not accepted at Augsburg, I advise you to make application to the Episcopal Church; I am certain that they will receive you there."

As already mentioned, Dean Vahl was among the earliest of the pastors in Denmark to call to the attention of the Danish Folk Church the need for mission work among the Danes abroad. We know also that he is the one who sought information about the churchly condition of Danes in America. A good question would be: Why was this man not a member of the Select Committee, set up to further the spread of the Gospel in North America? Why not? —And why was it that Dean Vahl did not refer the young man who sought his advice to this Select Committee?

It can scarcely be for the reason that he did not know of its existence. A. M. Andersen traveled to America in the early summer of 1872, and found work at Rock Prairie, Wisconsin.

In the fall of 1872 he was accepted at Augsburg Seminary, which by now was located in Minneapolis, Minnesota. One of the pastors of the Danish Church had advised him not to attend the Augsburg school. While he was studying at the seminary, he received a letter from another pastor of the same church telling him that there would be a place for him in the Danish Church when he had completed his studies. He did not follow either of these hints. A.M. Andersen, however, was neither the first or the only Danish student at Augsburg. We have already mentioned R. Andersen and H. N. Thorup as students of that school. when it was located at Marshall, Wisconsin. Another Danish man who later became a pastor for a time in the Danish Church, S. C. Madsen, probably had also studied at Augsburg Seminary when it was at Marshall, Wisconsin. In addition to these, one can name as students, both in Marshall and Minneapolis, Hans Hansen (born 1848) from the region of Præstø on Sjælland. H. Hansen arrived in America in 1865, coming to Minnesota, where a brother, Niels Hansen, was living in Minneapolis. Hans Hansen eagerly went to work at once, earning good wages, and soon became the owner of a piece of land in Minnesota, and some money in the bank. During a visit to his brother in Minneapolis, his brother's wife invited him to attend church, where he met Pastor O. Poulsen, the man who can be credited truthfully for the fact that Augsburg Seminary moved to Minneapolis. Under the preaching of Pastor Poulsen, H. Hansen was seriously awakened to Christ, and decided to prepare for the ministry. At age 22 he enrolled at Augsburg Seminary, where he studied for four years, and then was ordained in 1874. H.. Hansen no doubt also studied for a time at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.

At the same time that H. Hansen and A. M. Andersen were there, Niels Madsen from Møn (born in 1843) studied at Augsburg, first in Marshall, and then in Minneapolis.

Moreover, besides H. Hansen, Niels Madsen and A. M. Andersen, a fourth young Dane arrived at Augsburg Seminary in the fall of 1872. This was H. P. Berthelsen from Falster (born in 1846), who came there from Sheffield, Illinois. He was one of the Danish settlers there, where C. L. Clausen had been preaching to his countrymen. In addition, a fifth young Dane enrolled at Augsburg Seminary in 1873. His name was M. C. Hansen Rohe, and he was from Pastor R. Andersen's home region on Fyn, and had been among the awakened Christians in a circle there.

The men noted above, to whom we shall later return to in another connection, are more than adequate to show that there were fully as many Danish pastors and congregations outside of the "Church Mission Society' and its replacement, "The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America' as there were within it, or connected to it. This fact reflects a rather strange light on the assembly in Racine, Wisconsin, in June 1874. This was the meeting at which a few pastors, some of them having only recently arrived in America, undertook nonchalently to call themselves "The Danish Church in America." But there is something else illuminated here. That is that as we see the relatively many young Danes studying at Augsburg Seminary, we find that the Konference is far from giving up the mission among the Danes voluntarily. We find that now as never before, they appropriated this mission, despite any Select Committees and protests, etc., both in and from Denmark. Up until now the mission among the Danes had been carried out by Danish pastors who not only had been trained and ordained in the Konference, but also maintained their membership in it. But that which specially concerns us

here is to show that in this way both sides were influential in causing the split in the Danish mission in America to take place, so that this division would be as deep and wide as possible. And the most regrettable aspect, viewed from that side, is that the Danish Christians who contended on both sides were not interested in finding out how many common interests they had in spite of their differences. Instead, they fastened their gaze on what separated them. Viewed from the other side, the Lutheran Christians can be happy that the Konference—which is what we are especially dealing with here—held conscientiously to the Lutheran principle of scripture and the biblical order of salvation, and that they stamped these young men for the ministry with it. Thus it will be seen, no matter how one manipulates it, that with the Holy Scriptures, respected and used as holy scripture, not only the Christian confession but also the Christian faith and the Church stands or falls. One can only regret the shortsightedness and lack of understanding which could not recognize this, or would not. And the blame for this must fall on the leadership of the mission field - and not upon the Folk Church of Denmark, which they so often cited.

Now, in order to see how from both sides the task of schism would be advanced, we must take a little detour to Denmark.

X. Two Schools for American Pastors in Denmark

As we have noted earlier, the first two of the Select Committee's emissaries to America had attended Danish folk schools. A. S. Nielsen had been a student at Testrup Folk School near Aarhus for a time. Other than that, he had received his training in the school of life, along practical lines. R. Andersen had been a student at the folk school in Ryslinge, which for a time had gone in the Inner Mission direction. Joh. Clausen had directed not a few students there from Inner Mission circles in the country, but then little by little this folk school, along with Pastor Clausen, had moved in a Grundtvigian direction. But R. Andersen had attended not merely the folk school in Ryslinge, but had also been mentored by Pastor Clausen for a couple of years with the intention of becoming a missionary to the heathen. But then the question of sending men to America as pastors came up, and that is the route he thought that he should follow.

However, after Andersen's departure, there were young men who received their theological training at the Ryslinge school who later came to America to be pastors in the Danish Church in America. Of these, we can here name J. P. Lillesø, who arrived in America in the fall of 1874, and also H. J. Pedersen, in 1875. Both men became pastors in Michigan, Lillesø in Muskegon and Pedersen in Gowen. Meanwhile, however, Ryslinge did not become the training school in Denmark for American pastors, as one might have expected. Instead it closed down, when Pastor Clausen moved to Nørre Lyndelse in 1877.

On the other hand, there was another folk school in Denmark which for more than a few years trained men for the ministry in America. That was Askov, at Vejen Station, Jutland. This was a continuation of the first folk school in Denmark, Rødding Folk School (after 1844). That is to say that it is to be understood that Askov Folk School made a place for young men who contemplated going to America as pastors. As nearly as I can discover, credit for this innovation can be given to the chairman of the Select Committee, Dr. L. Helveg in Odense, that from the autumn of 1872, the year of Grundtvig's death, such a school was established at Askov. Naturally the premise was that subjects of concern to America should influence students in a humanitarian [In Danish, *folkelig*] direction, along with their special formation as pastoral candidates. The school was started with the young Candidate in Theology P. Riemann as theological teacher, and with Jens Pedersen from Sjælland and O. L. Kirkeberg from Valders, Norway, as students. For two years the school carried on with Riemann as teacher, until these two students were sent out to America, as mentioned earlier. There J. Pedersen was ordained to be a pastor in Luck, Wisconsin, and O. L. Kirkeberg went to Indianapolis, Indiana. As far as

I know, P. Riemann is the only special teacher of theology that the training school at Askov has had. Later the classes were under the direction of two of the folk school's teachers, Schrøder and Nutzhorn, both of whom were candidates in theology. From 1872 to 1887, when the seminary in West Denmark began operation, the school in Askov had about eighteen seminary students who later came to America. There may have been a few more, but they became weary before they graduated. Some of these eighteen received a significant part of their training at the University of Copenhagen, where the later Select Committee secured theological candidates to teach the prospective American pastors. Many of these Askov-trained pastors naturally were folk school students earlier, either in Denmark or America. Since their later training took place for the most part in Copenhagen, not a few of them trained to be pastors in America were young men from Indre Mission circles.

In regard to the pastoral training itself which this school offered, I shall not speak further. I will only make the general observation that this training was necessarily as remotely distanced as possible from American conditions under which the prospective pastors were to work. Naturally that was a bad mistake. On the other hand, it would not be right to assert that this training was one-sidedly in the Grundtvigian direction, as far as I know.

A third seminary in Denmark, which should have been at the forefront of training and sending workers to the Danish mission field in America, was the University at Copenhagen. But it nobly held itself back. Among its professors, H. N. Clausen was among those who voted on the matter of Grundtvigianism's relation to the Danish Folk Church, as previously mentioned. Later on, Professors P. Madsen and Fr. Nielsen became members of the Copenhagen Select Committee, which replaced the one from Fyn. Of the theological candidates from the University there were, so far as I can learn, only six—I say and write six—from 1873 to 1893 who found their way to America as pastors in the Danish Church. Most of these remained here only the required five years. The one who was here the longest, Th. Helveg, was here for 14 years.

To me this seems most unfortunate, perhaps at most for their own sakes. Even though they were capable and effective men, they always worked with Denmark in the back of their minds, and some of them were not above talking about it upon occasion. And if some of them were a part of leading the little Danish Church strongly in the Grundtvigian direction, as was probably the case, they nevertheless did not stay in America and take the consequences of this.

Taken all together, the theological candidates in America before 1893 were capable and well-liked men. Their presence in America served also to shore up the illusion held by many since 1874, which regarded the Danish Church in America as the true daughter of the Mother Church. The truth of the matter was that a Danish candidate in theology could as easily go to be a missionary in Turkey (which one of them did at one time) without losing his status as a candidate in theology or his seniority. And such a mission among the Turks would never be hailed as a true daughter of the Danish Folk Church.

In addition to the students who came from the various clergy training centers in Denmark there were a few young men who carried on their studies with the theological candidates who had come from Denmark to America. It was in this way, for example, that Lars Hansen studied under Rosenstand, and Jens Jensen under J. A. Hejberg. A few individuals had studied under Pastor N. Thomsen, and later at the Folk School in Elk Horn, Iowa. But the real supply of pastoral workers came to the Danish Church from Denmark. Only comparatively few of its

workers had attended Norwegian (and German) seminaries in America. Chiefly sought after were workers who were acquainted with so-called "Danish spiritual life." And that expression was naturally understood in its own way, namely the life of the Danish folk schools and churches in Denmark.

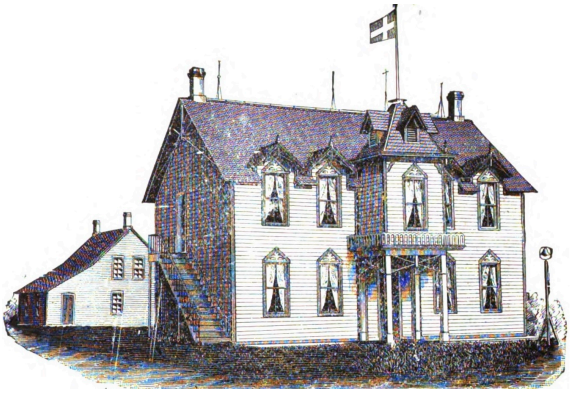


Figure 9: The First School in Elk Horn, Iowa

XI. The Danish Pastors in the *Konference*

[Vig distinguishes here between the Synod for the Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (the 'Synode') and the Norwegian-Danish 'Konferencen'/the 'Konference', which operated independently.]

As we have noted repeatedly in earlier pages, it was the Norwegian pastors, both in the *Synode* and *Konference*, who were the first to undertake mission among the immigrant Danes—exclusive of those who were Baptists or Methodists. In particular, it was the Konference pastors, who not only wrote to Denmark requesting Danish workers, but also unloaded their Danish congregations with good will when some Danish workers eventually came to America. The fact that these Norwegian pastors had a different attitude toward the Danish workers can be understood, when one considers that these Danes leaned toward the Grundtvigian point of view.

In the very nature of this matter, this is reasonable and explicable. And it was appropriate that the Norwegians in no way would transfer the mission among the Danes in America to the Danish Church, even if pastors of the Danish Church considered it only natural that they would have the sole right to this mission. Admittedly, the Danish pastors were willing to concede that the Norwegian pastors were the first Lutheran missionaries among Danes here in this country. In *Kirkelig Samler,* (sixth year, page 377) the Danish pastors Hejberg, Dan and Holm admitted, "The first to interest themselves in the spiritual needs of our countrymen were Norwegian Lutheran pastors—and they deserve thanks for this. This additional work was probably more than they could handle, considering their own work, which was often difficult. But what they accomplished, they did in good faith, with an honorable intention to help a kindred people in their churchly needs." The words here cited from the organ of the Danish Church are found in an introduction to a documented complaint against the Norwegian Konference, and also in particular against Pastor Vilhelm Beck, because he had worked against the Danish mission in America by recommending and sending young men to the seminary of the Konference, and by writing letters to pastors of the Konference. In other words, it was bad enough that the Konference had worked against them, as they maintained, but even worse that they were supported in this opposition by the Indre Mission in Denmark.

As we have seen, Dean Vahl had already involved himself in this transgression by sending young men to America who were not under the aegis of the Select Committee.

The point is this, that little by little it could be seen that the men in Denmark who sought training to become American pastors were directed to Grundtvigian Folk Schools, to be influenced without exception by Grundtvigian ideas. It was then that those from the Indre Mission side spoke up to say that it was not right to turn the mission in America over to the Grundtvigians. It was well known that it was Indre Mission who had first sounded the trumpet for this cause. Even as early as 1874 one who called himself "Monitor" had spoken out in *Indre Missions Tidende,* as we know on a previous occasion to say that the Grundtvigians should not be alone in this important cause. That in turn led to action by Indre Mission. In 1875 "Monitor" (Teacher N. M. Hansen) was sent as a pastor and teacher to a circle of Inner Mission people in Denmark, New Brunswick, Canada. There, having been ordained by the Episcopal Church, he served among his countrymen for many years.

Pastor Joh. Clausen had leanings in the direction of Grundtvigianism, and thus had become somewhat separated from the friend of his youth, Vilhelm Beck. But now he approached Vilhelm Beck, in the company of another member of the Select Committee, Pastor Strøm of Marslev. They presented a question, "Would it be possible for the Select Committee and Indre Mission to work together in the cause of the American mission?" Pastor Vilhelm Beck declared that he was willing to negotiate with the Select Committee about this. In a later meeting in Odense with Pastor Joh. Clausen, Pastor Joh. Møller and Dr. Ludvig Helveg, Beck stated that he would approve of Indre Mission and the Select Committee working together on two conditions:

1. That the Select Committee would be open to sending non-Grundtvigians as pastors to serve in America, and

2. That the Select Committee would augment itself with two new members, one of whom would be Vilhelm Beck. And, in particular, the Select Committee was to publicise Point 1 in *Indre Missions Tidende.*

Pastor Joh. Clausen and Pastor Joh. Møller were willing to go along with the two named conditions, which Vilhelm Beck had insisted on as the only way he could secure the approval of Inner Mission in this matter. But Dr. Helveg would not go along with them. Vilhelm Beck concludes his report of this negotiation by saying, "In other words, this route is closed for those men that Indre Mission would like to send to our counrymen in America. So I chose another route—to go by way of the Danish-Norwegian pastors, where I knew that the way was entirely open.[17]

So, in sum: The Norwegian-Danish Konference would not, and could not, hand over the mission among Danes to pastors in The Danish Church. Indre Mission in Denmark was not willing to allow the Select Committee to have the sole right to send pastors to America. Young men of that persuasion who aspired to be pastors among their countrymen in America thus went to Augsburg Seminary as students. After completing their studies and being ordained, they then joined the Konference. In the publications and annual reports of this group they were called "The Danish Brothers."

As far as can be determined from the sources, there were in all ten young Danes who graduated from Augsburg Seminary to be ordained as pastors in the Norwegian-Danish Konference

[17]Cited from *Kirkelig Samler,* 7th year, page 142.

during the period from 1872, when the "Church Mission Society" was established, until 1884, when "The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church" was formed. They are listed here according to the year in which they were ordained:

1872. H. N. Thorup

1874. Niels Madsen

1874. H. Hansen

1874. A. M. Andersen

1877. M. C. Hansen Rohe

1879. H. P. Berthelsen

1881. G. B. Christiansen

1882. A. Rasmussen

1883. Fr. Jensen Møller

1884. P. J. Østergaard

All of these became pastors of Danish congregations. Some of them had four or five of them to serve; some even more. These congregations, which now are in the ranks of the United Danish Church, were found in the states of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, and Kansas.

Most of them did not hold membership in the Konference, but were independent of any synod connection. As a rule, the Danish students were sent out from Augsburg Seminary to preach in Danish settlements during vacation periods. Often this resulted in calls to them from the District, which might mean that they had to break off their studies early and be ordained. There was a large field for work, and the laborers were few.

As one might expect, pastors of the Danish Church would not look kindly upon these co-workers on the Danish mission fields in America. Especially irritated was Pastor Jakob Holm, editor of *Kirkelig Samler* (1876 - 1881). He could not concede that anyone who had no connection with the Danish Church in America could be a "Danish pastor," only because he was born in Denmark. Certainly not, if he did not stand in a living relationship with the "Danish Church," and had neither been authorized or commissioned by it. Even if this person were to be recognized by another branch of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, it would not resolve the matter, since such a synod would not have a connection with "our Mother Church," and thus be recognized by it in any way. And everyone knew that neither the Norwegian *Synode* or the Konference here in this country had this recognition, and even if they applied for it, they probably would not receive it. Not even the Norwegian State Church had given these synods any legal status. Just think, if such a man allowed himself to be called to serve Danish people—that would not make him a Danish pastor. Especially not, when one notices the kind of pastors who are offered to our people by the *Synode* or the Konference, which then makes it their goal to tear them loose from a living connection with their Mother Church.

One can see from this that the change of name on June 27, 1874 has borne fruit, and that with a vengeance. It will likely appear to a present day reader of the words cited above, that it is their author who is guilty of "underhanded dealings," in that he summarily builds his case on the assertion that the Danish Church in America is the living connection with the "Mother Church" to which everyone must belong who would have lawful access to be called

a "Danish pastor." The real truth of the matter is that our "Mother Church," i.e. "The Danish Folk Church" had only the most remote concern for the Danish Church in America, and would likely decline to own any such connection. It almost seems like an irony of fate for Pastor Jak. Holm. Revealed in a summary of his life in the latest volume about Danish pastors is this line: "Dismissed June 16, 1876, to bcome pastor at St. Stephans and St. Michaels congregations in Chicago. Received royal recognition as a pastor in the Folk Church July 20, 1877."[18] This is to say that Pastor Jakob Holm could not be a pastor in Chicago for "The Danish Church's" congregations there, and at the same time be a pastor in the Danish Folk Church—unless he had special royal permission! And consequently it was that royal permission which became for him the "living connection" with the Folk Church in Denmark.

Now as we return to the Danish pastors in the Konference, we must dwell a bit on some of their projects in common.

[18]Cf. Hauch-Fausbøll, *Danmark's Præstehistorie*, 1884-1911, Volume 2, Page 314.

XII. Danish Lutheran Church Magazine *(Dansk luthersk Kirkeblad)* 1877

Kirkelig Samler.

Til kristelig og folkelig Oplysning og Opbyggelse paa Troens Grund.

Udgivet af "Kirkelig Missionsforening"

Redigeret af Adam Dan

1ste Aarg.	Oktober 1872	No. 1.

Indhold.

Kirkelig Missionsforening (ved Jyndelsen i — Kirkelig Samler" (Digt af Pastor A. Anderse

dede tilbage til Faderhuset hvorfra de ere udgangne

For at kunne virke til dette Formaal

1ste Nr. af „Kirkelig Samler".

Dansk-Luthersk

Kirke-Blad.

Udgivet af

De danske Præster i Konferensen for den norsk-danske, evangelisk-lutherske Kirke i Amerika.

Redigeret af Pastor A. M. Andersen, Racine, Wis.

1. Aarg.	August 1877.	Nr. 1.

Til Læserne.

„Lader Kristi Ord bo rigeligen iblandt Eder i al Visdom" (Col. 3, 16.)

— saavelsom ethvert andet Menneske — har en udødelig Sjæl, som er dyrekjøbt og mere værd end den hele Verden (Math 16, 26), og der er

1ste Nr. af „Dansk luthersk Kirkeblad".

Figure 10: First editions of *Kirkelig Samler* (*The Church Gatherer*, Edited by Adam Dan) and *Dansk-Luthersk Kirkeblad* (*Danish Lutheran Church Paper* published by the Danish Pastors in the Konference for the Norwegian-Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Edited by Pastor A. M. Andersen, Racine, Wisconsin. Volume 1 August 1877 No. 1)

In October 1872 the first number of *Kirkelig Samler* came out. It purposed to be "for Christian and social Danish: *folkelig* 'edification on the basis of faith." It was "published by 'The Church Mission Society'." It was edited by Adam Dan. The paper was printed in the print shop "America" in Chicago.

In August 1877 appeared the first number of *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad.* It was issued by the Danish pastors in the Konference of the Norwegian-Danish Lutheran Church in America. It was edited by Pastor A. M. Andersen of Racine, Wisconsin. The paper was printed in the print shop of *Folkets Avis* in Racine, Wisconsin.

There is no doubt that there is a certain connection between these two church publications—beyond the fact that both of them were put out by an association of Danish pastors, and that the editors were Danish pastors in the same town. It is also clear that it is *Kirkelig Samler* that called forth *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad.* Thus the latter is in one way a testimony to the significance of the former in the Danish mission in America. I don't know if there had been any long consultation before *Kirkelig Samler* came on the scene, or whether the Select Committee had prompted the publication of such a paper. The initiative for this most likely came from America. On the other hand, *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* came out as a result of consultation within the Konference, and with the sanction of that church group. According to the Konference's 1877 annual report the following statement about this matter was submitted to the annual convention and approved: "In recognition of the great danger which threatens our Danish brothers, asserting itself from Grundtvigianism, through statements in the church press and by public praxis of the pastors which insinuate that its manner of speaking is the doctrine of the Danish Lutheran Folk Church. Further in view of the unmet need for an edifying Danish Lutheran publication, the Eastern District of the Konference (which has the greatest number of Danish pastors and congregations) proposes to the honorable Konference that it take remedial steps by establishing an organ through which the synod's pastors and congregations may oppose the Grundtvigian influences, partly by means of edifying meditations and partly by articles contradicting this [Grundtvigian] position." This proposal was accepted, with the condition that the editor of the paper should take responsibility under the Konference for the contents of the paper.

Thus, as we said above, *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* appeared in 1877. It was introduced with a detailed piece, "To the Readers," giving an account of the paper's intention and purpose in a gentle and thoughtful way. At the end of the account, *Kirkelig Samler* is named. "To anyone who might have the idea that the latter is a Lutheran church publication, the author would express his conviction that the spirit and direction which had formerly prevailed in *Kirkelig Samler* is Danish, but not Lutheran. It is Grundtvigian. Therefore those of us who see in Grundtvigianism a dangerous deviation from the Lutheran church must not through this publication tone down the need of our countrymen for a truly Danish Lutheran church paper. The Lord has entrusted us with the commission to work among these people."

It could hardly be expected that the pastors of the Danish Church would be content with the picture of them and their conduct which was painted in the proposal cited above, any more than the picture of *Kirkelig Samler* given in *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad*'s introductory article. Thus it was almost unthinkable that the man should be dealt with gently, when he had been active in portraying this picture, and had written this introductory piece.

To begin with, in the mind of the Danish Church's pastors, there lay a special challenge in the fact that the editor of *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* was the pastor of that same Racine congregation which had withdrawn from Pastor Dan's Racine congregation, declaring that he espoused false, un-Lutheran teaching.[19]

When the first issue of *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* appeared, Pastor A. S. Nielsen of Cedar Falls took up his pen. Although he did not often express himself in writing, he now wrote "A Word of Peace to the Norwegian Konference's pastors and lay people."[20] It was a friendly attempt, and a good word, in which he sought to show that there is really no reason for strife, since the Danish Church and the Konference have the same Bible, the same confessions, the same sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, the same doctrine concerning sin, reconciliation and redemption, etc. He avers that those who argue against the Grundtvigian concept of the Word of Faith are bewitched. It obviously has never occurred to Pastor Nielsen that when he counts up the various items in which he agrees with the Konference, he is really making a complaint against himself. He avoided joining that synod in which he himself was ordained in 1871. The fact that he did not do this has clearly altered the history of the Danish mission. It was the indirect reason, among others, for the issuance of *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad.* But he could not see that. The fact that the editor of *Kirkelig Samler* took a somewhat more cavalier attitude toward the matter than Pastor Nielsen can be seen in his postscript to Nielsen's article in *Kirkelig Samler.* Here he gets in trouble for a slightly incorrect remark, by citing what *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* had said in its opening article about *Kirkelig Samler.* He had to issue a correction in a subsequent issue. In order to show that there was absolutely no need for such a paper as *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad*, he for once praises *Lutheraneren* as "a very good paper, that is to say, at least for those who share the views of the Konference—of which I certainly am not one. And with regard to what the name Danish means, that is only something that Danes want to smear around their mouths, etc., etc." Pastor Holm takes for granted that Danish and Grundtvigian stand or fall together.

It is not the intention here to dwell in detail on what the two papers had to say about each other over the course of time. That would be too protracted. On the other hand, there is something else about them which we can dwell upon. That something is their consistency. Even though Grundtvig and his followers made a theoretical distinction as wide as the heavens between the spoken word and the written word, they had nevertheless had a good practical understanding of how to use the written word to run their errands. In this respect *Kirkelig Samler* has been greatly significant, especially in its early days. It would not otherwise have been as widely discussed as it was. And in contradiction of their theory, the Danish Church's pastors gave the same testimony to *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* from the very beginning.

Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad emphasizes in its introduction that there is need for a Danish church publication. Perhaps unwillingly it puts forth a testimony to the fact that, even apart from Grundtvigianism, there is a difference between Danish and Norwegian understanding of Christianity. This applies even to those who agree on the essentials, and one can not inviolably leave this difference out of consideration. Seen from that side, *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* is a testimony to Danish independence of thought, which deserves honor, even though the Konference saw this matter in a different light at the very beginning. So this little publication has

[19]Cf. *Kirkelig Samler,* 6th year, page 379.
[20]Cf. *Kirkelig Samler,* 5th Year, pages 201-205.

protected the Danish pastors from becoming Norwegian in any bad sense, and has sharpened the congregations' consciousness that they were Danish.

And looked at from the standpoint of the Danish Folk Church, it seems to me that *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* in its early days was a more moderate representative of the cause of Indre Mission than *Kirkelig Samler* was for the Grundtvigian cause back home. At least it seems that way from a distance.

XIII. The Danish Mission of the *Konference*: "The Danish Mission Committee"

While *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* tried to keep the various Norwegian controversies out of the paper, it then laid more weight on the Danish mission. It underlined the fact that the Konference from the very beginning had taken "Norwegian-Danish" as a part of its name, and had put mission among Danes on its agenda. As early as 1875, as far as I can see, the Konference elected a "Danish Mission Committee." This committee was to look after the Danish mission, gather contributions toward it, and take care of workers in the new places. In 1877 this committee was made up of the following members: Pastor H. Hansen, Omaha, treasurer; Mr. M. P. Hansen, Two Rivers, Minnesota, and Pastor A. M. Andersen, chairman.

As early as issue No. 3 of *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad,* it could be announced that the Danish Mission had received a new worker to send to Nebraska, Mr. A. Jensen, who at one time had studied at Augsburg Seminary but had never been ordained. In the same number of the paper it was reported that M. C. Hansen Rohe had been ordained for ministry in two Danish congregations in Polk County, Wisconsin. There he became a neighbor of Pastor J. Pedersen of the Danish Church, a fact that did not gladden the heart of J. Pedersen.[21] The contributions which had been sent in for the Danish mission were acknowledged in *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad.* In the No. 10 issue Pastor H. Hansen acknowledges receipt of $61.53, in No. 11 of $39.27, etc. These contributions from places where money was scarce—most of them were from Nebraska—show that people had generous hearts, even though the grasshoppers harvested most of what the farmers had sowed for several years. As far as I can see from the paper, gifts to the Danish mission were almost exclusively from Danes. A full account of income for Danish mission from 1877 to 1880 is given in *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* for August 5. It was evident that the Danish mission was not carried on with Norwegian contributions. Beyond that, the Danish congregations took their part in paying professors' salaries, and also contributed funds for needy students at Augsburg Seminary. This was also attested in the paper. Of interest is a little note in the paper mentioning that "A Danish Lutheran congregation in Nebraska applied at that time (i.e. during the grasshopper years) to the Select Committee on Fyn for help. The Select Committee replied that it had all it could do to take care of its own."

The time has now come for us to hear something about the workers in that Danish mission. When *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* first appeared (August 1877), there were only four Danish

[21]Cf. *Kirkelig Samler*, 7th year, page 36 ff.

pastors in the Konference. (This number does not include C. L. Clausen, as he was not one of the newer Danish pastors.) They were H. Hansen in Omaha, N. Madsen in New Denmark, Wisconsin, H. N. Thorup in Hartland, Wisconsin, and A. M. Andersen in Racine, WI. On October 11, 1877 M. C. Hansen Rohe was ordained to a place of work in Polk County, WI. Besides these five ordained workers was a layman, A. Jensen. "He works with Pastor H. Hansen, and is a very capable man, who becomes discouraged now and then," writes M. C. H. Rohe of him.[22]

At the end of 1878 *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* reports that there were "six Danish pastors at our school" (i.e. in Minneapolis). As a rule students were sent out during vacation periods to do mission work. In August 1879 the editor of *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* mentions that he has become acquainted with a Mr. A. V. Clausen from Copenhagen, who for several years has participated in Inner Mission work there; now he had come to America with the purpose of working among his countrymen. He came with good recommendations, especially from Pastor R. Frimodt, and he was directed to a mission work in Nebraska. We hear nothing more about him. In June 1879 H. P. Berthelsen is ordained to become assistant pastor with H. Hansen in Nebraska, and thus the number of ordained pastors became six. In 1880 A. Fr. Andersen, who had earlier worked in the Danish Church, was received by the Konference as a worker in Nebraska.[23]

As one can see from the names listed above, the work was chiefly carried out in Wisconsin and Nebraska; gradually work was done also in Minnesota and Kansas. But most of the Danes were in Wisconsin, and these Danish settlers streamed in large numbers to Nebraska and Kansas, especially in the decade from 1870 to 1880, especially to Nebraska, where the Swedes and the Danes outnumbered the Norwegians considerably. The mission field was large, and the workers were few. However the hindrances and troubles were many. Not only were the Baptists and Adventist working among the settlers; there was also "Private Missionary Lang," as *Kirkelig Samler* calls him, traveling around in the 1870s in places like Omaha, Fremont, Grand Island, and elsewhere. Mormon preachers also tried to reach people wherever they could.

And pastors of the Danish Church usually took no notice of the fact that a pastor from the Konference was called to a Danish congregation as its pastor.

However, it was not all of the pastors in the Danish Church who looked unkindly upon the Danish pastors of the Konference or regarded them as opponents. Pastor R. Andersen, who always had been a man of peace, kept in touch with them. In *Kirkelig Samler* of 1878, page 122, he proposed that the Konference's pastors be invited to an upcoming meeting in Neenah, Wisconsin. Pastor Holm, editor of *Kirkelig Samler*, had nothing to say against this. He only maintained that the president of the pastors' association, Pastor Hejberg, should not invite them on his own. Rather let Pastor Thomsen and his congregation in Neenah invite them "if he wants to." Pastor H. J. Pedersen of Gowen, Michigan supported Pastor R. Andersen's proposal, and he urged Pastor Thomsen to invite them. Pastor Thomsen did not think this was his responsibility, "even though he devoutly desired it."[24] They were not invited. Pastor J. P. Lillesø sent a little poem to *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad*, "A Greeting in Peace to the Warriors

[22]Cf. Pastor Rohe's obituary notice, page 31).
[23]Cf. *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad*, 1880, page 307.
[24]*Kirkelig Samler*, 1878, page 158).

Figure 11: Pastor Kr. Anker

for the Lord."[25] Pastor H. J. Pedersen likewise sent a poem "My Home" to the paper.[26] In a note to introduce his verse he says, "My intention with this is mainly to show both our own people and their kindred that I want peace, as long as it can be in truth." In 1881 at the annual meeting of the Danish Church Pastor Lillesø made a motion that a delegate be sent to the annual meeting of the Konference, but that was voted down. To a committee for a "free conference" (1881) Pastor A. M. Andersen proposed that an invitation be sent also to "the Danish Church;" Pastor R. Andersen sent in an article to *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad,*[27] entitled, "An Idea for Peace on a Lutheran Basis," in which he recommends fellowship gatherings which could lead to better acquaintance and understanding. The editor of *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* introduced R. Andersen's article with a "proposal" along the same lines, although he thinks that there is much that prevents such an idea becoming a reality. But even though there were voices from both sides of the wall of separation, they were voices crying in the wilderness. More time had to pass, and other things had to happen, before they would be heard.

[25]1879, No. 3
[26]1879, No. 18
[27]1882, No. 5

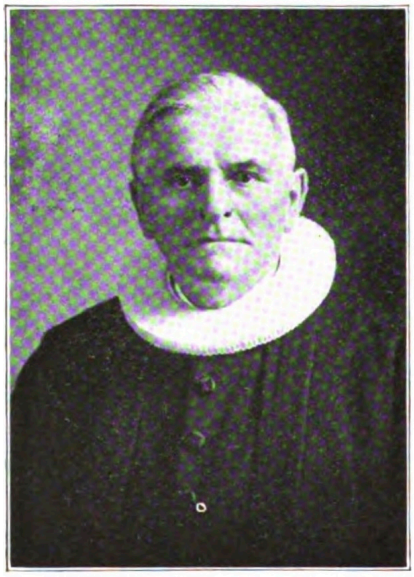


Figure 12: Pastor H. Hansen

XIV. The Danish Professor—The Folk School

Not everything within the Konference was as it should be, nor as the Danish pastors thought it should be. It was not only the Danish Church which secured theological candidates from Europe. Of these, there was one in particular who kept the Grundtvigian light burning. The Konference also secured candidates from Norway, from both the "Old Norwegian" and the "New Direction" emphases. But whereas the theological candidates in the Danish Church granted an immediate place as leaders to Pastor J. A. Hejberg as "Chairman of the Ministerium" and to Jakob Holm as editor of *Kirkelig Samler*, it was just as easy for the Norwegian candidates to take a leading position within the Konference. While the Danish theological candidates as a rule did not remain in America for more than five or six years, there were quite a number who stayed in America until they died. And while the Danish theological candidates stood together as a rule while they were in America (with the exception of Lyngby and Helvig), it was quite different with the Norwegians. They tended to become spokesmen, each for his own view. What was known among the Norwegians as "the old direction" within the Konference had its origin from the theological faculty at the University of Christiania, most especially from the well known Professor Gisle Johnson, whose standpoint can be characterized as "orthodox pietism," concerned for a devout union of sound teaching with a Christlike life. The spokesmen for this direction in the Konference were Professor Johnson's disciple, August Weenaas, Svend Rud Gunnerson, and Pastor B. Gjeldaker. Of these, A. Weenaas was the best known, as well as the one who had been in this country the longest.

The "new direction" came to America and into the Konference with two candidates in theology, who later were widely known as professors at Augsburg Seminary, Sven Oftedal and Georg Sverdrup. On their program was written in large type "living union of humanism and Christianity in agreement with the teaching of our childhood." It was a foe of all doctrinal strife, something which caused them no reservations when they were minded to "put someone on the pillory and make fun of him" as the Norwegians say it. Like a ghost from the Period of Orthodoxy which they wanted to bring to life in the 19h Century, it could lead to the church's corruption. Little by little they succeeded in commandeering all the power in the Konference to themselves, at least the most important positions, both on the theological faculty as well as the leadership of the synod and the church press. No less than three theological professors of the "Old direction" resigned from their posts: A. Weenaas, S. R. Gunnerson, and B. Gjeldaker. The pious Pastor J. Olsen, chairman of the Konference, also had to withdraw, and so on, and so on. With his eloquence and humanity, Oftedal put in place a "Pastors' Fund" among the Norwegian farmers, which turned Augsburg Seminary into an independent institution. He was

the chairman of the "Board of Trustees," which soon came to be seen as a post of absolute authority. What is mentioned above is enough to show that the situation in the Konference was not one where everyone could sit in peace under his own fig tree.

All of the older Danish pastors in the Konference held to the "old direction," e.g. H. N. Thorup, H. Hansen, N. Madsen, A. M. Andersen, M. C. H. Rohe and H. P. Berthelsen. Of the younger Danish pastors there was hardly one who completely held to the "new direction." Everyone was willing to concede Professor George Sverdrup's eminent gifts as a teacher of theology. It was clear that *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* maintained unreservedly the standpoint of the "old direction." This can be seen, among other evidences, from the fact that Professor Weenaas and Professor S. R. Gunnerson were contributors to the paper.

The annual convention of the Konference in 1881 was held at Rock Creek, Iowa. The three professors of theology at Augsburg, Sverdrup, Oftedal, and Gunnerson, had sent in their resignations. So the convention was faced with the election of new professors. A proposal had come to the Nominating Committee, probably made by Pastor H. Hansen, to elect a Danish man as professor at Augsburg. The "old direction," according to *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad*, hailed this proposal with joy. But the "new direction" people did all they could to prevent it. That resulted in the matter of "the Danish Professor" being laid on the table—and there he lay. Professor Gunnerson and Chairman J. Olsen were offered up on the altar of peace. The clergymen of rank, Oftedal and Sverdrup, left Rock Creek as victors.[28] The editor of *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* wrote afterward about this matter: "After one has seen the final outcome of the election of professors this year, neither Danes in the Konference or their friends wish to see a Danish professor installed at Augsburg to work beside the two men, whom none of their own countrymen wanted to have at their side." In other words, that route was closed for the Danes. So they went another route. From this point on an idea came more and more to the forefront in *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad*, the idea of a Danish Folk School. Just as it probably was not without regard to *Kirkelig Samler* that *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* came out with the idea, so it was not either without regard to the existing Danish Folk School in Elk Horn, Iowa that the idea of a Danish Folk School came forward among the Danish pastors in the Konference. Let that be as it may; the idea did come up for them, and was given expression at meetings and in their church paper.

It was in the fall of 1878 that the Folk School in Elk Horn, Iowa began its operation, with Pastor O. L. Kirkeberg as president. The matter of a folk school had long been on the agenda of the Danish Church, and many, both pastors and laymen, had spoken and written about the great importance of such a school in America. Especially Pastor Jakob Holm, editor of *Kirkelig Samler*, an enthusiastic spokesman for this cause. *Den Danske Pioneer*, had willingly opened its columns to articles about the Folk School—that is, until Pastor Kirkeberg got the idea of calling the school "Leif Eriksen's Memorial." Then the *Pioneer,* which preferred to have a Danish Folk School, turned its back on both the school and the pastors. But the Folk School became a reality anyway. So, as said before, the Folk School idea became important also for the Danish pastors in the Konference, replacing the idea of a Danish professor at Augsburg.

As far as I can ascertain, it was Pastor S. Johnson, currently of Fresno, California, who spoke out first in *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* for a Danish Folk School in Nebraska.[29] The editor

[28]Cf. J. A. Bergh, *The Norwegian Lutheran Church's History in America,* page 278-281
[29]Cf. *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* 1882, page 35 ff.

of *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* supported S. Johnson's view in a postscript. And the Folk School was discussed at district meetings and mission meetings in Fremont and Minden, Nebraska, and other places. Both pastors and lay folk endorsed the idea warmly. As early as March 3 - 5, 1882, at a meeting in Fremont, there was discussion of where the school should be located—whether in western or eastern Nebraska. At the same time as the Folk School matter, there was another question of greater significance: was it reasonable for the Danish pastors to remain in the Conference in the long run, not just in consideration of their own needs, but for the needs of their congregations and their work?

To get a picture of the extent the work of these pastors, as far as numbers can help with that, let me insert here (taken from *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad*) the following excerpts from the Parochial Report for 1882: The Danish pastors are serving 21 congregations, numbering 2,286 souls. 187 were baptized, 28 were confirmed, 913 had taken communion, and 461 services of worship had been held.[30] The great majority of these congregations were not members of the Konference, and were opposed to joining a Norwegian synod.

[30](*Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* 1882, page 335.

XV. Withdrawal from the *Konference*

It seems to me that there were several entities which can rightly be considered as steps toward one single goal—an independent Danish church synod. These things were: "The Danish Mission Committee," *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad*, "The Danish Professor at Augsburg," and a "Danish Folk School." The fact of the matter is that this is what they were. The entities mentioned above were in any case a testimony that the Danish pastors in the Konference did not want to be Norwegian, even if circumstances had caused them to seek and receive their training at a Norwegian school, and to be rostered as pastors in a Norwegian synod. It was not because of any perceived lack of recognition that the need was felt for a Danish church body , nor was it because of any feeling of being set aside in the Konference. On the contrary, it sounded with one voice from the Danish pastors: we are brothers, and have been regarded fully as such by our Norwegian coworkers. Nevertheless, the Konference was Norwegian, the overwhelming majority of its pastors were Norwegian, and the mission among Norwegians was naturally of first priority on their agenda, even as contentions and negotiations with the other Norwegians in America were likewise on the agenda. The situation could be described, as one of the Danish pastors expressed it at one meeting: "The name of the Konference is 'Norwegian-Danish', but the Norwegian aspect was growing so large that it completely overshadowed the Danish." And the fact that they belonged to a Norwegian synod hindered the work of the Danish pastors among their countrymen. The Danish Church, for its part, argued loudly, "These Augsburg graduates are not Danish pastors; they are Norwegian, and they run the errands of the Norwegians among our people." From most of their own congregations it was said, "We are happy for the Konference, but it is Norwegian, and we are Danish—and we will not be members of a Norwegian synod." Even if they did not say this in so many words, this was what they thought. This came to light also in the negotiations about this matter. This step was not taken without very careful forethought. As far as I remember, Pastor S. Johnson of Fresno, California, has told me that it was in his sod house at Munson Creek, Nebraska, where some of the Danish pastors were gathered, that the idea of a special Danish synod was discussed. That was in the autumn of 1882.[31] But other meetings were held about this same matter. The Omaha District of the "Norwegian-Danish Konference" was held in Hampton, Nebraska, Pastor H. Hansen's charge, in October 1883. Alongside the regular District Meeting, a meeting of pastors and lay people was held on October 22. The following items were on the agenda:

[31]Cf. *Danske i Amerika* I, second part, page 118.

1. Should we Danish pastors in the Norwegian-Danish Konference consider seriously our present situation?

2. Should the congregations our pastors are serving continue to stand alone, as they do now, or would it be best for them to join together in one synod?

Participating in the discussion of these points were pastors H. Hansen, A. Rasmussen, G. B. Christiansen, M. C. H. Rohe, along with congregational delegates P. C. T. Munk, Argo, William Petersen, Omaha, A. Fred Andersen, Minden, P. Henriksen, Hampton, and M. Madsen, Hampton. All of them agreed that the present situation was unhappy both for the pastors and congregations, and that it would be best to join together in one synod, seeking a relationship with Indre Mission in Denmark. Upon a motion from Pastor Rohe, it was agreed that a committee of three members be elected to carry this idea further. Elected were pastors G. B. Christiansen and M. C. H. Rohe, together with Mr. P. C. T. Munk. The committee was charged with three tasks:

1. Write a letter to the leadership of Indre Mission in Denmark, and explain our situation and intention,

2. Select a man to travel to Denmark to present the cause there, and

3. Draw up an outline for a synod constitution.

With that the meeting in Hampton, Nebraska was adjourned.[32]

The Omaha District of the Norwegian-Danish Konference, which was made up exclusively of Danish pastors, held its next meeting in Omaha, Nebraska from February 28 to March 2, 1884. The sessions were held in a Swedish Lutheran church on Cass Street. It was bitterly cold during the days of the meeting, but there was one matter discussed by the groups which especially warmed their hearts. The committee which had been established in Hampton presented its report to the District meeting in Omaha. In all there were 28 participants, five of whom were pastors, and other delegates from Danish congregations in Omaha, Council Bluffs, Iowa, Blair, Fremont, Argo, and Hampton, Nebraska. Pastor H. Hansen chaired the meeting. When the committee's report had been discussed for a while, H. Hansen asked those assembled, "Are we now entirely clear as to what is before us? Are we fully conscious of what we are undertaking? Are we prepared to offer something, yes even everything, for the Lord?" The participants then rose to their feet and answered unanimously and loudly, "Yes." Whereupon the meeting left off discussion and offered prayers. After that the pastors and congregation delegates adopted the following resolutions:

1. To withdraw from the Norwegian-Danish Konference,

2. To send a man to Denmark in the summer of 1884 to attend the summer meeting of Indre Mission in Viborg, and to speak there with its leaders and other influential men in the church about the mission in America.

[32] Cf. Pastor Rohe's memorial, pages 31 - 38.

The District meeting in Omaha also discussed these questions:

1. Should a mission society be formed to be related to the Indre Mission in Denmark?
2. Should a new Danish synod be founded? or
3. Should we explore some kind of union with the Danish Church?

No decisive actions were taken, but a committee was established to evaluate the matter and present their conclusions at a meeting which they scheduled to hold at Argo, Nebraska, in the autumn of 1884. In case this committee should recommend the establishment of an independent church body, they should come with a proposal for a synodical constitution.

The decision which had been made at the meeting to withdraw was brought to the annual meeting of the Konference. It acknowledged the reasons which the Danes gave for withdrawal, and they wished "the Danish brothers" God's blessing on their work among their countrymen in America. At this same meeting, the Konference decided to delete the word "Danish" from its name, and from that time on it was called "The Norwegian Konference."

The meeting in Omaha had elected A. M. Andersen as the one to travel to Denmark, and asked him to report the outcome of his journey to the meeting in Argo. If Andersen for some reason was unable to go, Pastor G. B. Christiansen was to go instead. A fairly detailed report of the meeting was published in *Kirkelig Samler*, which at that time was edited by Pastor Th. Lyngby of Racine.[33] Deep wonderment was expressed that the Danish pastors of the Konference could think of finding support from the Indre Mission in Denmark. Further wonder was expressed that there might be reservations about getting together with "The Danish Church," inasmuch as that was the Mother Church's true daughter in which both Grundtvigians and Indre Mission people could work together with good understanding, inasmuch as they agreed upon what was basic in Christianity. The editor saw nothing remarkable about this. He also was probably the first to use the expression "Those who have walked out," which from that point became the Danish Church's standard phrase to describe these Danish pastors and congregations. They had separated themselves in a brotherly way from the Konference, in order better to serve their own countrymen, and they wanted nothing other than to hold rock solid to the Word of God and the basis of the Lutheran Confessions. Those who seceded tended to speak constantly of the other group as the "Grundtvigians," and people in the Danish Church spoke of "those who walked out" as *"De Udtraadte."* And they kept a fairly sharp eye on one another.

From the Danish Church's side attempts were made to negotiate with the "ones who walked out" about a possible merger. Pastor Th. Helveg, who at that time was president of the Danish Church, invited the pastors who had withdrawn from the Konference to attend the Danish Church's annual meeting at Clinton, Iowa. Pastor A. M. Andersen, who was secretary of the committee which had been set up at the Omaha meeting, replied on behalf of his group that he did not see the annual convention of the Danish Church as a proper setting for negotiating about possible merger, etc. Several letters were exchanged between him and Pastor Helveg, which were published in *Kirkelig Samler.* One does not have to be terribly bright in reading between the lines to conclude that not many people from either side were thinking seriously about a

[33]Cf. *Kirkelig Samler* 1884, No. 14.

union. It seemed that they were just looking for a delicate way to avoid saying this out loud. At any rate, this is the impression I have received from reading through this correspondence.

XVI. Pastor A. M. Andersen's Trip to Denmark

Pastor Lyngy had predicted in *Kirkelig Samler* that Pastor Andersen would not achieve an official relationship with Indre Mission in Denmark, and he was shown to be correct this time. Yet there was a good prospect from the side of the seceding pastors that this could be done. It was, after all, Indre Mission people who had first expressed the idea of taking up mission to the Danes who had immigrated to America. Several of the seceding pastors had come from Indre Mission circles in Denmark, and arrived in America and at Augsburg Seminary with recommendations from Indre Mission pastors, as we have mentioned earlier. But it was a longer jump than any of those involved had anticipated, to gain official recognition of an American mission project. —And let me say this right here: it was good that such a step was never taken, even though at the beginning it was a big disappointment to the American mission friends. That is to say that church mission in America could never be carried out under European leadership without occasioning constant friction, inasmuch as the situations, conditions, and patterns of thought are so different for those people in Denmark who had never lived or worked under American conditions. Such leaders cannot well direct a mission work that is to go on under these conditions. A decision for Indre Mission to grant official recognition would be unthinkable without appropriate leadership from that side, at least as long as Vilhelm Beck lived.

Beyond this, Indre Mission in Denmark had been far from sailing always on smooth waters. It thus had to pay attention to existing conditions, and avoid collision with them as far as possible. Too, there was at one time the "Select Committee" which looked after the mission in America. Since the death of Dr. Helveg in 1883 several men of significance had been placed on the Select Committee—men for whom Vilhelm Beck had considerable respect—among them Dr. Stat Rørdam, Professor P. Madsen, Pastor Rindom and others, not to forget Pastor J. A. Hejberg, who had returned from America to become a parish pastor in Aulum and Hodsager, near Herning, as well as dean of the Hammerup diocese. At that time he was chairman of the Select Commiittee, and as such was the self-appointed spokesman for the Danish Church in America, in which he had at one time been "Chairman of the Ministerium.'" How then could a man from the distant West be effective under such circumstances? It must have required all of A. M. Andersen's patience and discretion and faith in the cause to keep his balance. Pastor Andersen was present at the summer meeting of Indre Mission in Viborg, where he laid the cause of the American mission before the governing board of Indre Mission. But the chairman of the Select Committee, Dean Hejberg was also present at the meeting with the determined aim of opposing Andersen. In a private conversation between the dean and Pastor Andersen, the

latter asserted that he and his colleagues were strongly in favor of a union, under the condition that the Danish Church would accept the Bible as the Word of God and completely adopt the Lutheran confessions. The dean thought that these were reasonable conditions, and that those pastors who would not accept them ought to be allowed to sail in their own sea. The mission's governing board conceded that it was the Indre Mission which had first spoken up for a Danish mission in America, and that it was in agreement in their basic principles with the Danish pastors who had seceded, but that they had their hands so full with the work in Denmark that they did not dare to extend their efforts also to America. In brief: if the pastors in America could take care of themselves it would be good, and if they could not, it was their problem. That at least was the purport of what was said. Pastor Andersen had a talk also with Skat Rørdam, who at that time was a dean, and later bishop of Sjælland. He was of the opinion that a union with the Danish Church would run aground, if they were required to accept the condition that the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God.

Pastor Andersen made it a point to visit a number of meetings in Indre Mission circles, both on Fyn and Jutland, and everywhere he was given only the best reception; offerings were even received for the mission in America, etc. All in all, he got the decided impression that Indre Mission and the Grundtvigian groups were a long way from coming closer together in Denmark, as adherents of the Danish Church were claiming.

Was then Pastor Andersen's errand in Denmark unsuccessful? The answer must be given in the negative. True, he did not achieve what he and those who sent him had hoped, i.e., gain official recognition by Indre Mission. But he did achieve a relationship with Indre Mission in the sense that not a few young men from Indre Mission circles were trained for ministry in the new church body established in America in 1884. More than that, Andersen was quite sure that he had found a young theologian in Denmark who was willing to come to America as a teacher in the training school he was planning to establish for pastors. This man was at that time an assistant pastor in Smidstrup and Skærup near Vejle, Pastor H. R. Steffensen. Here was a man for whom Andersen came to have a high regard, and one who had virtually promised to come to America if the call would be extended to him. Unfortunately, this never came to pass.

Pastor Lyngby informed the readers of *Kirkelig Samler* that he had learned from letters sent to him from Denmark that Pastor Andersen had not obtained a connection for himself or his colleagues with Indre Mission. On the way back to America, Pastor Andersen was accompanied by H. J. Dahlstrøm, a worker in Indre Mission in Denmark, He was being being sent by the Select Committee to work in the Danish Church in America. Dahlstrøm wished sincerely that both Andersen and the others who had seceded from the Konference would seek union with the Danish Church. And if I remember correctly, Pastor P. C. Trandberg was of the same opinion. He had been in America since the early summer of 1882, and he was present at the Danish Church's annual convention in Clinton in 1884. I also remember that he expressed the wish that the Folk School in Elk Horn might become the property of a single person, and not, as was the case then, be a property of the synod. He thought that this would make a union easier with the ones who had seceded. Later on, Trandberg was very much against such a union.[34]

[34]To read Trandberg's opinions about this matter at the meeting in Clinton, see *Kirkelig Samler*, 1884, page 500.

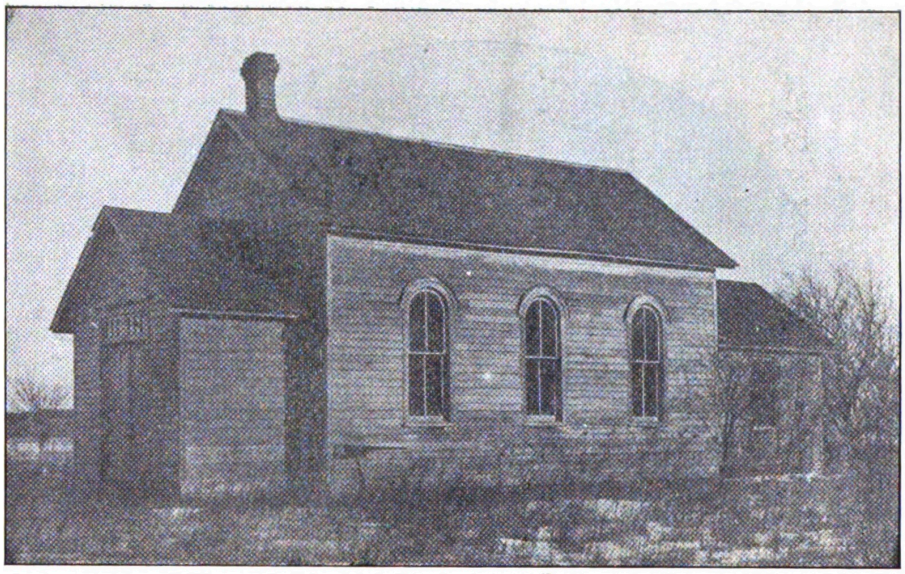


Figure 13: The Church in Argo, Nebraska

Figure 14: Pastor A. M. Andersen

XVII. The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church Society in America–1884

There is something called "distance illusion." Often an object that is looked at from a distance, appears to be both closer and more glorious than it proves to be in reality. Those who travel from the plains to a mountainous landscape become acquainted with this kind of illusion repeatedly. But that which is distant in space is also likely to become distant in time. The human mind has an inclination to idealize what is far away, that which is lost, that which one has been separated from. Nearly all emigrants suffer some kind of "distance illusion" which comes out in various forms. The difficulties seem to lose their sting with the passage of time. As the proverb says, "Time heals all wounds." The good things that one has experienced, fair and pleasing, tend to get better as time goes by, because they are idealized in our memories. Most people idealize their childhood and their childhood home. Most emigrants tend to idealize the people and the homeland which they parted from in time and space. They suffer from disappointment at a distance. Many of them who return to their home country discover that the homeland memories they have in their minds are vastly different from what they see now. It disturbs them to see this, and many have a problem with accepting it. Thus, when people in the Danish Church in America continually and always talked about "our Mother Church," in which they conceived the various divisions all eating from the same large platter, that is "distance illusion" and "distance idealization" so powerful that it can be felt and grasped. For the truth of the matter is that this same Folk Church had little use for such idealists, when they sought a call and means of living. The Folk Church could very well get along without them, and its leading men often looked askance at "Americans" who did receive calls in Denmark, especially if they had the poor taste to speak about how they conducted themselves in America.

And when those Danish pastors who had seceded from the Konference came to seek a relationship with Indre Mission in Denmark, that too was "distance illusion." They held that the movement which they themselves had come from would surely receive them now, when they were concerned to carry out mission in America in the spirit of Indre Mission! That was the reasoning of the idealists. But the Indre Mission had enough to do in Denmark. That was the answer that was given to the seceding Danes.

It is interesting, however, that this same "Indre Mission" had both time and means to take up a mission among the Danes in New Zealand. At the meeting of the Indre Mission leaders in Sorøon July 19-20, 1883, the following resolution was passed: "The work for God's

Kingdom among the Danes on New Zealand, which now is being cared for by Pastor Sass, is to be taken under the aegis of Indre Mission, and documents are to be drawn up for Pastor Sass to show that, as long as this enterprise continues as now to have our confidence, his work will be supported with an annual contribution of 1,800 crowns, counting from the 1st of May, 1883." Pastor Georg E. Sass from New Zealand had been visiting Denmark on behalf of this mission in 1883, just a year before Pastor A. M. Andersen visited there.

That same autumn, after A. M. Andersen had made his summer visit to Denmark, Indre Mission made the decision, at its meeting in Odense (1884) to form a special "Select Committee" to look after the mission in New Zealand, to make sure that the promised contribution to that mission was paid. The Indre Mission selected the following five men to serve on this "Select Committee": Pastor H. Budde-Lund of Nidløse, chairman; P. Chr. Larsen of Høve; A Busch of Horne; along with some laymen—farmer Niels Jørgensen of Aulby near Middelfart; and farmer Anders Stubkjær of Bording, near Holstebro.[35]

The mission in New Zealand, which is beyond our scope here, was a cause that Indre Mission could be concerned about, whereas it could not be bothered with mission in America. The latter mission was turned over to the "Select Committee," of which Vilhelm Beck himself became a member in 1885! Those who had withdrawn from the Konference experienced a disillusion not unlike that of A. S. Nielsen, who when he in 1871 traveled back to Denmark with a letter of call in his pocket from a Danish congregation asking the "Select Committee" to ordain him. There was no one in Denmark who had the courage to lay hands upon him and ordain him to that work he was called to do, because such a one would thus risk his position in the Danish Folk Church. And in 1884 Indre Mission would not recognize its own children in America, because it might damage their influence in Denmark!

The Meeting in Argo, Nebraska, 1884

In "New information about the Danish American mission" for July 1884, Dean J. A. Hejberg writes among other things to friends of the mission:

> "The Danish men, who formerly were placed as pastors in the so-called Danish-Norwegian Konference, have now discovered that they really do not fit in there, and they have withdrawn to form a separate synod. They have decided to apply to the Indre Mission's leadership for some kind of recognition as legitimate Lutherans. Meanwhile we have ascertained that this recognition will not be granted to the seceded Danish pastors by the Lutheran Folk Church or its pastors in Denmark. It is one of the happy signs of our time that the believing pastors and lay people of disparate groups within the Folk Church are in fact getting closer to one another in loving understanding, toward the end of doing work in common on the ground of faith, and in the battle against unbelief and indifference. Our advice to the Danish pastors in America, both those in the Danish Church and those who were once a part of the Konference is this: start looking for what you agree upon. Then the items of dispute will vanish, and no longer be deemed important. You will find that

[35] In regard to this matter cf. Blauenfeld *Den Indre Missions Historie*, pages 209-211.

> not until then, when you stop wrangling along the way, will the Lord and Master of the church, Jesus, be known by your work as His own. He will bless it with the power and warmth of the Spirit. Moreover, friends of the Lord here at home will much better be able to pray for you and work with you in the enterprise over there. God grant, that the separated ones may get on their knees together in Jesus name"

This was the advice of the Dean, and no doubt Vilhlem Beck and the rest of the governing board of Indre Mission were in agreement with him. As we noticed earlier, the Danish Church in America had invited the seceded pastors to attend their annual convention, and the door stood open for them to come into the Danish Church. And there might be much which would beckon them to enter that door, both when they looked at their own diminutive number, and that struggle which would inevitably follow if they did not go in, etc., etc.

When the seceders then did not proceed in that way, it was surely in order to let them express the misgivings that they themselves found crucial for them, when they chose another way. In the Report of the 8th convention of the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, held in 1891 in Waupaca, a short account is given for that synod's existence. This account, which is signed by "The Publishing House Committee," was no doubt written by A. M. Andersen. He writes, "When we, in spite of everything, voted to establish a synod of our own, it was for the basic reason—and one can as well say the only real reason— that we felt bound in our consciences to contend for no less than an unconditional acceptance of the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God in such a union , along with open submission to the symbolical books of the Danish Folk Church. This requirement is one which the Danish Church has not been willing to accept, even to this day. That was the situation that prevailed, when this church was organized during a meeting at St. John's Lutheran Church in Burt County, Nebraska, the 11th-14th of September, 1884. As truly as we wanted to be faithful to our conviction and to work as Danes among Danes for the salvation of souls and the furtherance of God's Kingdom on the basis of our Lutheran Confessions, this was the only way which stood open for us, i.e., to establish for ourselves an independent synod. It is true that the 'Danish Church' had let us understand that it would receive us, and let us work, each according to our own conviction. That was very liberal, even more liberal than we would wish. It was our conviction that a union built only on tolerance could never be a true blessing for our people. For this, and for no other reason, we voted this independent status, until such time as our Lord in his wisdom and marvelous guidance could lead to a union among Danish Lutherans in America on a better ground than what existed. Thus we undertook in God's name to form a synod and adopt a constitution.."footnoteReport cited above, pages 44 - 45.

From this explanation of the reason for what happened at the meeting in Argo, we have previously selected the subjects about which we will hear more now. St. John's congregation, the call of Pastor A. M. Andersen, was one of the few Danish congregations which had formally joined the Konference. As secretary of the group of pastors who had seceded, Andersen made the necessary announcements for the meeting, in keeping with the decision of the Omaha convention to hold its next meeting at Argo from September 11 to 14, 1884. All of the pastors who had seceded showed up: A. M. Andersen, H. P. Berthelsen, G. B. Christiansen, H. Hansen, A Rasmussen and M. C. Hansen Rohe. I don't know how many delegates from the congregations were present, but there were some. The committee appointed at the Omaha meeting brought forward a resolution for the establishment of a synod, with an accompanying constitution.

After some discussion, it was agreed to band together as a synod under the name, "The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church Society in America." They agreed on the following confessional basis and purpose:

1. The Holy Scriptures, as fully comprising God's revealed Word for the salvation and blessedness of people and thus the highest authority over faith, doctrine, and life.
2. As a short and faithful expression of the authority of God's Word our society holds fast and confesses the confessional writings of the Danish Mother Church, viz. the ancient symbols—the Apostles Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed; the unaltered Augsburg Confession, and Luther's Small Catechism."

In regard to its purpose, the meeting declared: "With thanks to God, this synod embraces the work with which it has been entrusted, i.e. to spread the fragrance of Christ among our people." "Our goal on the ground of this our Lutheran confession is to work with the means which God has provided to his people, and with the abilities and strengths he gives us, for the spreading and establishing of God's Kingdom, especially among our countrymen in America."

The convention also established a committee to set up a training school for future pastors and put it into operation as soon as possible.

At this same meeting the number of pastors was increased to nine, with a Norwegian, seminary graduate Joh. Risdal, ordained as a pastor upon call to the congregation in Fremont, Nebraska, and candidate P. Nielsen as pastor for the congregation in Hutchinson, Minnesota, and Pastor J. Danielsen. The latter had been unjustly excluded from the Danish Church at their annual meeting in 1880. He had applied for admission to the new synod. This was after Pastor A. S. Nielsen in Chicago, who had been president of the Danish Church when Danielsen was excluded, had examined the matter more closely and found nothing to hinder his acceptance. (I have in my time heard Pastor Kirkeberg, who probably was very active in Danielsen's exclusion, say that if he would meet Pastor Danielsen again, he would sincerely ask for his forgiveness for the injustice that had been done to him).

In regard to the size of the new synod, Pastor Rohe says, "The society consists at the time of its formation of nine pastors, 19 congregations, and 15 preaching places."[36] Pastor A. M. Andersen reported that the society had five pastoral calls in Nebraska, one in Iowa, one in Kansas, and two in Minnesota; each of these consisted of about 200 souls, of whom less than half were confirmed.[37] The first president of the new synod was Pastor H. Hansen, its first secretary was Pastor A. M. Andersen, and its first treasurer Mr. P. Clausen. Pastor Rohe says, "The new synod's governing board consisted of five members, three pastors and two laymen, and the charge given them was to carry out with all energy inner mission, and to send out laymen, if such can be found, to work also for the Kingdom of God among our people.."footnoteObituary, page 40.

Pastors Hansen Rohe and A. Rasmussen were elected as editors of *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad.*

In this way a new Danish church synod came into being, a logical consequence of that hint which Grove-Rasmussen in his time had given the Select Committee, in regard to the stance

[36]See the obituary by Pastor I. M. Hansen, page 40.
[37]Cf. Report, 8th annual convention, page 46.

future Danish pastors in the Konference would take, and that the "Danish Mission Society" and later "The Danish Church in America" would take, both in regard to the Word of God and the Lutheran confessions.

Before we proceed further, it is in order to remark that not all Danish pastors in the Konference joined the new Danish synod. Pastor H. N. Thorup continued his membership in the Konference. P. J. Østergaard, who was ordained in 1884, remained in the Konference, until he sought admission to the young Danish synod in 1886.[38] Fr. Jensen Møller, a seminary student from Denmark and candidate in theology from Augsburg Seminary (which he attended for four years) was another one who also did not join the new synod at the beginning. Thus at the beginning in 1884, only two thirds (6) of the Danish pastors in the Konference seceded from it. Meanwhile H. N. Thorup was the only Danish pastor who remained in the Konference (besides C. L. Clausen). He kept his membership in the Konference and in its successor, "The United Norwegian Church" until his death.

[38]Cf. *Kirkebladet*, Year 1886, page 276.

XVIII. How the Young Church Society Was Received

It has long been experienced in this world that anyone who feels that he has sole rights in some area, also has the propensity, among other things, not to have anyone else at his side who has the right—maybe in this case, the sole right—to be obstinate. Cain, as you know, was the older son, and as such began to envy Abel, especially when the Lord was pleased with Abel's offering. Ishmael was likewise the older son, and it is told that when Isaac grew up, he made fun of him. No one who knows anything about human nature has any doubt about the reason for this. Joseph was also the eldest son born to Rachel, but Leah's sons were older. We have heard about what they did to Joseph, when they noticed their father's special love for him. And we know the reason that the Pharisees hated the Lord Jesus: he disputed their sole right to be the interpreters of the Law in Israel.

The fact that the Danish Church in America considered itself to have exclusive right to carry on mission in America is no dream or creation of fantasy. There are many and strong evidences of this. Of these, a number have been cited earlier and will not be repeated here, even though they could be multiplied plentifully.

As a consequence, the Danish Church did not look with kind eyes on the settlers who had landed in Nebraska with the goal of getting land and a place to live there. This fact is really self-evident. Before we hear more about this, it can be of interest to know:

How many Danes were there in America in 1884?

The approximate answer to this question comes from the census statistics of the United States. There we read that from 1820 to 1884, 94,660 Danes immigrated to the United States of America. One should notice that those Danes who landed at Canadian ports, to travel from there to the United States are not included. If one subtracts the deceased, and counts those born, and those from South Jutland, you get a total of significantly more than 100,000 Danes in the U. S. in 1884. By far the largest bulk of immigrant Danes were found in Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska and Wisconsin. In 1880 Wisconsin had the greatest number of Danes, with 8,797. In 1890 Iowa holds the record for the most Danes, with 15,519. Nebraska is next, with 14,335 Danes, whereas Utah lags behind with 9,023 Danes. Of the great cities, Chicago has the greatest number of Danes with 7,087. Next is Omaha, with 4,242 Danes. When one looks at these numbers, one would think that this field was large enough for work—both for those who had the "exclusive right," and the newcomers of 1884. This will probably become more apparent when we find out:

How large was the Danish Church in America in 1884?

The approximate answer to this is found in R. Andersen's book, "Emigrant Mission—the church's directions for immigrants" (1884). In this helpful booklet the President (at that time) of the Danish Church, Pastor Th. Helveg (pages 87-92 of his manuscript) has given an "Overview of the Field of work in 1883." By comparing these figures with the statistical tables of Danes in the states noted, you get a fairly clear concept of both the Danish Church's size and the size of the mission field to be harvested. An attempt to do this follows. We will follow the same order as the one given in Pastor Helveg's "Overview".

1. California

In this great state, there were, according to the census figures, 3,748 Danes in 1880, and in 1890 7,764 Danes. The Danish Church had one pastor, four congregations, and 6-7 preaching places - some 6-7,000 souls.

2. South Dakota

According to the census figures, this state which now comprises North and South Dakota was a territory in 1880 which included 1,447 Danes. In 1890 there were 2,860 Danes in North Dakota nd 4,369 Danes in South Dakota. In 1883 the Danish Church had one pastor and six congregations with a total number of souls there of 440.

3. Iowa

According to the U. S. census, the Danish population here was 6,901 in 1880, and in 1890 it was 15,519. The Danish Church had six pastors there in 1883, 25 congregations and preaching places with a total of around 2,000 souls.

4..Illinois

1880: 6,029; 1890, 12,044 Danes. In 1883 the Danish Church had four pastors, nine congregations and preaching places, numbering 1,629 souls.

5. Michigan

1880: 3,513; 1890: 6,335 Danes. In 1883 the Danish Church numbered three pastors, 11 congregations and preaching places, with a total of about 400 souls.

6. Minnesota

1880: 6,071; 1890: 14,133 Danes. In 1883 the Danish Church had two pastors here, five congregations and preaching places, numbering about 350 souls.

7. Nebraska

1880: 4,511; in 1890: 14,345 Danes. In 1883 the Danish Church had five pastors here, with 11 congregations and preaching places—a total of 7-800 souls.

8. New York, New Jersey and Connecticut

In these states in 1880 there were respectively 3,145, 1,264, and 428 Danes, there were, likewise respectively, 6,238, 2,991 and 1,474 Danes. Here the Danish Church had one pastor in 1883, who visited and served 15 or 16 congregations, most of which were very small.

9. Wisconsin

Wisconsin had 8,797 Danes in 1880, and in 1890 there were 13,885 Danes. In 1883 the Danish Church had six pastors, 21 congregations and preaching places, with 2,590 souls.

10. Kansas

This state had 1,838 Danes in 1880 and 3,136 in 1890. The Danish Church had two small congregations since 1874, along with one preaching place in Kansas. In 1881 these two small congregations included 167 souls.[39] No information is found from this state in Pastor Helveg's "Oversight" for 1883, since the congregation was without a pastor at that time.

* * *

The Danish Church had 31 pastors in 1883 and six unordained ministry candidates. Pastor Helveg says in his "Oversight" that "the Danish Church has taken up proclamation of the Gospel in twelve states."

Thus, if you take the total of pastors, congregations and members of congregations, and compare these with the total of Danish immigrants to this country at the same time, it does not seem that fields for work were lacking. Even if the Danish Church, as it claimed, had the exclusive right to carry on mission among Danes in America, it was far from able to accomplish this task.

In *Kirkelig Samler* of October 26, 1884 one finds among "Church Notices" an article with the title, "Those Who Have Seceded." The editor begins by calling the attention of readers to the publication, *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad*, which he says was established for the special purpose of fighting against *Kirkelig Samler* and the Danish Church in America. It seems that now *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* has become the official organ for "The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church Society in America." That is to say, that the ones who have seceded have now formed a new, independent church synod under a new name. In regard to this, the editor of *Kirkelig Samler* points out that:

[39] Cf. "New Reports."1882, page 84.

1. Formation of a new synod was unnecessary, inasmuch at the Danish Church had extended them a genuine hand of brotherhood, with an offer of all the freedom they might wish in pastoral and synodical work, 'both theoretically and practically' in doctrine and life.

2. The name of the new synod composed of those who had seceded was a **'grand fraud'**. They call themselves the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church Society in America, to signify that they are the only real Danish Lutheran Church over here. In any case, they have indicated by formulating their name in this way that every Dane who comes over here from the fatherland—many of whom who do not understand how the whole thing hangs together—will think that he will find the Mother Church's daughter among the group who seceded. The truth is, that these people have invented and made for themselves a new synod—one which is neither commissioned nor recognized by the Mother Church. Indeed, it is one which has neither support from nor connection with any of the movements within the Danish Folk Church.."

3. The matter is quite clear. These folks have made their choice, they have broken off from us, broken from the Mother Church, and have elevated themselves to the seat of judgment. Their only access to this seat that they have is by way of narrow-mindedness and intolerance. So they will have to realise that we will continue working in our own way, without further regard to this newly made synod. As long as they blame us for heresy, any kind of cooperation is impossible. Indeed, it must be self-evident that these people feel themselves constrained to work against us."

Thus far the quote from *Kirkelig Samler*. Other articles which came out subsequently in the same paper had basically the same tenor. i.e.. that the Danish Church had the exclusive right to carry on mission in America. Further commentary on this is probably superfluous.

So it came to pass that from 1884 on there were two Danish Lutheran Church synods in America, each putting the blame on the other for the fact that they were two, and each assuring itself that it wanted union on a Lutheran foundation. As strange as this is, one probably has no reason to doubt that on both sides there were those who had honorable intentions. To understand this, one must pay attention to how differently the two groups were brought up, and to their attitude toward both Denmark and America. Especially was this true of the leading men on both sides.

As we have seen, the two leading men of the Danish Church at that time were the young pastors Th. Lyngby and Th. Helveg. Both turned out to be only visitors in America. When they spoke of the Lutheran Church they had in mind the Danish Folk Church, in which they expected to find their future work. And they did find it there, one soon, the other later. It is almost self-evident that they must bespeak its cause while they were in America. The non-theological candidates among the pastors of the Danish Church could not naturally think otherwise, since these two men resembled "the Mother Church" as much as they did. One could not expect anything else of them here in "the far country." It seemed that they closed their eyes to the conditions and circumstances, both inward and outward, that were so different here from what existed in Denmark. These differences really made it a vain dream to build a "Folk Church" here for those who intended to stay in this country. It might have seemed an important goal to those who stayed here only a few years, and then went their way. From their standpoint it must naturally have appeared as narrow-mindedness and obstinacy to be

Figure 15: The First School in Blair

required to recognize the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God, and to accept unconditionally the Lutheran Church's confessions.

This may be contrasted with the view of the leading men on the other side, who had been trained in the seminary of a Lutheran free church. After their time of mentoring with pastors whose ministries had been spent in a free church, they did not find any virtue in following a Danish Folk Church model, at least as far as doctrine and praxis was concerned. These men were working among countrymen who had come to America to stay. They could see that a Lutheran free church which did not unconditionally lift up the Scriptures as the Word of God, would be a self-contradiction from their point of view. They held that in the same meausre that they surrendered these points they would cease to be Lutheran—just as a nation without nationality or a people who did not speak their own language.

Keeping in mind these differing points of view, it is not so difficult to understand why there had to be two synods in 1884. To delineate these different ways that they viewed the Church's mission is significant in helping a person to understand it, who is now living in the present time. For this reason we have dwelt at length and in detail about something which already lies a generation behind us in time. Principles are stronger than the people who hold them, and this is true even after the people who were their spokesmen are dead. And if we would understand this church conflict, we must first understand the principles that people contended for with such vigor.

Figure 16: Pastor G. B. Christiansen

SUPPLEMENT

I. Pastor Niels Madsen (1842 - 1881)

Since this man was one of the first Danes to study at Augsburg Seminary, first at Marshall, Wisconsin and subsequently in Minneapolis—and who also is the first Danish Lutheran pastor in America to die—I expect that it is in order that some words in his memory should be found in this chapter of the United Church's prehistory. In *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* No. 8 for 1881, his fellow student at Augsburg, who later was his coworker in the Danish mission, Pastor H. Hansen, has given a little outline of his course of life, from which some of the most important parts are excerpted here.

> "Niels Madsen was born in Lille Damme, Fanefjord Parish on Møn on August 12, 1842. His parents were of peasant stock, who owned a small property themselves. He spent his childhood at home and in school. On October 5, 1856 he was confirmed in Fanefjord Church by the parish pastor, P. F. Obel. As a native of Møn, N. Madsen grew up close to the sea, and a desire to be a sailor was in his blood. But his parents were very much opposed to letting him follow that desire. He continued to plead with them about this, but it was not until after an uncle supported him that at last they gave their consent. He left his home at age 15 to become a sailor. The life of a seafarer is full of dangers, and more than once he was rescued from some which he experienced. But he did not know the Hand that rescued him, nor did he seek Him. Niels Madsen was a person of quiet and thoughtful nature, and as such the rawness of a seaman['s life] at length did not appeal to him. It is enough to say that he gave it up, and headed on the way to America in 1863. As soon as he landed in New York, he was put to bed with a difficult illness. He lay alone, a stranger and sick among foreigners. He must have severely missed that care that he might have received from friends if he had remained with them. But his sickness was not unto death. To the contrary, he came to a living realization that there is a living God. who had called for him.
>
> "After his recovery, he made his journey to Moline, Illinois, where he found several of his countrymen. He joined the Swedish Lutheran Church, and that became a matter of great importance to him. It was there he now learned to know himself as a helpless sinner and also to know Jesus as the one who saves sinners who take refuge in him. In other words, Niels Madsen now became an assured Christian, who felt at home with the children of God as his family, and there he found love for his fellow men as fellow sinners, for whom God's grace had been prepared.

"After becoming a believer in this way, he had no thought at that time of becoming a pastor, since he did not see himself as particularly suited for such a responsible work. But then he attended a mission meeting, where the spiritual plight of Scandinavians in America was portrayed with living colors. Niels Madsen felt himself taken hold of by this, and made the decision to do everything he could to meet that need. He decided that if possible, he would seek training as a proclaimer of the Word among his countrymen in America. With that goal in mind, he applied for admittance to the training school of the Konference in Marshall, Wisconsin. His application was approved, and after the Christmas break in 1871 he began his studies at the above-named school.

"He made diligent use of his time and abilities, leading an exemplary life as a Christian, and thus won the confidence of his teachers and fellow students. After he had studied at Augsburg for nearly four years, he took his final examinations in the spring of 1874. He was ordained on June 14, 1874 as a pastor upon call from New Denmark and its annex congregations in Brown County, Wisconsin. The ordination took place at the annual meeting of the Konference in Fort Howard, Wisconsin, and he entered his new work shortly afterward. Madsen was a man with a quiet, unostentatious nature, but also a devout man of prayer, diligent in study, preparing his sermons with care, and conscientious in attention to this work. It was his goal to live for the Lord personally, and to lead people into his fellowship.

"But it was not long until his somewhat frail health became worse in his somewhat extended parish. His organs of speech were affected, and he was afflicted by bad sieges of coughing. He felt weak, without strength in his body, so that it was only with great difficulty that he could carry out his work. He sought the help of several doctors, but no one was able to help him. So he felt compelled, on the ground of his poor health, to lay down his pastoral work in 1880, in the hope of recovering his health.

"Upon the advice of several doctors who had urged him to seek a milder climate, he decided to travel to Nebraska to see if that would help. In mid-July 1880 he made the journey from Wisconsin to Pastor A. M. Andersen in Argo, Nebraska. He stayed there for nine months, and seemed to be significantly better. In the month of October he journeyed out to Hamilton County, Nebraska, to be with another of his comrades from Augsburg Seminary, Pastor H. Hansen. Also here he felt a little stronger, as long as he was able to be outside. But when the cold weather came, he had to stay indoors and there his weakness became more apparent each day. He could only with difficulty attend church, which was situated only a few steps from the parsonage. On the Sunday after New Year, 1881, he was in church for the last time. In the middle of January his sickness took a turn for the worse. One evening after going to bed, he called Mrs. H. Hansen (the pastor was away) and said to her that he expected that this night would be his last. He also said that he was very disturbed in his mind, and he requested that she read God's Word and pray for him. For three days he was affected with great anxiety.

"'For six years I have spoken God's Word and comforted others,' he said, 'and now I am without comfort myself.' Often he would exclaim, 'It is difficult for a pastor

to be saved.' Constantly he begged those standing around him to read the Word of God for him and pray. In time the gloom disappeared, and the sun of grace broke forth from the dark clouds, so that he could accept the unmerited grace of Jesus Christ, and release himself to God's will regarding his life or death.

"In this condition he lived for another eighteen days, becoming steadily weaker, but complained only over the pain in his throat, and also that he was so tired. Some hours of the day he was able to sit up in a chair. On January 30, which was a Sunday, he could tell that death was drawing near. He wanted to write down his final testament, but he was so weak that he could not write. So he made an oral declaration of his wishes about his effects and his burial. The following day he was given the Sacrament of the Altar, and on Tuesday he asked his friends to pray that he might soon be set free. On Friday he lost his voice, and could no longer speak. But he was conscious of what was going on around him. Just an hour before his death, he took part in evening devotions which friends conducted at his bedside.

"To the amazement of everyone, he answered the question that Jesus had posed to Martha, when John 11:21 was read, by saying clearly, 'Yes.' Pastor Hansen then asked him, 'Are you now ready to give yourself over to your Savior, in order to be sure of coming home to him?' His answer again was a discernible 'Yes.'

"An hour later, on February 4, 1881, at 9:45 in the evening, he breathed his last. On the 7th of February, which was a bitter winter day with cold and snow, his dust was laid to rest in the church yard at Hampton, Nebraska. In spite of the difficult weather, most of the members of the congregation followed along to the grave. A memorial stone is placed there now, given by his friends."

Pastor Rohe, one of Pastor Madsen's fellow students at Augsburg, says of him, "He is an unusually quiet man, with a heart which longs for the salvation of souls. We were students together for a year. He lives in Brown county, Wisconsin, where he is the pastor of several congregations."[40]

New Denmark, where Pastor Madsen served, was at that time a rather difficult place to work. We have seen earlier that it was here the Baptists obtained one of their first congregations in America (1869). The Danish apostle of Adventism, Johan Gotlieb Mathiasen (John G. Matheson) had come as a young man to New Denmark with his parents. After he became an Adventist, he began to preach the Adventist tidings for his countrymen here, and he got some of the older settlers and their children to go along with him. Those who became neither Baptists nor Adventists joined the Norwegian Lutheran pastors, of which Pastor Johan Olsen who had worked in New Denmark and was at a later time president of the Konference, was one. Or, they became Free Thinkers, as they liked to call themselves. Besides the pastors of the Konference, or more correctly, those of the Augustana Synod, there had been one, probably Norwegian born Pastor of the General Synod, Geo. Olsen. (who was probably not one of mother's best children) who became a Free Thinker. Pastor Madsen, who replaced the Norwegian pastor from the Konference, was not allowed to be alone in the work of the oldest Danish settlement in America. While he was ministering there, a little Danish congregation was formed, no doubt with the help of Jens Jensen, one of the Danish Church's lay preachers. This little congregation

[40]Cf. Rohe's memorial, page 30.

sought pastoral service from the Danish Church, and got Pastor N. Thomsen to preach in New Denmark. When Pastor Madsen moved from New Denmark in 1880, his church and the Danish Church's congregation merged and were able to get R. Nielsen from the Danish Church as their pastor. He gave Pastor Madsen a gracious tribute: "The Danish pastor who had lived here was a Danish man from the Konference (Pastor Madsen). Universally he is given praise as a devoted believer, who wanted to serve the cause of our Lord and to lead people from sin to the way of truth. He therefore set himself to oppose the Free Thinker stream of philosophy which had gained entrance among the people. But he was unable to completely stop the mouths of these happy followers of Voltaire who had their hearth and place of liberty in the taverns and in the so-called shanties in the woods, where the strongest of their men had winter work, where not only the frightful smallpox took its victims, but roughness and drunkenness took even more. No wonder, that this pastor's weak voice was neither heard nor followed, because the great majority seemed to have no time, and because it was not their goal to do God's will, but rather the world's."[41]

Pastor Madsen did not leave financial wealth at his death. Possibly he had earned some money before he began his studies. His salary as a pastor was probably never large, and even though he was very thrifty and was never married, he certainly could not save up money as a pastor in New Denmark in those days. Let that be as it may. How much he left behind I don't know. But one can read in *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* No. 12, 1882 that $150.00 was sent in to the Konference's Danish Mission toward worthy causes by L. C. Madsen from Pastor N. Madsen's estate. In the same paper, No. 14, appears another note of receipt, "To the Danish Mission of the Konference by L. C. Madsen from Pastor Madsen's estate, $100.00." And in the same paper (No. 6, 1882), toward the same end: "From L. C. Madsen, New Windsor, Illinois, $40.00." In *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* 1883, No. 9, can be seen that in 1882 Pastor Madsen's brother, L. C. Madsen of New Winsor, Illinois has given from his late brother's estate $500.00 to the school fund of the Konference.

Pastor A. M. Andersen comes out with the above information in a rejoinder to the editor of *Lutheraneren,* who had said in connection with Andersen's proposal to have a Danish professor at Augsburg, that such could only be considered after the Danish congregations gather an adequate fund from which to pay the salary of this person. Andersen brings the reminder that the Danes have made their contribution to the Norwegian fund for teachers each year, and at the same time have given their contributions to the fund for teacher's salaries. Unfortunately, since I do not have a complete set of *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad* issues, it is possible that Pastor Madsen has contributed even more to worthwhile causes. But that which I have cited is enough to show that he particularly remembered that school where he received his training for the ministry, together with that mission in which he had worked so faithfully, when he made decisions regarding the use of his money after his death. Also as a pastor he is seen to have been a diligent contributor to the various mission funds.

On the other hand, one can find only a few written contributions from his pen in *Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad*, and these few are very brief.

[41]Cf. 'Messages' 1883, pages 150 - 11.

B. The Constitution for Danish Congregations and The Synod

The Ordination Vow

"This Grundtvigian congregation has its Confession, its Catechism, and now also its Altar Book and Ritual, and for a long time, its Hymnbook prepared. But it is in Askov that it is presented for the first time as completed. This is done in this way so that there shall be no more doubt about its existence."

—Bishop O. Laub in a letter to Bishop Martensen on the 20th of October, 1874.[42]

What Bishop Laub says here applies to those concerned in Denmark, not America. As what follows will show, the Danish Church in America was in this respect out in front of the meeting in Askov by some years. The meeting in Askov took place August 2-4, 1881. But when it is mentioned in the letter cited above, it speaks about something that happened in Askov (1874), i.e. Folk School leader Appel's ordination as pastor. The Gruntvigian church in America had its constitution for congregations completed prior to 1874.

Model Constitution for Congregations

The model constitution for all congregations of the Danish Church appears as follows:

Paragraph 1. The congregation calls itself The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Congregation in . . . . . It agrees to be without connection with synods or other American church societies, but will always remain as close to the Lutheran Church in Denmark as possible.

Paragraph 2. The faith of the holy universal Church: We receive The Apostolic Confession of Faith as the only infallible basis, source and rule for our faith and life. Note: This Church's Confession is our baptismal covenant of renunciation and faith.

Paragraph 3. In the closest agreement with the faith of the church (Paragraph 2) is the Holy Scripture—the books of the Old as well as the New Testament, which we therefore acknowledge and receive as containing wisdom for salvation for fellow believers of this faith, and it is in this way our book of illumination and edification on the ground of faith (Paragraph 2).

Paragraph 4. As a visible and clear confession of divine truth, we accept and confess as our own the confessional statements of the Danish and Norwegian Church, specifically, the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Catechism.

Paragraph 5. The administration of the holy sacraments, along with other worship elements in this congregation, shall be in agreement with the Altar Book and Ritual of the Danish Church.

Paragraph 6. The office of preaching and administration of the sacraments in this congregation are to be carried out only by properly called and ordained Lutheran pastors.

Paragraph 7. The congregation recognizes its Christian obligation to care for the children and youth in its trust with human and Christian enlightenment to the best of its ability, and to stand by the needy in the congregation with counsel and help.."

[42]Cf. *The Life of Bishop Otto Laub*, by Mynster and Schepelern, II, page 361.

The Constitution of the Synod

The Danish Church has had a long row of constitutions for its guidance, too extensive to be cited here. Its first constitution was adopted at the convention in Neenah in 1878, and consisted, like the model constitution for congregations, of seven paragraphs. Regarding its confession of faith, Paragraph 1 says: "The pastors and congregation delegates assembled at the church convention in Neenah declare ourselves to be 'The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,' which will stand on the faith basis of the Mother Church, and we decide as a synod to carry this name in official use."

Note: The Danish Church dates its existence from 1872 (or 1871), but got its constitution first in 1878. A new edition was also adopted in 1884, 1888 and in 1893 there were not less than two. In the first article of the edition of 1888 you find "The name of the synod is 'The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,' and as such it stands upon the faith basis of the holy Christian Church, and declares itself to be in agreement with the Holy Scriptures and the symbolic books of the Mother Church."

The Ministerial Vow

I, ..., having been officially called as pastor of The Danish Evangelical Lutheran congregation in . . . . . ., with a clear conscience that I have not used any dishonorable means to enter this ministry, vow before the presence of the all-knowing God:

First, that I will be diligent in proclaiming God's Word in its truth and purity, as it is found written in the prophetic and apostolic writings and in the symbolic books of our Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, with due veneration and propriety administer the holy sacraments as instituted by Christ, and that here as in the other holy actions, carry out everything in agreement with the requirements of the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church.

Second, that I will, according to my ability, oppose any misuse of the holy Means of Grace and combat any teachings that are in conflict with the Church's confession of faith. At the same time I will faithfully work for the Christian enlightening and direction of the young people.

Further, that I will strive by diligent and serious study of God's Word and the holy doctrines of the faith, constantly seek to improve and form myself to be fitted for this holy ministry, and that I will do my best, as befitting a servant of the Word, to lead the congregation by good example, so that in carrying out my service with obedience and accountability in its different areas according to the ecclesiastical rules and regulations, I show such a relationship to superiors and brothers in the ministry that there is no ground for complaint against me.

All this I vow, with the Day of Judgment in prospect, to keep conscientiously, according to the grace that God provides me to do this.

Concluding Remarks

Since we now have reached that point in time which was set as a goal for our historical development, i.e. 1884, the year that the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church Society was formed in Argo, Nebraska, it is probably in order that we take a look backward and think about and ponder what it has taught us. In this vein there are several things which become evident to each thoughtful beholder. As the first of these, I permit myself to point out:

The great and significant change

which has come over the Danish immigrants to America in ecclesiastical outlook. For a long time—too long as it proved—it appeared that the mission among Danes in America (whose numbers increased year after year) should be left to the Methodists, Baptists, and Adventists. After all, they had support from their respective brothers in faith in America. These colleagues in faith worked heartily among the Danish Lutheran immigrants, and were able to establish, as we have seen, some of the first congregations among Danes in America. A number of these have since ceased to exist, and their church buildings were sold. There were actually very few, after the Danish mission in America began to work, who became active in the spiritual directions named above. This gives historical and practical evidence that a religiosity without sacraments was something that the Danes, also in America, did not want to have anything to do with. Grace without the means of grace is a self-contradiction, just as meaningless as grace for all is without means of grace.

For a time there was some effort to have the mission among Danes in America managed by the American Episcopal Church. The constantly active Rasmus Sørensen was a "lay reader" for a time in that church in Wisconsin, and his son, Martin Fr. Sørensen, was a priest in that church body. Somewhat later an American bishop traveled to the Nordic countries, seeking men to carry on Danish mission in the name of the Episcopal Church. But none were to be found. And only relatively few Danes became members of that church, even though they had more than a few Danish priests, and even more of Danish descent. That the great change we are discussing here did not become even greater can be attributed to several things: among these is the fact that from the beginning there were too few workers and too small means to work with. However, we must not forget that we all owe a debt of gratitude to those men, both in Denmark and here in this country, who dared to take up this great work of preaching the Gospel to their immigrant countrymen in America. Of these, most have died, and others have grown old under the heat and burden of the day. It is good to look at those still among us a little more closely. They broke the ground on which we now live and build. We would wish that the evening of their lives would not be gloomy, but gentle and friendly.

And we owe a big thanks to the many men and women in Denmark, who accompanied the work here with both their prayers and their gifts. There is a large number of them, and their gifts add up to large sums, even in the period of time up till now. In the same way we owe thanks to the men who by speaking and writing held up the cause of the American mission in Denmark, and gathered the gifts which were contributed to this cause. It is a legitimate question, to ask what would have become of the mission in American without their faithful and persistent cooperation.

The faithfulness of ordinary people.

The time frame of 1872-1884 now lies so far, far back in time, especially if time is not measured only by one year after another, but also, and especially so, by what happens in a frame of time. How few and poor the Danes were, in contrast to what they are today! Only a few of them who had anything to do with the church owned their own home, particularly not in the cities. and towns. Most of them had not been in the country very long, and wages were very modest, in comparison to what they are today. Those who had established a claim on a piece of land, with or without forest, were there in the earliest beginning, and times were tough for many of them. In the forest lands there was wood enough to build houses with, but the soil had be carved out, almost inch by inch. If a man could get away to do harvest or railway work for a time, he probably could pay his taxes and get the foodstuff he needed. But money in the pocket or bank was not often found. And those who had come to take up a homestead on the prairies, were confronted with something even worse, when the grasshoppers harvested, year after year, what the farmers had sowed. Truly the times which they had to sweat through were hard. But it was from this kind of people, manual laborers, day laborers, and farmers just getting started, that the first Danish congregations were established in America. It was a joy to read in the small Danish church papers, that they built one church after the other in town and country. They also sent in gifts to mission—both to inner mission and mission among the heathen and for help to their countrymen in need. If you think about it in one way, they were small and poor congregations, but in anoother way they were rich. They indeed put many of us to shame who live in a later time, in this respect as in others! It has probably always been the case in the world that those who have the least, are the most willing to sacrifice. I wonder if this is not also true in the Church? It often happens that the poor day laborer has more that he can get by without than the wealthy business man. For this reason a kind of glory shines over these first days, which those who lived through them now miss in the work of the church, when the resources are present in a greater measure. There is always satisfaction in giving, whenever and however one really gives.

Work and Opposition

As we have seen, the church work among Danes in America has been divided right from the beginning—not just between Reformed and Lutheran bodies, but also within these bodies. In other words, there has not only been activity, but also counter-activity, and that not always of the best or most pleasant kind. It probably is natural that the one side would put the blame for this on the other side. This will be the case as long as human nature is what it is. One cannot doubt that this schism has caused much harm for the work. That this division has kept many from joining the church is beyond doubt. But that is only one side of the matter. Opponents need to learn from each other, to have an educative influence upon each other, probably more than they themselves would like to concede. However, this is not any less the case in Denmark with the church parties there. True enough, it is the contradictory views in Denmark which have been brought over to America, only with this difference, that the people in Denmark were found—and are found—within the same Folk Church frame. But over here they exist under the conditions of independence [separation of Church and State], where each

must look out for himself. The Danish Church has constantly harped on the note that it will permit the same freedom and roominess in its territory, as that of the Folk Church in Denmark. But this practice has not proven feasible, because we here in America live under completely different conditions than in Denmark. On the contrary, there is no doubt that the split in the Danish mission can also be seen from a brighter side. It has served to keep people active and alert. In that way people have been reached who otherwise would not have been reached. This seems to be undeniable. And it is thus with regard to the split in the work of mission, led one to expect that the mission, under the conditions it met, would go and must go, even if some people wished that it might be under other conditions. But it is to be hoped that each of the parties learned from experience, that without the Word of God and the Church's confession, the church is surrendering its own life. And it will not work to reverse these two, by making the Church's confession of faith into God's Word, or God's Word into the Church's confession. That would be the same as saying that the sun is to set its course by the clock, or to make the source independent of the river.

God's Word is Living and Powerful

When one looks back from today's viewpoint on those long vanished days of the Danish mission in America, one can see that much was neglected that could have been done, much lost which could have been saved, just as much was done which one could wish had been done in another way. There were many offenses, which our work suffers from even today. But in spite of everything, a sizable piece of work was done for the salvation of souls and the planting of the Lutheran Church. It may be that all this has not yet found the appreciation that it deserves. Generations to come will look back on it as a great work, carried on by humble people with limited means under difficult conditions. It may be an enterprise, all things considered, that probably has no parallel in the history of the Danish church. The pioneers who were there to carry out this work need not be ashamed, even though no one knows better than they the mistakes and omissions and sins which occurred, and no one more than they could have wished that the work had been both greater and better.

The mission, the Lutheran mission, among Danish immigrants in America is probably not what is specially discussed by our countrymen who have visited America and then afterward have published reports of their visit over here. For that reason the story is not known as a whole in Denmark, nor is it counted for much—even though in this later time there is a refreshing change to be noted about this. In any case, it will likely be shown that the mission and its work, in spite of its frailty, has been a mighty source of blessing for the Danish people in America as a whole . Its accomplishments, both direct and indirect, are of unaccounted value. A further attempt to show this would lead us entirely too far away from our actual subject. So we make only a couple of remarks. There has been so much talk about protecting the Danish language and its propagation in America. There really is no other factor which can be compared to the church in working for this cause. Until now, the church has chiefly made use of our mother tongue in the services of worship and other meetings, in Sunday School and vacation Bible School, at folk schools and seminaries, as well as in its publications, books, and periodicals. And on the other hand, there is probably no other entity like the church which has worked for a healthy transition to the use of the English language. This is a natural development which

carries us along. So both Danish and English are used in its higher schools in preparing future workers in the school, the church, and in civic life in the public square.

There has been a lot of talk about building bridges between the fatherland and the Danish immigrants for their mutual enrichment. The importance of this, at least for the sake of the immigrants, can scarcely be opposed. But also in this area, it seems to me that the church's work deserves more appreciation than it has received until now. In its work, just to point out a few things, the church has produced and spread volumes of good sound Danish literature for the Danish population in America; papers and books from Denmark make their way into many homes in America as a result of the efforts of the Danish Lutheran Publishing House. And not a few Danish speakers and lecturers have been presented under the auspices of the church before large crowds which they would not otherwise have reached. Without the gathering and preserving influence of the church, the Danes who immigrated to America would have vanished much sooner into the great stream of people who came here from the overpopulated areas of the Old World. In regard to this subject, we do not have to resort to guessing and suppositions, but rather refer confidently to the fact that where people have had no intention to make use of the values of the Danish church, they probably had little regard either for the Danish language or for Danish morality or customs, or with Danish ways of thought on the whole. The many and happy exceptions to this rule, which are generally known to be found in numerous Danish homes in America, unfortunately only serve to confirm the rule. Yet the church is very far from being only a conservative factor among Danish immigrants in America. In this respect, it has also proven to be a progressive factor. In this regard we need only point to not a few Danish settlements in America, where with the aid of the church, a lot of Danes have been helped to purchase their own homes, and gain the means to live independently. This is better than having to toil one's way up in the big cities, where one is subject to a daily wage that the big corporations are willing to offer their workers. And we are not afraid to point to the many young men and women in America, who have received a boost upward at the little Danish Folk Schools maintained by the Danish church toward that life which is worthy of living. And also not a few waifs in our children." homes have been helped to become someone better than just an outcast from human society. And thus we could go on, but it is not necessary.

But the ability of the church both to preserve and to move forward did not come to the Danes in America from the great crowds, from the wealthy contributions, or from highly educated or gifted people, even though lack of these advantages often have held the church back in one way or another. No, the church's ability both to preserve and to broaden out came first and foremost from the Word of God and its use both in homes, schools, and churches. To the same degree that the church neglects God's Word, either by suppressing it or by putting anything else in its place—or alongside of it—to that degree the church's work will be hampered and weakened. Because the Lord has set his church to be the bearer of the Word, and to the degree that the church is faithful to that task, God will bless its work, as He has done until the present, also in the Danish mission in America. The only person who can avoid seeing this is the one who willfully shuts his eyes.

Therefore the Danish mission in America, whose foundation-building era we have sought to portray in this book, is a testimony both to the power of God and the ability of the Lutheran Church to win its way into the pioneer population of a foreign land and to plant itself even in a foreign language.

Glossary of Names

With English equivalents used in this translation

Kirkelig Missionsforening. The Church Mission Society. This was the first name which was taken by a group of Danish emissaries in America in 1872.

Den Danske Evangelisk Luthersk Kirke i Amerika. The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This name was adopted in 1879 by the Danes above who formed a church under the aegis of *Udvalget* (The Select Committee) . Frequently shortened to *Den danske Kirke*, The Danish Church.)

Konferencen. Usual title for the Norwegian-Danish Conference. Established Augsburg Seminary. The Danish spelling Konference is usually retained in this book, to distinguish the title from other church conferences.

De danske Brødre. The Danish brothers. A term of friendship used by the Norwegians in the Norwegian-Danish Conference during the time that the Danes were a part of it.

De Udtraadte. Literally, "those who stepped out, or withdrew." The group of Danish Lutherans who withdrew, with mutual regard, from the Norwegian-Danish Conference. Because of their secession from the Norwegian-Danish Conference, the translation in this document terms *De Udtraadte* "The Seceders."

Det danske evangelisk-lutherske Kirkesamfund i America. The Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church Association in America. A somewhat similar, yet different, name adopted by the group of Danes who withdrew from the Norwegian-Danish Conference in 1884.

Den Danske Folkekirke. The Danish Folk Church in Denmark, which preferred to be known thus, rather than as a "State Church."

Kirkelig Samler. The Church Gatherer. Publication of The Danish Church.

Dansk Luthersk Kirkeblad. The Danish Lutheran Church Paper. Church publication of the Danes in the Norwegian-Danish Conference, which was continued later in the church established by The Seceders.

Indre Mission, Inner Mission. The movement in Denmark formed to empasize the personal aspects of salvation as well as the spreading of the Gospel in unreached countries. Their publication was known as *Indre Missions Tidende,* or Inner Mission Times.

Den Norske Synode. The Norwegian Synod. Wanted to perpetuate the Church of Norway in America. Had ties with the Missouri Synod. Publication: *Lutheraneren.*

Den Forenede Dansk Evangelisk Luthersk Kirke i Amerika. The United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, formed by a merger in 1896 of the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church Association (often known as "the Blair Church" and the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church of North America, which was made up of pastors and congegations excluded from "The Danish Church." The latter was often known as the "North Church," which had come into being in 1894. The similarities in outlook between the Blair Church and the North Church made their merger into the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church quite natural.

Postscript

Dr. P. S. Vig was one of the pioneer leaders of the church body which came to be known as "The United Evangelical Lutheran Church in America" (UELC). He wrote this *Festskrift* as the Lutheran Church was observing the 400th anniversary of the 95 Theses that Martin Luther fastened to the church door at Wittenberg, Germany in October, 1517.

Now the time is approaching for the 500th anniversary of this Reformation event. Some 88 years have elapsed since Vig wrote this book, and it may well be asked if it is worth anyone's time to read about the struggles of another era, when Danish immigrants to the U. S. were seeking to establish a church in America.

A number of books have been written, both in Danish and English, in which the author attempts to portray the reason, or reasons, for the fact that there were two churches, rather than one, contending for the hearts of Danish immigrants and their descendants in America. Authors like Peder Kjølhede, Enok Mortensen, John M. Jensen, Paul Nyholm, Thorvald Hansen and others have each made their contribution to this story.

This translator, who was born in the year that Vig wrote this book, finds in it the clearest depiction of the issues which defined this struggle among the Danes. Vig pictures the controversies on both sides of the Atlantic—those which arose in the Danish Folk Church, as well as those of their countrymen for whom the disagreements in Denmark were set in a different context in the New Land.

Vig describes the tenets of both Grundtvigianism and Inner Mission, allowing representatives of both movements to have their say. He shows how the mindset of Europeans living in a state-supported church, is not workable in a country founded on the concepts of freedom and independence. He pays tribute to the help which Danish Lutherans in the U. S. received from other Scandinavian countries—Sweden and Norway in particular. The penetrating search light of his studies reveal human weaknesses, such as jealousy and smugness. He takes pains to correct the record in cases where false charges and counter-charges were being hurled.

It is a book worth having at hand in this later day, when Lutheran Christians are trying to find ways to follow both sides of the mandate of the Lord, who by his death and resurrection redeemed us and showed his great love to us. It is he who gives us the twofold charge: to love this Lord with all of one's heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. An evangelical Lutheran church in America can do no less.

Edward A. Hansen, *Lutheran Bishop emeritus*

June, 2005

Note: *Edward Albert Hansen (1917-2009) attended Dana College (1935-1939) and Trinity Seminary in Blair, Nebraska, graduating in 1942. As such, he would have been well aware of P. S. Vig, a founder, early president and professor at that institution, although Vig died in 1929. Rev. Hansen pursued further theological studies at Luther Seminary, Biblical Seminary in New York, Mansfield College of Oxford and St. Andrews University in Scotland, receiving his D.D. in 1961 from St. Olaf College. His long career saw him become president then bishop of the Southwestern Minnesota District of the American Lutheran Church (ALC) in Willmar.*